

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: Wednesday, November 28, 1990 2:30 p.m.

Date: 90/11/28

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

### Prayers

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

As Canadians and as Albertans we give thanks for the precious gifts of freedom and peace which we enjoy.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly we rededicate ourselves to the valued traditions of parliamentary democracy as a means of serving both our province and our country.

Amen.

### head: Introduction of Visitors

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have the great pleasure today of introducing five very special guests from Edmonton's sister city Harbin, in Heilongjiang, China. Presently they are seated in the Speaker's gallery. Mr. Zhu of the Harbin People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries is accompanied by Mr. Qi, Mr. Liu, Mr. Sha, and Mr. Wu. Also seated today are Mr. Ron Hodges and Mr. Cliff Phillips from the Edmonton-Harbin Friendship Society, and Rockford Lang from my department.

The delegation is here to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the twinning agreement between the city of Edmonton and the city of Harbin. During their stay I understand they will be meeting with local government and municipal officials, visiting our secondary schools, and participating in the fifth anniversary celebrations organized by the city of Edmonton. I would also like to point out at this time, Mr. Speaker, that 1991 will be the 10th anniversary of the twinning relationship between the province of Alberta and the province of Heilongjiang in China.

These gentlemen have now risen in their places, and I'm sure that in particular the Member for Edmonton-Glenarry, who had a visit to Harbin when he was mayor of this city and participated in this process, and all my colleagues will join in welcoming these gentlemen to our Assembly.

MRS. B. LAING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly 37 students from Queen Elizabeth high school in the constituency of Calgary-Bow. They are currently studying government. We have the grade 10 class, plus the honours class. There are 11 seated in the members' gallery and 26 in the public gallery with their teacher Gail Hicks and volunteer Glen MacDonald. I'd ask them to stand now, please, and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, there are some very special guests in both your gallery and the members' gallery today. At the outset I would like to express their appreciation for your courtesy in greeting them today in the Carillon Room.

Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, as well as in the members' gallery, are very proud Korean veterans. I'd ask them, as I call their names, to rise in your gallery: from Edmonton Mr. Kenneth Campbell, Esther Cortzman, Mr. and Mrs. James Colville, and Mr. Gordon Brown from Lethbridge. As well, Mr. Speaker, we have seated in your gallery two of our security people who are also Korean veterans: Mr. Everitt Johnson and

Mr. Chuck Mullin. And if I may, Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I would ask our own Sergeant-at-Arms, Oscar Lacombe, who is a Korean veteran, to rise as well. In addition, we have in the members' gallery some 40 Korean veterans and their families. I would ask them now to rise in the gallery. I would ask all my colleagues in this House to welcome these very special people to the Legislature today.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, there are two other members who should be recognized for having participated in that conflict. I'd ask them to rise in the House: the Minister of Advanced Education and the Member for Lloydminster.

### head: Presenting Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present a petition signed by almost 60 people from Ernest Manning senior high school in Calgary. The petition asks for a delay in pulp and forestry projects until a class environmental assessment has been done on the cumulative effects and until individual assessments including public hearings have been conducted on each forestry project.

### head: Introduction of Bills

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

#### Bill 240

#### An Act to Amend the Hail and Crop Insurance Act

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce Bill 240, An Act to Amend the Hail and Crop Insurance Act. This Bill provides for a 14-day period during which the owner or possessor of assets that have been seized under the Act can submit an objection, as is already the case under the Seizures Act.

[Leave granted; Bill 240 read a first time]

### head: Tabling Returns and Reports

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the hon. Leader of the Opposition asked me if a certain individual, Mr. McLaren, is a person who administers my blind trust, and I said yes. The Leader of the Opposition then said:

Mr. Speaker, then the Premier is saying, because this is a very serious matter, that Mr. McLaren is acting as an agent for the Premier, and therefore he's admitting that he should be put down in that disclosure, following the Legislative Assembly Act.

I said, Mr. Speaker, that I would get the information for the hon. member. I'm pleased to file the report from the Parliamentary Counsel confirming my answers and that my answers are correct and that this matter has been handled correctly.

### head: Introduction of Special Guests

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to draw to your attention and to members of the House a former colleague from the Legislative Assembly of this province who served with us from 1979 to 1986 as the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn and in his last term was Minister of Energy. I'd ask Mr. John Zaozirny to stand and receive the recognition and welcome back to the Assembly.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, in the members' gallery I would like to introduce to you and members of the Assembly a colleague in terms of representing constituents. Yvonne Fritz is the alderman for ward 5, which covers the constituency of Calgary-Montrose and Calgary-McCall. She is here as a member of the Carewest board for the Alberta Hospital Association. She is a very good representative, and I consider her a friend. I'd like her to stand and be acknowledged.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-Foothills, followed by Edmonton-Avonmore.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to be able to introduce again to you and through you a former colleague and member of this Assembly who served as a member and a minister from 1972 to 1982: Mr. Stewart McCrae. He represented the riding of Calgary-Foothills. He's seated in the members' gallery, and I'd ask you to join in extending a hearty welcome.

2:40

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly 20 students from Donnan elementary school in the constituency of Edmonton-Avonmore. They are accompanied by their teachers Mrs. Arlene Fearon and Mrs. Linda Scott. They are seated in the public gallery. I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, again it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly 26 students from Hazeldean school, again in the constituency of Edmonton-Avonmore. They are accompanied by teachers Don Brooks and Darren Schlese and parent James Logan. They are seated in the public gallery. I would ask that they please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to welcome to the Assembly and introduce to you and through you to the members 27 grade 6 students from the Daysland school, accompanied by their teacher Milt Openshaw, parents Ann Bobik, Werner Strohhaecker, Mona Urkow, and Faye Brausen; and bus driver Tom Brinker. They're seated in the members' gallery, and I'd ask that they rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly.

### head: Oral Question Period

#### Provincial Budget Projections

MR. MARTIN: Well, as a surprise I was going to ask about a code of ethics, but I guess I won't. I'll transfer over to the Treasurer: my friend the Treasurer, Mr. Speaker.

This province is in serious financial shape. There's absolutely no doubt about that, Mr. Speaker, and one of the reasons is that this Treasurer has been cooking the books to make himself look good when he reads the Budget Address here in March. Even he must admit that this last provincial budget is totally and absolutely out of date. Let me just go through: \$326 million in special warrants since March; debt servicing costs up from \$965 million to \$1.2 billion; stabilization that we're not getting from Mulroney, as he's made clear; the price of oil we don't know. Apparently he told Tory faithful behind closed doors that the deficit was bigger in 1989 and '90 than he originally said. My question to the Treasurer is simply this: when will this Legislature, which is supposed to deal with the financial matters of the

province – not the Tory faithful behind closed doors – get the same sort of update they got behind closed doors?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, as usual we'll be providing any kind of information the member would like to ask for. [interjections] If he'd just calm down, we'd be glad to help him with the special warrants, the update on oil. I can recall that this House adjourned in July of 1990, some – what? – hundred or so days ago, and at that point I said to members of the Assembly and to all Albertans that the government of Alberta was on its plan, on course. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. JOHNSTON: At that time the Member for Edmonton-Norwood was flailing his arms in the air in all kinds of ways, yelling and screaming. About what, Mr. Speaker? About a low oil price. [interjection] And I said to him, as the Minister of Energy has just pointed out: give us your forecast, Mr. Expert; take a risk, speak to the people of Alberta about the assumptions that you would use. Not a word. I could embarrass him by reading his words back. But no question about it; it was the doom and gloom synopsis.

We tried to assure all Albertans that the \$21 oil price forecast would be very close this year, very close. Well, now oil – I just checked it a few minutes ago – is trading \$32 a barrel. There's no doubt there's a war premium attached to the price of west Texas intermediate right now, but I can tell you that in fact the average oil price is very close; in fact, above our assumption. So in terms of that prophesy I can assure Albertans that we're very close to our plan of action.

Secondly, the Member for Edmonton-Norwood talks about the special warrant, as does the member of the Liberal Party, whatever his name is; Wavy over there talks as well. Mr. Speaker, since it has been raised, I think I should have an opportunity to speak about some of the items that are included in the special warrant. It's only fair.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. I'm sure we'll get that in the supplementary.

MR. MARTIN: I never knew how brilliant this Treasurer was. My God, he knew that possibly there was a war coming in the Middle East when he made his predictions. He'd been talking to Iraq. He was so clever, Mr. Speaker. What a man.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just to refer the Treasurer to the question I asked: when are we in this Legislature going to get a financial update the same as the Conservatives got behind closed doors? When are we going to get it, rather than silly, overblown rhetoric?

MR. JOHNSTON: That's why I'm here, Mr. Speaker, to give the Member for Edmonton-Norwood an update. But you know, it is curious that both he and the member from the Liberal Party, of course, really get upset and are quite distressed about the worst case scenarios. They're piped up; they're pumped about the worst things that can happen, about the doom and gloom. The Member for Edmonton-Norwood in particular is one of those people who suffers from this anxiety. In fact, he only recovers his health and his serenity when disaster strikes; that's the only time he feels good.

Mr. Speaker, let me talk about the special warrants, because I'm sure Albertans want to hear about the special warrants. They've already accused us of spending \$300 million which

should have been in the budget. The parliamentary system is clear on that point, that all governments have an opportunity to respond to unforeseen events, to disasters, to occurrences which are beyond anybody's forecast. That's why special warrants are provided. Just let's look at a few of these. Since he wants an update, I think it's important that we do give an update with respect to special warrants. There is about \$41.6 million for fire suppression, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FOX: That's not the question.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, it's included in the \$300 million. I know the Member for Vegreville doesn't care about some of the other programs, and I'll make sure I underscore those in just a few minutes.

Fire suppression: now, we've heard these environmentalists cry about saving the forests. So what are we doing? We're . . .

### **Speaker's Ruling Brevity in Oral Question Period**

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry. Hold it. Thank you.

Provincial Treasurer, I send you this note. *Beauchesne* 417. "Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate." [interjection] No. You're still down. I'm sorry. [interjections]

Now, perhaps when we have the final supplementary here, we're going to have all the troops in the House be a little more quiet so we can hear what's going on and the minister will get a chance to get on with the answer.

### **Provincial Budget Projections (continued)**

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're used to the verbal diarrhea coming from opposite. And the Treasurer is right about one thing: I do suffer from anxiety. I suffer from anxiety every time he talks about the finances of the province.

But my question again, and I'll try to make it as clear as I can to the Treasurer. He gave an update on the finances of the province to the party faithful at a Conservative gathering with the few Conservatives that are left in the province, Mr. Speaker. The rightful place was here in the Legislature. I want to know if he will give us that same update here, and we can spend some time debating it. Will he guarantee that this will happen now?

2:50

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, with respect to your advice, I certainly take that as good warning. I should say that I think *Beauchesne* also cautions the opposition about provocative and debate-incentive questions. If the opposition is going to ask those questions which require a fairly full answer and demand information, I'm trying to do my best.

Let me say that in March of this year I presented an update in the '89-90 forecast showing that the expected deficit for the province for the March 31, 1990, year-end would be \$1,828 billion. In doing that, when I talked to the very large turnout of members who follow this party at a policy conference dealing with the future, the vision of this province, where inputs from all people across Alberta were reflected in policies which you will see drive us through the '90s ahead – I talked to those people about the fact that some of our forecasts, including the special warrants which I've referred to, including stabilization, which is included in this profile, may not be collected, in which case I could see the deficit rising above the \$1,828 billion. I'm also

giving the same information to the Member for Edmonton-Norwood, Mr. Speaker, the same sort of information. That's essentially what we've been telling our supporters, the very vast number of Albertans who support the Conservative Party, to let them know that this province is now on a course to balancing its budget for '91-92.

I'll be presenting that budget in due course, sometime in March of this next year, but at the present time, Mr. Speaker, surely both parties should be saying: "Well, isn't that good? Isn't it about time that if you control the expenditures and you get a bit of a break in the very difficult pricing arrangement we have on oil, the government can balance the budget?" Now, if I was in the opposition, that's what I'd be saying. I wouldn't be taking the negative point of view that they are.

Let me confirm to Albertans that we're on course this year, and we'll balance . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.  
The second main question.

MR. MARTIN: I think we'll move to the second set of questions and stay with the hon. Treasurer, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the typical arrogant fashion of this government he says that when he's talking to the people sitting in the Conservative Party at the policy conference, he's talking to all Albertans. Well, I'm sure all the rest of the Albertans out there will be very interested in that statement. My other point. He says: isn't it good? Well, yes, let's ask the Treasurer. Isn't it good that behind closed doors there were \$326 million in special warrants since the last budget? Isn't it good that because of their mismanagement our debt servicing has gone up to \$1.2 billion from \$965 million? Isn't it good that they cooked the books, putting \$250 million in the stabilization plan? Isn't it good, Mr. Speaker? Isn't all that good? Isn't it good that the deficit's gone up another \$800 million from '89 to '90?

Again I want to come back to the Treasurer and ask him this. The budget will not be coming down till next March at the earliest possible time. The budget is totally outdated, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Treasurer or the Deputy House Leader: why do we not take time, as they do in the House of Commons from time to time – and this is perhaps the most important thing that we're going to be debating – to debate the finances of the province, including the revenues, including the expenditures, in this Legislature?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, if the member wants to put a resolution on the Order Paper – in fact, I think the current resolution talks about the fiscal policies – I'm sure that at some point that could be called, and we'd be very willing to talk about a variety of options which the government is pursuing to balance the budget for next year. I can assure you that this year we're very close to the balanced budget. I should note that the privatization of AGT has gone through. None of those dollars are included in the current forecast, and that's above and beyond the kinds of dollars that are available to the province.

But let me make just a couple of points. I can make a very broad profile about our policies. I've done it before. I'm not going to get into the shouting match that is endemic and characteristic of the Leader of the Opposition, but I will say that the people of Alberta know that we will balance the budget by '91-92. We are on track now, Mr. Speaker. We've had a break on the oil price, we've had some difficulties in terms of gas prices and exchange rates. Everyone in Alberta knows that the expenditure profile of this government has been the best of any

government in Canada. That expenditure profile has allowed us to ramp down the total expenditures and maintain a focus and a priority in health and education, as we're doing, and at the same time stay close to the forecast budget position that I brought forth in March of this year.

Mr. Speaker, that is the situation; that is the update. I'd be glad to talk more specifically about special warrants. Again I come back to say that these are not done behind closed doors. This is the parliamentary tradition: that when emergencies occur, governments have the right via special warrant or by demanding more money for targeted unexpected items, and we can respond, as we did, for example, in the nurses case to put through the wages, in the case of fire suppression, or in the case of disaster services. Those kinds of items are the items that are included in the \$300 million. In context, \$300 million out of a \$12 billion expenditure is not a whole lot of money. But let me conclude and confirm that we're on course this year, and we will balance the budget next year.

MR. MARTIN: Three hundred million dollars is not a lot of money? Gee, that sounds like CD. Howe: what's a million? What's a million in this province? What's \$300 million?

My question back to the Treasurer is simply this then: will the Treasurer tell us today what the actual deficit was for the 1989-90 period? Apparently he shared that information with the Tory faithful. What was our actual deficit in that period of time?

MR. JOHNSTON: Again, Mr. Speaker, I draw the member's attention to the 1990 Budget Address. In that Budget Address I pointed out that in '89-90 our forecasted deficit is . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Provincial Treasurer, for just half a moment. [interjections] No. Order on this side of the House involves various sets of benches, not just one party. I'd like you, please, to tone it down. If you have some conversation, perhaps you can go take a cup of coffee. The Chair can't hear what the answer is.

MR. TAYLOR: There is no answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. You've always got an answer, my friend; I know. Thank you.  
Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, just to continue from before the noise and interruption by the opposition, who are demanding to hear the answers but not wanting to hear the information, \$1.8 billion is in fact what I forecast in the budget of March 1990, and as I pointed out, as I point out to many people, several things have happened. Certainly the price of oil in the first part of the year had reduced our expected revenues, and of course that must be factored in, but in fact the stabilization claim was still proceeding. We had not received much confirmation that the federal government was going to be willing to pay us the \$539 million that's due to us. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, because of the central government policy to keep the interest rates up, obviously in terms of our debt servicing costs there was some exposure there as well.

Now, you don't have to be a financial genius to go from \$1.8 billion to something over \$2 billion by simply dealing with stabilization. That's essentially what I advised my colleagues, and I'll advise anybody that if stabilization isn't paid, obviously

my forecasts from March of 1990 of \$1.8 billion plus stabilization of about \$200 million take you close to the \$2 billion level. That's what I'm telling the Member for Edmonton-Norwood, that's what I'm telling the people of Alberta, and that's what I've told anyone who's asked me who was willing to listen to the answer, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, that's precisely the point we're trying to get through this sick government's skull: their budgeting process . . . [interjection] Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I hurt his feelings. I'm very sorry that I hurt his feelings.

Their budgeting process is totally out of whack. You should not put in stabilization payments till you get the money. You should budget realistically with the price of oil; you should include the unfunded liabilities. That's the point. My question to the Treasurer is simply this then: at this point could he give us an update about what our accumulated deficit is at this particular time?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the member covers a large expanse of waterfront in his questions. I'd be very, very pleased to respond, but I know you're going to get edgy because some of this has been dealt with already. Let me say again that if you go back from 1986 to the present, the current debt of the province is running at about 9 billion to 9 and a half billion dollars. That's on our budget course, exactly as we outlined.

With respect to the other items that the member talked about, let me just focus in on stabilization in particular. The member has said that we are hiding something. First of all, I object to that in the most strenuous fashion. Nothing has been hidden. Secondly, the member has said that this is a sick government. That, Mr. Speaker, is not parliamentary, and I'll get back to that in a minute. Thirdly, with respect to disclosure, we thought it was only fair in terms of providing Albertans with a fair estimation of what is due to us from the federal government as a result of fiscal federal policies which the province of Alberta must be able to participate in, that in fact some \$539 million was owed to us. Now, it's always a problem to account for that. So we wanted to provide as much information as possible to show that we will continue to bring pressure against the federal government to collect this money which is due to the province of Alberta, to the people of Alberta, to the taxpayers of Alberta. We have in fact collected \$75 million already, and those negotiations are proceeding.

3:00

Now, as I've said in the House time and time again, it's important that we do all these things, but it's also important and risky that when you put the money up front and give people information, as we have done clearly, you sometimes are going to fail, because the federal government has no commitment to pay that money until December of 1990. As I repeatedly say, we may have to pursue this in court to collect what is rightfully ours. Now, the Member for Edmonton-Norwood should be coming to our assistance. What instead is he doing? He's actually saying to the federal government: ignore this; ignore this calculation. That is exactly the kind of objection that I think this party should reflect upon, because they are not working in the best interests of Albertans, as is this government, Mr. Speaker.

#### Vencap Equities Alberta Ltd.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I brought to the attention of this Assembly the fact that pals of the government

have been treated most generously by the government. Churchill development corporation received \$14 million; Pocklington, \$60 million; Alberta-Pacific Terminals, \$12 million. Now we learn today that the pals of the government disease has struck again. We learn that Vencap has provided moneys to a venture capital company in California. My questions are to the Minister of Economic Development. Given that the previous Minister of Economic Development, when he introduced legislation on Vencap in this Assembly, represented that taxpayers' moneys would go to Albertans for Alberta businesses in Alberta, will the minister stand up and condemn and tell us that the lending of these moneys to a California company is clearly wrong and breaches the conditions that were set out in the Assembly by the previous minister?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I should indicate to the hon. member that if he knows anything about the attraction of high technology, he will know that it is important that companies such as this know what is taking place on a worldwide basis, and for that reason they have some investments with the hopes of attracting high technology to the province of Alberta, which we recognize is so, so important to this province.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I don't think the minister heard my question. The question is this. A pal, Mr. Starko, who is clearly a benefactor of this government and probably a great pal of the minister and most of the cabinet, has received benefits by Vencap funding a California company. Now, is that wrong, or is it right?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, let me indicate to the hon. member that he is not a pal of mine; he is not an acquaintance of mine. He's probably closer to the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry than he is to me. Notwithstanding that fact, I've indicated on a number of occasions in this House – and if the hon. member wishes to persist in twisting the facts, that's fine; I'm sure the public will recognize it as such – that Vencap does not take direction from this government. It's interesting that the NDP just yesterday in their debate suggested that they be arm's length and government not be involved in this type of activity. We're not involved with the decisions that Vencap makes, and that's a conscious decision whereby they are at arm's length from this government so they cannot be involved with any type of political interference. I'm happy to leave the hon. member with that assurance.

MR. TAYLOR: Arm's length? Hell, they're in bed with you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the information I have is that this particular initiative by Vencap was cleared with the Alberta government. That means that the minister or his colleagues or the government were involved. Is this a right action or a wrong action? Give us an answer.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I just gave the hon. member the answer. Let me repeat it for him. The information that he has is incorrect, as is typical with his information. It was never cleared with this minister. This minister is the minister that responds to the Legislative Assembly on behalf of Vencap. It was never cleared with me. Again the hon. member is false, as he is consistently in this Legislative Assembly.

### Speaker's Ruling Improper Inferences

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, the reference to *Beauchesne* again – I think I've had to quote this earlier in the week, and we're only up to Wednesday – is 409(7):

A question must adhere to the proprieties of the House, in terms of inferences, imputing motives or casting aspersions upon persons within the House or out of it.

The Chair is increasingly concerned at the number of times this happens in this House. It's your responsibility as members to be vigilant on behalf of those people out there who don't have the right to defend themselves in this place. If I'm going to have to keep jamming this into this House, I'm going to have to do it, and your questions will be ruled totally out of order, and question time will be taken away.

Calgary-Fish Creek.

### Alberta Children's Hospital

MR. PAYNE: I would like to direct a question today to the Minister of Health, but before doing so, and hopefully with your concurrence, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the members that for the first time in the history of this Legislature question period is being interpreted in sign language for the benefit of deaf Albertans who watch the late evening telecasts of question period. I might add that Alberta is the first province in Canada to provide such a service, and on your behalf, Mr. Speaker, and on behalf of all the members, I would like to welcome those deaf Albertans who are watching the telecast of today's and indeed of future question periods.

Now, to the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Children's hospital has announced its decision to terminate outreach therapy services, which for several years have been provided to special needs infants at the Providence Child Development Centre in Calgary. This decision will profoundly impact the developmental progress that has been achieved by these special needs children. Consequently, I would like to ask the Minister of Health if she'd be prepared to ask the Alberta Children's hospital board and senior management to reconsider this most regrettable decision?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, we ask a board of trustees to make decisions on our behalf, particularly when it comes to a provincial hospital board, as the Alberta Children's hospital is, and they accept responsibility as citizens of this province for that decision as our agents. I think that having given them that responsibility, we don't withdraw it or remove it when the moments are such that we don't agree with them or when it comes to us having some political discomfort over those decisions.

I know that the board of the Alberta Children's hospital has struggled very much to ensure that the care of children is in fact not profoundly impacted by their budgetary decisions, and I would remind members of this House that the funding allocation to the Alberta Children's hospital this year over last was an increase of 10 percent. I think we have to trust our boards to make the decisions that are required and, once they've made them, accept that they had the right to make those decisions.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the minister's reference in her reply to a budgetary decision and the fact that the hospital received a 10 percent increase, in view of the public statements made by the president of the Alberta Children's hospital that even if he were given an additional \$2 million or \$3

million in new funding, he would not necessarily sustain or continue this modestly priced \$200,000 program. It's not a question of money; it's a question of changing policies and priorities. My question to the minister would she be prepared to intercede on our behalf and at least ask the board to provide us with a statement of those priorities under which this remarkable program has been slashed?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure who the hon. member is referring to when he says "us." He certainly has every right as a member of this Assembly and as a citizen affected by those services to make that request himself of the chairman of the board.

I would note that modifications have been made to ambulatory care services at the Alberta Children's hospital. Some children are now going to be required to visit the hospital for treatment as opposed to having the treatment outside, in the centre, and there will be a reduction in the number of treatments available. Each child, however, is going to be assessed on an individual basis, and certainly the goal is to ensure that the best possible treatment is provided to those children within the available resources.

### Hospital Funding

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, despite the Minister of Health's lofty speech to the 3,000 or so delegates at the Alberta Hospital Association this morning, she unfortunately failed to acknowledge in any way that the prime reason so many hospitals are facing deficits in this province is because of her broken promise. Last year the minister told the AHA to go ahead and negotiate good contracts with the nurses and other employees, but after the settlements were in, the minister comes back, pulls the rug out from under them, and funds them less than 75 percent of the cost of those wages. It's no wonder the hospitals are left with deficits. It's no wonder they feel betrayed and are now in revolt. Will the minister not agree that it is not the hospitals who are unwilling to balance their books that is the problem, but the real problem is that it's this minister who is unwilling to fulfill her previous commitment to them of last year?

3:10

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, at no time did I ever say that this province would fully pay for the cost of the nursing settlements. What we did say at the outset of negotiations one year ago was that we would review any nursing contract knowing that given the settlements in other provinces for the same period of time, we were probably facing an increase beyond the 3 percent we had already provided to hospitals. We did not pull the rug out from under the feet, in the words of the hon. member, of the hospitals, and in fact the \$47 million to the acute and long-term care sector and the \$3.9 million to the health unit sector averages out to approximately 90 percent of the cost of that settlement. I think that's very reasonable, in fact generous support for both nurses and for hospitals and health units in this province given the province's fiscal position.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that that 90 percent figure is patently false, that it is in fact less than 75 percent. This is from the Alberta Hospital Association themselves. Who else does she expect to fund these settlements anyway? Do you think the hospital's going to have a bake sale or something for these nurses or what?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Hon. member, that was a question. It might be rhetorical, but let's have the question and get on with it.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, given the blatant unfairness of this funding broken promise that has forced the hospitals into closing beds, laying off staff, lengthening waiting lists, and now to run deficits, how can the minister in any conscience now threaten to go to these deficit-ridden hospitals who are in defiance, such as the hospitals in Fort Saskatchewan or Lamont or Grande Prairie, throughout the province, and threaten to dissolve those boards and to fire that administration just because of her broken promises?

MS BETKOWSKI: The allegations made by the Member for Edmonton-Centre are clearly false. At no time in my speech – and I would be more than happy to table a copy for him in case he wasn't listening while he was sitting there – did I suggest that we were going to be firing people in terms of administration and closing down hospital boards. Interestingly, having heard the first question today from his leader, the Leader of the Opposition, which referred to the serious financial shape that Alberta is in, all of a sudden we have the member for Edmonton-Centre saying: we want more, we want more, we want more. Well, you know what, Mr. Speaker? Everybody wants more.

The appetite of health is never going to be fully satisfied no matter how much we give them. Quite frankly the easiest approach and naturally the approach suggested by the Official Opposition is to simply take more money, and I would argue and this government would argue that it is also the most irresponsible approach to take. To say that more is the only answer is to make a choice, and the choice that's being made is to systematically and deliberately lower the standard of living of the kids in this province when they have to pay for that debt 20 years from now. That's not part of the legacy that I'm going to leave or this government is going to leave for this province. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West.

### Tourism Funding

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We're not in Committee of the Whole. We're also not on a break.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the Financial Administration Act, section 30, to which the hon. Treasurer has referred, does allow for special warrants when "an expenditure of public money is urgently required." This is a quote directly from the Act. The Provincial Treasurer did refer to some special warrants, but he omitted to mention some that included purchases of fence posts, maintenance of scientific equipment in the Attorney General's office, and the ongoing operation of the environmental council of Canada: only a few of 26 special warrants amongst the total of \$326 million. My question today is to the Minister of Tourism. Referring to an order in council dated October 26, 1990, a special warrant of \$7.6 million, actually a little more than that, was approved under the Canada/Alberta tourism agreement, an additional \$7.6 million over the \$3.8 million that was budgeted. My question to the minister is: could the minister please inform the House as

to what the urgency was for requesting more than twice the amount of money that was originally approved in the budget?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, I'd be glad to. As you all know, the Canada/Alberta tourism agreement came to an end, and applications were very furious last fall. All of the decisions were made by the committees in March, and the five-year program is now over. A lot of those programs that were assisted were accelerated by the proponents, and the estimates were low as to the amount of applications and contracts that would be fulfilled; therefore, the special warrant.

MR. BRUSEKER: My second question, then, Mr. Speaker, is that given that the \$7.6 million is for capital projects, what was the urgency, what was the need to thwart the normal budgetary process, leave that out of the budget that we had in March, and suddenly include it now at this time of the year?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, the Canada/Alberta agreement was a \$56 million agreement over a five-year period, and the acceleration of the cash flow within the budget process has been caused by the excitement throughout the province and the rapid development of those projects that were helped. We're glad that those projects are going forward. Therefore, the acceleration of that cash flow caused the special warrant.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Clover Bar, followed by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

#### **Hospital Funding** (continued)

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Minister of Health. The Fort Saskatchewan hospital is in great difficulty due to the request by the minister that a break-even position be achieved without adversely affecting current service levels. The board has reduced the estimated deficit of \$400,000 by some \$173,000. I am told that further cuts will in fact affect service levels. The annual outpatient growth has increased by 63 percent in this area and is expected to further increase due to economic diversification, the Dow expansion. Will the minister sit down with this hospital board, review their special circumstances, and co-operatively develop alternatives that will address their pressing funding and service level problems?

MS BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated at the Alberta Hospital Association convention this morning, living within a balanced budgetary plan for our hospitals is not an option; it is an obligation. It's an obligation not only to service today but to future generations of Albertans so that we can be sure we have a health system 20 years from now. That's why we're all working as hard as we are on it. However, I am prepared to be flexible in the time frame in which they balance their budget, but I would put two conditions on that flexibility. The first one would be that their budget has to be balanced within a reasonable period of time. The second is that the flexibility in the time frame will only be used for those boards who are least able to balance their budget by the end of this fiscal year as opposed to those least willing to balance their budget. I indicated as well at the AHA this morning that if any hospital board feels they are incapable of balancing their budget, for them to simply let me know and I will send in someone that can help them do it.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Rather than blindly recommend additional funding, as the NDP does whenever there's a problem, not that it solves the problem, I would ask the minister to explore not just the funding situation but also alternatives to service that should be explored. Such an alternative, I would suggest, might be the Victoria health project.

3:20

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I think certainly the issue of being as much assistance as we possibly can be to boards who are doing a very important service for this province is something that this government feels very strongly about. The acute care funding plan which is in place in Alberta and, in fact, frankly, not in just my words but in the words of other health ministers across Canada, is leading the way in health reform across Canada, I believe can be a very useful instrument to all our hospitals as they look to the appropriate allocation of resources for serving the health needs of their community.

I also will say in answer to the first question that I will be happy, with my department, to work with all hospital boards in this province so we can get on with the job of ensuring that we do not continue to build debt and deficits into our hospital budgets.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

#### **Lubicon Band Land Claim**

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In March of 1988, more than two years ago, vice-president and general manager of Daishowa, Mr. Kitagawa, promised the Lubicon people that they would not log Lubicon lands until there was a settlement and that afterward they would consult regarding any logging within the traditional Lubicon area. True to their word, they approached the government earlier this year with a request to log outside the Lubicon area, which, according to Mr. Higginbotham, the assistant deputy minister, was passed on to the Premier and the minister. He said: that decision requires some political sanction; this is not strictly a forestry matter. I would like the minister to stand up and explain today why he made a political decision to veto Daishowa's request, precipitating a useless and needless confrontation with the Lubicon people?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, that just is not so. I'll answer the question of the hon. member to clear up any confusion there may be in his mind as follows. The staff of the Alberta Forest Service met on two occasions late last summer with the Lubicon band, and Chief Ominayak attended one of those meetings. All reforestation and harvesting activities that were to be carried out on what the Lubicon considered to be their traditional area within the next year were at that time reviewed with the band. The band expressed no concerns except for logging in two specific new disposition areas. In fact, those were the two areas I referred to in the letter the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place waved yesterday. The logging that is taking place in the two that were not raised as a concern by the Lubicon band: one of them is about 90 kilometres away from the Lubicon and Little Buffalo reserve entitlement area; the other *one* is about 45 kilometres away from that entitlement area.

MR. McINNIS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the confusion that the minister has is that he can't really determine what the Lubicon lands are until such time as there's a settlement. We have no settlements. I put it to him again, because Mr.

Hamaoka, who is now in a senior capacity with Daishowa, said that he has approached the government and has asked for alternative logging areas to carry the Boucher Bros. and Brewster's operations through the winter. My question is quite simple: why did the government refuse to honour that request?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, the entitlement area that has been set aside for the Lubicon is some 95 square miles. That 95 square mile entitlement area is an area that is under negotiation and discussion with the federal government with respect to the monetary settlement that may come. On that issue the hon. the Attorney General may wish to supplement my answer. However, Daishowa is not logging in that area; they have not planned to log on that side of the Peace River this year. But let's be fair, Mr. Speaker. We cannot take all of northern Alberta and say that nothing is going to happen there until a settlement takes place. There is good faith on behalf of Daishowa; there's good faith on behalf of our government and the leadership shown by our Premier to try and help resolve the issue. But men of goodwill on the Lubicon side and the federal government side must resolve the issue. It cannot continue to go on for ever and ever.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Belmont, followed by Edmonton-Gold Bar if there's time.

#### **Employment Initiatives**

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. For years we've been telling this government that we need meaningful job creation and job training programs, and the response we get is quite frankly something that subsidizes business and cuts to career development and employment programs to the tune of over \$15 million. Given that we've got 8 percent unemployment, a waiting list that is months long to try and get upgrading, and a 10-month waiting list at the Alberta Vocational Centre for upgrading programs, what specific programs does this minister have to provide education and training to people who truly need that assistance before they get jobs?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the Minister of Career Development and Employment is going to want to supplement my answer, but I can assure the member opposite that I've worked very closely with my colleagues in caucus and cabinet at making sure there are jobs available in this province. The member knows full well. Again, we started to talk about the success of our diversification initiatives during this last three or four years. It's interesting that so often when we talk about diversification and so often when we take some of those steps that are required to make sure that there are jobs available in this province . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon. minister.

Order for the sake of your own welfare, three members.

MR. OLDRING: So often when we're taking those steps to make sure there are job opportunities available in this province, Mr. Speaker, it's the members opposite that are trying to stop us from doing that.

I'm sure that the Minister of Career Development and Employment is going to want to supplement my comments.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

MR. WEISS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly welcome the opportunity to respond in a supplementary manner. The Member for Edmonton-Belmont should be well aware that there's some \$17 million on one program alone, the employment alternatives program, which is working very satisfactorily, I might add. In many communities we have some pilot projects that right now we're monitoring and evaluating, working with people.

I want to assure the member and all members of the Assembly that it's not our department's responsibility, nor the government's in this case, to create jobs for these people. More importantly, it's to assist in the development of their skills and their learning ability so they're able to enter the work force in a meaningful way, to provide this opportunity not in a wage subsidy program but in a learning and training process so that they, too, will be able to be better citizens and build their self-esteem and confidence so they'll be going on to a job, a successful, meaningful job.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to point out: we cut work experience programs by \$12.8 million, job readiness training programs by \$1 million, and training allowances and assistance programs by \$800,000 in the last budget alone. Without that education and training, the only entry level jobs that these people are going to get are often low skill, part-time, and minimum wage jobs. So I would ask the Minister of Career Development and Employment on behalf of those workers and especially those people who require assistance in getting back into the work world: when will this minister or this government undertake to look at minimum wage programs again and increase the minimum wage so that it's at a survival level?

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to deal with the wage matter at this point. There'll be, I'm sure, an opportunity on future occasions to deal with it, and the Minister of Labour would more than welcome that as well.

I do want to take, exception to the hon. member's remarks about the cuts or the reductions in programs. As I said, Mr. Speaker, to all members of the Assembly, we are not involved in wage subsidy programs. Yes, we've looked at those closely, but we are working with and training more individuals and there are more Albertans working today than there ever have been in the province in history. Tell me it isn't working; I say prove it to me.

#### **Speaker's Ruling Brevity in Oral Question Period**

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, we've come to the end of question period. We've only been able to reach nine topics in a general fashion today. I know we've taken an inordinate amount of time in terms of questions and answers, and I'm certain that both sides of the House will take it under advisement. Tomorrow we'll start shortening the preambles to all the questions radically. Also, with regard to the answers, perhaps we'll go right to the heart of the matter without a number of parenthetical remarks. It would be appreciated, because we have left five members waiting in the wings.

Thank you.

#### **Point of Order Parliamentary Language**

MR. SPEAKER: During question period we had a few issues arise. First, the Chair recognizes the Member for Clover Bar.



MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of order. It relates to the first question that was posed by the member for Edmonton-Northlands to the Provincial Treasurer. [interjections] The Leader of the Opposition, Edmonton-Norwood. My apologies.

The phrase used by the questioner was "cooking the books," as it applied to the Provincial Treasurer. I would raise the point of order under *Beauchesne* 317, which requires me to do so, and I would ask the Speaker to offer a ruling on that particular phrase. Now, I realize, Mr. Speaker, that 488, 489, 490, or 491 do not list the phrase specifically. However, in its context, the way it was used, 486 of *Beauchesne* and 491 apply.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where do you guys get this stuff?

MR. GESELL: Also, our own Standing Orders . . . Mr. Speaker, I would appeal to you under . . .

3:30

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member.

AN HON. MEMBER: *Beauchesne* made me do it.

MR. GESELL: I would also cite . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, please wait.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would also quote our Standing Order 23(i), which indicates that no member shall impute "false or unavowed motives to another member."

I've researched that particular phrase, Mr. Speaker, and it arises in laboratory research and also arises from accounting practice. In laboratory research it refers to a procedure whereby the test results are so altered that the hypothesis is proven. So there is an intentionally distorted situation, intention to deceive, which applies similarly in bookkeeping and accounting. The same intention to present a deceptive position with the intention to defraud, or deliberate deception, is implied here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I also want to cite 481(e) and 484(3) in *Beauchesne*, which apply specifically to the issue of unavowed motives. There have been some outrageous statements made in this House by members, and these appear to be escalating. I think it results in a deterioration in the credibility of this House and all members within it.

MR. FOX: Sit down; you're making a fool of yourself.

MR. GESELL: I find the remarks . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Now, just a moment. Take your place, hon. member.

That's an inappropriate comment, hon. member.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, "cooking the books": this is wasting time. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, perhaps you'd refer to *Beauchesne* 168, with respect to when the Chair is trying to gain order in the House. Thank you.

Now, would you like to briefly conclude your remarks, Clover Bar.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find the escalation of the derogatory and unfounded statements in this House to be detrimental, and I would ask the Speaker to rule that the remarks made by the hon. member are unparliamentary and, if the Speaker does so rule, that the member withdraw those remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: That's hypothetical. [interjection] No, hon. member. The Chair would recognize the Leader of the Opposition, who made the comment, if he wishes to make comment. In actual fact the issue should be raised if the Provincial Treasurer took grave offence.

The Leader of the Opposition, please.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to respond to the member from wherever, the point is that "cooking the books" is not unparliamentary in *Beauchesne*, and I can't imagine why he'd be so exercised by it. What we went through very clearly is things that were wrong in the last budget, and I'm trying to make the point. He can't decide out of the blue to become an expert in parliamentary procedure, something he knows nothing about. It's either in *Beauchesne* or it isn't, and it isn't there. How can he make rules like that?

MR. SPEAKER: The Provincial Treasurer, a brief comment.

MR. JOHNSTON: *Beauchesne* is very instructive when you deal with unparliamentary language. Not only is it exhaustive in detailing those words which are in fact already by parliamentary standards eliminated from our normal usage and which in a very broad sense are pejorative and may in fact have connotations which are probably not intended, it is in fact very instructive to look at 491, which I think is the bigger section. *Beauchesne* 491 talks about, whether or not the item or the word is included in the exhaustive list or not, there being some modicum of decorum which exists in this House. There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that you have attempted, against limited odds in many cases, to deal with that.

What *Beauchesne* does say is that some words are in fact particularly offensive, and *Beauchesne* is specific with respect to lying. Lying, Mr. Speaker. Now, my colleague the Member for Clover Bar has made a very close nexus between cooking the books and lying. The connection is clear. That's why in this case this is much more than a frivolous action. Not only does it reflect on me, on all members of the government, and to some extent on my colleagues in the opposition, it also reflects upon a servant of this Legislative Assembly, and that is the Auditor General, because it is his ultimate responsibility to report to this Legislative Assembly about what it is that is in the "books," and he has not, to the best of my knowledge, over the history of the time I've been involved, found any reason to say that there have been questionable procedures or that in fact the information has been misleading. In fact, we have applied consistent bases with which we have dealt with the information which is put forward.

We have to look very carefully at the broad instruction that we receive from *Beauchesne*, the Standing Orders under which we operate, and to some extent the parliamentary traditions which have existed previously. In looking at all of those, Mr. Speaker, I think it is clear that you would find that the words "cooking the books" are pejorative, suggest that there is a misrepresentation or lying involved, and I know that my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Norwood would not want

to leave that impression. Knowing him to be the honourable man that he is, he'll quickly come to his feet and retract that expression. Knowing him well, I know that he will.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what there is to apologize for. It's not in *Beauchesne*. He doesn't like it; he doesn't like it: too bad.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, hon. members, I want you to know that I'm very pleased to be back here for the fall. I know all of us would have died of boredom without coming back here this fall.

The Chair appreciates the intervention of various members, including the Member for Clover Bar, with respect to trying to make all of us mindful of the various forms and usages within the House. I know that all hon. members take that matter to heart in terms of serving in this particular Assembly.

The Chair in this instance will follow the direction as given from the committee on the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. A similar phrase was used there, and the chairman of that committee at that time did not rule that the matter was unparliamentary. At that time, the Member for Clover Bar appealed the chairman's ruling, but the chairman's ruling was upheld. Therefore, while . . . [interjection] Hon. member, there's no need for that. There's no need for that.

While the Chair will allow the phrase to stand in this instance, the Chair also cautions the House to be much more careful in terms of phrases that are used. The word "lie" was not there; the phrase was "cooking the books." But having now declared that kind of statement, I still admonish the House to please be much more careful in the terminology. Thank you.

The Provincial Treasurer.

DR. WEST: I wonder if the Communists are . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I was going to raise a point of order, but given the time we have spent on the last point of order by the Member for Clover Bar, and essentially it arises from the same set of questions, I will find my rebuttal elsewhere.

#### **Speaker's Ruling Parliamentary Language**

MR. SPEAKER: For purposes of the record, since *Hansard* does record many phrases that are heard, the Chair heard the word "Communist" shouted across the Chamber. I wonder if the hon. member would be good enough to rise and withdraw the remark.

3:40

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, in the heat of the moment and looking across I was confused, and I'll retract that statement. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order. Thank you, hon. minister.

Hon. members, I think you will take that as an example. Thank you.

#### **Speaker's Ruling Parliamentary Language**

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, with regard to a matter that arose in the House yesterday.

MR. McINNIS: I refer, Your Honour, to *Beauchesne* 490, at page 148, the reference to *House of Commons Debates*, April 12, 1960, page 3175, as part of my defence. I'd have to say that I am glad I didn't accuse another member of making false allegations, as the Minister of Health did today, or twisting facts, as another minister did.

But I do want to refer to some other statements made by the minister of economic development. In the *Hansard* of our Assembly, April 2, 1990, on page 447, he states that comments made by another member "are somewhat misleading"; the statement by the same member on page 1178 of *Hansard* this year where he states that a statement made by another member "is very misleading"; a statement by the minister of economic development, June 5, 1990, in which he states that statements made by another member, in this case myself, were "dishonest or not the truth"; also a further statement by the same member, again referring to myself, when he says that all the member – that is, myself – does is "continuously mislead the House and the public he deals with." So I think it's probably pretty much in the record of this Assembly that the word that I used is not unparliamentary.

I would have to say in reference to the concern the minister has stated that I believe he has stated, if not in the Assembly elsewhere, that he had no intention of misleading Albertans when he signed his name to a statement that Daishowa subsidiaries would not log lands claimed by the Lubicon people. It's not up to me to determine the minister's motives, and I have never said what his motivation may have been in making that statement. I don't wish to impute any motivations. I do wish it said, though, that there is logging going on, which is the result of potentially violent confrontation in the northern part of the province on lands claimed by the Lubicon people. Whether or not that's misleading I think speaks for itself.

MR. SPEAKER: The minister, briefly.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the comment was made about my misleading the public with respect to a letter. The unfortunate circumstance that I think it involves is taking whatever that letter says out of context without reference to whom the letter was written to and in what context that letter was written. It's my understanding that the letter was written to me from the gentleman based on a newspaper story that talked about the areas of concern to the Lubicon, and my answer reflected that.

I never did say outside of the House that I didn't mean to mislead the public, because I was not misleading the public in any way, shape, or form. It's when you take a letter that is written to an individual and take that out of context, without recognizing the context it was written to . . . It was not meant to be a public document. It was meant to be a letter to an individual in response to a concern. That the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place decided to make that letter public without the other letter that was written that it referenced I don't feel is fair.

However, I did not say outside of the House in any way that I misled the public. Truly, I believe that one hon. member making that statement about another is not only unparliamentary but I don't think it's in the good standing and decorum of this House or what the citizens of this province expect from their elected representatives.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Well, there are a couple of issues here; in fact, there are three. First, the Chair will allow the

word "misleading" to stand because it is not listed in *Beauchesne*. In our own practice from time to time we have ruled it out of order from the Chair, possibly reflecting the tenor and the temperature of the moment in which it was uttered. The Chair nevertheless decries the use of phrases such as this no matter which side of the House they are being spoken from, and perhaps hon. members might think of some more gentle way of still getting the point across.

### **Speaker's Ruling Citing Documents**

MR. SPEAKER: Nevertheless, without insisting upon a retraction, the Chair wants to bring to the attention to the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place that a slight disservice was done to the House by that hon. member, perhaps inadvertently. The Chair has had to deal with a similar matter of the House on another issue, I think at that time it was with regard to the report of the Principal Group of Companies, of some selective reading from correspondence. In the *Hansard* record it reads, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place quoting from the letter "will not be logging in the area of concern." However, upon examining the letter which was tabled, the full quote is this: "will not be logging in the area of concern this winter." Now, that may or may not reflect the aspect of certain concerns, but the problem is there need to be – let's look at the complete quotes.

Now, the other matter that is a concern of the Chair is this: in filing correspondence it is the tradition of the House of Commons and this parliament as well that one just doesn't file automatically, indeed, there is this tradition of at least having the consent of the person to whom it was addressed or the person who has signed the letter, depending on the circumstance. Now, I know the practice is that if you happen to have a letter from the minister, well I suppose in a sense it's fair game. But there is that other responsibility to clear it with the person to whom it's addressed as well.

Thank you, hon. members. I apologize to our special guests that it's taken so long to get to this next item on the agenda. Nevertheless, it's part of that parliamentary process, and we thank you for having fought in various campaigns to give us the right to be able to carry on as we do in this place.

## **Orders of the Day**

### **head: Government Motions**

#### **Korean Voluntary Service Medal**

#### **21. Moved by Mr. Gogo:**

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly endorse and urge the government of Canada to strike a medal, the Korea voluntary service medal, honouring the more than 27,000 Canadians who served in the Korean conflict under the banner of the United Nations from 1950 to 1953, and furthermore that the said medal be presented to those surviving veterans of the Korean conflict in a suitable manner and to deceased veterans' families in an equally suitable manner.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured and very pleased to present the following motion to the House today. To me this is a very, very important matter, and I know it's a very, very important matter to our distinguished guests today.

I would like to recognize that we have within the Assembly, in addition to those I've already recognized, members who have

served Canada in the Armed Forces: my colleague the Member for Lloydminster, the hon. Mr. Cherry, the Member for Calgary-Fish Creek, as a naval officer; and the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon who also served in the navy, although in a somewhat different war than the one we're about to talk about.

3:50

Mr. Speaker, in our Legislature Library downstairs one would find the various books of remembrance. Within those books, done in extremely fine calligraphy, are recorded some 114,000 names of Canadians who gave their lives for the very fact that we are able to be here today in a free society and express different points of view. One thinks back to what Canadians have done in the interests of freedom and democracy. I think in terms of just over a hundred years ago to the South African War – Boer War, I guess, most people would think – when along with the Nile expedition almost 300 Canadians lost their lives; World War I, some 66,000; World War II, some 44,000; and of course the Korean conflict, or the Korean War as I'm about to describe it, some 516. We would hope that we don't gather in this Chamber sometime in the future to honour those who may have lost their lives in the Middle East or Iraq.

Various members in this House are well aware of the track record of Canada's veterans, none more so than the hon. Member for Lacombe, Mr. Moore, who served in the Royal Canadian Navy as well. We recognize these Canadians every year on November 11 in some very, very special ways. I was a very proud member of the Assembly back in 1986 when I was fortunate to have the support of my colleagues in having the Remembrance Day Act passed in this Assembly whereby our school children, some 430,000 of them, each year are made aware of the sacrifices made by Canadians who gave their lives so that they might understand and enjoy the freedoms we have.

But today, Mr. Speaker, is uniquely different because in many ways today I'd like to talk about not only those who gave their lives but, equally important, those who served and served Canada in a very fine manner in the Korean War. Just 40 years ago last June – in many ways it seems to me like it was yesterday, as I'm sure it does to other people – North Korea launched an offensive against South Korea across the 38th parallel. It was on June 25, 1950. It was a devastating attack on peace-loving people. Within 12 hours the United Nations met in New York in emergency session and declared an emergency and asked all member partners of the U.N. if they would participate in a peacekeeping operation to repel the invasion by North Korea into the south. Only 48 hours later U.S. President Harry Truman, without reference to Congress, marshalled the U.S. forces in order to support the U.N. resolution in repelling the invasion of South Korea. There's great confusion over that because he described it that day and at that time – maybe it was a political move; I don't know – but he termed it a "police action" in Korea. Later it became known as a "conflict."

Well, one only has to look at the record to recognize it must have been some police action or some conflict when you consider that some 4 million casualties occurred between 1950 and 1953, some 43 percent of all South Korea industries were destroyed, and 33 percent of all the homes in South Korea were destroyed. I just ask hon. members to visualize this capital city of Edmonton if one out of every three homes were suddenly to disappear, how one could possibly describe that as a police action or a conflict. If that's not war, Mr. Speaker, then I obviously don't have an understanding of what war is all about.

During those three years Canada lost 516 Canadians, 516 people amongst the 27,000 Canadians who answered the call to

arms on a voluntary basis as Canada, being a member of the U.N., volunteered to support South Korea in repelling North Korea. Some members may recall that a special Commonwealth division was formed of England, Australia, New Zealand, and of course Canada was amongst them. Canada supplied the 25th Infantry Brigade group commanded by, I'm sure hon. members will well remember, the famous Brigadier Rocky Rockingham. They went off to Korea in 1951, some 6,000 strong, to do what they could to see that the resolution of the U.N. was responded to.

It's interesting to just recall very briefly the Canadian units that were involved. I think of the Royal Canadian Navy, which the hon. Member for Lacombe was involved in; the ships the Athabasca, the Cayuga, the Crusader, the Sioux, the Haida, the Huron, the Iroquois, and the Nootka. They ring bells, I know, with the hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek who served in one of those. The Second Armoured Regiment, which the hon. Member for Lloydminster was a member of. The very famous Lord Strathcona's Horse, which a hundred years ago, of course, was on horseback; today they use tanks. The Royal Canadian Dragoons. Artillery regiments of which I was proud member. The Royal Canadian Corps of Signals. The Royal Canadian Infantry, which consisted – and many of our special guests today were members of these groups – of the Royal Canadian Regiment; the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry – some three battalions, different years; the Royal 22nd Regiment, the famous Vandoos from la belle province; the Black Watch of Canada; the Queen's Own Highlanders of Canada; and the Canadian Guards. Our hon. Sergeant-at-Arms served for some time with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps prior to the PPCLI. They were there. The Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps: hon. members who watch MASH would have an understanding of their activities in Korea. The Royal Canadian Dental Corps, the ordinance corps, the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers – and the provost corps, because we found in the army, as some hon. members will recall, that the provost corps maintained jails in the field whereby if you didn't quite do what you were supposed to, you managed to spend some of your holiday time. Finally, which may seem contrary to many people's views, we had the intelligence corps.

They comprised some 27,000 Canadians who served in Korea, and that was just between 1950-53. Canadians were there until 1955, and if one were to add the aggregate, you would have some 30,000 to 33,000.

Now, I don't wish, Mr. Speaker, although this is the Alberta Legislature, to speak in the context of Alberta, although we from Alberta had some 3,000 Albertans over there. I'd rather speak in the context of all of Canada. You see, the Korean veteran organization from Lethbridge, which we have represented in the gallery by Mr. Gordon Brown and Mr. Ken Blampied, the president of the unit in Lethbridge, number 53 – Mr. Colville in the gallery is the president of the unit here in Edmonton, KVA 21. We have as well a Calgary unit, 54; Mr. Badge Franklin is the president. We have some 75 units across Canada to represent those 27,000 Canadians who served in Korea.

All they're asking for, and it's evident in the motion, is simply for the government of Canada to strike a voluntary service medal for those who served in Korea, not unlike what was done in the second war. There was a voluntary service medal struck called the CVSM, the Canadian Voluntary Service Medal, for those Canadians who volunteered to serve abroad in that war. We now see that in spite of the hon. George Hees, the former Minister of Veterans Affairs, a veteran himself and a champion

of the cause, who authorized and struck a lapel pin for Korean veterans, for which the KVA is extremely grateful – I know he didn't feel it was appropriate that we could justify as Canadians or the government of Canada the cost of 25,000 medals that we would present to our veterans. I don't want to get in the issue to quarrel about what the government of Canada wastes in terms of funds or anything else, but it seems to me that it would be perfectly justifiable to see that these veterans of Canada who served in Korea could have struck a medal they I know would wear with pride in representing their government and their country. You see, Mr. Speaker, all those who served in Korea were given the United Nations Service Medal, a series of blue and white stripes, some 17 of them, representing the 17 countries at the time, and the Commonwealth Korea Medal of blue and yellow, which the hon. Sergeant-at-Arms is wearing.

4:00

However, Mr. Speaker, in the second war the government of Canada issued a Voluntary Service Medal. Most countries in the western world did. It's interesting to hear the explanation of the hon. Minister of Veterans Affairs. I don't want to take issue with Mr. Merrithew. He says that the reason the government's not prepared to do this is the following:

The problem with this is that the CVSM was struck for a specific purpose.

This is World War II.

It was designed to distinguish between those who volunteered for service during the Second World War, and those who were conscripted for [the war].

That, Mr. Speaker, is a reason given or an excuse given by the government of Canada for not striking a service medal: because no Canadian was conscripted for Korea. I think that's a very, very weak argument and certainly not one that's acceptable to me.

Mr. Speaker, five years ago this month I had the opportunity to join other veterans in going back to Korea, a place I obviously hadn't seen for some time. I marveled at where that country is today. I visited places like, obviously, Seoul, Yongdungp'o, Panmunjom, where the peace talks are held every day of the year to this day even though the armistice has been signed, and Kap'Yong – I know many of the hon. members in the gallery lost their friends there. How different it is after 35 years.

While I was there, I had the opportunity of going to Pusan, which now has the U.N. cemetery. I had the opportunity of visiting the graves of most of the 516 Canadians buried there. When I think back to the headstones I looked at, Mr. Speaker, the ages on them – 19, some 18, some 20 – I thought to myself: these people paid that price for freedom. How grateful I found the Korean people to be. It was inspiring to me to see the Canadian portion of that United Nations cemetery, which didn't exist when I first went to Pusan on my original trip to Korea. The Korean people, as I say, are extremely grateful, and each day of the year they have elementary schoolchildren tending those graves. How proud I was to see the grade 6 students of various schools in Pusan servicing, putting flowers on, and maintaining the graves of the Canadians. It was a pretty proud time for me.

I just want to conclude with this, Mr. Speaker. It seems to me that it's not asking too much of the government of Canada to recognize some 27,000 Canadians who served in Korea to ensure that Communist aggression was repulsed, that South Korea and the freedom of those people would exist. It's not asking too much either to urge this Assembly to support this motion. It's not asking too much to urge the government of Canada to strike

a medal in recognition of those 27,000 volunteers who served our country, this province and our nation, in Korea.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to express the support of the Leader of the Official Opposition and the rest of the members of the New Democrat caucus for this motion proposed by the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and thank him for what I think were very thorough and thoughtful remarks about the efforts of some 27,000 Canadians who volunteered for service in the Korean War.

This is an issue that I have been lobbied on by a constituent of mine, Mr. Neil Deck, who was proud to serve in the Canadian forces and is, I believe, a gentleman well known to our Sergeant-at-Arms. I noted in my conversation with Mr. Deck that a motion similar to this was proposed and passed by the Ontario Legislature, introduced by, I believe, Mike Farnan, who is now the Solicitor General in the new government in that province. So there is some history here.

I think we're all a little remiss in noting that this *is* perhaps coming 40 years too late, but hopefully this is an historic injustice that can be righted. I hope the member proposing the motion has some opportunity to promote it at the federal level, which is certainly where it's got to occur. I note that he wants to urge them, and hopefully we can be assured there will be people there that will take up this issue and do something with it very quickly. I think it's very appropriate that the people of Canada, through the issuance of the Korea voluntary service medal, express our thanks and appreciation for the 27,000 Canadian men and women who offered their service and some who paid the supreme sacrifice in that war. I think in so doing we want to redouble our efforts as Canadian citizens and parliamentarians alike to seek solutions to the problems that confront the citizens of the world, to do what we as Canadians do best and that is promote peace and understanding with the brothers and sisters in the human family.

I thank the member again for his motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Lloydminster, followed by Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. CHERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I consider it an honour to rise and speak in support of the motion brought forward by my hon. colleague from Lethbridge-West and the elegant way he put his speech forward, going back in time and trying to relive what happened during those days.

Motion 21 urges the government of Canada to strike a distinctive Canadian volunteer Korea medal to be awarded to those Canadians who served in the Korean war from June 25, 1950, to July 27, 1953. During those years 27,000 Canadians, as my colleague from Lethbridge-West, served in Korea. Five hundred and sixteen paid the supreme sacrifice, 1,256 were wounded, and three are still, nearly 40 years later, missing in action.

Mr. Speaker, I was one of those 27,000 who served in Korea. I served with a famous armoured regiment, Lord Strathcona's Horse Armoured Canadians out of Calgary. Speaking with my good friends in the gallery this afternoon between 12:30 and 1:30, I noticed that one other member served there also in the same unit I did. We were there as Canadians, and we were fighting the same cause.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Canadian veterans here today and throughout the nation, I can say with confidence that we considered it an honour to serve our country in this capacity. We served as a unified United Nations force, but I can tell you that we also served as Canadians and were very, very proud that we were Canadians. We volunteered for service because we believed in taking a stand against the North Koreans' aggressive strike on the 38th parallel, and we believed we represented and stood with the vast majority of Canadians on this issue.

4:10

Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of some of our members here today that are younger than my hon. colleague from Lethbridge-West and my good friend the Sergeant-at-Arms and my good friend from Lacombe who served, and also the other members that served in the Armed Forces, I want to go back in time and tell you somewhat about the years '50 to '53, world conditions at the time the Korean conflict began. All fears that the Communists were going to attack the free world were warranted; the leader of the Soviet Union exercised a reign of terror not only in his homeland but also in eastern Europe and in parts of the Far East, Asia. You must remember that World War II was still very fresh in everyone's mind. I might add that as a young fellow at that time, 12 years old, out where I came from in the lower mainland in British Columbia, of course, there were both army units and air force units stationed there. I remember that after school when they went for route marches we would fill in with them and carry their rifles for them. Maybe that was one of the reasons I took a delight in joining the forces.

The Communist aggression and bid for domination in Korea was so blatant that all caucuses in the House of Commons including the CCF urged commitment of Canadian troops at that time. Mr. Speaker, as a result, the Canadian Army Special Force was formed. Canadians landed in Korea in early 1951 and saw their first action fighting at Kap'Yong. It was in this battle that the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, also of Calgary, distinguished itself by holding its position against all odds. This defence prevented North Koreans from overrunning the allied forces. They are the only Canadian unit ever to receive a presidential citation for bravery from the United States of America. Through them all Canadians are honoured.

I might add that when we were in Korea the odds against us were basically in the millions. We were standing there because, if I might say also, at that time the life of a North Korean was not valued at a great amount. So there were large armies facing us. But I want you also to know that with the training the Canadian forces had, we were able to withstand most of the attacks that came in on us.

Mr. Speaker, 40 years later Canadians find it easy to assume that the Korean War was nothing more than a three-year skirmish. They only think of death and destruction and a war that ended in a stalemate without a great victory over the beaten enemy. It seems that people just want to forget about it. In fact, it's often referred to as a forgotten war. It was just last summer that I read an article published in an Vancouver paper that had the headline *The Forgotten War*. Recently we were reminded of the service of the World War I and II veterans on Remembrance Day, and on this day people seldom recognize Canadian veterans who served in the Korean War. Part of the reason for this is that people can attach more meaning to the first two wars: a triumph of good over evil. Both wars can be justified. The Korean War is not so easy to analyze. For some the war is even more difficult to justify now that communism is crumbling all over the world.

However, I think people have to ask themselves whether the drawing of the line in Korea by the free nations wasn't the beginning of the end for communism. Prior to World War II Hitler was allowed to take aggressive action, and after time a major confrontation was inevitable. The result was one of the most costly wars the world has ever seen. If we wouldn't have taken a stand in Korea, would eastern Europeans be participating in free elections today? We must also ask whether South Korea, which Canadians fought to defend, would be an economic power today, moving from authoritarian rule towards democracy, if a stand hadn't been taken. I know that South Korea today is a very, very powerful industrial nation. In gratitude the Seoul government is awarding medals to Korean war veterans. Two other medals have been issued to each Canadian who served in Korea between 1950 and '53. The first medal was issued by the British Commonwealth and the second by the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Korean veterans, I can assure you that this recognition has been appreciated. We were in Korea representing the Commonwealth and the United Nations, but we were also there representing Canada. The government of Canada has recognized the service of veterans of previous wars, but not the Korean War. The Korean War veterans are Canada's last fighting veterans. Recognition should be given not to glorify war but to honour the generosity of spirit that led to sacrifice so that others could experience dignity and freedom. If the government of Canada awarded a Korean War volunteer medal, I would be more than honoured to accept such a medal, not only for my service but also on behalf of those who were killed in action and other veterans who have since passed away without formal recognition from Ottawa.

New Brunswick, Ontario, and British Columbia have already passed motions in their Legislatures urging the federal government to award a volunteer service medal. Out of respect for the dedication and pride that veterans displayed for Canada, I think it's time for Alberta to do the same.

As veterans from the Korean war, we have a slogan: though we are forgotten, we will not forget. That slogan represents some of the frustration Canadian war veterans feel. Motion 21 gives Albertans and Canadians the opportunity to remember and give the recognition all veterans deserve. I urge members of the Assembly to support Motion 21.

MR. SPEAKER: Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to join the other members of the House and assure the House that members of the Liberal caucus and the Liberal leader certainly support this motion put forward by the hon. minister. There's little I can add to such an eloquent speech by hon. minister to begin with. I haven't been moved to tears in this House very often, unless it was laughter by some of the antics of the opposition. I think he's always a great speaker, but in this particular case he outdid himself. Also, I was very impressed with the hon. Member for Lloydminster, who was actually there. I think it must be a great feeling to be able to come out and support a group you were part of.

4:20

All I can add now, Mr. Speaker, is that in this day and age when we are setting records, so to speak, we're doing it with apologies here, there, and other places – maybe doing more – and one of the greatest vacancies or holes has been the recogni-

tion of the Korean veterans, and certainly our party is very much in support. If I would add anything – and I don't want to just repeat – I couldn't help but be moved also by thinking that I visited some of the graves in Korea just two years ago, and just a short while ago I was in Rome where there's a Canadian graveyard where people were shot down, mostly all air force. Seeing the Jewish star and the Christian crosses side by side for people aged 18 and 19 and 20, you wonder: was it worth it all? But then we wouldn't have, as the Member for Lloydminster said so eloquently, what we have today and wouldn't be where we are today if that sacrifice had not been made.

I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, in the years ahead the price for peace will always be eternal vigilance. The rule of law for man is coming closer. I don't think it's here yet. Certainly the people involved in the Korean conflict . . . It was maybe one of the first major police actions. We're going to get smaller actions in the future; I hope they will be smaller. Nevertheless, it was a police action. We all got together. Much of the world got together to try to put down aggression or show that somebody couldn't march on and use force as a method of settling an argument. I'm afraid that we haven't gotten rid of the idea yet on all sides. Our own side sometimes uses force. Sometimes people that we know and love use force. Sometimes people that we don't like use force; then it's always easier to use police force. Nevertheless, until the rule of law is paramount the price for vigilance will be people willing to sacrifice and to represent the country as nobly and as well as the hon. Member for Lloydminster and his cohorts did.

Thanks.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Lacombe.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I stand with a great deal of pride, to be able to stand here in a free society and address this House. But I also stand here with a feeling of shame that Canadians and the Canadian government haven't recognized those who contributed to our being able to stand here in a free society. It's a black mark on the federal government.

For those who say it was a police action, not a real war, I've never been involved in a war. It's easy for them to say it was a police action and not a war. When I look around this House and in the stands, the only ones that know it was a real war and know what a real war is are those that went through it. They know it was a real war. Twenty-seven thousand Canadians volunteered to protect our society. I think it's been touched on today that this was in defense of freedoms that were threatened by the communist totalitarian governments in the world. One of the first actions taken to defend the world was at Korea. It was when we took a stand as freedom-loving people in this world to stop the spread of communism. That was taken in Korea, and part of that was 27,000 Canadians of which 516 gave their lives. That was a war. And we're proud of those people. Even though the Canadian government down in Ottawa doesn't seem to carry that pride, I can assure these veterans here today and those around the country that we are proud of them because we know the sacrifices they made in a real war.

Let's think about sacrifice. It's a nice platitude, you know, to those that have never made many sacrifices. It sounds nice, but it really means nothing; it passes over their heads. But I can tell you that those standing in the stands and those veterans from Korea, any veterans, know what sacrifice is. You don't know what real sacrifice is unless you go through a war. I say that

from firsthand experience. Around here you sit in this House and think as a young person. You leave your home, your family. You're in a foreign land. You're under attack. Only those that have been involved in war will share my feelings, the feelings when the first shell breaks. You know what sacrifice is. You know you're scared, but I don't think one Canadian took one backward step because Canadians have a tradition of bravery and standing up for what is right. You'll know what the true meaning of sacrifice is when you come back, pick up your dead, and work with your casualties, but these people around here that are veterans know that you stepped right on and kept going. You didn't have the day off to mourn or anything else. The next second you were into it. There was no tomorrow, it went on and on. There was no tomorrow, it seemed like it was endless. That is what sacrifice is. But does this Canadian government recognize this sacrifice? It's very unfortunate that they have not recognized it.

Now, we talk about the bravery of the Canadians. I want to go back just a little bit and show you what tradition Canadians have established in the defense of freedom. Let's go to World War I – and it's all history for anybody that's read history – and the famous battle of Vimy Ridge. The allied troops couldn't take Vimy Ridge, but who was to the forefront? The Canadians. They stormed that ridge at a terrific cost. They didn't back up. They made sacrifices. They took it with thousands of casualties and they brought peace. It was a contributing factor to peace in the world at that time.

Let's go to World War II, Ortona. A lot of you younger people won't realize what Ortona was. At Ortona, the east coast of Italy, the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, which we are very proud of, was at the forefront. The British and the other allies had attacked Ortona. The Germans were entrenched and the pride of their units were there. They had been turned back at Ortona until they called the Canadians in. The Loyal Edmonton Regiment went in, and it's history. They were cut to ribbons. They brought in reinforcements, and those that were still standing kept going with reinforcements coming in. They lost two-thirds of their complement, dead, but they took Ortona. Bravery in the defense of this style of life and the freedoms we enjoy today. They made the sacrifice, but none of us seem to recognize that any more.

We come to the Korean War, and I want to talk about the Korean War because that's why we're here today. Now, they accepted that bravely, and that's recognized. As my colleague from Lloydminster said, the Princess Pats, under fierce attack, turned back the enemy who were about to overrun the Allied lines and made a major contribution to stopping the Communist onslaught. They received the presidential citation for bravery, one of the few regiments that ever received that. That shows that these people up here maintained as veterans that tradition of bravery and finishing the job in defence of freedom, yet they aren't recognized by Ottawa. They aren't recognized by Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, and I find that very disgraceful.

4:30

It is unfortunate that we have volunteers who went out there, gave their all, came back to Canada – they never asked to come back as heroes. I never saw a soldier or a sailor or an airman that walked back onto Canadian soil that said, "I'm a hero." They didn't think of themselves as heroes, but what they did think they should have is respect. That's not asking much, and every one of us has a great indebtedness to those 27,000 and

these ones remaining sitting up here today. We are indebted, and they are owed respect. They deserve respect because that's all they ask.

When we say to strike a volunteer service medal, I can only speak from personal experience, Mr. Speaker. I have a volunteer service medal from World War II. That's all I have to show for five years, but I'm very, very proud of it. It means a lot to me. So I know the feeling of this group here, being deprived of some symbol of recognition and respect by Canadians for what they did for the world and for Canadians. A tremendous sacrifice they made, and it's not asking much to give them that respect.

So today I ask all my colleagues in here to give unanimous support to Motion 21, and I'd like to thank my colleague from Lethbridge-West for bringing it forward on behalf of all Korean veterans. I want to tell you I am proud to serve in this House, where we have two of my colleagues Korean veterans and three on our security staff. That includes our Sergeant-at-Arms and two from our security staff who served there. I'm very proud to be here and to consider them my friends and to say to them that I and, I know, everybody in this House respect you. It's unfortunate the federal government doesn't. You did a job. You did it with a great amount of class, you did it with a great amount of sacrifice, and you exhibited a lot of bravery under extreme conditions.

So today we hope that the actions brought about by this motion from the Member for Lethbridge-West will bring results and finally, come 37 years later, will show respect to 27,000 very honourable, very brave, very respectable citizens who have long gone without any recognition.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to have the opportunity of closing debate on this motion. I want to say how grateful I am to the hon. members who participated: the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, the Member for Vegreville, my colleague from Lloydminster, and the hon. Member for Lacombe.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that this is not the end of this motion, that perhaps, sir, with your permission, if this motion is carried, it can be suitably forwarded to the proper authorities, the Canadian government, to take some action on it. There are some 600,000 Canadians who are members of the Royal Canadian Legion and there are thousands of members of the army, navy, and air force association of Canada who I know join with me in supporting the objectives of the Korea Veterans Association to see that they get their just due. I would think that with the support of hon. members of this House, we can stand very proud, not only for what the veterans of Korea from this province have done but for the Korean veterans from all of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you, sir, and I thank members of the House for supporting this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Having had the opportunity to visit war graves from both the first and second world wars in Europe and some in Canada and also having visited the graves of some of the Canadians who died in Korea, I have listened with a great deal of attention, as have all members in the House, and I take the unusual step of thanking all members for participating in this debate in such a sincere and emotional manner.

All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Let the record show the motion passes unanimously.

The Chair would do the unusual thing of saying this: is it the wish of the House that the Chair forward the appropriately embossed resolution together with the record of the debate to the Speaker of the House of Commons, to the Prime Minister, and to the Minister of National Defence?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried; let the record show unanimously.

Finally, to those who did visit Korea under other circumstances, perhaps there's one phrase that you might have picked up along the way. It's the only phrase that I picked up when I went to Korea. [remarks in Korean]

### Electoral Boundaries

20. Moved by Mr. Horsman:

Be it resolved that the report and recommendations contained therein presented to the Assembly on November 26, 1990, by the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries, appointed pursuant to Motion 14 passed by this Assembly on August 15, 1989, be now received and concurred in.

Moved by Mr. Bruseker that the motion be amended by striking out "be now received and concurred in" and substituting "be now received and that recommendations A, E(1), E(2), E(4), and G be concurred in."

[Adjourned debate on the amendment November 27: Mrs. Black]

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to stand up, and first of all, as a younger generation I'd like to thank the hon. members for what they did for our generation so that we could stand here.

I stand today to speak to the amendment to Motion 20 as presented by the Member for Calgary-North West. I had the evening to think about the amendment, and I was a little dismayed that a committee could work together for approximately 14 or 15 months, go through probably the most extensive hearings process that this province has ever had, reach consensus on a number of issues, and vote and reach support on a number of recommendations, only to have a member stand up and basically eliminate the majority of the report that was filed by the committee. I find that absolutely amazing.

In fact, I'd like to look at the portions that the Member for Calgary-North West would like to eliminate from the report. The first recommendation that he wants to have removed is recommendation B, which states:

The basis [for redistribution, that is] shall be total population using the most recent federal census statistics when the Electoral Boundaries Commission is formed.

And then in brackets:

(for present purposes this means using the 1986 census results).

Last evening, Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the committee made mention and recognition that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Belmont had, very early in our process, brought forward the idea of looking at population. In fact, he commended the member for bringing this up. The committee then reviewed other jurisdictions and realized that the majority of the jurisdictions do in fact use population numbers as opposed to enumerated

voters, feeling that we do in fact represent all of the people, not just those people who appear on a voters list.

4:40

We deliberated over this extensively and in fact had comment made through our public hearings process. Our concern was that if in fact we were to change from enumerated voters to full population, what was the best vehicle available to us to make this change? We went through extensive discussions, and through consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer of the province, whom we had the privilege to have serve ex officio on our committee, it was determined that the only available vehicle would be, in fact, the federal census. We then had some concern that the only federal census that would be available at this time would be the 1986 federal census, because the 1991 federal census would not be available to our Chief Electoral Officer and the commission until 1992.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

With that information in hand, Mr. Speaker, on October 23 in the deliberations of the committee, on page 923 of the *Hansard* of that day, the Member for Edmonton-Highlands moved that "population statistics for . . . deciding numbers of people per riding as opposed to number of electors per riding" be used. The chairman asked if she meant "the most recent federal census figures," and she replied positively. The chairman called for the question, and the vote was carried unanimously.

Now the Member for Calgary-North West has changed his mind, and I'm in a little bit of a dilemma. I understood that each member had been appointed to this committee to represent their party. We had made it perfectly clear through our proceedings, Mr. Speaker, that we would have ample time after we had reached some items of consensus to consult confidentially with our own people and then come back. In fact, our chairman indicated on several occasions that even though we may have reached consensus within our committee, we still had the opportunity when the question was presented to change our minds. In that period of time there was no indication that population and the 1986 census numbers were not going to be appropriate, and in fact the motion was carried unanimously with all members present. So I'm at a loss on that one.

Then we flip down to recommendation D, the composition of the commission. As you can well imagine, when you're making a major change in legislation, there's a tremendous amount of deliberation that takes place. In fact, if you review the report, in the back the deliberations of the committee are listed, and the options that were presented by committee members on the commission are listed on page 66. It was unanimous in our committee that we all felt that Members of the Legislative Assembly should not serve on the commission. We felt that it was important to have the public involved in the commission, and we did not want political partisanship shown as being membership on this committee. We debated back and forth. There were compromises made. The Member for Edmonton-Belmont is laughing. Actually, he and I were at other ends of the spectrum and decided to compromise. But we came to a tentative agreement.

We felt it was important, first of all, that the Chief Electoral Officer should serve as a member of the commission. He certainly had the experience and the expertise and could be most valuable to any commission. He had also been ex officio with our committee and therefore had been involved in listening to the public hearing presentations. We also agreed that a judge



or a retired judge appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council would be a natural for the committee, and two citizens at large, one appointed by the Premier and one by the Leader of the Official Opposition in consultation with the other party. We also agreed, Mr. Speaker, that at least two of the five members should be from Alberta cities and at least two should be from outside Alberta cities. We felt that that was important so that all of Alberta would have fair representation on the commission.

When I got into the Blues from last night, which I know are unofficial, I was a little surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. Member for Calgary-North West would not accept this recommendation when the committee had gone out of their way to be fair to all of Alberta and to even suggest that we have representation from all of Alberta on this commission. He indicated that the Tories would have three positions to appoint, showing partisanship in the selection. Now, I don't know whether he was referring to the judge or the Chief Electoral Officer, coupled with the two citizens to be nominated by the Premier through the Speaker. I would hope that he was not indicating that the judicial system in Alberta operates on a partisan basis, because I think their oath that they take is very strict, that they are not allowed to operate on a partisan basis in this province. I believe the same applies to the Chief Electoral Officer, that he represents all people in this province and would not be partisan at all. So I don't know where the Member for Calgary-North West would find the third person. I'm at a loss on that as well. He seems to have changed his mind and flipped from one item to another item, and I don't really know where he's coming from.

MR. WICKMAN: From his caucus, Pat.

MRS. BLACK: Well, maybe that's reflective of the caucus and the member for . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Whitemud.

MRS. BLACK: Edmonton-Whitemud. Thank you.

The other thing I was quite interested in, Mr. Speaker, was recommendation E, Instructions to the Commission. Now, the hon. member would like to leave in sub 1 and sub 2. However, he wants to strike out 3, which says:

The commission shall, after considering any representations to it and within nine months of the date on which the commission is struck, submit to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly a report which shall delineate the boundaries of the proposed electoral divisions.

Now, again we had the benefit of the Chief Electoral Officer, ex officio on our committee, and we spent a tremendous amount of time deliberating this, because again all members of the committee felt it was important to have this process proceed as quickly as possible because of the effect that it has on the people and the effect that it has on MLAs.

4:50

So we had a consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer, and our recommendation was taking three months off the normal time frame that has been in our legislation. We discussed it back and forth, and in fact we called in the Chief Electoral Officer for consultation. We asked him if we could shorten it further, and his advice to us through his experience of going through this process before, which none of us had, was that he could only shorten it to the nine months, that if we took any further time away from him, it would not allow the commission to do their job effectively and efficiently. In fact, I will quote

from the October 24 *Hansard*, where the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Ledgerwood, commented. We had asked him to cut it down, and he responded:

I think you'd have difficulty in completing the public hearings and bringing a report in four months.

This was in response to a question I had asked. Edmonton-Highlands then asked:

So if you went with eight [months] and six [months], would that help?"

Mr. Ledgerwood responded:

I think eight and six would help, with the understanding that the commission would work very hard to complete the interim report in less than eight months if possible.

Well, as the discussion continued on, there was concern with the timing, that this legislation was coming forward, that in all fairness and on his advice the commission have nine months to report to the Legislative Assembly with an interim report, and that six months would be allowed until the final report. I don't know whether the hon. member had left for coffee or just wasn't prepared to listen, but certainly there was no misunderstanding on the part of the other members of the committee that we could shorten that time frame any further.

Then we get into item F, the length between redistributions. I think we get into a situation where we recommended that the length between redistributions "shall be after every second election but not less than every eight years." And we added another sentence in that recommendation which I think is very important.

The Chief Electoral Officer shall report, following each Canadian Census, any variation outside the + or - 25% range.

We put that in because we were concerned over using 1986 census data. We were concerned that there may be shifts, and there is a responsibility in the Chief Electoral Officer's annual report to report things to the Legislature. We make the regulations and the legislation in here. We expect him to report to the Legislature any major shifts. We batted this one around, and again the deliberations and the options are listed in the report at the back.

We felt that because of the recent events in Manitoba, where there were two elections held in 20 months, under our present legislation in a 20-month period we could be going through a full-blown redistribution all over again. Now, this isn't something you do because you have nothing else to do or because you want to go out on public hearing processes. This is a very serious situation to be addressed by any Legislature because of the emotion, the trauma, the change, and the anticipation that is out in the public eye. But there's also another element that has to be looked at, and that's the cost. Yesterday the hon. member reported that the cost was in the range of \$65,000. Well, he forgot to mention that that was only the cost for the commission, which did not include the salaries of the members. It was only the direct fees that were paid out of the Chief Electoral Officer's office. In fact, the cost of the last redistribution in order that we were ready to go for the general election, which I thought was the intent of this, was over \$3 million. So I think that's a factor, and to have \$3 million-plus to be added potentially every two or three years or whatever it may be is a factor that must be considered, and I think it would be negligent of us not to consider that.

I think it's also important to note from last night's discussion – and again I'll refer to the Blues, because it was a bit of a blues story – I was surprised to hear that the hon. member made statements such as when he was speaking to using 1986 census data. He sums it up by saying that this is all wrong. He says:

Therefore, I would suggest that using data that is that old is simply not responsible, it is not leadership, and it is not appropriate for this province.

And then he ends it. He didn't say what he wanted us to use. He didn't come forward with an alternative. He just was agin, and he's been agin and agin and agin all the way through this process. We don't know what he wants because one day he votes for that and then he's agin, but we don't know what it is that he's agin or for. It's been a very difficult procedure, let me tell you.

Then we get over a little further, and he talks about the members that are going to be appointed to the commission. This is on the commission:

We're going to have essentially three members appointed by the government party, and that's a problem. He didn't say who he wanted appointed. I think the biggest problem is that the Liberal Party didn't get to pick a member of the commission all by themselves, so they're sulking and pouting over there in the corner. In fact, our good friends next door here agreed to consult with them on the selection of their member, which they didn't have to do. They're the Official Opposition, not the third party. It's high time they learned that.

Then we get into the time frame, and he talks about:

But if we have a hearings process, nine months, I would suggest, is an inappropriate length of time.

So if nine months is inappropriate, after consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer, what is appropriate? You keep forgetting to mention that. At one point in the committee discussions you had us down to two months. They couldn't even drive from one end of the province to the other in two months. However, he didn't really care about that. You know, we listened to the experts, we listened to the people that had been through this process, and we talked about it. We had to make some concessions on all sides, and we came up with some ideas.

5:00

Well, I left probably the one that I find most disturbing to the last, item C, the percentage variance formula, and this defines the plus or minus 25 percent. This is the type of thing we had to deal with: last night the hon. member stood in the House, and in response, I believe, to the Member for Red Deer-North, to his speech, he says:

I have to question the bogeyman that it seems the members opposite that have spoken regarding the American system keep referring to.

And he says:

I don't recall anyone saying that we're going to advocate one person, one vote. I know that I certainly never have advocated such an event and certainly do not do so now.

Then you flip the page — oh, gosh; we must be three minutes later — and he's referring to Calgary and Edmonton, and he says:

Edmonton and Calgary, those two cities hold 51 percent of the population in the province. Now, it's true that that number has remained relatively constant over the last number of years, but they only have 43 percent of the MLAs currently represented in this Legislature. That is admittedly an improvement, but we still have a long ways to go to get to 51 percent of the population having 51 percent of the representation.

Now, for a former math teacher, 51 to 51 is 1 to 1, unless there's new math again; I don't know. So again we don't know where you stand. Either you want 1 to 1 or a variance, but nobody knows because you didn't follow through to say, so we were left in limbo again.

Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, I look at this report in that area, and I wanted to get in on this because people throughout

this province, through 39 public hearings, told us that certainly we had to look at the Constitution. There's no question on that; our country is governed by constitutional law. We had to look at the McLachlin case — and my colleague from Red Deer-North went into that last night — which allowed clearly for a variance of plus/minus 25 percent. But we also had to look at other things. I know it's going to be dramatic, but we had to look at reality. That's something that's difficult, because reality tells you that there are transportation problems, there are distances, there are community interests, there are variances and disparities and regional interests throughout this province that must be recognized. Historically we have done that. Calgary and Edmonton combined in 1971 had 51 percent of the population in this province with 38 percent of the MLAs. Today, 1990, we have 51 percent of the population and 43 percent of the MLAs, clearly a move in a positive direction. You also have to look at the reality that we in this province have traditionally and historically recognized our regions. That was one thing that Justice McLachlin said, that you must consider the traditions, the history, and the cultural interests within the regions and the province. We have done that.

Last year in this province in response to a historical cry that Albertans have made — I don't remember them not making it, quite frankly, sir. But for at least 20 years Albertans have been crying about the lack of regional representation in Ottawa. My grandfather talked about it, my father talked about it, and I'm hearing it still at the door. We yelled loud and clear that a foul existed. In fact, citizens like Bert Brown created the triple E Senate concept, and we're proud of it. Last year Alberta, in response and trying to pressure the federal government to recognize Senate reform, put forward the Senatorial Selection Act, and we elected the first Senator in this country from Alberta. Over 600,000 Albertans participated in that election.

Now, if there's room for regional representation from Alberta on the federal scene, surely to goodness there's some room for regional representation in this very Legislature. If there isn't, there's something wrong, and I would question the leaders of the opposition, both parties, who made comments on this report in the press without even reading it, which I think is disgraceful. To make comments on a standing committee report — I would question them on what their position is on a triple E Senate. I think they have to stand up and say what it is now so Albertans know where they stand, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this report in its entirety is a result of what the people said. It's reality, it's fair, it's practical, it's logical, and it's workable. It is constitutionally right. It's right for Alberta, and anybody that tells you it isn't is not looking at what makes up Alberta. It complies with all the rules and regulations. We're recommending it be reviewed by the judicial system in this province. I feel that confident about this report that I would question anybody who says this report is not fair and representative of what the people want in Alberta.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to make a few brief remarks on the subject of this report and the amendment that's before the Assembly at the present time, because I don't believe that this is the final word. To date the government has not yet introduced legislation incorporating the recommendations of this report, and the legislation, if and when such is passed, has

not yet cleared the challenge of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. So we're at an interim phase in the electoral process.

I think there are a few remarks that should be put on the record, though. First of all, with regard to the suggestion that this committee operated on the basis of consensus, I don't believe that that *modus operandi* is reflected in the outcome of the report regardless of how the committee may have conducted its business throughout, because to my knowledge at least one minority report has been published to date. I don't believe the Liberal Party has published a minority report. I don't know that they plan to do so or they don't plan to do so, but it is my understanding that no consensus emerged from the committee.

It's also my understanding that this committee was struck primarily to examine

the appropriateness of the provisions of the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act

with regard to

the implications of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms for electoral boundaries and distribution of constituencies.

This, I submit, Mr. Speaker, is going to be the undoing of this report and possibly the undoing of any subsequent follow-up action that the government may take, not that they necessarily think that's a bad outcome. In fact, I think the government has probably taken that strategically into their thinking as they proceed with this matter.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

But it is the case that the Attorney General of the province of Alberta, in bringing this motion before the Assembly, expressed the fear that Alberta's electoral boundaries may not withstand a Charter challenge. I believe he did so based on sound reason and logic. I believe he did so based on the instruction that this Assembly has previously given to electoral boundaries commissions, which in effect tied the hands of every commission to date and told them what they should do to the extent that they had to produce an electoral map which was distorted by its very nature, that that was in the terms of reference. It was done so on the basis of designating certain ridings as being – well, in fact, putting a quota on Edmonton and Calgary, on the various urban municipalities throughout the province of Alberta, in saying that in that urban basket there shall be X number of seats and in the rural basket the balance, which was essentially 50-50, given the boundaries that we have right now. The Attorney General expressed the concern that that way of doing business may offend the Charter of Rights and Freedoms inasmuch as the Charter guarantees a measure of equality for every citizen.

5:10

Now, this committee went about its business throughout the province of Alberta, heard a lot of submissions, spent a very sizable sum of money, and came back with a report that suggests that we have not – they no longer name the ridings, name the cities, name the number of seats that shall go in quota to the various cities. Rather, they refer to single municipality districts and multiple municipality districts, as if that made any difference, Mr. Speaker. It's the same thing in other language. I think that if you go before any court and you take a category that you understand to be unlawful and you give it a different name, I don't know how long the courts are going to be fooled by that. I don't believe that for very long at all the provisions of this report, were they to be proposed by the government in legislation and were that legislation to be passed, would survive a Charter challenge. I submit that probably means that the question of the appropriateness of the distribution of seats in

the province of Alberta from a Charter point of view played a relatively minor role in the deliberation of the majority in the committee and in the findings that we have.

So I think we have the basis for issuing a fairly clear warning to the government that if they proceed with this, they proceed with the possibility that the foundation of the distribution of seats may not survive a Charter challenge. Now, when I say that, I think that that wouldn't really bother the government. If their strategic objective were to maintain the status quo or something like it, I think they would be as equally happy if this formula were thrown out as if they did absolutely nothing, because it would amount to the same thing. It becomes like a game of chess: who's going to force the issue; who's going to make changes in electoral distribution of boundaries? I think the answer is that the cards are all in the hands of the government when they deal with an issue and deal with it in the fashion that they have.

It's interesting to me that when the government of the day, the Progressive Conservatives, was in opposition, it had a much different view of how electoral boundaries should be struck. In fact, you go as far back as April of 1969 when this government was in opposition and the then Social Credit government came forward with a formula for distribution of seats. What did the opposition say? The Conservative minority issued a minority report at that time – surprise, surprise – and they said that

the redistribution formula may in fact be unworkable in practice. It did not "effect a general redistribution but resulted in only a piecemeal, adding-on of constituencies."

On principle, the Tory report said, all ridings should be roughly equal in voter population...

I add that that's perhaps a fairly progressive point of view which they had when they were in opposition, but it goes on:

... with a 25 percent ceiling and floor on either side of the average Figure to allow for the variables of sparse population, communications and community of interests.

I'm quoting from the *Edmonton Journal* of February 11, 1969.

What would you say about a government that said one thing in opposition and quite another thing when they're in government? I hate to speculate without having *Beauchesne* in front of me, but it seems to me that we have an instance of saying one thing in opposition and another thing in government. Perhaps the variation between what's being said in opposition and government has more to do with the desire of certain members to maintain their career paths than it has anything to do with fair distribution of seats in this Assembly or fairness to Albertans throughout the province.

I believe that this report fails to take account of Justice McLachlin's clear warning that you could look at 25 percent at the outside but not 50 percent, and 50 percent is what we've got in this report today. Fifty percent, while it's certainly better than what we have today – there are a number of ridings throughout the province that have one-third the number of voters as the one that I represent, and that kind of thing goes on today. Well, now we're going to have double, and the suggestion by the majority will be that that's something that can be justified on the basis of a number of factors that they've listed. Well, when they were in opposition, they recognized the factors that were listed. The opposition today recognizes the factors that were listed. That's what the 25 percent is for. That's not what the 50 percent is for, and I think there's some confusion on that. I don't believe that any constitutional authority has come forward and said that 50 percent is acceptable with regard to questions of community, of sparsity and density of population, and the rest of it. In fact, there are numerous ways in which this Assembly

supports the work of members representing sparsely populated ridings.

I believe the government is playing with fire when it raises the rural/urban axes, politically, in support of this type of proposition. I think it's very, very dangerous to try to drive a wedge, a gulf, between the urban and rural residents of our province for the purpose of preserving a certain number of seats, for the purpose of preserving something that looks, feels, and tastes very much like the status quo. Because I think in doing that, creating those divisions, making them a part of the political debate of the province, they are playing with fire, and I'll leave it at that.

As to the actual terms of the amendment, in common with the previous speaker I feel that perhaps the Liberal Party could give us some idea of what in their estimation might be fair. As I puzzle through the amendment, it leaves us with very little indeed for the money and the time that was spent on this report. It leaves us with 83 electoral divisions, it leaves us with the idea of having some instructions to a commission and some other recommendations, but it leaves us without a commission. Now, if we don't have a commission, how are we going to get new boundaries? There's no commission whatsoever if the Liberal amendment were passed, so I think there are some problems with that. But I think there are even more serious problems with the report, and I hope that the government will not proceed with the next steps, in terms of implementing these measures.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise to speak against the amendment to Motion 20. During the 39 hearings we held in the past year and a half, we heard Albertans asking for a fair system for all Albertans. Motion 20 will provide a process that will allow for the development of a fair system for all Albertans, rural and urban.

Some of the considerations given in the development of this process are in the example of rural ridings. Consideration was given to the distance from the Legislature, geographic area – an example of this is my riding; the Athabasca-Lac La Biche constituency has close to 29,000 square kilometres – the number of municipalities served, school boards, chambers of commerce, economic development councils, further education councils, Metis settlements, Indian reserves, land claims. Diversity of the ridings also was considered. For example, some of our ridings include issues in the forestry area, major projects in agriculture, tourism, the oil and gas industry, and in a lot of areas, too many areas, very, very high unemployment and welfare and poverty. As a member that has dealt with the poverty issue most of my life and deals with it on an ongoing basis today, I know Motion 20, if it moves forward as proposed by this committee, will go a long way towards dealing with the poverty issues, because we will have a fair system for all Albertans.

5:20

MR. SPEAKER: On the Electoral Boundaries Commission amendment, please, sir.

MR. CARDINAL: Now, if the amendment to Motion 20 as proposed by the Liberals is followed, then we will not be able to have a fair system for all Albertans. I'll go on in the comparisons. The urban riding of Edmonton-Whitemud, for example, has over 30,000 voters, but geographically it's very, very small. Distance from the capital city: basically it's right next door. The standard of living in a riding like that as compared

to other constituencies is considerably different. The unemployment rate in that particular riding is different than in a lot of other ridings.

### Speaker's Ruling Relevance

MR. SPEAKER: Forgive me, hon. member. We all have great sympathy with those issues in your constituency, but you've got to come back to this issue, which is the Electoral Boundaries Commission and the amendment.

### Debate Continued

MR. CARDINAL: Speaking again to the amendment to Motion 20, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to touch on a couple of important issues, because if we do amend Motion 20 as proposed by our committee, we will not be able to provide a fair representation to all parts of the province. That is why I speak of the differences between ridings.

I will continue just briefly to outline how accessible MLAs and ministers are in the urban centres. For an example, access to ministers' offices, to the deputy ministers, the assistant deputy ministers, and the ministers is a lot different than what we have in other parts of Alberta. Therefore, Motion 20 as proposed by our committee I believe should move forward without any further amendment.

I'll just briefly touch again on a couple of other issues, because if we do amend Motion 20 as proposed, we will not be able to deal with issues that are outlined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. For an example, under equality rights, item 15(1) indicates: "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit . . ." It does not say one person, one vote anywhere. Under (2), equalization and regional disparities indicate that the government of Canada and the provincial governments are committed to promoting equal opportunities for the well-being of all Canadians, furthering economic development to reduce disparities in opportunities and provide essential public services of reasonable quality to all Canadians. I feel Motion 20 contains the necessary tools for this Legislature to put a process in place that will deal with those issues. The amendment proposed would only delay the process and would not allow this Legislature to continue in dealing with this issue effectively.

Mr. Speaker, due to the time I would like to ask adjournment of debate on this one.

MR. SPEAKER: There's a motion to adjourn debate. All those in favour, please say aye. The motion fails. Nobody voted in favour of the motion for adjournment.

The Chair will now recognize Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, I would move we call the question on the amendment.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: There's a call for the question with respect to the amendment.

[Motion on amendment lost]

MR. SPEAKER: Back to the original motion, the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a few comments on this report and in regard to this amendment.

I'm quite amazed at the failure to recognize the lightness of one person, one vote. It is also in our history to know that there are mediating factors: geographic factors, sparsity of population. But I think we need to recognize that throughout this province – and all members of this Legislature surely are not so narrow minded as to accept poverty in another person's constituency. Surely we all come together here to create a society that provides for the well-being of all Albertans; we don't come here to pit one region against another region. Surely we should have a government that looks to the whole of this province, and we should have Members of this Legislative Assembly that represent their constituents in the context of the well-being of the whole province, and we don't have this regionalization and the suggestion that I, because I am an urban member, cannot understand the needs of rural people in this province, given my history of growing up in rural Alberta. I find it totally unacceptable that we would pit region against region, interest against region, and then rationalize it in the name of geography or sparsity of population. Our history has said that one vote, one person cannot work, but history . . .

**Point of Order  
Relevance**

MR. DAY: Point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Order please. We have a point of order.

MR. DAY: Correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Speaker. I believe I heard the member preface her remarks by saying she was speaking to the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, hopefully . . . [interjections] No; order, hon. members. Order. I'm sure the member is now aware, and

probably it was just a slip of the lip, which often occurs for all of us here.

On the main motion, hon. member.

**Debate Continued**

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, our history has dictated that we have to take into account great geographical distances, but technology has changed the world that we live in. It was much more difficult to travel through a large constituency in a horse and carriage than it is in a car on paved highways. We have telephones and means of communication that were not part of our history. I think we recognize the difficulties in communicating and reaching our constituents in both large geographical constituencies as well as large population constituencies. At the present time we have mechanisms in place to deal with the large population. Maybe instead of saying we're going to skew the commitment to one person, one vote, we should start to look to mechanisms that will allow the member who represents a large geographical constituency to have the kind of supports that will allow that person to reach out to his constituents.

In view of the time I would beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. [interjections] Order. Motion to adjourn the debate. Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. BRASSARD: Mr. Speaker, the government business of tomorrow will be the committee study of Bill 52, the Natural Resources Conservation Board Act.

[At 5:29 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]

