

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Wednesday, December 5, 1990 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 90/12/05

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

### Prayers

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Lord, renew us with Your strength, focus us in our deliberations, challenge us in our service of the people of this great province and country.

Amen.

CLERK: Introduction of Visitors. Presenting Petitions. Reading and Receiving Petitions.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, in view of the distraction yesterday, I wonder if we could have the petition on public transit from Red Deer read.

MR. SPEAKER: I think that's next. Forgive me, hon. members of the House, and in particular Edmonton-Jasper Place. Perhaps we could come back to Presenting Petitions.

The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

### head: Presenting Petitions

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to present a petition with over 600 signatures from the residents of the town and district of Westlock requesting

the Legislative Assembly to urge the government of Alberta to move ahead with the construction of the new Immaculata Hospital, as swiftly as possible as the land has already been acquired.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

### head: Reading and Receiving Petitions

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Clerk could read the petition from Red Deer that I tabled yesterday.

CLERK:

We the undersigned hereby ask the Alberta Legislative Assembly to increase support for public transit policy.

### head: Notices of Motions

MR. PASHAK: I would like to indicate my intention under Standing Order 40 to rise immediately following Oral Question Period and move the following:

Be it resolved that this Assembly transmit to the government of Canada our strenuous objection to the \$100 million budget cuts to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which have resulted in the closure of 10 regional CBC outlets, including Calgary CBC operations effective today, causing the loss of over a hundred jobs and severing vital communication links in southern Alberta, and our call for reinstatement of full operational funding for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

MR. SPEAKER: Additional Standing Order 40s? Thank you.

### head: Introduction of Bills

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

## Bill 287

### An Act to Provide for Elected Representation on Post-Secondary Educational Institute Boards

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to members today Bill 287, An Act to Provide for Elected Representation on Post-Secondary Educational Institute Boards.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very innovative bit of legislation. It would put an end to the appointment by patronage system of boards of governors for colleges, universities, and technical institutions and, lo and behold, even in the modern 1990s allow for democratic election to those boards.

[Leave granted; Bill 287 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-McKnight.

## Bill 252

### An Act to Amend the Universities Act

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 252, An Act to Amend the Universities Act.

This Bill will define the ancillary fees that may be established by the province's universities. This would eliminate the ability of universities to circumvent the limits placed on fees for instruction.

[Leave granted; Bill 252 read a first time]

### head: Tabling Returns and Reports

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table four copies of the 1989-90 annual report of the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual report of the Public Service Commissioner covering the year ended March 31, 1989.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual report of the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission for the year ended March 31, 1990. I would like to mention that the report is done on recycled paper.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Assembly letters from several physicians in north and central Alberta pertaining to the need to press ahead with the funding for the Royal Alexandra redevelopment, one such letter from as far away as Lloydminster, as well as a similar letter from the mayor of the city of Edmonton.

### head: Introduction of Special Guests

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, in the members' gallery this afternoon we have five very highly respected members of the Vietnamese community, three of them from Calgary, and they are joined by two members from Edmonton. I'd like to introduce them to you, and then after I've introduced them, I'll ask them to stand and receive the acknowledgement of the House. Today we have Mr. Tom Truong, who is president of the Vietnamese seniors association in Calgary; Mr. Tran Van Truy is director of the Vietnamese Catholic church in Calgary; Mr. Vu Duc Dinh is the counselor to seniors for the Vietnamese association in Calgary, Mr. Le Van Dao is president of the Vietnamese Canadian Association, Edmonton chapter; and Mrs.

Nguyen Nguon is co-ordinator of the Vietnamese Association of Edmonton. They are also accompanied today, Mr. Speaker, by Ann Wilson, who is executive director of the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society. I'd ask them to stand and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased today to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly five leaders of the Alberta Hispanic community. They are sitting in the members' gallery. My Spanish is very limited, so all I can say is *amigos*. [interjection] I tried.

We have with us Mr. Felix Mora. He's the national president of the Canadian Hispanic Congress. We have the national secretary of the Canadian Hispanic Congress, Nelly Arboleda; a member from Calgary, Sergio Chacon; the national treasurer of the Canadian Hispanic Congress, Nestor Torres; and a member from the provincial chapter in Edmonton, Hernan Quinteros. They're in the members' gallery, and I'd like them to rise and receive the warm traditional welcome of the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: Stony Plain.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very honoured to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly three very distinguished guests who are seated in the public gallery. They are from southern Saskatchewan. I'd ask them to stand as I call out their names. Mr. Herman Blind is a school trustee for Last Mountain school division No. 29. He is also the counselor for Gordon band No. 86, and an aide-de-camp to the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan. The next gentleman is Don Schindelka, the director of education for the Last Mountain school division No. 29, and Tony Sparvier is the director of education for the Touchwood-File Hills-Qu'Appelle Tribal Council. I'd ask the Assembly to give them the traditional warm welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Mill Woods.

2:40

MR. GIBEAULT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to make two introductions today. The first one is a visitor from El Salvador. She is Susana Rodriguez, the secretary of women's affairs for the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers, or FENASTRAS by its Spanish acronym. She's accompanied by her associate Gladis Molina. I'd ask them to stand now in the gallery and receive our warm welcome.

Mr. Speaker, it also pleases me to be able to introduce today a dynamic group of young students from John Paul I elementary school in the constituency of Edmonton-Mill Woods. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Gerry Thiell. I'd ask them now to stand in the gallery and receive our very warm applause.

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

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly 40 students from St. Martha school in the constituency of Edmonton-Meadowlark. I was asked by one of the young women in the class to underline that they are 40 "smart" students from St. Martha school, and knowing them as I do, I can confirm that that is in fact the case. They are accompanied today by Vince Isaac and Hugh Esch, their teachers, and I would

ask that they rise in the gallery and receive the welcome of the members of the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to the Legislature 14 very energetic and bright students from the Alexander Indian reserve attending the Kipohtakaw education centre. They are in the public gallery, and they are accompanied by teachers and parents Laura Okemaw, Bertha Laboucan, and Arthur Arcand. Would they rise and get the traditional welcome of the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Recreation and Parks, followed by the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

DR. WEST: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and to the Members of the Legislative Assembly 29 grade 10 students from Sedgewick Central high school in the constituency of Vermilion-Viking. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Greg Martin, who has shown tremendous dedication over the years in bringing students to this Assembly so they can witness parliamentary democracy in effect. I would like them to stand in the members' gallery and receive the warm and cordial welcome of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway, followed by Calgary-Bow.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you 13 of the English as a Second Language students from the Alberta Vocational Centre, the Winnifred Stewart campus, in my riding. They are accompanied by their teacher Shel Montgomery, and I ask them to now rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. B. LAING: Mr. Speaker, each year the Alberta branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, in co-operation with the Department of Education, sponsors the parliamentary essay contest. The aim of the contest is to encourage a greater awareness of parliament and the parliamentary system. This year's first prize winner is Kathleen Renne from Calgary-Bow. Today Kathleen was honoured for her achievement. Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is Kathleen, accompanied by her parents Thomas and Janice Renne and her sister Colleen. Would they please rise to receive the warm welcome of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am pleased to announce that Roberta Shepherd from Grande Prairie received the second prize for the 1990 parliamentary essay contest, and today Roberta's achievements were recognized with a special ceremony in the Legislature Building. Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is Roberta, accompanied by her parents Larry and Sheila Shepherd of Grande Prairie. Would they please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

## head: Oral Question Period

### Health Care System

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health. Between the years 1983 and '86 this government allowed extra

billing, but because of the federal government's Canada Health Act, which set out criteria for federal/provincial cost sharing of health care, this attack on Albertans was stopped. Today finance ministers are in Winnipeg to discuss revisions to federal/provincial cost-sharing agreements, including a proposal by B.C.'s finance minister to eliminate federal involvement in administering health care for Canadians. They have a fancy code word, a right-wing word: "disentanglement." The dominant theme of this proposal is that national standards are expensive and should be removed. My question is simply this: will the minister take this opportunity to denounce this policy of disentanglement as advocated by the B.C. government?

MS BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that in the two questions which ensue we will get into what in fact the paper is about, but let me say to all members of this House and all Albertans that this Minister of Health, this, coincidentally, Acting Provincial Treasurer, and this government remain firmly and unequivocally committed to the principles which underlie our system of health care in Canada.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I know what's in the paper; I have it in front of me. If the minister has read it, she would know that this is a frontal attack on medicare. My question again: rather than talk about generalities, will she take the opportunity to dissociate herself from this paper and say that at no opportunity in the future will she ever advocate what the B.C. finance minister is proposing here?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that I speak to this issue in the context of other ministers across Canada. I can assure Albertans and members of this House that ministers of health are all firmly committed to a national health care system. What we are concerned about and what the paper does address is a situation where tax dollars are diverted by the federal government away from our precious health and education systems, as occurred this year, 1990-91, yet the provinces are left with the responsibility to make up for that change in priorities by the federal government. That is the issue that is being addressed by the provincial treasurers and the finance ministers, and I support them in addressing that issue.

MR. MARTIN: It's not Canadians' fault that they elected a Conservative government federally, Mr. Speaker. [interjections]  
My question. Clearly, there is a thrust to this to get into the finances, of getting out of the medicare system and not spending that money on medicare. I want to ask the minister: does she agree with our Provincial Treasurer that they'd rather have provincial tax points and that they would allow the federal government to withdraw from funding? Is that what she's saying?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, the proposal that is being discussed would be to take from the federal government the tax points they use to make cash transfers to the provinces and preserve them so that there is no further erosion, no taking away from those dollars dedicated to health in Canada. That is the issue. The issue of disentanglement is one that is addressed within the paper, and it speaks to, and I quote, "a better, more visible link between the revenues raised by governments, and the programs and services these revenues fund." That's what the paper is about. But let me repeat and let me reassure Albertans and every member of this House that the issue is our unequivocal

commitment to the system of health care that exists in Canada.

MR. MARTIN: Frankly, it's pretty scary, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Churchill Corporation

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that since taking office the Premier has had a mortgage on his personal residence with MIC Holdings. There are very strong links between MIC and principals in the Churchill Corporation. I'd like to ask the Premier: did he advise his cabinet colleagues of this personal financial arrangement, or did he put in place any precautions to ensure that the government did not enter into business arrangements with the Churchill group while he was Premier?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I know it's a matter of my personal, private life and that you would not want me to discuss it here in the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary question dealing with policy issues, let me point out.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, will the Premier confirm that at the same time that the mortgage on his personal residence was held by MIC, this company associated with the Churchill group, his government approved a private placement in the Churchill Corporation of a \$3 million subordinated debenture from the province's pension fund?

2:50

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the issue that the hon. member is raising. I would say this though: the hon. member should be clear as to whether or not MIC and Churchill are associated.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Documents filed with the Securities Commission, Mr. Speaker, will confirm that the province made this placement, if the Premier won't.

Does the Premier consider it appropriate that at the same time that the government was investing \$3 million into the Churchill Corporation, he had a personal business arrangement with a company closely associated with the Churchill group of companies?

MR. SPEAKER: No. That's fine. [interjections] That's fine. The leader of the Liberal Party.

### Provincial Budget Projections

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the government has been consistent in running up deficits, consistent in ensuring that even the projected deficits are greater than they were projected, and consistent with keeping the books and information away from Albertans. The 1989-90 deficit was projected to be \$1.5 billion. It was amended by the Treasurer to be \$1.8 billion in midyear, and we now know that that deficit will be considerably higher. My first question is to the Premier. Given that the Provincial Treasurer provided secret information to just a handful of members of the Conservative Party, giving them the specific details of the '89-90 deficit, why is it that Albertans at that same date weren't given those same specific projections, and why is it

that even today Albertans don't know the specific number for the projected deficit?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd certainly take the matter as notice for the Provincial Treasurer.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, this is the same government that filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 31 of 1990 the prospectus for borrowing \$300 million to look after the deficit. In this prospectus it says that the projected '89-90 deficit will be \$23 billion. That's a document that comes out of cabinet, I presume, that the Premier should know about. I'd like to know, Mr. Premier, why it is that foreigners, people in New York, in other parts of Canada, and other parts of the world can get that information, but that 2 and half million Albertans are still waiting for the information on what that projected deficit is? How come?

MR. GETTY: Again, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Treasurer may wish to discuss this more fully when he returns to the House, but I'd point out that the hon. member is waving about a public document.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm horrified that the Premier of our province doesn't know the representations that are made in a public document, a document that he and his cabinet members have filed to borrow some \$300 million. I'd like to know: why don't we have freedom of information? If Americans and other Canadians and offshore citizens can get information and Albertans can't, why not? Why can't we have freedom of information legislation?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is now arguing in a circle. He's got a public document and says that I don't know what's in it. What kind of nonsense is that? He has a public document, he's quoting from it, and then he says he can't get the information. What foolishness.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Glenmore, followed by Stony Plain.

#### University of Calgary

MRS. MIROSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The University of Calgary recently introduced their new initiatives on the co-operative education project. Co-operative education allows many students to combine their studies at the University of Calgary, offering a degree along with work related experience, and a variety of employers in business and industry and government employ these students on a co-operative basis. It has allowed increased accessibility to the universities and again utilizes universities 12 months of the year. I would like to ask the Minister of Advanced Education if he would outline his department's policy with regards to this co-operative education policy and program.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I think it's generally accepted today that postsecondary institutions recognize that they have a unique role to play with training people and educating people. Part of that obviously is work related. For some years both in medicine and engineering, and I presume in law, this has gone on. I understand that the University of Calgary, along with many other institutions, is keenly interested in working out some firm proposal where this so-called co-operative system could be put

to work. I'm enthusiastic about it. Frankly, I wish I had the money to see it implemented further.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, this is a University of Calgary project, not a department project. The business community in Calgary is certainly excited about this and would like to opt into it and perhaps help finance it. Has the minister examined the idea of the businesses helping fund this program as well?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I have seen the proposal. I'm encouraged by the University of Calgary, as with NAIT and SAIT and other institutions, wanting to do this. I would encourage them to do it and encourage them to find the funds to do it with. I've shared with the University of Calgary that I do not believe the funds are available in 1990, the current year. I don't know what the New Year holds, but I would encourage them to do whatever they could to see that on the one hand the students would pay their fair share, and that the employers certainly would become involved as one of the major beneficiaries. I think in the final analysis, Mr. Speaker, it may well indeed improve the whole question of access to our postsecondary institutions.

MR. SPEAKER: Stony Plain.

#### Education Funding

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Education has stated that the present system of educational funding causes inequity in the distribution of wealth, inequity in the tax effort required, inequity in the dollars available per student, inequity in programs and opportunities for students, but his solution, corporate pooling, or co-mingling as it was referred to back in '87, merely pirates the local machinery, equipment, and power and pipeline revenues from the local jurisdictions, placing the \$400 million in a so-called trust. This will not remedy existing inequities, but it will force jurisdictions to rely even more on the local residential tax base for the shortfalls which regular funding does not and likely will not cover. My question is to the Minister of Education, who is trying to breathe life into a dead concept abandoned years ago by his predecessor. Will the minister at least inform the Assembly as to when he will introduce legislation to protect money directed to his trust fund, and will he promise that all provincial education funding, not just the corporate pool, will be protected by the said legislation so that it will remain exclusively for the use of education?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely correct: there are inequities in our school systems across this province. I could get into a great number of details, and I'll give you just one. When the school board in the Cardston school division levies 1 mill per student for education purposes only, they raise \$71. When the school division in East Smoky in the Valleyview area levies 1 mill per student, it raises \$432 per student. So when I look around the province and see school boards having to live up to their responsibilities to ensure that each and every child in their school district gets a first-rate education, I then look around the province and say: how can school boards do that when they don't have access to an adequate local tax base in order to live up to their responsibilities? Mr. Speaker, I have laid on the table a proposal for all members of this Assembly, for school trustees and other stakeholders across this province that will deal with that problem.

As for the hon. member's suggestion that any money that would be raised under this minister's proposal would be spent on anything but education, I would draw the member's attention to the School Foundation Program Fund, that's been in existence for the last 30 years. Mr. Speaker, not one single dollar out of that fund has been spent on anything but this government's priority of education.

3:00

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Mr. Speaker, it was upon the request of the Minister of Education that the members of the Alberta School Trustees' Association worked hard at coming up with a solution to the problem of inequity in education and in educational funding. Option 1, the solution overwhelmingly supported by the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hold it. Thank you, hon. member. Let's have the supplementary question. Calgary-Glenmore was caught in the same position today of giving too much of an answer in the preamble. Let's leave something for the minister to answer, please. Let's have the question.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Okay. I'll try and shorten it, Mr. Speaker. This is very important.

It appears, Mr. Speaker, that the minister really believes that option 1, which was supported by educational organizations, school boards, and parents is inferior to his own proposal, which is supported by almost no one but himself. Why has the minister chosen to enforce his own unsupported proposal in the same style in which the federal government is forcing the GST on all Canadians?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the hon. member go out of Edmonton, go out of just Stony Plain or his constituency, that he begin to travel around this province and speak with school boards like my colleagues and I have done. I suggest that he go and tell his story to the people in Barrhead, go and tell his story to the people in Lac Ste. Anne, go and tell his story to the people in the county of Warner. They don't like what the hon. member is saying, and he knows it full well. So I suggest . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. [interjections] Thank you. Since the topic is education, the Chair is thankful and trusts that most school classrooms in this province are better behaved than this. Calgary-Buffalo.

#### **Lubicon Indians' Arrests**

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is to the Attorney General. There are disturbing reports that members of the Lubicon band have been arrested by the RCMP for interrogation purposes, held incommunicado without access to legal counsel, and then released without charge: 18 to 19 individuals. The Attorney General well knows that in Canada police can't arrest individuals for interrogation purposes but must have reasonable grounds to believe that that individual has committed a specific offence before arrest for that offence. The reports, if accurate, reflect police practices which are unacceptable in this province, which is supposed to be governed by the rule of law. I'm wondering what, if anything, the Attorney General is doing or is going to do in order to determine whether these reports are accurate and, if so, to see that a stop is put to them, since they're totally unacceptable.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, the incident the hon. member refers to was looked into. The staff sergeant at the division in Peace River said that there are no improprieties that have taken place and that if anybody has a specific instance that he's not aware of, they should lay their complaint. That hasn't happened.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, once over lightly isn't acceptable, Mr. Speaker, and in light of the major mess that our governments have been making with respect to Indian issues in this country in recent times, I'm wondering whether the minister would tell the people of Alberta whether he's prepared to allow the rights of the Lubicon Indians to be trod upon or whether he's going to do his job as the minister who's responsible for law enforcement in this province and see that the police follow legal practices.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge and without a specific complaint coming forward, I can assure the hon. member that the police are doing their job. But I would like to inform the member of the number of things this government has done for native people in this province. Unsurpassed by anyone we have land entitlement agreements with the Fort Chip band, with the Sturgeon Lake band, with the Whitefish band. We have a number of them under process right now. We have the Metis legislation which was passed in this Assembly last year, where 1.25 million acres was given to them and a self-determination process was put in place. There are many, many more. I suggest the hon. member just read his *Hansard* from other sittings.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Foothills.

#### **Securities Commission**

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As security markets become more global, one of the results appears to be the increase in the international nature of the reported abuses such as the use of Canadian corporations in international stock manipulations or, as we've noted recently, a case where a U.S. mutual fund manager was bribed by Canadian stockbrokers to purchase huge amounts of B.C. penny stock. Such activities bring our markets into disrepute. My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. How does the minister propose to protect investors in Alberta from villains from abroad?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question from the hon. member, over the past two years we have moved with legislation in this Assembly to have an information-sharing agreement between provinces and between nations. We in this Assembly last year passed an amendment to the Act that governs my portfolio which also gives us the authority to give information, to share with respect to the kinds of companies I believe the member is talking about.

There is, nonetheless, a good point to the question in that there seems to be a requirement to do more in this fast-moving world, and I am considering a change to the Act which could be recommended to the Assembly that would allow us to carry out investigations here at the request of other governments, other securities commissions, and that would allow us to request the same from jurisdictions across the country.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, at the present time the Securities Act only empowers the commission to cease the trade of a particular company or to prevent a particular individual from

trading. I'm wondering if the minister could do a little more. Could you consider additional sanctions within the Act?

MR. TAYLOR: Try jail.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I notice that the gray ghost of Liberal leaders past has yelled: what about jail? That, in fact, is something that we put in the Act a couple of years ago, the ability to send those who would manipulate stocks to jail for up to a five-year period of time. That's one of the enforcement mechanisms.

Nonetheless, I think we must keep on top of the changes that are necessary to make sure that our market is fair but tough on those who might abuse it. In that regard, I'm considering both the suggestion that those found guilty before the Securities Commission may pay for part or all of the hearings they have in fact caused to take place and that we might consider a suggestion the hon. member has made in fact in days gone by, and that is allowing the commission to take away a position as director or company officer from a company if that person has been found guilty by the Securities Commission. Those are recommendations we will consider and may be able to recommend to the House next spring.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

#### **Painters' Safety**

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, my questions today are to the Minister of Occupational Health and Safety. Albertans who work in the painting trade are daily exposed to toxic paints, solvents, and other hazardous chemicals which are known to damage human health over time. Yet despite the documented evidence to this effect, the department of Occupational Health and Safety still has no regulations governing it. So my question to the minister is simply this: when will he be bringing forward some regulations to protect the health of these workers?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is completely wrong, because WHMIS is in effect and that protects all workers with information on all hazardous material. So if the workers in the paint industry are not looking at the labels, then I don't really know how we could improve on that except do other certain things which we're looking at at the present time.

MR. GIBEAULT: Well, Mr. Speaker, WHMIS gives information to workers, but it doesn't require employers to give any kind of protective gear or anything to their workers. Those people who are in the organized sector of the painting trade, which is only about 10 to 20 percent, probably get the benefit of the health and safety protections that are available, like WHMIS, but those that are not in the organized sector, which is the vast majority, don't. I'd like to ask the minister if he'll give us some assurance today that only those qualified and properly trained tradespeople will be allowed to handle these hazardous products.

MR. TRYNCHY: I don't know what the question is, Mr. Speaker, but if he's suggesting that no person but a qualified painter can paint, I wonder if he could say that to his neighbour that's painting his house.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark.

#### **3:10**

#### **Oldman River Dam**

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since 1988 Martha Kostuch has charged under a private prosecution that the

Alberta government has unlawfully damaged natural fisheries in the construction of the Oldman River dam. Two – count them: two – official legal process rulings have established that there is sufficient evidence for these charges and for the Alberta government to be taken to trial. Despite this, the Attorney General has stayed these charges on two occasions and is now undertaking a cynical legal manoeuvre to ensure that further charges can never be laid again in this particular case in this particular way. To the Attorney General: will he please explain how his actions can be construed as anything but a blatant abuse of his powers premised upon a clear conflict of interest to cover up environmental impropriety on the part of his very own government?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, a procedural question. The instances that the hon. member has brought up have been stayed because the jurisdiction was with the federal Department of Justice. The information that was gathered by the investigators was sent to them, and they determined that there was not the grounds to proceed, so the matter was stayed. There was another information laid. The procedure was the same, and the information was stayed again.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, the federal government handed this hot potato back to the Attorney General, and he utilized his power, abused his power to stay those charges. To the Attorney General again: will the Attorney General please explain to us what makes him so fearful that he won't, even after two rulings to the effect that this issue is perfectly acceptable to go to trial, allow this issue to run its natural and proper course through the courts?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to fear. I just said that the procedure was that the investigation was done. The Attorney General's department does not do the investigation. The information was given to the authorities that have jurisdiction in this matter, which is the federal Department of Justice. Their information was that proceedings should not proceed. It was stayed. It's on the basis of the information that the matter is not going, not because he wants it to go.

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

#### **Social Services Agencies**

MR. DAY: Thank you. [interjections] I can see the little porkers are excited, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Associate Minister of Family and Social Services. One of the challenges that the minister inherited on assuming his portfolio was the issue of the considerable wage disparity between employees of agencies that deliver programs and services on behalf of Family and Social Services and the employees who are working in similar positions directly within the department. These funding deficiencies have created obvious problems, not the least of which is the problem of attracting and retaining employees. I think it's fair to say that the minister has had ample time to assess this problem. Will he please tell us if he plans to do anything about it?

MR. BRASSARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I certainly am aware of the problem, and I believe I am taking what I consider to be appropriate action. I'd just like to reinforce with the members of the Assembly the outstanding work that these agencies do in

co-operation with government. Too often they get too little recognition for their involvement. We have undertaken a study to get a handle on the extent of the problem, and I can honestly say that it does indeed reinforce the points the member has made. I'm currently pleading my case before my colleagues.

Thank you.

MR. DAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm somewhat encouraged by those remarks, but it has been eight years since an attempt was last made to address this problem. Can the minister can tell us when additional money might be headed towards these agencies?

MR. BRASSARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Let me state at the outset that part of the solution is money, there's no question about it. But it certainly is not the total answer. While I am urging support from my colleagues, I also recognize that there's a number of priorities and demands on the taxpayers' dollars today, and we're trying to balance that all out. We're also working with Career Development and Employment and Advanced Education on developing strategies and programs that will help enhance the training these people are involved in and the job satisfaction, and that itself is part of the answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.  
Edmonton-Beverly.

### Housing Rent Increases

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As January 1 draws near, an increasing number of tenants are receiving notices that their rents will be increasing as a result of the GST, in spite of the fact that the Mulroney government has promised that rents would not be affected. Now, the regressive GST will be applied to things like garbage collection, gas, and electrical service. With vacancy rates on the downturn right across the province, renters have no choice but to pay these rent increases. My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Given that the government says that they are opposed to the GST, what concrete steps is the minister taking to have some effect as a result of the GST application on the rents in this province?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, my department has had a number of calls with respect to potential rent increases or rent increases taking place, and the reason has been given with respect to the GST application on January 1. In fact, in any of the research that we've done, we have been unable to find reasons for significant increases as a result of the GST, should it become law in the federal Parliament. The calculations on the increase in costs for plumbing services, for example, would seem to add up to somewhere in the neighbourhood of 3 percent, not anything approaching the increases that are suggested.

At this point, I do have to say, though, that there have not been significant rental increases and that the last report from CMHC would indicate that rental increases in this province over the past six-month period have been in the neighbourhood of 2 or 3 percent and in some three-bedroom categories or in various parts of the province, 4 percent, not increases out of the ordinary at this point in time.

MR. EWASIUK: Well, Mr. Speaker, we have documents, examples where landlords are using the GST as an excuse to gouge money from tenants. One of the landlords who has had a GST cost of \$10 now in fact is asking rents of \$25 for his units.

Will the minister commit to provide legislation for a rent review process that will force landlords to justify their rent increases before they are passed on to the tenants?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, the short answer to the question is: no, I won't provide legislation for rent review. In fact, in provinces where that has been done, the experience would seem to have been keeping rent increases at the maximum level allowed for a period of time. That's one of the problems that Ontario, Toronto in particular, is facing now. I will, though, undertake to the hon. member to review any documents that he has and to advocate on individual circumstances with the federal authorities responsible for this GST to ensure that there is some look at situations where information is being unfairly used to the detriment of renters.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway, followed by Calgary-North West.

### Alberta Intermodal Services

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. The minister announced on Monday the sale of Alberta Intermodal Services, and since the taxpayers of this province have put some \$32 million into this company, we're somewhat concerned. Given that according to the December 31, 1988, annual statement – and it's the last one we seem to be able to get hold of – the operating deficit of this company was some \$2.8 million and the fixed assets were only \$7.2 million, how does he expect to get the taxpayers' \$32 million back?

3:20

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, obviously the hon. member didn't read very well the financial sheet that appears in public accounts. Contrary to some of the accusations that hon. members have made, this information is public through the public accounts, and at the appropriate time the additional information is, because we have legislative authority which we have to follow.

I indicate to the hon. member, as I have indicated publicly, that it is our desire to recoup those funds, hopefully something greater than the amount that we had invested, so that we can again return it to the General Revenue Fund to the benefit of the Alberta taxpayer. This company has performed very well. We have had a number of interests indicated as it relates to the privatization proposal that we have made public, and we look forward to receiving submissions from those individuals that are interested.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, I resent the implication that the public accounts are any more up to date than the numbers I gave him. They are not. They're two years out of date.

This government has become rather famous for offering sweetheart deals to bail out Tory friends, and a perfectly good example of that is Alberta-Pacific Terminals. Now, what I want this minister to promise is that this company, Alberta Intermodal Services, will not be sold to some company that needs bailing out like Alberta-Pacific Terminals.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be part of a government that has led this province to be the number one province as it relates to economic growth. I'm proud of our involvement. The hon. member can cast all the allegations he wishes. He knows that there's no truth to them whatsoever. We

involve ourselves in thousands of individual enterprises, thousands of them, and if he is suggesting to us that we shouldn't have, I wish that he would do so openly. We involved ourselves with the farm credit stability program, which has close to 30,000 loans out, and the Alberta Opportunity Company, which has involved itself in some 18,000 enterprises. We're proud of that involvement, and that is why this province is the number one economic province in all of Canada today.

#### **Small Business**

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Recently the Canadian Federation of Independent Business polled almost 22,000 of their members asking them their opinions on the climate for small business in their province. This is called the discomfort index, and the discomfort index for Alberta is 292 complaints per 100 members. In fact, as I'm sure the minister will appreciate, understandably so, only Ontario business owners are more pessimistic than they are here in Alberta. My question to the minister is: how does the minister explain the huge imbalance between the government, that's telling everyone how rosy and wonderful things are here in Alberta, and, on the other hand, small businesses that are crying out for help? What do you want to do about it?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the hon. member is aware of it or not, but every other province outside of Alberta is going through a recessionary period. Because of that recessionary period in other parts of Canada there is cause for concern amongst our small business community. But I'm happy to report to the hon. member that within this province we have the lowest rate of taxation for the small business community of any province throughout Canada. We're going to maintain that tax competitiveness within this province. We're going to maintain a climate whereby if one is willing to invest, they will prosper.

The hon. member is also, I'm sure, going to suggest that we have had an increase in bankruptcies, which is right, but we've also more importantly had a substantial increase in corporate business within this province, and we look forward to continued growth as it relates to the small business sector.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see that the minister is reading the newspaper as well.

Two of the big concerns: 68 percent of Alberta small businessmen complain about tax, which the minister mentioned; 59 percent complain about excessive red tape. Now, my question is: since the Provincial Treasurer has talked about increasing the taxation by collecting his own taxes, what is the minister going to do to address those twin evils that are soon going to be increased by this very government?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is going to have to listen to the answers if he wants to put the questions, because I've already answered his first question as it relates to taxation levels. I've indicated to him that we do have the lowest taxation rate of any province in Canada for the small business community. It's a rate of 6 percent, which is unparalleled in any other province in Canada.

Secondly, we recognize that there is a concern as it relates to red tape, and we are working with the small business community with the hopes of reducing it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Rocky Mountain House, followed by the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

#### **Propane Prices**

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many Albertans are very concerned about the price of propane. Last winter we saw a dramatic increase in the price, and it was said that the reason for that was a prolonged cold spell. This year we have seen an equally large increase in the price since last August. To the Minister of Energy: given the fact that propane is a by-product of the natural gas processing industry and that the price of natural gas has not increased, albeit it does go up and down, and the fact that we're just now entering the winter, can this current price of propane be justified?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct in suggesting that propane is essentially a by-product of natural gas. However, about 15 percent of our propane supply does come in association with the production of crude oil, but the member should know that propane is sold in separate and discrete markets from natural gas. Propane is generally used as a competitor for heating oil, and when we see an increase in prices, as we have this year, we tend to see an increase in the price of propane. That has to do with the fact that propane does compete as a heating fuel, as a transportation fuel, and in the petrochemical industry. Of course, the petrochemical industry will stockpile or accumulate or switch to propane when the price of naphtha is very high, and naphtha is a by-product of oil. So it's a very dynamic market. We've looked at it, and in fact it's working effectively. It is in a price spike right now, but if it reacts the same way it did, when we get out of the winter heating season next year, we'll see essentially lower prices.

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, many people have to use propane as a heating source for their homes. They don't have an alternative. Is the government doing anything to help those people?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the hon. member that if there is a concern outside of the dynamics of the market, whether the market's working or not, it certainly is for those that are in the remote parts of our province that cannot get access to cheap propane. We do have a program under the Department of Transportation and Utilities that I believe has been in place for some 10 years that gives about a 25 percent support price or rebate on propane. I understand that program is coming to an end, and I know that the hon. member will be pleased to take it up with the minister of transportation.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Avonmore.

#### **Social Assistance Policy**

MS M. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Family and Social Services. The minister says through his new social reform package that he wants to reward independence, freedom, and responsibility, a team approach between recipients and social workers to work out individual plans that support individual initiative. Given this new direction and commitment, will the minister now rescind his department's policy of not allowing social service recipients, often single mothers, to attend university?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, I would again remind the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore that we have an excellent



support system in place for all Albertans to be able to attend university, and it's the student finance program. It's served many Albertans well, and I can tell the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore that there are a number of instances where single-parent mothers on social allowance have been able to make that transition and have been able to successfully complete university. Again the process in place to be able to do that is our student finance, and the Minister of Advanced Education might want to supplement that.

MS M. LAING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not satisfied with that answer and would therefore direct my second question to the minister responsible for women. This minister has often stated how important it is that women not limit their aspirations and that they choose nontraditional careers so that they may escape lives of unending poverty. Given the policies of the Minister of Family and Social Services which forbid single mothers on social assistance from attending university thereby limiting their aspirations and careers as well as condemning them to lives of poverty, will the minister responsible for women now intervene with the Minister of Family and Social Services and have him change this regressive and oppressive policy?

3:30

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, as all members of this House know, I am not the minister responsible for women, although I would be honoured to be given that title, but only for women's issues. As that minister I am an advocate and as much as possible a catalyst within the development of policies and programs that are of particular concern to women.

The member opposite has raised a very significant and key question, and it is one that I know I have had conversations about with the Minister of Family and Social Services, also the Minister of Advanced Education and the Minister of Career Development and Employment. We have identified it as an area where we must bring a new focus to bear, particularly with the reforms that have been announced. I'm not in a position to discuss it in any detail today, but I can assure the member opposite that that is being looked at and very seriously so.

#### head: **Motions under Standing Order 40**

MR. SPEAKER: A request under Standing Order 40. Calgary-Forest Lawn.

#### **Canadian Broadcasting Corporation**

Mr. Pashak:

Be it resolved that this Assembly transmit to the government of Canada our strenuous objection to the \$100 million budget cuts to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which have resulted in the closure of 10 regional CBC outlets, including Calgary CBC operations effective today, causing the loss of over a hundred jobs and severing vital communication links in southern Alberta, and our call for reinstatement of full operational funding for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As to urgency, the cuts to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation budget resulted in the loss of approximately 100 jobs today in Calgary. These cuts follow other job losses caused by actions of this federal government. The cancellation of *The Canadian* through Calgary and the transference of Air Canada jobs out of Alberta are but a couple of recent examples. Not only is the job loss important,

but the Calgary CBC outlet over the years has performed an important nation-building function in the city, not just in Calgary but in southern Alberta more generally.

So the reason for urgency in brief, Mr. Speaker, is that if we're going to reverse this despicable action by the federal government, we have to act immediately, we have to act now, and we have to deliver a very strong message to Mr. Brian Mulroney and his chief financial architect, Mr. Wilson. I'd urge members to give approval to allowing this motion to proceed.

MR. SPEAKER: Under Standing Order 40, those willing to grant unanimous consent to proceed, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The matter fails.

### **Orders of the Day**

[On motion, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee of the Whole]

#### head: **Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole**

[Mr. Schumacher in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the committee come to order, please.

#### **Bill 52**

#### **Natural Resources Conservation Board Act**

MR. CHAIRMAN: The committee spent some time on November 26 and November 29 on amendments. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place wishes to continue discussing amendments to Bill 52?

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few remarks to address to committee study of Bill 52, primarily in response to the stinging attack launched by the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark on myself and my party for the role we've played in this debate so far. While it is a cheap tune perhaps, I think it cannot pass totally unnoticed, because I want to remind members that in the process of deliberation on this Bill to date, some two sets of government amendments have been dealt with, deliberated upon, and disposed of by the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order in the committee, please. Could we have this conversation in some other spot?

While the Chair has the committee's attention, I was wondering if the hon. member could advise the Chair what particular amendment or clause the member is speaking to at the moment.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Chairman, I am coming to another set of amendments, which I'd like to bring to the Chair right now. Perhaps I can get the pages to submit those and distribute them for the deliberation of the committee.

I am at this time responding to remarks . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I think for the purposes of the proper conduct of the committee we should wait till these amendments have been distributed, and then the hon. member can choose one of them. [interjection] Oh, I see. It's a package of amendments. The Chair does believe that the amendments should be distributed so that the members will know what the hon. member . . . [interjection] All right. Very well.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Chairman, so as to not waste the time of the committee, we'd like to make some general comments while the amendment is being distributed.

The New Democrats voted to move this Bill into committee so we could undertake the difficult and important job of amending it so that it would become an important and a valuable mechanism to serve Albertans for many years to come. We believe it's vital that we develop clear and, I say, crisp and consistent rules for environmental impact assessments, for deliberations around those, for the benefit of all concerned.

This is not simply a concern of environmentalists, not simply a concern of the general public; it is in fact also a concern of industry. Many times over the past year people in industry have complained to me that their biggest problem with this government is that they don't know what process they're going to go through when they make an application. In fact, Procter & Gamble, certainly no friend of the environmental movement, made the point when they shelved their expansion plans for the Procter & Gamble mill near Grande Prairie that part of their problem in assessing their project and the investment was that they didn't know exactly what rules they would go through. I think on most days I have some sympathy for the Al-Pac consortium for the many twists and turns the process has taken during the time they have been trying to get their project approved. There simply is not a well-established set of rules whereby people will know where they stand in relation to environmental matters.

I think that lack of certainty, that lack of clarity, has to be dealt with in legislation. A vehicle such as the natural resources conservation board can do that, and therefore our party felt we should get on with the process of making amendments. And we did. We presented 14 amendments in total, one of which was accepted by the government, or at least almost entirely accepted by the government. I want to say that I appreciate the government's willingness to go that far, and if they had a little more open mind, perhaps we would be dealing with legislation which would have the support of most members of this committee today.

Now, the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark felt somehow bitterly disappointed that the New Democrats had supported moving this Bill into committee, and he attacked us mightily on a number of fronts to do that. But it was curious to me that he prefaced his remark by saying:

A natural resources conservation board, properly structured with proper powers, with proper attention to each and every one of those principles that we have talked so frequently about as being essential for this kind of Bill, is an integral and necessary condition, a fundamental part of proper environmental policy for this province.

So the Liberal member describes this Bill as being "integral and necessary"; you know, something that absolutely has to be done. If I understand those words "integral and necessary," this is something that's pretty important, and I believe, if I'm interpreting those words correctly, that indicates support in principle for the concept. But somehow he got it in his mind that it would be

politically wise for him to vote against the Bill in committee and not carry on forward. Well, then he went on to state, having indicated that in principle this thing is a good idea, a number of concerns he had, and he concluded his remarks by saying:

Mr. Chairman, I and my caucus are not going to propose the almost infinite number of amendments that would be required to make this Bill in any measure acceptable.

3:40

So he's got concerns. He's got a list of concerns, but he's not going to move any amendments. Why? He says because it's too much work. You know, they really can't be bothered doing the job of working out language which would be acceptable, which would deal with the concerns he pretends to have in this Legislature and in other places. Now, I regard that as being essentially laziness on the part of the Liberal Party. Perhaps they're waiting for the New Democrats to do all the work, to get the material tabled in the Legislature, have it voted upon, and then they can pick it up and say: well, this was our idea and we think you should vote for it. It sounds like medicare and some of the other social programs in the past.

Mr. Chairman, I put it to you, because you're a fair-minded individual: if a party in opposition can't be bothered to fix up legislation, how will you know what they're going to do one day in government if, God forbid, they should ever get there? How will we know what they're going to do? How will they know what they're going to do if they can't be bothered when in opposition preparing amendments to address their concerns? You'll never know.

Now, it is interesting to me that the Minister of Energy did the correct thing. He brought up the Liberals' record in dealing with this legislation. He pointed out that the Liberal member has another Bill before the House that would do all the same things that he says are cardinal sins in this legislation, that would give the Crown authority to approve and amend decisions on the environment, that would give Executive Council the power to confirm, amend, or annul a decision or an order of the board, that would extend ministerial discretion to the point of allowing exemptions for certain projects. Can you believe it? A minister acting alone would be able to exempt projects from the environmental impact assessment process. This is Liberal legislation currently before this House. It also states that the proceedings don't need to be public. So I'm very confused. It seems to me that the Liberal Party position is: it's okay as long as I do it, but if somebody else does it, then it's wrong. Now, if that's the position they put forward, I think people need to do it.

Well, if I can return to this question of amendments, because I think it's vitally important that those of us who are in opposition should not merely oppose and criticize but should have constructive suggestions to put forward. I put mine forward, but where are the Liberals' suggestions? Well, Mr. Chairman, it appears that before this rather cheap tune was discovered by the member, the tune that says I and my caucus members are not going to propose the almost infinite number of amendments, in fact somebody, on behalf of the Liberals, did prepare some amendments.

Mr. Chairman, we have a leak of those amendments. In fact, I believe the leak stems from the fact that the member may have inadvertently tabled these amendments in the committee back in June when he still thought that perhaps it was not too much trouble, or somebody working on his behalf thought that. I would like to say that this party represents all the working people of the province including those who happen to work for the Liberal caucus, and if there's a Liberal researcher who has prepared these amendments at a great deal of time, effort, and

trouble, I believe the committee should consider the amendments. I believe they should be put forward in this committee so that all of us can have an opportunity to determine which of these should perhaps be followed. Because I think if a Liberal caucus researcher goes to the time, effort, and trouble, regardless of the cheap politics of the members of caucus, that work should be recognized. That work should be put forward. That work should be debated here in this Legislature. So I've taken the unusual step of putting my name on these amendments, because I think I would like to move these amendments on behalf of the Liberal research department, the ones who do the effort even though it isn't . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, hon. member. The Chair certainly appreciates the hon. member's introduction to these amendments, because the Chair wondered how the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark's name got crossed out and the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place appears there. I don't know; I guess the Chair is not in a position to give a legal opinion as to whether there's any copyright infringement on this or not.

Before we proceed with the actual amendments, would the hon. member permit us to revert briefly to the Introduction of Special Guests? [interjections] Order please.

MR. TAYLOR: Point of order. I think it's quite acceptable. We've found this is the only way we can get the support of the NDP opposition, by leaking it and leaving it in plain brown envelopes around their caucus. Then they will present it on our behalf.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member.

Would the committee allow unanimous consent to revert to the introduction of . . .

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

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

MR. MAIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, colleagues. It's a pleasure today to introduce to the Legislature, that is meeting now in committee so it's somewhat more casual than it would have been, oh, scant moments ago – but an opportunity for 14 people associated with the Whitemud Cub pack to be here in the gallery today, 14 members including their guides and instructors Lonni White and Doris Wood. I would ask the members to offer the Cubs and their group a warm, committee-like welcome.

#### **head: Government Bills and Orders** **Committee of the Whole**

##### **Bill 52**

#### **Natural Resources Conservation Board Act** (*continued*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to make it clear that I have no intention of imposing any party discipline on

the proceedings of this. I've discussed this with the members of my caucus, and I would like to announce that this is a free vote as far as the New Democrats are concerned on the Liberal amendments. We don't necessarily have to vote for them. In fact, I may not support them all in particular detail, but I think, as I said, somebody has gone to some time and effort. Somebody over there believes that it is appropriate for an opposition party to attempt to put some ideas forward in the committee. Perhaps I could just run through these amendments quickly for the benefit of the committee so they understand where they're headed and can then make a judgment whether or not they wish to support them.

Item A is primarily definitions, and it's in support of substantive provisions which come down the road. They are to move energy projects insofar as their environmental impact under the purview of the natural resources conservation board and to include forest management agreements. I believe these amendments don't go far enough, but I think they are a step forward, and I believe the Bill would be improved if the committee were to adopt them.

Item B relates to the purposes of the Act, section 2, which has been debated at great length in the committee and has been amended twice by the government, and one attempt was made by myself to amend it as well. This does go some distance to try to put the environmental imperative into the decision-making process. It uses language that the Liberal member indicated he was comfortable with, the language of "sustainable," sustainability, the language of controlling pollution. He feels more comfortable in that than he does with the language of ecosystems. That's fine. That was on another date his position, and perhaps it's still the Liberal caucus position, but I think it's something the committee should vote on.

In section 4 we're dealing with the scope of the NRCB, the scope of the jurisdiction of the board. This suggestion here relates to a broader range of issues and subject matter than is in the government Bill. It includes "enterprises or activities or proposals, plans or programs." So we're into the area, perhaps, of government programs as well as projects, and I believe that's a step forward. It is basically subject to a limitation which I think is a little tighter than need be, but again this is an improvement, because we have, clearly, the environmental impact of energy projects put forward, forestry management agreements, and then a broader area where the board can use its discretion.

Item D again deals with the matter of public notification. I find this amendment substantially similar to one that I presented and therefore certainly one that I support.

Item E injects some criteria which are taken, I believe, from the EIA Task Force report. There are some interesting additions here that I think should be drawn to the attention of the committee. It means that the board should look not simply at the environmental impact, cumulative impact, but should look at alternatives as well, and I think it's vitally important that a board like this have the power to look at alternatives to the development so that whoever makes the proposal doesn't bind everyone else to a very limited agenda. That's our problem with Al-Pac. You know, I think if the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche were to look at it from a somewhat broader point of view, he would see that there may be alternatives to Al-Pac, so that's important. But there's also the question of the no-go option. You know, looking at the question of not carrying out the undertaking. What are the consequences of that? That should be looked at as well. So there are some good points there. I think item E deserves some attention.

3:50

Item F relates to notification, and I think it has an improvement on what's there in the Bill. There's a glaring exception there under subsection 3 where the board has to balance the interests of making information public. Something like that I think is a good idea, although frankly I don't understand why that member raked me over the coals for a very similar clause that I had in my environmental impact assessment Bill. Perhaps again it's a question of it's okay if I do it but not if somebody else does. I don't know. As I said, I didn't write these amendments; I'm only here to see that they get their good and proper consideration.

Item G deals with the political independence of board members, again a matter which has been brought to the attention of this committee and deserves attention.

Skipping quickly to item J, I think we have here a question of how hearings can be triggered by members of the public. Now I believe this has been dealt with to a fair extent by the government, although this wording should perhaps be examined by the committee because it's a little more advanced than is the wording that's in the government amendment we have.

Finally, there is a consequential amendment in which the ERCB legislation is amended to make sure that the environmental aspects of energy projects come before this board.

Now, having explained these amendments, I think I'd leave it to the committee to decide whether they should be approved or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question, I guess, for the previous speaker before we go to the vote. Now, I was here last night and I understand that a Liberal was saying in the context of another matter that he had initiated something, a provision under electoral boundaries, that in fact was the initiation of the New Democrat caucus. I just want to clarify from the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place: what we will be voting on now are amendments that were originally tabled by the Liberal caucus in June or July when the Bill was first in front of us but now they wouldn't sponsor in this committee so we're sponsoring them. Is that correct?

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the hon. member, that's precisely correct. These were amendments that the Liberal member had tabled in the committee last June, but he, for I guess political reasons, decided to withhold from the committee, and I'm simply moving them on behalf of the Liberal researcher who prepared them so that the committee can give them their due and proper consideration.

MS BARRETT: What a nice guy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. For the guidance of the Chair, does the committee wish to deal with these amendments all in one package or by letters? All in one package?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question having been called, all those in favour of the amendments introduced by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The amendments appear to be defeated. Call in the members.

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

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

4:00

For the motion:

Bruseker	Hewes	McInnis
Chumir	Martin	Taylor
Gagnon	McEachern	

Against the motion:

Adair	Fowler	Orman
Ady	Fox	Paszkowski
Barrett	Getty	Payne
Betkowski	Gogo	Roberts
Black	Kowalski	Shrake
Bogle	Laing, B.	Sigurdson
Bradley	Lund	Sparrow
Brassard	Main	Speaker, R.
Cardinal	McClellan	Tannas
Clegg	Mirosh	Thurber
Day	Mjolsness	Trynchy
Dinning	Moore	Weiss
Elliott	Musgrove	West
Evans	Nelson	Woloshyn
Ewasiuk	Oldring	Zaruský
Fischer		

Totals:	Ayes	—	8	Noes — 46
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[Motion on amendments lost]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are there any further comments, questions, or amendments to this Bill? [interjections] Order please.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

[The sections of Bill 52 as amended agreed to]

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we could cause the coffee cups to disappear, please. Grande Prairie, the cup. It's not coffee? Okay. Thank you.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole reports the following with some amendments: Bill 52. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by the Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. All those members who concur in the report, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried.

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

**Bill 52**

**Natural Resources Conservation Board Act**

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, please allow me to be brief in my summary comments in moving third reading of Bill 52. Let me just say that I've really appreciated the input and advice I've received not only in this Legislature but from all other groups in industry that have expressed an interest in the movement of the Bill.

I think we have a Bill that is very acceptable. As I have said throughout the debate, this is a Bill that is unprecedented anywhere on this continent and therefore it is very difficult to deal with in terms of putting it together and making sure it can get up and fly. We have had the opportunity to tool it in much the same manner as the operations of the Energy Resources Conservation Board, but let's be clear: this is not the Energy Resources Conservation Board. It has a substantially different mandate, different responsibilities, and different ways of relating to its jurisdictions.

We wanted to accomplish one very important thing, Mr. Speaker, and that was to deliver a mechanism that will allow for input in a formal and informal way, that will give opportunity to both proponents and intervenors and other concerned parties to express their views in a way that is acceptable to everyone involved and balanced and unbiased decisions can be made on natural resource development in this province.

Now, I say "unbiased." Those that believe that it has the potential for being biased would say that it is skewed toward environmental protection. I've had that expressed to me. I've had it expressed to me that it's skewed toward industrial development or natural resource development. However, in our sense, and through the refining of the Bill and the amendments that have been put forward – and I appreciate the suggestions of the opposition, Mr. Speaker – we have come up with a Bill that I believe will be a model that will be held up throughout this continent as a piece of legislation, a mechanism that will allow for this balance between environmental protection and economic development, which is called sustainable development. I believe we have that.

4:10

Mr. Speaker, I've undertaken in this Legislature that if at this time next year or some time down the road it looks as though this legislation needs some modification, some adjustment, based on the practical application of it, we have indicated that we are open to that. But the analogy I've used before I'll use again, and that is that it's like the Wright brothers; sooner or later you have to see whether it flies. You can only do so much modification and retooling and planning. You have to get it on the road

and see how it works, and that's what we want to do with this legislation.

The success of this legislation too, Mr. Speaker, will be on the people who are on the board. We've had much discussion in this Legislature about the types of people who would be best suited for operating the natural resources conservation board, and one of the next difficult choices the province will have to make in this connection will be to get the right people who have in mind the ability to balance environmental protection and economic development. I believe we have achieved a piece of legislation that will give rise to an atmosphere to allow that to happen. I certainly look forward to this Bill becoming a reality and getting into business, getting on with the projects, the pent-up demand out there today looking for an appropriate forum to ventilate discussion on projects that interface with environmental sensitivities.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I will not prolong my comments in moving third reading. I would like to repeat that I do appreciate the input and advice. It has been a very eye-opening experience for me to be able to pilot this legislation, and I daresay it's been an honour for me to have this opportunity.

Having said that, I move third reading of this very important piece of legislation, Bill 52, the Natural Resources Conservation Board Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address a few remarks to third reading of Bill 52, the Natural Resources Conservation Board Act. May I first say that I appreciate the willingness of the minister to look at this thing in practice and keep a flexible cast of mind in terms of how it actually operates and the willingness I think he expressed to open up the legislation if need be, if demonstrated on the basis of experience that it may not be working the way he had hoped it would.

There are a few general remarks I would like to put on the record dealing with how this Assembly and the people in it relate not only to our constituents but to the values that drive our future growth in this province, because I really think our responsibility here in this Legislature is to set values, to bring forward a vision of the future in a way that people can understand and relate to and make a judgment on. If we do that to that extent, we do a service to our constituents. We give them the ability to see between conflicting visions and philosophies and value systems, to make choices that are relevant to them. To the extent that we sort of muddy things up and say one thing but do another thing, we do a disservice to the constituents. I want to be as clear as I possibly can in terms of the values that I think ought to be enshrined in legislation like this. Perhaps a few reasons why.

It seems to me that the minister and the government make a very great mistake when they talk about the need in legislation like this to balance sustainable development and economic development. I think he actually used the terms "economic development" and "environmental protection" as if these were two different spheres we had to balance at polar opposites. I ask him and I ask the government to look at it this way: our economy, our economic activities are a part of our environment; they are part and parcel of what makes up this great planet Earth we occupy and this little corner of it we call Alberta. You know, our economic system is not over here and our ecological system is not over there in such a way that somebody has to make a judgment between one and the other. It's a point

that perhaps may seem subtle at first, but the more you think about it, the more you realize that part of what we have to do is to make our economic system compatible with our need to survive. Ultimately this environmental imperative comes down to a matter of survival. It's a question of how many more generations will be able to enjoy life on this planet. We're at a stage now where it makes sense to talk and think about how many generations there are. So that's why I've tried to move to put the economic system within the perspective of the ecosystem, because it's just a subsystem within it. That's all it is, a system we use to draw sustenance, to get food, shelter, clothing, and some of the other things which go beyond that.

Now, there are many people in North America who spend all their waking hours working hard to try to obtain material things, material goods they don't need, they can't use, they will never be able to use. In a way that may be a part of the environmental problem we have. But I think we've got to get it out of our heads that somehow we're anything other than creatures and other species within this ecosystem on planet Earth. Until we start thinking of ourselves as another species and not something over and above and apart from it, so much the better.

I've talked to biblical scholars who say that it's really a mistranslation to say that humanity was given governance over the planet, that really the dominion talked about is more like stewardship than the ability to rule and govern, at least in the traditional 19th century liberal sense when we think about government. In fact mankind or humanity was given a special responsibility, because of the unique gifts we have, to look after that. That's why, for example, in Leviticus they talk about the importance of the Sabbath or allowing the land to run fallow. That's a very important part of what it is to sustain. That seventh day is there for rest. It's not for Sunday shopping; it's not for anything other than the regeneration or rejuvenation of our ecosystem. I think we have to get that into our minds. I describe it perhaps as a flaw, but I think it's a philosophical question. It's not that economic development and jobs are unimportant; they're vitally important, but they are a part of that ecosystem.

Now, what can we do as legislators to put that forward at the level of values? Well, I think what we do is put it in legislation, in laws. That's what we do. That's where I think government needs to be: presenting values, putting values into law, and bringing a vision of the future forward. Where we don't need to be is in deciding projects, deciding whether Alberta-Pacific will get a licence to construct a pulp mill, deciding whether Shell will get a permit to build a sour gas plant near Caroline or whether the OSLO project and a myriad of others will be able to go ahead. I think we need to frame laws in such a way that we state clearly for the benefit of technical people what criteria we want to have applied to decisions.

I've stated on behalf of my party that we think value is perpetuating and restoring functioning ecosystems, maintaining biological diversity in all its three facets, the facets of ecosystem diversity, species diversity, and genetic diversity. We think those are the values that should drive the system and somebody else with independence, with expertise, should be making the actual decisions. So we're hoping, if you like, to reduce the authority of government to make those decisions. Generally that's been the thrust of a number of amendments that have been put forward by the Official Opposition: to try to create that set of values, those criteria, that political/economic independence for the people who actually make the decision to make sure they have expertise.

Now, in my conversations with Albertans I think people really want to be a part of the solution to the environmental problem. I see people certainly changing their personal habits, changing the way they operate in their households, their businesses, and their community organizations. But I see more than that. You know, not everyone believes that you can necessarily shop your way to a cleaner environment. There's a little more to it. Last weekend I attended a conference of community activists from all over northern Alberta. There were probably 80 or 90 people there, each from a different community, each representing an active group throughout the northern half of the province, each working in their own way on an environmental project or two, all willing to spend some of their volunteer time looking for projects, looking to share ideas on how they can participate more effectively.

4:20

I think legislation like this will provide a means of effective participation. I believe it's intended to do that and will go some distance in doing that. It could be a little better, but you know, that's the way things go. But if you reduce it to its very basics, there's a very short list of things that we as MLAs can do to make that possible, practical, and realistic from the point of view of the average citizen.

Number one, we have to share with them information, because it's very difficult to be active in a timely fashion and to be effective participating publicly without information. Every member here knows that. We depend on information for our part in the political system. Everybody else is the same. We desperately need a general freedom of information statute in the province of Alberta, but I say it applies particularly in the environmental area because in the environmental area what you don't know can hurt you. In fact, what you don't know can kill you. That's a reality. Humanity, among its many gifts, has the ability to create substances which are toxic in the extreme, in fact lethal. So what you don't know can cause you a great deal of damage. I think some efforts were made to make sure that insofar as the jurisdiction of this board applies, that information be made available. I mean information not just in the passive sense that you can apply to ask for and see any document we have on file, because what if we don't have the right document on file? What if we don't have the information available?

Take, for example, the Alberta-Pacific project, because it's been a significant part of the deliberations in this Assembly over the last year and a half. At the conclusion of the hearings that were held involving the public, the environmental impact assessment review board found there was a very large information gap. There was a body of information and material which was missing from the file, not available to them, and which they felt was absolutely needed before a decision could be made. They structured a detailed set of recommendations around what that information was and described in some detail the kinds of studies that would have to be done to obtain the information. Unfortunately the response of the government was not yes, we need to do those studies and we will make sure that information is available before a decision is made. The response was to manipulate the process, to turn it around again so a new process was under way and that proponent would have another opportunity to have their project approved without the information. Well, that's not good enough, and I think making sure that information is there is a prime requisite. It's a primary job of this Legislative Assembly to get that information, to get the systems in place so that information is available to our con-

stituents, the citizens of the province, on a timely basis as needed.

Secondly, I think we need to give an interpretation of that information, because as I've said many times, to participate effectively scientific information needs to be analyzed. Like it or not, the environmental field is becoming increasingly deep in terms of scholarship; scientific breakthroughs are happening on a daily basis. Legislators in other contexts have full-time staff who do nothing but learn about scientific advances in areas that affect them and advise them. Unfortunately, members of this Assembly are not so amply endowed with staff that we can be advised in that fashion. But I know from personal experience that it's extremely difficult for a person with a general background to read all the reports that are absolutely crucial to understanding issues and then, having read them, to understand fully their implications. That's why it's vitally important that everyone involved in the process be advised by someone with independent expertise, someone who can analyze a great deal of data and explain in English, please, or whatever the operative language is, what it means, because what it means, especially for a lot of people, is quite a bit more important than the actual data. So we need to have, if you like, translators, people who can take scientific data, analyze it, and give an informed and realistic opinion on what it means. We need those kinds of people to answer the real-life, ordinary concerns people have such as: if a pulp mill goes next to my farm, how will that affect my crops, how will that affect the health of my children, how will that affect those aspects of nature that I happen to enjoy and rely on for my livelihood? Those are the kinds of questions people have, but the people who write environmental impact assessment documents don't always address them in a way that's accessible. So that independent expertise is very important.

Thirdly, I think we have to make sure that having had their questions answered, everyone who may be affected and has a legitimate interest that needs to be put forward has the opportunity to do that. Having the opportunity does mean public hearings in most cases, but it means a great deal more than that. It means being notified when a hearing is being held, when a project is brought forward. It means having the type of funding which makes participation possible. Now I recognize there are hearings in this legislation, there is intervenor funding, and those are steps forward and are appreciated. But I think the walls, the lines drawn around the process in that respect are a little too narrow, and again suggestions have been put forward on how that can be improved. But you know, you can't divide those requirements. You can't say, "We're going to jump to the third step; we're going to have hearings without all the information being available and without having it interpreted properly by experts," because then the process would be futile. You'll get a very limited number of people coming forward who have a vested interest or a capability above and beyond ordinary citizens to be involved in that process, and that's about it.

I kind of feel that over the years the ERCB has developed that type of model where it's very much an insider's process. You have scoping sessions where the intervenors go and make their . . . You know, most people we'd want to target for this thing couldn't tell you what a scoping session is. Nonetheless that's what they have, where people within a limited family participate. You know, occasionally it does go beyond, but often it does not. So without the information being available, without the analysis and the questioning phase, that third phase, the hearing, is not going to be as effective as it could be.

So those are some of the things I think we need to enshrine in the legislation in this Assembly and which I believe eventually

will be enshrined – when precisely I can't say – and they are the underlying philosophy of the amendments that were moved by the Official Opposition. Now, having moved those amendments and having had them defeated by the government, although I do note in passing that the Liberal Party supported them, we're in the unfortunate position of now having a Bill which falls short of the mark and therefore the Official Opposition will be opposing this Bill at the third reading stage.

MR. ORMAN: In summation, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to first thank the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place for some of his thoughtful comments. You know, I would be remiss if I did not indicate that although many of the government amendments were not worded in much the same way as the NDP's amendments were, the spirit was the same. However, we do come from a little different positions, and I appreciate that. The hon. member and I know that we agree to disagree. We just have a different starting point, and I appreciate that with regard to the Official Opposition.

There is one final comment I want to make. While the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place was on his feet, it reminded me that there was an undertaking I gave members of the Legislature in committee study. That undertaking was that prior to proclamation of this legislation we will be certain to circulate the regulations and rules of practice, at least a draft document, for public input and advice. And I would appreciate the advice of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place on behalf of the Official Opposition and all other members of this Legislature, for I think it is an essential component of this legislation, and that is how the regulations and rules of practice will look. I did say that I did not believe it was right for the government to draft those or put them in place in the absence of members of the natural resources conservation board. Certainly these will be out for input and advice, and upon appointment of those board members, they will be able to review the input and then get on with drafting those very important regulations and rules of practice. They are vital to the good operation of this board.

So again I thank all members for their participation, Mr. Speaker, and hope that we do have support in third reading.

4:30

MR. SPEAKER: Those members in favour of third reading of Bill 52, Natural Resources Conservation Board Act, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The matter carries.

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

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

4:40

For the motion:

Ady	Fischer	Orman
Betkowski	Fowler	Paszkowski
Black	Gogo	Payne
Bogle	Jonson	Rostad

Bradley	Laing, B.	Sparrow
Brassard	Lund	Speaker, R.
Cardinal	McClellan	Tannas
Clegg	Mirosh	Thurber
Day	Moore	Trynchy
Dinning	Nelson	Weiss
Elliott	Oldring	Zarusky
Evans		

Against the motion:

Barrett	Gagnon	Mjolsness
Bruseker	Hewes	Pashak
Chumir	Martin	Roberts
Ewasiuk	McEachern	Sigurdson
Fox	McInnis	Woloshyn

Totals:                      Ayes    —    34    Noes — 15

[Motion carried; Bill 52 read a third time]

[On motion, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee of the Whole]

**head: Government Bills and Orders  
Committee of the Whole**

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I'd ask that the committee please come to order.

**Bill 57  
Electoral Boundaries Commission Act**

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are there any government amendments?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Chairman, an amendment to Bill 57, Electoral Boundaries Commission Act, is being circulated now. It relates to striking out section 18(3) and then adding section 19. The principle is to clarify the action it would have taken under section 18(3), wherein there would have been appointment of a person in an office. This clarifies that the Speaker would be responsible for appointing such a person to assist the boundaries commission.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions with respect to this amendment?  
The Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Are you entertaining comments on the amendment at this point, Mr. Chairman? I'm aware of the contents of the amendment as a result of prior consultation, and I guess I would like to point out that I was originally going to sponsor a very similar amendment and am glad that the government saw fit to sponsor it. I'm not sure if I tabled the amendment that I had planned to sponsor, but it's almost identical in intent, and therefore we'll be supporting this amendment.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Ready for the question?  
The hon. Member for Calgary-North West.

MR. BRUSEKER: Just a brief comment. I believe the Member for Taber-Warner has already mentioned the yeoman

service we received from this particular individual in terms of our committee deliberations. In fact, this was a unanimous proposal of the committee, and therefore the Liberal caucus will be supporting this amendment as well.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thanks. I was just reminded by the comments from Calgary-North West that I should have said the same thing. The reason that I originally intended to sponsor an amendment very similar to this is not that we don't appreciate the services provided by the individual who was the administrator for our committee. It is that, you know, we feared that providing a job by statute for an individual named, or essentially named, is highly irregular and probably precedent setting, and therefore it did not sit comfortably with us. But it was never my intention in my amendment or in agreeing to the government's amendment that it would be interpreted in anything other than a technical fashion.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion on amendment carried]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you are aware, the other day when we were at second reading stage of Bill 57, my colleague the Member for Vegreville introduced at the end of Monday's session a number of amendments. We'd certainly like to go through them separately; that's the will of the committee. We have had occasion to chat with a number of members, and I believe that will be the agreement of the committee.

Mr. Chairman, the first amendment, which I'll ask the pages to hand out straightaway, deals with section 5(2). The wording in the proposed Act in 5(1) is:

A new Commission shall be appointed during the first session of the Legislature following every 2nd general election after the appointment of the last Commission.

Then it goes on into subsection (2):

Notwithstanding subsection (1), if less than 8 years has elapsed since the appointment of the last Commission, a new Commission shall be appointed

(a) no sooner than 8 years, and

(b) no later than 10 years

after the appointment of the last Commission.

It's the proposal of our amendment to strike subsection (2), which would then leave contained in the Act:

A new Commission shall be appointed during the first session of the Legislature following every 2nd general election after the appointment of the last Commission.

Now, we have currently in our legislation provision for a commission to be struck after every second general election. We've had committees that went back to 1983, following the '82 election. We had a committee sometime following the 1975 election, before the 1979 election, where we had boundary redistribution. It's always been after every second election.

What we've got here, though, is a provision that says we cannot have a commission struck sooner than eight years. Now, indeed, we can go up to eight years if we have every second election. There's no problem. But we can't have a commission struck sooner than eight years, and therein lies the problem. If



we have a commission that's struck in 1990, this month, it does its work in 1991 for the next election, which the Premier says is in 1994. But if we take the average of three and a half years, which is the average since the Progressive Conservative Party came to power in 1971 – the average had been three and a half years – that gives you a seven-year mandate for two elections from 1989, which gives you to 1996. We could go, with this, up to about 1999.

There's a problem with that. Don't forget that we're switching over from voter population to total population in the constituency to determine the size of the constituency. In that changeover we're now going to a census-based population rather than an enumeration-based population. With enumeration you would always know what your voter population is per constituency. With the census base we know what the total population is per constituency based on 1986 figures, the figures that are most recent. But if we allow two elections and up to eight years to pass from now, the 1986 census not only is dated now; it'll be especially dated. We won't even bother to use the 1991 census because eight years will not have passed. When we next have a commission, we would probably be using the 1996 census. So the time period is just too long to go without having a new commission struck. [interjection] Well, it should sound familiar, Frank. You were there when I mentioned this in committee. I'm glad you believe that you made this argument. Indeed you did. You supported the argument. I appreciate that. You listened carefully, you presented my argument well. I'm glad you did.

4:50

I'm sure the chairman remembers, I'm sure the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche remembers, the Member for Edmonton-Highlands probably remembers too, that one of the positions I tried to espouse was that we should have a commission struck after every census. In that we're switching from an enumerated base to a census base in gathering the information, I suggested that we should have a redistribution after every census; if not an enumeration, then at least a review by the Chief Electoral Officer's office to decide whether or not a commission should be struck, and that report would then come to the Assembly. But that was one of the areas that didn't appear in the report as a recommendation of the committee.

What we've got in the proposed legislation is the recommendation of the committee. We proposed to amend it to back to every second election, the current provision in current statute. Mr. Chairman, that would be consistent with British Columbia and Saskatchewan, and it would be consistent with what we have now. We feel that subsection (2) just provides too great a time period to elapse before a commission is struck. I think it's important that we get back to the provision that's in current statute.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to rise and speak against the amendment proposed and, in so doing, add some additional information to the remarks made by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Belmont.

It is true, as indicated by the previous speaker, that in the most recent electoral boundary redistributions conducted in the province, going back to 1976, the rule has been after every second general election. It's important, though, to go one step farther back in the process and to ensure that all hon. members

are aware that prior to that time, general redistributions in Alberta occurred every 10 years. The reason the change was made in 1976 was to take into account the very rapid population growth occurring within the province of Alberta. For that reason we moved from the standard used by most jurisdictions at the time, a general redistribution once every 10 years, to a general redistribution after every second general election.

While the committee was doing its work, a general election occurred in the province of Manitoba. Now, if our rules applied, the rules that are in the current legislation which this Bill proposes to amend, and we had followed the Manitoba scenario of two general elections in a 20-month period, we could see general redistribution of seats occur two years apart. That seemed to be a totally inappropriate use of funds for such a purpose. The current Act puts in the safeguard that the redistribution should occur not sooner than eight years but not more than 10 years.

I might further point out section 11 of the Act, which is a totally new section not contained in any previous Act and which requires the Chief Electoral Officer to report to the Assembly in his annual report immediately following a release of Canada census information, a list of those constituencies which fall outside the provisions of section 17. In other words, the Chief Electoral Officer will come back to this Assembly following the census-taking. The census will occur in Canada in 1991, and the results will be available in 1992. So in the Chief Electoral Officer's annual report, probably to be tabled in the spring of 1993 – by this legislation, the Chief Electoral Officer is required to indicate those constituencies which are either above or below the plus/minus 25 percent figure. So a further safeguard has been put in place. With the explanation given and the safeguard explained, I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, that the amendment proposed should indeed be accepted.

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to rise in support of this particular amendment. The Member for Taber-Warner refers to the responsibility of the Chief Electoral Officer to report, and that is contained in another section of this proposed Bill 57, which we are discussing today. However, the concern that I have with respect to that particular issue, talking about the length of time between redistributions: although the Chief Electoral Officer is required to report, there is nothing in here that suggests that the Legislative Assembly has to do anything with that report. So although, yes, the Chief Electoral Officer will report after every federal census, which, the hon. Member for Taber-Warner argues, solves the concerns that have been raised, I would argue that in fact it does not because there is no requirement for the Legislature to do anything with the report.

I think the arguments put forward by the Member for Edmonton-Belmont are substantially the same arguments I have made in the past as well, that allowing a potential time gap of possibly 13 years to elapse before we get new data for a new commission in 1999 is simply too long a span of time.

So I would cease my comments there in the hope that we can expedite the entire process and support the amendment by the Member for Edmonton-Belmont.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion on amendment lost]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Further? The Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have an amendment I wish to put forward to the committee, if it could be distributed at this time. My amendment strikes out section 12(a), 12(b), and 12(c). It strikes out section 13 and puts in the words "The Commission shall divide Alberta into 83 proposed electoral divisions." The amendment further strikes out sections 14 and 15.

I think the purpose of this amendment is quite clear. What it does is untie the hands of the commission. It says to those people we give the task of drawing electoral boundaries that they should do what's fair and reasonable and in the public interest, having regard for the laws of this country, including the Constitution of Canada. Now, I think there's a very good reason for doing this. What we want is some measure of independence in the process, and hopefully we can structure a commission which will have independently minded people, people who don't have partisan axes to grind in terms of the boundaries, people who are sensitive to some of the important concerns that have been put forward by members of this Assembly and people in public hearings. What people out there want is, number one, fairness in the political system and, number two, to have access to the political system through their elected member and through all of the elected members of the Assembly collectively. I believe that untying the hands of the commission, taking away the fetters and the bonds which are embedded in this legislation, will achieve that.

5:00

You know, when I attempted to explain to one of my constituents the way the government was handling this issue back in 1989, I explained about the select committee of the Legislature which was touring the province holding public hearings, and they asked me, "Well, does that mean this Legislature committee is going to be drawing new boundaries?" I said, "No; what they're going to do is recommend a new process for the drawing of boundaries," to which the reply was, "You mean we've got a committee to study the committee." I guess I had to admit that that's sort of what the government had proposed, and the final reply was, "Well, this must be a government operation, having a committee to study a committee."

It turns out that the select committee went a little further than the mandate of studying the commission and setting up a process. They went so far as to hamper the commission in ways which are inappropriate. I recognize, Mr. Chairman, that now we're dealing with government legislation which in effect adopts the report of that committee. But by saying to the city of Calgary, "You have a quota of 19 seats," that neither more nor less than 19 shall they have, and also, in the case of the city of Edmonton, 17 seats, and saying that there's got to be two in Lethbridge, one in Medicine Hat, one only in Red Deer, one in Fort McMurray, and one that is entirely inside the county of Strathcona, including Sherwood Park, which I think most people would take to mean a Sherwood Park riding – what that does is compromise the ability of the members of this electoral commission to do the job we want them to do.

I think we should have the courage of our convictions if we believe in a politically independent process. If we believe it's important to get MLAs off the commission for that reason, then we should have the courage of our convictions to say to that commission: "Here's Alberta. Here's the problem. You come up with a solution." But, no; the committee doesn't do that and

the government doesn't do it. It comes out with a whole list of criteria, and when you work it out, it means of necessity that on average urban ridings have to be larger in size than nonurban ridings. They have no choice in that; they can't come back with something which on average is fair to people, that treats people in a similar fashion.

I'm not talking about making every riding equal. I'm not talking about some of the things that lead to the virulent anti-American rhetoric that we suddenly get from this government that spent all the taxpayers' money supporting a free trade agreement with the United States in the context of the federal election campaign. I'm not talking about that at all. I'm talking about the duty we all have and that the commission would have to have a look at the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have a look at the notion that Canadians, every person governed by the Charter, are equal under the law save for certain exceptions which are demonstrably necessary in a democratic society. In the second reading debate I dwelt at some length on precisely what those criteria are. But all of that material is accessible to the commission. The commission has the ability to look at the Constitution of Canada and has, I would wager, ability to interpret the Constitution at least equal to that of the PC members of that Legislature committee which drafted these rules. I think, you know, given that at least one of them will be a judge, perhaps you might even say their ability to interpret the Constitution is better. Maybe it couldn't be worse.

I think what we have in this legislation is a set of rules designed to foreshadow and predetermine the outcome. The government is not prepared at this stage to say, well, let's have an independent commission look at the problems of sparse population, look at the problems of representation, look at the history of community interests, and look at some of the various variables which have been put forward both in Madam Justice McLachlin's decision and in the committee report and in other places as well. Why should we as the Legislative Assembly set so many rules that the outcome is predetermined? I think that's really a very significant matter of detail in this legislation, and I'm asking the committee to consider untying the hands of this commission and saying: "All right, you've got a job to do, and we want you to do it. We want you to be fair and reasonable in the public interest." So I submit that we should untie their hands and allow them to do their job.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Calgary-Foothills.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to just make a couple of brief comments with regard to the amendment as presented by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. I think it's important to realize that the redistribution rules in part 2 of this Act were really a result of the public hearing process, and I think it's very important, particularly in section 12, the definitions of multimunicipality and single-municipality electoral divisions. This was specifically designed with the intent to try to get away from the connotation of urban/rural splits within this province. We felt it was very important to be sure that people felt that this Legislature truly represented all the people of the province, and this was something that was brought up at public hearings time and time again. Those terms were adopted to help eliminate the concept of urban/rural splits, so I think they're important to have in place.

I think it's also important that through consultation with previous members of commissions, their advice and expertise led us to believe it was important that the commission have specific

direction, and they felt more comfortable when the direction came from the Legislature as opposed to from people that were appointed to a body, because we are the people who are responsible for the legislation for this province, not an appointed commission. That's why the instructions to the commission were deemed to be necessary and to be quite specific by nature. I think it's important to keep in mind that this wasn't something that came out of the blue, that it was definitely through expert advice and consultation that we decided to be specific in the legislation. So I think that's important.

I think, more importantly, that sections 14, 15, and 16 are clearly the wishes of the people of the province through the public hearing process.

For that reason I would have to very much oppose this amendment and hope that all members would see fit to vote against it. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you. No; I'd very much like to speak in favour of this particular amendment, Mr. Chairman. The previous speaker just said that many of the citizens of this province supported this. Well, where's the evidence for that? I know you held public hearings and you had a large number of people that appeared before your committee, but when you have mayors of large cities come before you and others that tell you there should be more equitable representation, how do you dismiss the fact that they represent in some cases 700,000 people? No; in fact, these particular sections that we're doing are critical to this Bill in the sense that they're the ones that create all of the electoral unfairness. So I think this amendment as proposed by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place has to be adopted by this Assembly.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Calder.

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I rise to support this amendment on Bill 57. We've heard in second reading on the principle of the Bill many of the members in the Legislature talk about rural and urban splits. I think that was unfortunate, because what we're talking about when we're talking about fair representation is just that: we're talking about equity when it comes to voting, and equality. I think the process was very important, where the committee did go around the province and gather information from many Albertans. That process was indeed important, and I don't think, as my colleague from Calgary-Forest Lawn has just said, that many of the presenters would agree with what is in this particular section of this Bill.

5:10

Certainly part 2, the redistribution rules in this Bill, I believe encourages the idea that we do have an urban/rural split when it comes to electoral boundaries. When we talk about voter equality and fairness, we're talking about Albertans electing governments that will deal with issues that affect all Albertans. It certainly seems to me that part 2 of this Bill was created to protect the current number of seats, especially in rural Alberta. We've heard in previous debate on this Bill that perhaps many of the government members will have to run against each other for nominations, et cetera. Certainly, when I look at this section and I look at the detail in it and the kinds of stipulations it's

going to place on the commission, I really have to wonder what the objective was to put this in such detail in this particular Bill.

I think the commission needs to have the freedom to go out and divide Alberta into 83 proposed electoral divisions, and that is exactly what this amendment would achieve. The commission will not be able to do this in a fair way if they have to comply with all of the sections in this particular part of the Bill. I can only conclude, Mr. Chairman, that the reason why this particular section was put in, and the number of sections in here, is certainly to protect, I would say, perhaps many of the members in this Legislative Assembly. I think that's unfortunate. I do believe the commission needs the freedom to go out and, like I have said, divide Alberta into the 83 proposed electoral divisions, because what we want to achieve is fairness; what we want to achieve is voter equality. That to me is the fundamental objective of this whole process, and this particular section certainly doesn't allow that to happen.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The mover of the amendment made reference to provisions in the Bill hampering the commission, that we might in some way compromise the members of the commission with the provisions of the Bill, and therefore the amendments as proposed by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place would give the commission a free hand.

It might be appropriate, Mr. Chairman, for the hon. mover of the amendment to go back and review some of the *Hansard* transcripts of the committee work. I would draw the member's particular attention to the transcripts of September 21, 1989, and December 11, 1989, when we met with the Hon. Mr. Justice Tevie Miller, the Associate Chief Justice of the province, and the Hon. Mr. Justice Russell Dixon. These two gentlemen chaired previous electoral boundaries commissions, and in reviewing the transcripts, I'm certain the hon. member will see that both individuals spoke very freely to the committee and very openly about their experiences. They discussed both the advantages and the disadvantages of the process.

As well, I might draw the hon. member's attention to the Out-of-province travel the committee made to the provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and British Columbia and some of the lessons the committee learned during those travels. The very candid remarks made by the former chairman of the Saskatchewan boundaries commission are an example of that. We saw vividly – and indeed members of the same caucus that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place represents expressed to us genuine concerns in Manitoba with the way the legislation had been drafted and the freedom given to the commission. The hon. member refers to freedom. The reference used in Manitoba was lack of direction to the commission so that the commission could accurately go about its work reflecting the will of the Legislative Assembly, the highest court in the land.

We saw in Manitoba where the rules are much tighter than they are here, indeed tighter than in any other province, with a plus or minus 10 percent variation. Even with those tight rules we saw the commission, a commission made up entirely of members from the city of Winnipeg – we saw two rural seats disappear, one in the northern part of the province held by the New Democratic Party and one in the southern part of the province held by the governing Conservative Party, and two more seats added to the city of Winnipeg. That didn't have to happen. They didn't have to do that. They could have redistributed the seats and stayed within the parameters as outlined.

So when the hon. member speaks of hampering the commission or in some way compromising the commission, I think it's very important that we go back and reflect on what previous commission members have told us, what advice they've given us, and the requests they've made in terms of the kind of guidelines and direction they expect to see. The hon. member may also wish to review the transcripts of our own Chief Electoral Officer, his comments relative to the kind of direction which this Assembly should indeed be giving to the commission.

The hon. member cited Edmonton and Calgary and indicated that Edmonton is limited to 17 seats and Calgary to 19. I would draw to the hon. member's attention section 15(e)(ii), which clearly allows for multimunicipality constituencies to come into either Edmonton or Calgary or any other city in the province. I indicate to the member that, indeed, if there were several constituencies around the city of Edmonton, as an example, that were multimunicipality, that might strengthen arguments made by the 17 members for the city of Edmonton. I cite my own example, where through an annexation a portion of the Taber-Warner constituency became part of the city of Lethbridge, which included a hamlet, the hamlet of Hardieville. I've met occasionally with the mayor and members of city council, not as frequently as my colleagues from Lethbridge-West or Lethbridge-East, but I was included in some of the discussions, and the mayor referred to me as the city's third MLA. I jokingly referred back that I was one-thirty-second MLA for the city of Lethbridge.

That was not a bad system. It worked. Indeed, I draw to the members' attention that when redistribution did occur and the Electoral Boundaries Commission in its interim report took the Hardieville area out of the Taber-Warner constituency and transferred it to one of the Lethbridge ridings, a petition was circulated and a delegation went to the meeting in Vulcan and asked that Hardieville stay within the constituency of Taber-Warner. Now, why was that done? It was done because the people associated more directly with people in the constituency of Taber-Warner. Hardieville was more like a hamlet, like Wrentham or New Dayton, than it was a new, developed part of the city of Lethbridge. So I think that by giving the opportunity to the commission – and it's clear to stress that point – in this case the commission is not being directed. The opportunity is there, and citizens have the opportunity in recently annexed areas of Edmonton, as an example, to indicate whether they would like to stay within one of the single-municipality constituencies or indeed if they would like to be part of a multimunicipality constituency. That choice is there.

I wanted to comment on another remark made, that the mayors of the two largest cities in the province came out, and did we listen to them? I want to assure the hon. member that we certainly did. We heard from 194 municipal councils in this province – 194. Now, we didn't treat the two largest as if they had a veto, and I certainly hope that wasn't the suggestion of the hon. member. Because if it is, I'd be interested in the hon. member's views as they relate to the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Do we believe that the Premiers of Ontario and Quebec have a veto over affairs in this country because they happen to represent the largest collection of population within the country? Does that make them first-class provinces and the other eight second-class provinces, the fact that the mayors of the two largest cities have one particular point of view? Should that point of view be taken over the views put forward by the vast majority of the other 192 municipalities that came forward? No. What I'm saying to the hon. member is that if he checks – and it's all in *Hansard*; it's all on the table, open to public

scrutiny – he'll find that the vast majority of municipalities asked for the kind of report and, indeed, legislation that was developed. The report reflected what the committee heard, and the legislation is based on the report.

So I would conclude, Mr. Chairman, by urging members to defeat the motion as put forward.

5:20

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't like the way some of the witnesses in front of the committee have had their comments distorted. One has to put this matter in context. If you ask somebody from a previous commission without telling them you're even contemplating going for any sort of plus/minus rule, "Do you want explicit instructions or general instructions?" they'd be stupid if they didn't say they wanted explicit instructions. If you told them you were going to target for, say, plus/minus 10 percent or even right on the button at average population for each of the 83 electoral divisions, to ask them then do they want tight instructions or loose instructions is practically an insult.

Maybe you don't get the picture. The point is this: if you have a principle to which you are to adhere, you don't need instructions to say that there shall be X number of seats in a city, Y number of seats in another city, and go down the line and define them one at a time. Presumably you're going to strike a commission of people who are competent and who can figure out that the overriding principle is their chief guiding rule, nothing else. I think it is wrong to suggest that these expert witnesses urged us as a committee to give them such explicit instructions as reflected in this Bill and in particular in this part of this Bill. To suggest that you cannot have multimunicipal ridings unless you have an explicit reference to such a creature in legislation is nonsense as long as you've already got a principle to which the commission is to adhere. Get the picture? I don't know how much clearer it could be. If you had a good rule, you don't need any of these other instructions.

The fact of the matter is that these little rules are all meant to find a way to ensure that the representation from certain parts of the province remains similar if not identical to the current configuration of that representation. There is no reason multimunicipality divisions cannot exist. You don't have to spell that out, just like you don't have to spell out that there will be two electoral divisions for the city of Grande Prairie, one which will consist of part of the city of Grande Prairie and all or part of one or more other municipalities. You don't have to spell out, for instance, that in the example of Red Deer you'll have one that is strictly within the municipal district of Red Deer and one that is partly in the municipal district of Red Deer and partly outside the municipal district of Red Deer. It doesn't take a genius to figure out how to apply a rule.

There's a reason I sent around the copy of the amendment that I will be sponsoring soon, and it is to put this argument into context for clarity of the members contemplating it. If you tell the commission to divide Alberta into 83 proposed electoral divisions, and you then tell the commission that under no circumstances shall the variation from the mean population exceed 25 percent, and you further tell the commission that where it "deems it possible and reasonable," each division "be near the average population of all the proposed electoral divisions," guess what? You are forced to a logical conclusion. You ain't got no choice. You don't have to have another rule

that says: "Oh, and under this circumstance we want X seats, and under that circumstance we want Y seats, and under other circumstances we want multimunicipality seats, and under other circumstances we want single-municipality seats." That is for the commission to determine.

The commission can go out and listen to people and say: "Hey, gee, you're right at the edge of Edmonton and, you know, if we leave one riding that's right at the edge of Edmonton the way it is, it's too big. It would be, oh, 5, 10, 20 percent over the mean population, and we're told to try to get close to equal in population. But if we split it up, it would be slightly under. How would you guys like to join in a new constituency that abuts the city and maybe overlaps a little bit of this jurisdiction, and that way we solve the problem?" Well, people living in that constituency might say, "Well, that'd be all right as long as you observed the river. The river is really important when it comes to what makes sense." Or observe a certain district line, maybe an improvement district line or railway line. Then guess what? They haven't violated any rule if they give you that new creature, have they? Because the rule wasn't there in the first place. If they haven't violated any rule, why do you need the rule there? The only reason you need the rule there is because the intent of this legislation as a package is to allow a majority of ridings that are not within what are now euphemistically called single-municipal districts to maintain a higher ratio of voting power than those which are currently in what are now called single-municipal voting districts and the voting power that those constituents have. That's what this is about.

If this legislation said "plus or minus 25 at the outside but go for even plus or minus 10 percent on the inside," you'd be moving towards voter equality. But this section of explicit directions, Mr. Chairman, is to accomplish one thing and one thing only: to accommodate the legitimized and possibly legal carving up of the province in such a way as to change very little in terms of rural representation versus urban representation and get away with it. My guess is that unless the commission is of a mind that it understands the plus or minus 25 percent instructions as a tolerable limit and has in mind that the unspoken intention was that we move towards voter equality, what you will have is approximately 18 or 20 percent over the average population for most of . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, I hesitate to interrupt.

MS BARRETT: One more minute. I'll adjourn debate.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We do have to move out of committee, but please proceed.

MS BARRETT: Oh, I see; that's right. Okay. Yeah, I'll move to adjourn debate.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion by the Member for Edmonton-Highlands, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Those opposed, please say no. The motion is carried.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report progress.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration certain Bills. The committee reports progress on Bill 57. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by the Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. [interjection] Order please.

MR. TAYLOR: I'll be all right as soon as I shower, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Do we have an option to send you to the shower, or what?

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Thank you for concurrence in the report.

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

