

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Wednesday, March 27, 1991**

2:30 p.m.

Date: 91/03/27

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

O Lord, grant us a daily awareness of the precious gift of life which You have given us.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly we dedicate our lives anew to the service of our province and our country.

Amen.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

### Bill 12

#### Rural Electrification Long Term Financing Amendment Act, 1991

MR. THURBER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 12, the Rural Electrification Long Term Financing Amendment Act, 1991.

The main purpose of this Bill is to provide long-term financing to farmers for electric installations. The amendment would strengthen security of government-guaranteed loans and provide for interest rates to be set by regulations.

[Leave granted; Bill 12 read a first time]

### Bill 20

#### Rural Electrification Revolving Fund Amendment Act, 1991

MR. THURBER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 20, the Rural Electrification Revolving Fund Amendment Act, 1991.

The main purpose of this Act is to provide short-term financing to farmers for electric installations. The amendment would, again, strengthen security of government-guaranteed loans and provide for interest rates to be set by regulation.

[Leave granted; Bill 20 read a first time]

### Bill 21

#### Rural Utilities Amendment Act, 1991

MR. THURBER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 21, the Rural Utilities Amendment Act, 1991.

The main purpose is to specify the criteria for establishing member-owned rural utilities and their business affairs. The amendments would strengthen security of government-guaranteed loans to farmers, require easements to be filed for underground utility lines for public safety, and clarify obligations of rural utility associations and the rights of a member with regard to idle risers.

[Leave granted; Bill 21 read a first time]

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bills 12, 20, and 21 be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MS MCCOY: It's my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to table two annual reports, one for 1988 to 1989 and the other for 1989 to 1990, both for the Department of Labour.

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, as the acting Provincial Treasurer I am pleased to table the report pursuant to section 31(6) of the Legislative Assembly Act, year ended March 31, 1990, of the statement of payments to MLAs and direct associates and, secondly, the report pursuant to section 43(4) of the Leg. Assembly Act, year ended March 31, 1990, of the reports of amounts paid to MLAs on boards.

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file the Northern Alberta Development Council research report entitled Mental Health in Northern Alberta and along with that a position paper entitled Addressing the Issues, on the same topic of mental health.

head: **Introduction of Special Guests**

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Advanced Education, followed by the Member for Drumheller.

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The University of Alberta has one of the finest medical schools in the country, and we have with us today representatives of the Medical Students' Association. On March 11, I had the opportunity of meeting with them and speaking with them and came away with the assurance that I'm the epitome of good health. Mr. Philip Yoon and Derek Borowka are seated in the members' gallery. I would ask them to rise and be welcomed by members of the Assembly.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to call members' attention to your page, who unfortunately has had to be active in her duties. Here she is: Darya Fustukian. She's a very special person in the following respects: she has maintained first-class honours in high school, she finished an advanced diploma in two years, she is the provincial winner of the Cayley mathematics contest, sponsored by the University of Waterloo, she will be representing our province on the provincial debating team that is going to the national tournament in Vancouver and Victoria, and Rotary international has selected her to study in Copenhagen, Denmark, next year. Also with us today are her mother, Sharie Dewar, and her father, David Fustukian, and her sister Suraya Fustukian, who are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. I would like all members of the Legislature to give them warm recognition.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Redwater-Andrew, followed by the Member for Red Deer-North.

MR. ZARUSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure today for me to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a friend of mine and also of this government, Mr. Mike Senych, who is a former member of this Legislature and is now a Thorhild village councillor. He's seated in the members' gallery, and I ask that he rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, we're honoured today to be visited by 18 students from St. Patricks community school. They are accompanied by their teachers Mr. Greg Hall and Mr. Maurice

Bourassa, and I would invite them to stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Calder.

MS MJOLSNES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly two people that work at the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers: Mr. Thomas Grauman and Mr. Leszek Walter. I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Solicitor General.

MR. FOWLER: Thank you. Earlier this afternoon the Metis Elders' Visitation Program Agreement between the Metis zone 2 regional council and my department was executed in this building. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly Mr. August Collins, vice-president of zone 2 regional council, Metis elders, members of Metis zone 2 regional council, and others in attendance today. I would ask Mr. Collins and his party to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

2:40

### Oral Question Period

#### Hospital Service Contracts

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health. Last week the Misericordia hospital in Edmonton announced to the workers in its laundry facility that it will contract out its laundry services. We have done some investigating and – surprise, surprise – the firm that won the contract, K-Bro Linen Systems Inc., turns out to be a loyal friend of the government and the Conservative Party. We find that the K-Bro group of companies has received \$3 million from Vencap, has been a consistent corporate contributor to the Conservative Party, and has already received extensive business from this government. My question to the Minister of Health: I wonder if the minister can explain these facts and tell us if K-Bro won this contract because it is more efficient or, instead, because it is a friend of this government and the Conservative Party?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, it really sounds like a question that should probably go on the Order Paper, but I can assure the hon. member that if the Misericordia hospital has chosen to contract out a portion of its nonmedical services, I will be pleased to provide that information to the House and to assure them that it was the best use of health dollars for that facility and for the region in Edmonton.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, that remains very debatable. It's probably the best use for the Conservative Party; there's no doubt about that. This has nothing to do with efficiency and saving money. I would report to the Minister of Health that a 1989 study of the costs of in-house laundry versus privatized laundry services done by the American Medical Association reveals that in-house services are cheaper by 41 percent for a hospital the size of the Misericordia. That's the reality. My question to the minister, then, is this: how does the minister justify this privatization move when it's obviously going to be more costly to the taxpayers of Alberta?

MS BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely fascinated that the opposition, who are such the critics of the American health system with respect to privatization, would use

American data to compare to a universal, publicly-funded system in Canada. It doesn't mix.

The second issue, Mr. Speaker, is that we are certainly looking at the contracting out of nonmedical services, including things like laundry services, including things like dietary services. The reason we're looking at those kinds of options, the reason the Misericordia, for example, is participating with all hospitals in the Edmonton metro region on looking at laundry costs and how they can get better value out of those laundry costs, is because that is exactly what we're attempting to do with health dollars. The allegations made in the member's questions are exceedingly serious, and I would invite him to put the question on the Order Paper and get the facts straight.

MR. McEACHERN: Why?

MS BETKOWSKI: Why? Because I believe it's important that we get the facts straight. These are issues of using health dollars in the best possible way, Mr. Speaker, and that is what the Misericordia and many other facilities around this province are doing, even though the New Democrats don't like it.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the reality to this government is that we are moving towards the American system. This is what this study shows is inefficient. If she was concerned about taxpayers' money instead of rewarding their friends, she would be concerned about this study.

I notice that last year the hon. Member for Barrhead said that contracting out services in his constituency, and I quote: would be inefficient and ineffective, and I have *Hansard* to prove this. For once the Member for Barrhead was right. I want to ask this minister this: simply flowing from such great authorities as the Member for Barrhead and the American Medical Association, will this minister now wake up and smell the coffee and admit that this move will cost Albertans more money in the long run, degrade the pay of workers, and it frankly . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. [interjections] Thank you.

MS BETKOWSKI: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Remind them of the sick elk at Barrhead.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, Westlock-Sturgeon, so the minister can at least get started.

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I will not admit to that. Frankly, what may work in one region of the province in terms of a cost saving on nonmedical services and contracting out may be a very different scene in another part of the province. Where there is a private player out there, the hospitals themselves have made these decisions. There has been absolutely no direction from this minister to choose one over the other but rather to use the health dollars in the best possible way.

The second point is that we are not moving to an Americanization of the Canadian system. This government and this minister are committed to this Canadian health care system. In fact, if the truth be known, the Americans are moving to the Canadianization of their system, to our credit.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of probably one of the few consistent positions that the NDs have placed on health, which is that they don't like the private sector being involved in the delivery of health. Well, let them go and argue with the Canadian Mental Health Association, the AIDS Network of

Edmonton, Boyle McCauley: people running our health system who aren't directly part of government. I think there's a complement going on here, which is that all Albertans are . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. I want to get through question period today.

MR. MARTIN: You know, it's going to cost 41 percent more. You tell us how that's efficient when it ends up costing us a lot more money.

### Health Care Funding

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, moving from one damaging health care move to another. Last week 300 jobs were slashed at the Calgary General. Now this government's slash and burn approach to health care has just resulted in the elimination of 54 more jobs at the Edmonton board of health. Now, the board spokesman said that these layoffs mean patients will have to wait longer for services. The president of the Association of Registered Nurses calls the cuts devastating to health care, and the executive director of the Health Unit Association of Alberta fears that the provincial health system is unable to meet its obligations.

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry. [interjection] Sorry. We're now up to well over a minute on the preamble. Could I have the question, please?

MR. MARTIN: My question to this minister is very simply: will the minister tell us if all of these health care professionals are wrong?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'll certainly tell the Leader of the Opposition that he's wrong when he says that we have slashed the home care budget. The Edmonton board of health budget this year over last has increased by 12.8 percent. If he is suggesting that the public health side of health be exempt from the fiscal realities in managing their budgets well in the context of the '90s, I don't agree with him.

MR. MARTIN: The minister knows that that was last year's budget, and it had to do with the GST, inflation at 6 percent, pay for the nurses' settlement, and demand being up 50 percent. Don't hand us that, Madam Minister.

The Rainbow report said that health care would be improved by enhancing community-based services. One week ago today the minister stood in this House and said: home care is something that I support. Mr. Speaker, given the minister's own words and the recommendation of her own government's report, can the minister explain her decision to force the board of health to slash their services?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I did not force the board of health to slash services. What we did provide for the Edmonton board of health, and I repeat because the member obviously didn't hear it, was a 12.8 percent increase this year. Community health has increased this year, in '90-91, over '89-90 by about 11 and a half percent. On the other side, the acute care side of our budget has increased by about 8 and a half percent. As I indicated to the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar when she asked the same question about two weeks ago, that is a statement of priority. We are shifting our health system more onto the community side. It's a very different scene than was the case

in our province 10 years ago, when we were having more increases on the acute care side and less on the community. The statement of priority is that we are moving, consistent with the Rainbow report, towards more community-based support services, and the numbers speak for themselves.

2:50

MR. MARTIN: The numbers speak for themselves all right: 54 down the tube. Everybody's fault but hers. Everybody else is wrong but her. She must be taking lessons from the minister of technology and communications.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is obvious: the government is slashing health care right across the board, through the board of health at the preventative end to what we've seen at the Calgary General at the illness end. Health care is in absolute chaos because of this government. My question to the minister: given that the government is firing workers, closing hospital beds, degrading jobs through rank patronage, and eliminating preventative care, will the minister explain to Albertans how this shows her government's commitment to health care?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, first of all, it's not a matter of anybody looking for where to lay blame; it's a matter of everybody accepting their responsibility. We want to use our health dollars in the best possible way so we can get the best value out of them so we've got a health system 20 years down the road. Believe me; it's a challenge and it's a big one and it's one that we're working on very consistently.

One of the issues with respect to the Edmonton board of health which I think is important to put on the record with their 12.8 percent increase is the fact that they have made the decision through the board, which is entrusted with the role of providing leadership in that health unit, to go from 11 sites of health unit offices down to nine. Although that wouldn't perhaps be as convenient as all of us would like, nonetheless the board is working through its own fiscal management plan to ensure that they do not carry a deficit. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I'm not an advocate of them carrying a deficit, because they're then using the health dollars to pay for debt as opposed to health services, and I don't think that's a situation that any of us would support.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry on behalf of the Liberal Party.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, before I put my questions to the Premier, I'd like to thank the Premier for the sad news about the hon. Member for Peace River. On behalf of my colleagues in the Liberal caucus, we wish the hon. member a speedy recovery.

### Pension Liability

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, 30,000 teachers are now writing letters to members of this Assembly and talking to members of this Assembly asking for action to be taken on the huge unfunded pension liability that exists in our province. My first question to the Premier is this: given that the government has not met, as I understand it, with representatives from each of these pension plans, do we conclude, Mr. Premier, that the government has concluded that it will force participants in these various government plans to help pay that \$9 billion unfunded pension debt?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I assume the hon. leader of the Liberal Party was anticipating that the Provincial Treasurer might be here today to deal with matters under his responsibility. I'll draw this to his attention. Nevertheless, the Minister of Education is here. The Provincial Treasurer and the Minister of Education are working hand in hand in this matter, and the Minister of Education may wish to comment in a reply to the leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, at a meeting on January 8 the Minister of Education met with the table officers of the Alberta Teachers' Association and subsequent to that had a meeting with the Teachers' Retirement Fund board of administrators. The dialogue on this very important issue, an issue of great concern to the Alberta Teachers' Association and its members as well as to this provincial government, is well under way. I appreciate the hon. member's interest in seeing it come to a satisfactory conclusion.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, we have the teachers mobilized. There are five other plans. I wonder if the Premier will agree and commit to having his ministers meet with the various pension plan representatives to continue that dialogue and to complete that dialogue.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think it was just yesterday or maybe the day before when the Provincial Treasurer dealt with this matter and said that he would be bringing recommendations to the cabinet and to caucus and would then participate in a consultative process with the parties involved. That still stands. We recognize the importance of the issue, and the Provincial Treasurer, working with other members of cabinet, will be going through an assessment of options, consultation with the interested parties, and then work towards a solution.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Treasurer and the government have been saying this same thing for two years now, and nothing has happened. Each year this unfunded pension liability gets greater. I wonder if the Premier would agree to commit to the creation of a special task force that would examine this issue much like Ontario did: have hearings, consult with people, and report back recommendations to this Assembly for action.

MR. GETTY: Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Liberal Party is completely incorrect with the lead-in to his question. The government has not been saying the same thing for two years; the Provincial Treasurer said this just 48 hours ago. I think he's given a responsible answer, a responsible course of action, and we will be coming up with solutions which I hope all members of the Assembly will support when they become available for discussion in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Member for Three Hills, followed by Edmonton-Jasper Place.

### **Tuberculosis in Livestock**

MRS. OSTERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are calls coming from cattle producers and I understand a formal comment made by the Cattle Commission as well about the TB outbreak in both elk and subsequently some cattle. Now, they are concerned about the potential effect on our export industry

if the herds are not dealt with expeditiously and, as well, possible pressure to open the U.S. border prematurely, which could put our elk and cattle industry in jeopardy. To the Minister of Agriculture: could he inform the members what positive role the province can play in dealing with this matter?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I too have heard concerns from the Cattle Commission. The major concern is the message to hurry up and get this issue of the TB dealt with. My understanding is that they're comfortable with the process that's been carried out many times in the past with respect to cattle. I think we should also all recognize that the province is in no way involved in the eradication process, because disease control is the responsibility of Agriculture Canada. I think all members of the Assembly should realize that for the same reason we are not involved whatsoever in the compensation for these animals and for that matter have not been requested to become involved by either the game growers or the federal government.

I think all members should also realize that there is certainly no connection between the outbreak of TB in elk in this province and the debate on Bill 31 in this Legislature. I think they should also all realize that even when Bill 31 is proclaimed, the control of import/export remains where it has always been: with fishery and wildlife.

The only thing I would make in closing would be that if we'd had the foresight to pass a Bill 31 two or three years ago so that we had the meat inspection system as part of the control of the disease, we may not be dealing with this issue today.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, that leads me to my supplementary, which I would ask of the Minister of Health because we're talking about meat inspection now. It is my understanding that we potentially import meat from Saskatchewan, where there is a slaughtering plant for wild game. There's an awful lot of discussion out in the public, maybe most of it is misinformation, as to how people may be affected, and we're aware that there has been one case contracted already. I wonder if the Minister of Health could give us an explanation in layman's terms, not in a lot of medical terms, as to what the public can expect or should expect or should or should not be worried about.

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, it is true that the same tuberculosis strain which causes the disease in animals can be passed to humans, but it is primarily done by being involved with fluids from the animal body. Meat is seldom infected. As a result of the testing that we do in this province, there has been one confirmed case to date that has been attributed to tuberculosis in elk. It was the case of a veterinarian who was caring for and operating on that elk and was in touch with the body fluids.

What we are doing through Dr. Fanning and the tuberculosis services of the provincial Department of Health is contacting as many of those people involved in the industry as we possibly can to advise them that if they have been in contact or are concerned that they might have come in contact with the animals to present themselves to their local health unit for testing. It is certainly not an outbreak, Mr. Speaker. I can confirm today that only one test out of 110 that have been tested so far has confirmed the disease of tuberculosis.

### **3:00 Natural Resources Conservation Board**

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, he's not often speechless, but twice in this very young session the Minister of the Environment has been unable to answer the question of whether the tripling

of the Swan Hills capacity will go to the Natural Resources Conservation Board for hearings or not. Today the government announced that the Buffalo Lake project is proceeding. Surprise, surprise: no hearings of the Natural Resources Conservation Board, depriving Albertans of the due process of law that they're entitled to. My question is to the Premier as the head of government. I'd like him to reveal the hidden agenda here. How many of these projects are going through ahead of the NRCB? We've got Buffalo Lake, Swan Hills, Kan-Alta Golf, Bow Valley, Three Sisters. Where does it end?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it may well be that the Minister of the Environment will want to once again straighten out the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. I should point out to him that there is nothing going ahead except three respected Albertans who are conducting public hearings on the matter. They will be holding them, and the decisions will be as a result of their recommendations. So what is going ahead is a process of consultation with the people of Alberta. That is what the government has committed to. We have the information from Mr. DeSorcy that the NRCB will not be ready and that this item has all the documents and all the information to go ahead, and he thinks it's appropriate that it should. Then we get three respected Albertans to carry out that assessment in a public way. I think that's just being responsible.

MR. McINNIS: I'll tell you what's going ahead, Mr. Speaker: a project that's a loser from an economic point of view, according to the EIA, by \$2 million. More importantly, almost all of the benefits, \$9 million out of 10, go to the property owners in the vicinity of the lake in the form of development benefits. Surprise, surprise. Now, I'd like to ask the Premier in view of the fact that he has property within a short five-iron shot of the lake, if he would indicate how he feels about taxpayers' money going to support a project which is an economic loser and benefits only the property owners in the area?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, what a . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry, Mr. Premier. That's not within your responsibility to answer.

#### **Worksite Safety**

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, under the oil well servicing regulations employers in the oil industry can apply to have their employees exempted from three requirements under the Employment Standards Code. These include statutory hours and days of work and rest; secondly, overtime pay; and thirdly, the maintenance of daily time sheets. A permit is then negotiated between the employer and the employment standards branch to define the hours and pay the employer must abide by. My question is to the minister responsible for Occupational Health and Safety. Since the employment standards branch has informed us that they don't have enough staff to monitor and enforce compliance with the permits, especially respecting hours of work and rest, and, secondly, that they are a complaint-driven office, what is the minister doing to ensure the safety of these workers?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of that concern being raised before this. I think probably it's a matter for the Minister of Labour to take under consideration. The safety rules on every worksite are the same across the province of

Alberta. If he is informed of a matter that needs investigation, then I wish the hon. member would let us know, and we'd make sure that one of our inspectors would visit the site.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, let me remind the minister that these are supposedly regulations that apply to the health and safety of workers of Alberta.

I will direct my second question to the Minister of Labour. Will the minister initiate the necessary amendments to allow for the participation of employees in the process of those permits that have a direct effect on the health and safety of oil field contract workers?

MS McCOY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd be more than willing to review such a suggestion if it were brought to me in more detail.

MR. SPEAKER: Athabasca-Lac La Biche, followed by Stony Plain.

#### **Pulp Mill Emissions**

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the hon. Minister of the Environment. We all know that Alberta has set the highest environmental standards presently achievable for pulp mill effluent. We all know the importance of this issue, and I'm glad the opposition knows that too. Will the minister give some assurance to this Assembly and the northern native communities in Alberta and the territories that our mills in Alberta are meeting these high standards that are set?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, indeed, as the hon. member points out, we have established the highest achievable standards relative to pulp mill operations certainly anywhere in this country, perhaps in the world. One of the good news stories that I'm sure the opposition would just love to hear is that not only have we set the highest standards, but the pulp mills in northern Alberta are not coming anywhere near to meeting their licence limits.

I would like to file with the House three documents that show how well these mills are performing relative to chlorinated organics, relative to total suspended solids, and relative to biochemical oxygen demand. In some cases, Mr. Speaker, some of the mills are performing 10 times less than their licensed limit, and this is absolutely phenomenal. This demonstrates that not only are the mills willing to abide by the strictest and most stringent standards in the world; they're prepared to exceed those standards. That is a good example of the private sector working harmoniously with government.

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is: will the minister advise this Assembly as to why Alberta mills are achieving these standards? I would hope the opposition would listen, because they could help here, and they can pass on that information to their colleague who I challenged before.

MR. KLEIN: Was that a question, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Stony Plain.

#### **Equal Opportunity in Education**

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Official Opposition has tabled the children's task force report in this

House. This document identifies concerns about the hundreds of children in this province who start school at a disadvantage. Poverty, hunger, emotional distress: all of these disadvantages mean that these children simply cannot enjoy the same successes in school that other children can. Will the Minister of Education commit his department to developing a strategy which will ensure that all children, and I repeat all children, in this province can start their education on an equal footing regardless of their economic status or their personal background? We are talking about equal opportunity in education for all children in this province.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I share with the hon. member his concern about students coming to school ready to learn. I frankly believe and I know my colleagues on this side of the House believe that it is deplorable that some children leave their homes each day without food in their bodies, without the nutrition they need to fuel their learning skills, but let's just look at what we are doing. We are funding schools across this province to the tune of some \$5,300 or \$5,400 per student, a total of \$2.5 billion. We are providing funding for school lunch programs in the Northlands School Division. We are providing some \$2.6 million in high needs funding in four pilot projects in the four boards in Calgary and Edmonton. We are providing in excess of \$5 million to community schools. I believe that we have laid out our plans, laid out some extensive efforts not just in education funding but funding in the Department of Health and the Department of Family and Social Services to ensure that those children's needs are being met.

3:10

MR. WOLOSZYN: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the minister's dissertation on funding. However, he has to agree that something is wrong since we still have these children coming to school at a disadvantage.

The minister's obviously aware of the problem. He must also be aware of the fact that there are preventative programs such as Head Start in existence that are intended to help alleviate it. To the minister: will the minister undertake the commitment to seriously work with other government departments, communities, local school boards, and other interested groups to implement an Alberta-based preschool program, and will he promise his ongoing, long-term financial support for such a program?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I won't reiterate all of the programs that were laid out in my earlier answer. Some 2 and a half billion dollars is being invested by Alberta taxpayers in education for our children. I am aware, as the hon. member has advised me privately on other occasions, of the benefits of the Head Start program, and you need only look at the experience in the United States, where after several years of good experience with the Head Start program, children and young adults come out winners and society comes out the winner. I can assure the hon. member and all members of the Assembly that I'm working with my colleague the hon. Minister of Family and Social Services to come to grips with how we could assist boards throughout the province to expand their existing Head Start program to make sure it's available to more students. I still call upon school boards and other agencies, service agencies in the community, including parents, to take on their responsibility to ensure that children come to school ready to learn.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Calder.

### Suicide Prevention

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The need for culturally specific suicide prevention services in Alberta is great, and the Department of Health recognized that need last year by providing a year's funding to the newcomers suicide prevention project, which has been working with volunteers throughout the province. In spite of excellent support from the community and from Department of Health officials, the project has been unable to secure a commitment for government funding for its second year. My questions are to the Minister of Health. In view of the fact that this suicide prevention training is an essential aspect to meeting the needs of new immigrants, will the minister now commit the \$25,000 needed to ensure that the program can be completed?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to get the details on the project in order to respond more fully to the hon. member, and I will do so. I would only mention that we are doing a number of innovative things in Alberta, as the member points out, with respect to suicide prevention. We still are, as far as I'm aware, the only province that has in place a provincial suicidologist who is working with local agencies to ensure that the programs are the most effective possible. I will certainly check the details for the hon. member and get back to her as soon as possible on them.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Edmonton-Calder.

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The specific program I speak of is preventative in nature, is community based, and is cost effective, and they are having difficulty obtaining the necessary funding to complete their program for their second year. I am pleased that the minister is willing to take a look at this, and I would ask her if she would make a commitment to the House, though, since this particular program is cost effective and is preventative, to ensure that the funding will follow through for the second year?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, it would be irresponsible of me to make that commitment in the House when I'm not prepared to. I'll certainly get back to the hon. member. I can say, though, that the demand for health services, quite frankly, is an infinite demand, and our resources are finite. Even though we would like to fund all the worthy projects that come before us, we have to sometimes say no, but I will certainly look into the program for the hon. member and get a response back to her as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West, followed by Calgary-Fish Creek.

### Schools in Rural Areas

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the past I have advocated the construction of a school in the community of Hawkwood, located in my constituency of Calgary-North West. The reason for that is simply that the students that live in the community of Hawkwood have to attend several different schools, which is not in the best interests of the community or in the best interests of those students. Now, imagine my surprise in receiving a letter from the community of Cherrill signed by 128 people opposing the impending closure of their school and the redistribution of the students that attend that school to three different schools in three different communities. This, I want to

note, is just one of many small rural schools that is facing impending closure as a result of inadequate education funding.

MR. SPEAKER: Let's have the question.

MR. BRUSEKER: Certainly, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. In view of this government's supposed commitment to rural Alberta, will the Premier please explain why, as a result of inadequate education funding, communities and schools such as this are being allowed to close?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's certainly an important matter which I'm sure the Minister of Education will want to deal with.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, as I am aware, the county of Lac Ste. Anne is considering a number of alternatives and they have made no such decision to shut down any school.

MR. BRUSEKER: My supplementary is to the Premier again, Mr. Speaker. Would the Premier commit to reviewing a suspension of all such school closures until there is a broad, overall rural development policy in place from this government?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, it's typical of the Liberal Party that they would want to control decisions made by locally elected school boards. What the hon. member is saying is that he knows best. His kind of approach is that all those decisions would be made only by his Minister of Education as opposed to locally elected school boards. That is precisely why we in this province believe so strongly in those locally elected school boards: because they can make those kinds of decisions with the resources they have available to them, make decisions that are best for the children that live in their community.

### Student Transportation

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, the Calgary board of education recently announced a significant student busing decision whereby students who previously were transported to their schools by school board buses are now being asked to use Calgary transit at a monthly fee, presumably as a cost-cutting measure for the Calgary board. I'm wondering: can the Minister of Education clarify the province's jurisdiction or funding involvement in school bus transportation for us?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, in the case of the four boards in Calgary and Edmonton, at their request, particularly in the case of Calgary public board's request, we moved in the last school year to a block funding grant approach so that they are funded on the basis of so many dollars per eligible passenger. What that does is provide that school board with the flexibility they need to make decisions about the transportation of their students to and from school, decisions that are best made by that locally elected school board. So in the case of those four boards, primarily at the request of the Calgary public board, we've moved to a block funding grant such that they have the flexibility to be making those decisions around their school board.

MR. PAYNE: Well, Mr. Speaker, under the terms of this block funding program the minister has described, can the minister indicate the specific funding to which Calgary is entitled?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I can only refer to the last school year budget, the 1989-90 school year, and in that year some \$13.6 million was spent by the Calgary public board on transportation. The provincial government funded that to the tune of some two-thirds, a little over \$8.6 million, which is a considerable sum of money but, again, is provided there on a block basis. It provides that school board with the flexibility they need to make the transportation decisions that best meet the needs of their own students.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Mountain View, followed by Calgary-Buffalo.

3:20

### Teachers' Retirement Fund

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The liability of the Teachers' Retirement Fund as of March 1990 was about \$3.3 billion; that's \$110,000 per teacher. The Minister of Education has suggested raising the contribution level of each teacher to the plan to 12 percent of each teacher's salary, almost three times the present levels, just to cover the current service costs of the Teachers' Retirement Fund. The Alberta public service pension plan is 5.5 percent and the average for other teachers across Canada is 7 percent. To the Minister of Education: in the meetings which he has had – he referred to them earlier in question period – was there an agreement that contributions by teachers should be at 12 percent, or is there some other reason why he seems to be promoting that level?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, let's make it perfectly clear that this Minister of Education and this government have never said any such thing. He has never said that the teachers' contribution rate should rise to the order of some 12 percent. What we did say is that the current cost of the benefits that are being paid out to retired teachers is in the order of some \$140 million a year, which is about 12 percent of payroll costs. So let's make it clear. Today what teachers are contributing to the Teachers' Retirement Fund is some \$57 million. The provincial government, according to a 1956 agreement – the government has lived up to both the letter and the spirit of that agreement – continues to contribute one-half of the annual pension costs payable. Let's not have the hon. member on the other side of the House fertilizing the truth as to what the Minister of Education said.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, then, I guess the minister should be well advised not to put some things in letters the way he puts them.

The unfunded liability of the Teachers' Retirement Fund, Mr. Speaker, gets worse the longer it is ignored. Last year it grew by almost a billion dollars; heaven knows what that unfunded liability might be today. Given that he's likely to have met with his caucus colleagues to determine a position, will the Minister of Education tell us today: what contribution is his government prepared to make to freeze and then decrease the unfunded liability in order to ensure that the Teachers' Retirement Fund remains viable?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have met with the Alberta Teachers' Association. We have met with the administrators of the Teachers' Retirement Fund. I can say on behalf of all of my colleagues on this side of the House that we believe the Alberta Teachers' Association has been positive, has been constructive in the approach they have taken to raise the awareness of all of us about their concern over the Teachers'

Retirement Fund. We on this side of the House are equally concerned. I have made a commitment on behalf of the government to begin discussions immediately with the Alberta Teachers' Association, with teachers, and with other stakeholders across the province to bring that Teachers' Retirement Fund into a viable financial position to ensure the long-term financial security of existing teachers and teachers who are currently retired.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

#### **Native Imprisonment**

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Cawsey report points out that 2,563 natives were jailed in 1989 for failure to pay fines, and it states that the figures for incarcerated aboriginal women for fine default is shocking. This is particularly discriminating against aboriginals, because most are poor. Indeed, in 1987 the Canadian Sentencing Commission recommended a reduction in imprisonment for fine default, but the Cawsey report states that there's little evidence of this being implemented in Alberta. I'm wondering whether the Solicitor General would tell this House whether he thinks it's right that individuals should be jailed because they're too poor to pay fines? If not, what is his department doing to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Two questions. [interjections]

MR. FOWLER: I'm very sorry, Mr. Speaker; I missed the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question, the Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: I obviously command a great deal of attention over there, Mr. Speaker.

Does the Solicitor General think that it's right, in relation to my preamble, which I hope he got – natives are being incarcerated for failure to pay fines – that individuals should be jailed because they're too poor to pay fines, and if not, what is he doing about this sorry state of affairs?

MR. FOWLER: Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that a member of the same profession, the law profession, would realize that we as the keepers of the keys have nothing to do with whether they come into our system or whether they don't come into our system. That is a matter for the courts, and in view that it is for the courts, possibly the Attorney General may be able to respond.

MR. CHUMIR: Usually we . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair hasn't recognized you, hon. member. I'm sorry. The Chair has noted it. The Chair has not been noted for letting things fall through the cracks. The Chair would like to point out for Calgary-Buffalo's . . . [interjections]

#### **Speaker's Ruling Disturbance in the Gallery**

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry. [Disturbance in the gallery] Sergeant-at-Arms, clear the galleries.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order in the galleries, please. Remove those people.

MR. SPEAKER: Clear the galleries. [Disturbance in the gallery]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Remove those people immediately.

MR. SPEAKER: Strangers, clear the House.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Get some help over there.

MR. SPEAKER: Would you kindly take the ladies and gentlemen into custody. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you ensure that they're taken into custody so I can visit with these people. Thank you.

#### **Speaker's Ruling Seeking Opinions**

MR. SPEAKER: Now, then, I'm sure the Member for Calgary-Buffalo would be good enough to look at *Beauchesne* 409. The framing of the question was indeed seeking an opinion, which is out of order.

#### **Point of Order Restrictions on Oral Questions**

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the Chair would like to recognize Edmonton-Jasper Place on a point of order.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, I rise under *Beauchesne* 409(6) and *Erskine May*, 19th edition, page 329, item 7, ministerial responsibility. During question period I attempted to ask questions of the Premier about a cost/benefit analysis which is part of the application for approval of the Buffalo Lake project. The Buffalo Lake project is, I emphasize, a government project. The government is the proponent that is putting the project forward. My question related to the cost/benefit analysis, which shows that the costs are entirely to the public and the benefits almost entirely to private landowners in the area.

Now, it's my reading that since it's a government project involving expenditure of funds, it is "within the administrative competence of the Government," to be sure, and matters for which the Premier is officially responsible to this House. I want to refer specifically to the *May* citation, which states that the Premier may be asked in this case "for statements of their policy or intentions on such matters, or for administrative or legislative action." This is a project which has been put forward by the government and therefore, I submit, is within the administrative competence of the government and the Premier.

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, briefly, Minister of the Environment.

MR. KLEIN: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully submit that this point of order not be upheld. Indeed the hon. member was not talking about the cost benefits of the project. Indeed he was called on his questioning by you, Mr. Speaker, relative to his pitiful attempt to impugn the reputation and the character of our Premier relative to his residence and its proximity to Buffalo Lake. It had absolutely nothing to do with the cost benefits of this particular project, and the hon. member knows it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. [interjections] Order.

The Chair has checked the references as cited by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. A properly framed question would indeed be able to raise the issue, probably as addressed to the Minister of the Environment. There are other sections in *Beauchesne*, which the member is familiar with, that any member of government may respond. You cannot insist upon the response coming from a particular minister.

3:30

The other problem with the question as phrased is that, if the Chair heard correctly, it was asking an opinion, which, again, was cited earlier with respect to Calgary-Buffalo, 409(3). I'm certain that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, given his long experience in this Legislature's corridors and that of another Legislature, as well as experience in the House, knows full well that that citation comes to bear there plus the other citation of *Beauchesne* 409(7). No point of order.

head:

### Statement by the Speaker

#### Resubmission of Written Questions

MR. SPEAKER: There are some items to be dealt with. I think with regard to the disturbance in the House that the Chair must perforce absent himself from the Chamber rather soon.

We have two notices of Standing Order 30, but before we go on to that, the Chair has an opinion which must be read into the record. So if the pages would distribute that to all members of the House, then the matter will be read into the record. Pages, please proceed now. The distribution can take place in spite of the Chair standing.

Hon. members, I'm sure you all understand that it's an unusual circumstance that we're called upon to deal with. There has been correspondence since last Friday with my office with regard to this matter of resubmitting written questions; therefore, I feel that it is incumbent that this item of clarification be read into the record.

A reading of Standing Order 23(c) reveals a direct instruction that matters once dealt with cannot be reintroduced to be repeated in the House again and again. Standing Order 23(c) reads:

A member will be called to order by Mr. Speaker if that member . . . persists in needless repetition or raises matters which have been decided during the current session.

However, an examination of Standing Order 43(1)(b) would seem to indicate an instruction that a written question which was not accepted can be reintroduced immediately after its removal from the Order Paper, possibly to be dealt with again and again throughout the session. So I quote:

A written question that is not accepted or notice of motion that is not taken up when called . . . may be renewed if it has been so removed from the Order Paper.

Faced with this apparent contradiction between Standing Order 23 and Standing Order 43, the Chair consulted *Beauchesne*, *Erskine May*, previous issues of our Standing Orders, and other parliamentary sources in an attempt to resolve the problem. The Chair has found references which support the practice that a matter cannot be reintroduced if already dealt with. The specific references are *Beauchesne* 428(d), 558, and *Erskine May*, page 292. The *Beauchesne* citation reads:

A question . . . must not . . . repeat in substance a question already answered, or to which an answer has been refused.

*Beauchesne* 558:

That a question being once made and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again but must stand as the judgment of the House.

*Erskine May*, page 292 reads:

Questions are not in order which renew or repeat in substance questions already answered or to which an answer has been refused or which fall within a class of question which a Minister has refused to answer.

No support for the practice as it appears to be stated in Standing Order 43(1)(b) could be found by the Chair or the Table officers in other jurisdictions. The prohibition against reintroduction of matters already dealt with seems to be universally applied.

What, then, is the intention of Standing Order 43(1)(b)? The Chair points out that our own Standing Orders between 1928 and 1984 inclusive, and the copies are here, contained the following Standing Order, and I quote:

A written question . . . or notice of motion that is not taken up when called

(a) shall be removed from the Order Paper unless the Assembly, by order made without debate, allows it to stand and retain its precedence on the Order Paper, and

(b) may be renewed if it has been so removed from the Order Paper.

Therefore, it would appear that a transcription error occurred during the last revision of our Standing Orders resulting in the conflict in our current Standing Orders. If we replace the words "not accepted" with the words "not taken up," to use the actual quote appearing within Standing Order 43 itself, the Standing Order does not then contradict Standing Order 23. Standing Order 43 then becomes consistent with other Standing Orders, similar rules in other jurisdictions, the House of Commons Standing Order 42, and the practice of this House between 1928 and 1984.

To adhere to the spirit and intent of matters once dealt with by the House not being reintroduced and to maintain consistency with other parliamentary jurisdictions and sources, the Chair is confident that the intent of Standing Order 43 is: when a written question is not taken up – that is, not accepted, refused, or ordered to stand and retain its place – then it is dropped from the Order Paper. Only in these circumstances can the dropped question be renewed. As *Beauchesne* 428(d) cites:

A question . . . must not . . . repeat in substance a question already answered, or to which an answer has been refused.

*Erskine May* 292:

Questions are not in order which renew or repeat in substance questions already answered or to which an answer has been refused or which fall within a class of question which a Minister has refused to answer.

Therefore, the Chair rules that Standing Order 23(c) must prevail against Standing Order 43(1)(b), and matters once dealt with by the House cannot be reintroduced in the same session.

Now, the Chair also would point out that with respect to written questions there's a citation in *Beauchesne* 425. I'm sure members on both sides of the House will be interested but not necessarily terribly happy about what it says. This is not in our Standing Orders. I emphasize not in our Standing Orders.

Members may place a maximum of four written questions on the *Order Paper* at any one time, and may, by so indicating at the time of filing the question, request that the Ministry respond to a specific question within forty-five days.

Now, the Chair raises this because of our overloaded Order Paper. It's not meant to inhibit the rights of any members, but it's just pointing out the practice which takes place in the federal House.

The Chair also goes on to point out that in this particular House the matter of repetition, especially within question period, is very difficult to try to enforce, but with regard to written questions the ruling which has been handed down now is necessary for the operation of this particular House.

Thank you for your attention.

MR. WICKMAN: Answer the questions promptly, and there's no problem.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member.

For the sake of the camera operators, they may now retire from the Assembly.

head: **Request for Emergency Debate**

### **Alberta Wildlife Park**

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes a Standing Order 30 request, the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to move to adjourn the ordinary business of the Assembly to discuss the urgent matter of shutting down the Alberta Wildlife Park on March 31, 1991.

Do I proceed with my argument as to the urgency of that?

3:40

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As to urgency, hon. member.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In speaking to the urgency of the matter, I will try to stay as close as possible to the House rules, as it is only the urgency that should be discussed rather than the reasons. There are plenty of reasons why we could get into the rather, some people might say, stupid decision to close.

The fact of the matter is that this is our last House sitting before the end of March, and if we do not consider it now, the Wildlife Park could be closed to the public March 31.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the urgency of the matter is that when you close a wildlife park, one does not know what is going to happen. This is not a case of closing down a service station and then possibly three months from now opening it up again. This is a case of over 800 live animals that could be sent away to the gas chambers or, as the minister so quaintly put it a while back, facilitated or sold to hunting licences in the U.S. and Canada. The fact of the matter is that once this Wildlife Park is closed, we have no direction of what the minister will be doing with the animals. In other words, we are putting in his hands a gun or knife or whatever he uses to do as he sees fit.

This is the whole point and why there's an emergency to go ahead today in discussing this, Mr. Speaker. The minister, who has shown an alarming propensity to speak only to God in some of his decisions and often not that, has had no cautions or riders put on his authority. So if we were to debate this today, the minister would have a very accurate opinion as to how it is . . .

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

DR. WEST: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Recreation and Parks.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, under Standing Order 23

- (h) makes allegations against another member;
- (i) imputes false or unavowed motives . . .
- (j) uses abusive or insulting language . . .

The hon. member in reference to his debate on this motion is directing comments to this minister that have no basis whatsoever for this motion or speaking to its urgency or any other place in this House. I want a ruling on that.

### **Alberta Wildlife Park**

(continued)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Has the hon. member finished with his comments regarding urgency of debate?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, this is what I wanted to remark on. As a matter of fact, the minister's temper well shows, Mr. Speaker, why we have to have some debate and direction, because he has even thinner skin than many of the animals out there.

### **Speaker's Ruling Relevance**

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Hon. member, applications under Standing Order 30 are rare, and they're supposed to deal with genuine emergencies and urgency. Now, the hon. member should direct his comments to those things and not to somebody's other characteristics. Keep your comments to what you want to convince the Chair of as to the urgency of debate for this matter.

### **Alberta Wildlife Park**

(continued)

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, as my friends on the right say, "Freddie could die" – Freddie being the giraffe out there.

The urgency of the matter is that if we do not debate and give direction of what to do with this park after it's closed, up to 800 animals could be put away, or facilitated as the minister so quaintly put it. There are thousands of school children, thousands of people in Alberta that want to see this park preserved. If nothing else if it came out of here that the debate said: "Slow down. Desist. Don't do anything until we've had a chance to look at the disposal." The point is that if this House does not debate or put some restrictions or direction to the minister, we have a number of live animals there, over 800 of them, that could be disposed of or removed. That is the reason for the urgency of the debate, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair realizes that this matter has been ongoing for months. There is nothing that has come up recently. The only thing that's happened is that through effluxion of time a certain facility is going to be closed. This House has been in session for two weeks tomorrow. There has been a question period available every working day. There has been the throne speech debate, which is an opportunity for a general and wide-ranging debate of any subject under the sun, of government responsibilities. The hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon has participated in that debate, and as far as the Chair is concerned, the Chair is unaware of any reference to the Alberta Wildlife Park in the hon. member's intervention on the throne speech debate. There's been nothing come up recently except that the end of the month is coming, and all members have known about March 31 arriving for several months now if not longer. The Chair therefore does not feel that there's any urgency to debate that subject at this time.

head: **Request for Emergency Debate**

**Tuberculosis in Livestock**

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

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 30 to request leave to move to adjourn the ordinary business of the Assembly today to discuss the following matter of urgent public importance, that being the recent discovery that the bovine tuberculosis outbreak has spread from game-ranching elk to domestic cattle and human beings.

To background very quickly and succinctly the issue and the matter of urgency with respect to my request for debate today, Mr. Speaker, we learned early this week – in fact, our worst fears were confirmed – that for the first time as far as anyone knows we have a transference of bovine tuberculosis from elk to cattle, from game-ranching elk to domestic cattle. This is of urgent concern not only to members of this Assembly but indeed the many thousands of Albertans who depend on the number one income generator in the agriculture sector, the beef industry in this province. The Minister of Agriculture was bragging about beef overtaking wheat as the number one income generator for agriculture in this province. It's a \$1 billion industry.

We now know that tuberculosis has been passed from game-ranching elk to domestic cattle. This is in the Neerlandia area. It is a very intensive livestock area. We understand that Agriculture Canada has now issued an order that all cattle within a 10-kilometre radius be skin tested for tuberculosis. Mr. Speaker, this is an enormous task. We estimate that there are some 3,000 head of cattle in that area, and it's going to be an enormous expense, a complicated process. The idea of having to confirm whether or not cattle have been moved from one ranch to another and the possible tentacles of that spread of this insidious infection are of great concern.

I must refer as well to the threat posed to the dairy industry in this province, a \$300 million to \$400 million industry. The two industries have worked very, very hard for a number of years and spent a great deal of money to eradicate tuberculosis from the industry so that we can declare the beef industry in the province tuberculosis free. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that that TB-free status is an enormous benefit to this very important industry in our province.

It's something that doesn't appear to concern the Minister of Agriculture. The minister, Ernie What-me-worry Isley, is doing his Alfred E. Neuman imitation: refusing to acknowledge when we debated this Bill in the spring the problems that this may cause; refusing to acknowledge the problems that may occur with the transference of disease between game-ranching captive elk and elk in the wild; refusing to acknowledge the problems that this causes for people, when there have been acknowledged cases of transference of bovine tuberculosis from game-ranching elk to human beings in the province; and now his stubborn refusal to acknowledge that there are any problems, indeed anything that he has to do as minister to respond to this very serious threat to the industry.

The obvious thing here is that the regulations that he continually refers to and depends on do not work. In dealing with the tuberculosis outbreak on the Cliff Begg ranch, Mr. Speaker, they have not been able to legitimize the number of elk that were supposed to be there nor the number of buffalo nor the number of cattle. It's apparent they don't know where the animals came from in every case and where they went. There are enormous discrepancies there, and it all happened for one reason.

3:50

What we have to discuss today is the government's role, because it's not, as the Minister of Agriculture said in response to the hon. Member for Three Hills today, something that has absolutely nothing to do with them. The acceleration in this industry, the impetus in this industry has been 99 percent because of the initiatives of the Conservative government that sought against the best wishes of thousands of Albertans, against the best judgment of many informed scientific experts on this issue to proceed with haste, to ram a Bill through the Alberta Legislature, to ignore any input from people other than the game ranch industry, to push it through, Mr. Speaker. It's resulted in a sort of careless acceleration in this industry which has induced people to import elk from suspect sources, to not follow the regulations that are in place. It's contributed to stress in the animals, which is clearly a contributor to tuberculosis in elk. Ask Dr. Conn Kiley of Agriculture Canada, if the minister wants to confirm this.

So there are a number of questions that have to be answered now so that this threat can be dealt with in a conscientious and proper way. I submit the government has many things to answer. Why the haste? Why would they ram the Bill through the Legislature? Why would they ignore the public hearing process? Why would they be so reluctant to listen to informed opinion? Why would the minister stubbornly refuse, after mounting evidence about the problems caused within this industry – the threat posed to captive elk, to wild elk, to the domestic cattle industry and to humans – to acknowledge their role in all of this and make a commitment to do something, Mr. Speaker?

Now, I have raised this issue in question period this session, had an opportunity to raise it in the context of debate last night. We tried repeatedly throughout the fall session and last spring session to get answers from this government. We've got absolutely nowhere, Mr. Speaker, and I'm appealing to you to acknowledge this as a matter of urgent public concern, something that needs to be dealt with today, because the Assembly, according to Motion 4, introduced by the hon. Government House Leader, rises today and does not sit again until next Thursday. We need to get at this problem, get at it now, and deal with it so that we can protect some very vital industries in this province.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, may I rise in support of the hon. Member for Vegreville's motion of urgency of debate? Certainly he's outlined very graphically the harm that could come to our cattle industry if we let this thing keep going.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the Minister of Agriculture has time and again tried to get by with saying that the federal government inspectors were supposed to be looking for TB in animals coming in, supposed to be federal inspectors that are watching cloven hoofed animals that are being traded out there. Most of all, the little love-in we had between the Member for Three Hills and the Minister of Agriculture, little pitty-patty back and forth to try to reinforce the fact that it isn't the government's fault, shows how badly this government is operating with respect to the dangers.

Mr. Speaker, an item that was not covered with the Member for Vegreville is the danger to people. Actually, this disease will spread to individuals. Even the Minister of Health, who's usually not willing to admit anything, is willing to admit there is a case or two in the province of the spread of TB. So if we have a disease that's spreading through our animals and livestock, not only is it the question of the fact that we could, maybe tomorrow, maybe the day after, have the border closed

to our agricultural exports of blooded cattle as well as beef cattle, but we could also have the case maybe of infection spreading to, say, our dairy herds, which the minister will tell you haven't been inspected some of them for five, six, seven years. The federal government shut down the inspecting of dairy herds in order to save money. So we have a disease that's dangerous to people as well as to our exports circulating through the province.

DR. WEST: Point of order.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. minister is rising on a point of order.

DR. WEST: Yes. Under *Beauchesne* 482 I would ask the member if he would entertain a question during his debate on this motion.

MR. TAYLOR: Certainly. I saw somebody deliver a slip of paper to him, so I thought he might have something, Mr. Speaker. That would be fine, yes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The point of order was whether the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon would entertain a question.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes. I'm sure the question will be entertaining if it's coming from the minister. Yes, I'm waiting.

DR. WEST: In listening to your debate, there seem to be a lot of variations to what fact is in veterinary medicine and health of animals. Could you tell me where you are getting your information base on this topic?

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, anybody who's read . . . The government reports mention that there is disease spread to an individual. The Minister of Health mentioned it.

#### **Speaker's Ruling Relevance**

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The question really did not relate to the matter of urgency, which we are confined to on this matter.

Has the hon. member finished his remarks concerning urgency of debate?

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I might finalize by just saying that this is a disease that not only jeopardizes a major export of our . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair I think has to remind hon. members that the seriousness of the question doesn't have anything to do with the urgency of debate really, or very little. The question that the Chair has to finally determine is whether there are other alternatives that can be used for bringing this matter before the government of the day. That is what the main question is.

#### **Tuberculosis in Livestock (continued)**

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, it's perhaps appropriate to suggest that the debate may already have occurred.

On the matter of urgency, the hon. member and all hon. members who wish to participate in this matter that the hon. Member for Vegreville considers to be a matter of urgency have full opportunity at any moment as we move into the throne

speech debate. As well, I think the hon. minister has made it very clear that disease control and the matter of compensation are federal responsibilities. The answers to the questions, I think, clearly demonstrate that there is not a genuine emergency existing as required by the Standing Orders. Therefore, I would suggest that the matter for urgency of debate in the case has not been made.

MR. TAYLOR: Anytime you leave anything to Mulroney, it's an emergency.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. member, all that may be true, but that doesn't help us with our Standing Orders.

The hon. Member for Vegreville has provided the Chair with the proper notice for raising this matter today. The Chair should also say that the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon did that in his own motion preceding this. That was in order.

As members have already noted, this question has been raised in question period. It has been pointed out that the problem of disease control in animals is within the legislative competence and administration of the government of Canada and not of the province of Alberta.

The matter of other opportunities for raising this matter has been raised. This is also a matter that has been before the public for several months now, if not weeks. As has been pointed out by the hon. Member for Vegreville, the House is going to rise today for a matter of a week. A week from tomorrow the estimates will be placed before the Assembly. The estimates are probably the most loosely regulated part of our procedures, and this matter will be of continuing concern through that period. Therefore, the Chair feels that the necessary urgency has not been established.

4:00

#### **Orders of the Day**

head:

#### **Government Motions**

6. On behalf of Mr. Horsman, Mr. Stewart moved:  
Be it resolved that the report of the special committee appointed March 14, 1991, pursuant to Standing Order 49 be now received and concurred in and that the committees recommended therein be hereby appointed.

[Motion carried]

head:

#### **Consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech**

Moved by Mr. Paszkowski:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Gordon Towers, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

[Adjourned debate March 25: Mr. Mitchell]

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

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In adjourning debate earlier this week, I made two particular points. To

summarize briefly, they were, first, that Albertans, this government have a moral obligation to do something about the global warming greenhouse effect problem because we are a significant part of that problem, producing fully one two-hundredths of all the carbon dioxide produced in the world today, because we are sophisticated and well educated, and because we are in a position, therefore, to provide leadership in the world to solve this problem. Secondly, we also have a huge economic stake in the resolution of the global warming problem. Should the world suddenly become as concerned about global warming as it has been about many environmental issues such as pulp mills and rain forests, it is entirely conceivable that demand for fossil fuels, that foundation of our economic success in this province, could become massively restructured, with profound economic consequences for the people of this province.

I heard recently a political pundit say, Mr. Speaker, that governments truly do not want to anticipate problems, because in doing so, they might actually avoid them. Having avoided problems, they would have nothing to solve, therefore diminishing their importance in their own eyes if not more broadly in the province. This is a classic case, and true to form this government has actively resisted, first, the recognition that this problem exists, and secondly, any concrete measures to do something about it. We have heard tacit, vague, remote references on the part of some ministers to the existence of global warming, the greenhouse effect. We have heard at least one minister joke in a rather macabre way about that effect on our climate. The Minister of Agriculture last year, I believe, said that on a cold day many of the people in this province probably think that it would be nice to have some global warming. It's not something that we should be joking about generally, and it's certainly not something that a government of this province should be joking about at all. Having only vaguely, if vaguely or remotely, acknowledged that the problem might exist, this government has done nothing of consequence to address the problem.

We saw, in anticipation of the Iraq war, the government subscribe to a conservation measure that was an advertising, public relations exercise. Most of us have seen little of that exercise in any event but would appreciate that it was a negligible effort and unfortunately was initiated, if at all, by a war, not by a recognition of a serious environmental problem, which should be in and of itself incentive for this government to do something. Beyond a conservation advertising program, which we have seen almost nothing of, if anything at all, the government pays lip service to different forms of energy generation: \$3 million, I believe, if we can add up diligently what this government has put into the development of solar and wind generated electricity, for example; a paltry, insignificant, negligible amount compared with what we put into other forms of energy development and compared to what the severity and the depth of this problem require and demand.

What is extremely frustrating about this, Mr. Speaker, is that yes, we can appreciate that there should be a sensitivity, given the tremendous impact of the fossil fuels industry on our province. It's well-being is the future of our people. But at the same time, responsible, considerate, innovative policy to address the global warming greenhouse effect problem need not be an economic disaster but quite the contrary. It can have profound benefits for this province.

Mr. Speaker, we literally have nothing to lose and much to gain. If we assume that there is global warming and if we act to implement policies to address that problem, we cannot hurt ourselves. We can only help ourselves. If we assume that the problem exists and it turns out 20 or 30 years from now that it

doesn't exist, nothing is lost; much is gained. We will have gained business advantage because we will have lowered our consumption costs, input costs. We will have gained health care advantages because we will have cleaned up the air that we breathe that ultimately can result, if it isn't healthy, to a deterioration of our health as people living in this province. Those are just two of the benefits.

On the other hand, if we proceed as though there is no greenhouse effect, operate as this government has been operating day after day after day and will, it would seem, want to operate into perpetuity, if we assume that there is no problem and operate in that way and in fact it turns out that there is a problem, then one day when we realize that, it may simply be too late to address it in the way that it must be addressed. Mr. Speaker, we cannot lose by assuming that that problem exists and operating accordingly with positive public policy which addresses this important environmental concern at a concrete, practical, pragmatic level. We can hurt ourselves in what can be tantamount to a terminal way if we operate as though there is no problem and in fact there turns out to be a problem.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

There are solutions, Mr. Speaker, if our government begins to act on the solutions that exist and that are at hand. The fact . . .

#### **Speaker's Ruling Disturbance in the Gallery**

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon. member. I wonder if I might beg the indulgence of the House to have a procedural motion dealt with.

Members are aware that earlier there was a demonstration in the gallery. The persons involved were cleared, and the Chair, because of the nature of the protest and the noise, ordered the persons taken into custody. The Chair has since met with the individuals involved with legal counsel present, the persons involved having been given due notice about their rights, their right to be able to engage a lawyer. They had consultation and decided not to. The complete conversation was recorded for the record. I also met with them briefly about their concerns, informed them as to the reason they were asked to leave the gallery and why they were taken into custody.

We have also been able to make arrangements whereby the Minister for Occupational Health and Safety, responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, has agreed to meet with the individuals and is presently meeting with them. I would report that our conversation was, I believe, not only frank but amicable.

Therefore, I recommend to the House that a procedural motion be put – perhaps the Deputy Government House Leader would be good enough to do so and would be the mover – that the persons taken into custody on this day be immediately discharged.

The Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy on behalf of the government to make the motion as you have read it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried unanimously. Thank you, hon. members.

Edmonton-Meadowlark, please.

4:10

**Debate Continued**

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There is no panacea to this problem. There are no easy solutions to this problem. But if we embrace the variety, the range, the multitude of small steps that can be taken to address global warming, to reduce greenhouse gases, then I believe that each of those small steps will in turn accumulate to a significant alteration of the evolution of that problem.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, first we need to drive our cars less, and we need to drive less car. This means more efficient light rapid transit systems. It means infrastructure for bicycle commuting across this province, particularly in concentrated urban areas. It means zoning guidelines to reduce urban sprawl and to compress travel distances. We must also drive more fuel efficient cars. At some point we as a government must begin, and soon, to structure incentives so that people will drive more fuel efficient cars less often.

There are a number of ways that have been experimented with successfully, that have been utilized elsewhere in the world, that we must consider and consider quickly. We could, for example, set fees for vehicle registration and licensing on a sliding scale to favour less polluting cars. We could impose a tax surcharge on all new vehicles that have a certified fuel consumption exceeding the provincial average or exceeding some absolute attainable but aggressive fuel consumption standard. While these approaches have the benefit of being positive incentive rather than negative regulation, they have one fundamental weakness, and that is this. At some point, understanding as I do and as many people in this province do that carbon dioxide is creating an extremely serious environmental hazard for us and for people around this world, it is not acceptable, and hopefully we will become aware that it is not acceptable, for people who have more money to be able to afford to drive a bigger car under some carbon tax regime and therefore pollute more. It is simply not acceptable at some point that people, because of their wealth, should be permitted to pollute more in a way that can ultimately be terminal for us in this province, for people around the world.

We should therefore, I believe, begin to consider an outright ban phased in, beginning at the middle of this decade at the very, very latest, on cars which exceed a certain specified level of fuel consumption or engine size. That is not to say cars that are already purchased, because in many cases it is people who are less capable financially who must buy older, less fuel efficient cars, but it is to say that at some point, and sooner rather than later, Mr. Speaker, it becomes extremely important that we say: enough is enough. Luxuries of large cars with power that isn't needed, that burn fuel that pollutes unnecessarily this atmosphere, must be banned from the roads of this province. We could provide leadership in the world in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, it is also true that we must encourage and help municipalities, as I stated earlier, to expand their rapid light transit systems and other public transit systems. We must encourage bicycle paths and networks. We must work with municipalities to do as is done in some American cities today: put bike racks on transit buses and light rapid transit facilities. We must consider the imposition of zoning bylaws that require bicycle parking spaces in downtown areas, that require the provision of changing facilities and showering facilities in

downtown areas so that people can commute and change once they arrive. As is being done elsewhere, in the States, perhaps we'd consider locker facilities that could be rented inexpensively by bicycle commuters so that they could put their bikes away in a safe place throughout the day in downtown parking facilities.

It is also true, Mr. Speaker, that this government should consider very, very seriously to stop subsidizing parking for provincial employees. I have asked to find out how many employees receive subsidized parking and how much that costs. Experience tells us that when the federal government increased the amount its employees were required to pay for parking, employee trips in personal vehicles were reduced by 23 percent. Perhaps it is that the government would find it fair to give the \$115 or \$120 that they subsidize a monthly space now to the employee, so that the employee could make that choice. But it is very important that the employee realize what the value of that parking stall is and that the incentive to drive be reversed, inverted if you will, to create a thought, a consideration, a disincentive to driving those cars whenever possible.

It is also true that we must consider aggressively alternative fuels. It's hard to understand why the government has not required, for example, ethanol substitution in all gasolines sold in this province. The environmental advantage is, Mr. Speaker, that even though ethanol does produce carbon dioxide, it only produces the same amount that it takes out in the growth and production of the biomass that is required to produce the ethanol. It is, therefore, neutral in the production of carbon dioxide and provides a tremendous advantage over traditional gasolines that are utilized in this province today.

Mr. Speaker, it is also significant and important that this government embrace the idea of alternative fuels in its own fleets. We've seen the Minister of Energy state that he is going to have his personal car converted to natural gas. That is to be applauded, and I congratulate him for doing that, but it is also an initiative that runs the risk of amounting to little more than tokenism. In fact, what he should be doing is insisting that broadly and across the board for his government's fleet of vehicles wherever practical, and pushing the limits of that practicality, conversions to natural gas or to propane power should be undertaken to provide not only a direct contribution to environmental improvement but leadership throughout this province to other businesses and individuals to pursue the same kind of environmental initiative.

We must address the manner in which we produce electricity. One-third of all the carbon dioxide produced in this province – and remember, Mr. Speaker, we produce one two-hundredths of all the carbon dioxide produced in the world – is produced because we burn coal to produce electricity. Well, we must do something about that, and there are initiatives that we can take. We must, for example, adjust the tariff rates that are currently charged. Now the more that a major commercial enterprise uses electricity, the less they pay. It is exactly the wrong kind of incentive. That incentive should be inverted: the more you use, the more you pay.

Mr. Speaker, we should adopt programs to stimulate energy efficiency. The fact is that elsewhere in the world it has been discovered that the creation of a new power plant to produce the marginal, the next incremental electricity requirement can be as much as seven times as expensive as conservation measures. New upgraded electrical engines, for example, under our kind of electricity utilization regime and cost regime can pay for themselves in a very, very short period of time. The utilization of compact fluorescent bulbs that can be utilized in an auditorium like ours here last 13 times as long and utilize much less

electricity and pay for themselves, even though they are more expensive, in a very short period of time.

4:20

Mr. Speaker, Ontario and Quebec have helped finance energy service companies by putting up capital for energy conservation projects which in turn can be paid for by the savings in electricity costs for the homeowner or the commercial and business user. Estimates are that with reasonable utilization of conservation measures that are within the grasp of individuals in their day-to-day lives in provinces like Alberta, utilizing the technology that exists and is practical today, in our society and societies like ours we can realize as much as a 25 percent reduction in electricity requirements and, therefore, in the carbon dioxide that is produced to create the electricity that we would otherwise use unnecessarily.

We must look to alternative mechanisms for the generation of electricity. It is very interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that the government finally, under pressure, did implement a buy back scheme for small power producers, but they set a limit of 125 megawatts of generating capacity on small power producers. Why would we do that? I believe we should have a differential incentive for alternative small power producers. Those that produce it with solar and with wind without creating any pollution would be paid even more than those who produce it through other cogeneration techniques, for example.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important as well that we implement immediately regulations for the recycling of chlorofluorocarbons, CFCs, in air conditioners and refrigerators and that we begin to phase out CFCs absolutely wherever they exist. For example, it would be a step in the right direction for this government in its fleet of cars and vehicles in this province to outlaw air conditioners, which are now created with chlorofluorocarbons. Yes, several days of the year it will provide an inconvenience for some people; it will be a discomfort for some people. In fact, that is a small sacrifice to be made when you consider the persistence, the virulence with which chlorofluorocarbons work to create global warming and the greenhouse effect, not to mention the effect that they have on the ozone layer and what that will do for the health, particularly with respect to the incidence of cancer, of people like my children and the children of people like Pat Black across the way.

It is also very, very important that we look in a general sense at a system of tradable permits that can be implemented to encourage businesses in an economically positive way to reduce their greenhouse gas production. It's very important that we don't isolate one kind of energy production industry from another kind of energy production industry.

Mr. Speaker, if I could have but a minute . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I regret to inform the hon. member that his time has expired.

#### Point of Order Speaking Time

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, a point of order. I have been interrupted due to procedural matters today that were important, that have meant that I . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. member, order please. [interjections] Order please. Order please, hon. member. The hon. member was interrupted, but the time that interruption took was not charged to the hon. member. The hon. member has had his full time.

#### Debate Continued

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

MR. GOGO: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the opportunity of speaking to the throne speech.

Yesterday, March 26, saw a unique anniversary for several members of the Assembly. My colleague to the right, the hon. Member for Taber-Warner; the Member for Medicine Hat, the hon. Mr. Horsman; our Provincial Treasurer, Lethbridge-East; the hon. Mr. Bradley, Pincher Creek-Crowsnest; the Member for Cypress-Redcliff; and myself experienced our 16th anniversary of being elected to this Assembly. Members may rightly ask the question, I suppose: what have been the benefits of 16 years in the House? I would submit, first of all, Mr. Speaker, that having survived 16 years alone might be an achievement. I would think, however, that more important, Your Honour, is the fact that members with 16 years in the House have experienced five successful elections. I would submit to you, sir, that that must indicate to many Albertans, particularly the voters in their constituencies, that these members have probably done a good job for that period of time or they wouldn't still be here. In my view, the strength of a member to be honoured to sit in this Assembly is in direct proportion to the service he or she offers to their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to begin by congratulating His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. I had the good fortune and real pleasure of having met him some 25 years ago, sir, at the same I met you, as a matter of fact. It's been an honour for me to have observed the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor's activities both in terms of a citizen of central Alberta and, more importantly, as a Member of Parliament for some 16 years.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make some comments relative to the constituency I represent, because if it wasn't for that constituency I obviously wouldn't be here. Alberta is a proud province, an attractive province, and a province that in many ways sets, I think, the national agenda in terms of economic activity. The province is only really as good as the parts of the province, and I'm proud to represent a community known as Lethbridge, Alberta's largest city after Calgary and Edmonton and certainly in many ways the friendliest city in the province for those who have ventured into the deep south to experience the Lethbridge community. Of significant note to some is the fact that Lethbridge is some 10 or 12 years older than the province of Alberta, having been founded before the turn of the century, and I think has in so many ways contributed to our success over the years not only in terms of the people it's elected to its Legislatures but more importantly the people who have built our province, particularly in the agricultural sector.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, Lethbridge is the service centre for agriculture, and one thing that I find particularly encouraging is that although on the one hand we have the largest research station in Canada adjacent to the city in the constituency of Taber-Warner and we have the largest animal diseases research institute in the country situated in Macleod on the western border of Lethbridge, the unique part of Lethbridge as a service centre is the co-operation it has with and the co-operation it gives to all the adjacent communities in the south in terms of what some people would call a catch basin: some 180,000 to

200,000 that funnel into the city of Lethbridge for such things as health and legal services and other services.

The point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, because I referred to my hon. colleagues who came north with me in 1975 after the March 26 election, is that the very fact that we're still here I think to a great degree and a great extent indicates the very high degree of co-operation that the members have enjoyed with each other, which is only a reflection of the communities they represent. Last night here in the House, Mr. Speaker, we met with a group from the south representing four constituencies. Their title is the Chinook Country Tourist Association. They met with the hon. Minister of Tourism and all the MLAs from the south and pointed out to us something we've known for some time but I think, with respect, have to be reminded about: the success of the Chinook Country Tourism Association, which includes Kananaskis Country and Calgary, is the fact that they co-operate with each other. It's not, "I will grab what I can grab, and you get what's left." I as well as my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, were quite taken with the fact that whether they were from the Cardston community, the Taber-Warner community, the Macleod or Pincher Creek community, or north of High River, they displayed, I think, a very co-operative attitude by saying, "Hey, if we stand together and share what we have with each other, then we'll attract the tourists to the entire area." That, I think, in many ways symbolizes the spirit of co-operation that's made southern Alberta as strong as it is.

4:30

We've often heard, Mr. Speaker, people talk about volunteers. Well, certainly Alberta is not only strong in volunteers but even recognizes, with a Volunteer Week, the attitude and involvement of the volunteers in our communities. I simply look in Lethbridge, at Lethbridge-West as well as Lethbridge-East, at one of the largest chambers of commerce per capita in the country. These are people who through their own time and effort, at no compensation, serve our community. One looks at the seniors' centre in my community. It has some 4,500 members that in my view go the extra mile to see that one of the communities of the province, Lethbridge, with the second highest on a per capita basis of senior citizens, gets involved with their fellow man in terms of assisting them.

One name comes to mind which is well known to all members from the south: the members for Macleod, Taber-Warner, Lethbridge-East, Cardston, Pincher Creek-Crowsnest. It is a person by the name of Pearl Borgal, who is some 80 years of age and is in hospital today. That person, Mr. Speaker, started a society called the Keep in Touch society. They've now surpassed 100,000 people over seven years. They phone senior citizens every day to make sure they're doing all right. They've refused to apply for or to take any government assistance. That is the pure role of volunteerism, people who take the time to care, people who say, "Hey, I've done all right, and I'm prepared to pay some rent for the space I occupy on Earth." They choose to do that by forming an association without government support. They get 50 to 75 others involved, and on a daily basis they contact thousands of senior citizens. That, in my view, is what volunteerism is all about.

As well, we are proud to have in southern Alberta the Royal Canadian legions and other veterans' organizations like the Army, Navy, Air Force and Korean Veterans associations. One only has to observe November 11 each year in my community, where the highest turnout per capita in the country is seen on Remembrance Day. Many of those come from surrounding communities into the city of Lethbridge to pay recognition and

tribute through remembrance for those who paid the price for our freedom. The Royal Canadian Legion, Mr. Speaker, this year in Lethbridge will attract from all of Alberta and the Northwest Territories over 5,000 delegates to a convention. The point I want to make is that without the involvement of the ladies auxiliary to the legion and the members of the General Stewart branch and all the surrounding legions in southern Alberta, this wouldn't be possible. That, in my view, is volunteerism, because the primary objective of the Royal Canadian Legion is to serve the members and the families of former members of the Royal Canadian Legion. That's volunteerism.

Mr. Speaker, the more we hear – and we just heard from Edmonton-Meadowlark a few minutes ago about government should do this, government should make more rules, government should run your life. Well, if that had happened, this province would never have been, because it's that spirit of volunteerism through pioneerism that made this province great.

As the MLA for Lethbridge-West I've made it consistently my first priority within my own constituency to create or do what I can to create jobs. We've heard the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche say to us many times that with jobs comes dignity for his people. That's true. How can we expect young people to remain within our community unless they have some assurance of employment, some assurance of careers? That's why, Mr. Speaker, when there's a lay-off within my community, whether it be NovAtel, whether it be Canada Packers, whether it be something else, it affects me in a very, very significant way, because employment is the number one priority. We must continue to do all we can to create, not hinder, the opportunity for small business, the greatest creator of jobs, to do all we can to ensure that they prosper. They don't need handouts. They don't need loans. They don't need loan guarantees. They need to know what the rules are and some commitment by the government not to change the rules.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, I'm a member of a government that like all governments, tends to make rules. If we were to adopt some of the policies I've heard from the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, they would result in more rules, more stringent conditions. I'm not trying to take away that environment is important; it is very important. I simply submit to the hon. member that you cannot afford to have the educational opportunities and the health standards and all the other social programs that take 75 percent of our budget without some type of economic activity with which to generate that revenue. That seems to be lost on people. It seems to be lost particularly when you reside in the capital city and you're fed by government, where the largest single occupation is a bureaucracy in civil servants. For those that think the capital city is the be-all and end-all, I'd simply invite them to travel around this province to discover some of these exciting opportunities, but more importantly the people.

I learned a long time ago, Mr. Speaker, that in this House one can judge one's importance when making a speech by simply looking at the galleries. That tells you how many people really are interested in what you have to say. In my view, members are known for their actions, not for their speeches. As a late member of this Assembly once said, and I've never forgotten it: there are probably more people who talked their way out of here than ever talked their way into here.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to hon. members that within the Lethbridge community, particularly Lethbridge-West, we can and should be very proud of not only our health standards and our health facilities but should recognize, as even the Prime Minister of Canada has said, that the future belongs to those

who are educated and trained. No longer are we in a protective society where we don't have to reach out and compete. Last year in Canada one-third of our total revenue came from trading outside our borders. I listened last night to someone whom people would admire and others probably condemn, Sylvia Ostry, who, as many members are aware, has occupied a place in Ottawa for many years, highly respected, I know, by the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, a very learned economist who pointed out that Canada cannot continue to maintain its high standards, assuming they are high, in health and education without the economic means to support them. For those that complain about the high value of the Canadian dollar as a logical argument as to why they can't compete with America, they only have to look at the deutsche mark or the Japanese yen. Those things have gone straight up in value. I do not accept for one moment the strong Canadian dollar as being the major hindrance for economic development outside Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pretty pleased and pretty proud that in Alberta, depending on what scale you want to measure economic activity – not a bad scale to use is the amount of revenue received in income taxes, because people don't pay income taxes unless they make money. As the Provincial Treasurer will show us in a week or so, the income tax not only anticipated for the next year but the amount of income tax received last year in this province compared to the year before has got to demonstrate in a very factual way that conditions, in terms of economic conditions, must have improved or more income tax would not have been paid.

4:40

I don't want to take away from the very great importance of education. We constantly hear it being criticized. I'm very proud to be the Minister of Advanced Education, which has within Alberta its 28 institutions with its billion-dollar budget, but more importantly, to have as the MLA for Lethbridge-West one of the finest undergraduate liberal arts institutions in the world, the University of Lethbridge. Hon. members around the House who meet with the School Trustees' Association know that of which I'm speaking, that the teachers who graduate from the U of L are in very high demand, as you yourself, Mr. Speaker, are aware.

I think it points out the wisdom of the previous administration back in 1969-70, the wisdom of establishing a third university in Alberta outside of the two major cities. The U of L was born just one year later than the University of Calgary, but today, with its over 4,000 students, with a payroll approaching some \$37 million, not only is it an important institution in terms of the students it has but an important institution in terms of its economic activity within my community.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we have the Lethbridge Community College. The first public college in Canada was Lethbridge Community College. Not everybody is aware of that. They think of Ryerson and they think of the others, but it was Lethbridge, Alberta, that was chosen in 1957, thanks to a certain Prime Minister we had at the time, to have the first publicly funded college in the nation. One only has to look at the wide array of programs offered at Lethbridge in terms of trades training, environmental training, and university transfer programs to recognize the very great value it offers to our community. But that may, I suppose, be expected of me to say as the minister.

If anything can be more important than the postsecondary institutions, it's got to be the school system, the educational system. We have within my community a very fine, outstanding

academic system in K-12, whether it be the Lethbridge district 51 with its 8,000 students, or the Catholic separate district No. 9 with its 2,500 students, or the Immanuel Christian school, the outstanding independent school in this province, with 600 students. The fact that they don't get enough money is another issue, and I won't raise it with the hon. minister in the House. It points out the fact that education is in pretty fine shape in my community.

Mr. Speaker, if one looks at the number of people who go on to higher education, one has to be somewhat proud not only of the school boards, who are elected by their peers, but of the nature of the school teachers we have today. I for one get a little testy when I hear this constant criticism and carping about the quality of teaching within our school system. One has to, I think, answer a very fundamental question, and that is: what is the role of the school in our community today? As far as I can determine, it's a toss-up with certain people whether they are schools of teaching as opposed to schools of day care. I suppose the only way we'd ever find out is to lock them up for six months and we'd find out for sure the role of those schools.

I look at the community school program, Mr. Speaker, one of our success stories. Lethbridge-West's Nicholas Sheran community school, the first community school in Alberta, last November, to quote one month, had 10,000 people through that school in nonacademic matters. If someone wants to question the role of a community school, simply look at that one, and there are many of them. If there's ever a bargain to the taxpayers in this province with regard to community schools, simply look at the \$5 million or whatever we're spending on them. It's a bargain because we get the citizens involved. They utilize those school facilities as meeting places, and they take a very deep interest in the kids that are in those schools. Nicholas Sheran and Gilbert Patterson, the two community schools in Lethbridge, I think have an outstanding record in terms of their community school activity.

An area I wanted to touch on, Mr. Speaker, was that last month we had a science fair in my community, as I'm sure all hon. members have, and if one were to look at the young people of grades 4, 5, and 6 that are involved in the science fairs, it would restore our faith in the future in terms of involvement in science. You know, not often do people get credit for those things, but there are outstanding teachers who take the time over and above their union contract for 23 and a half hours a week instructional time, or whatever the minutes are, who dedicate their time and their efforts because they see children as promise for the future. That's why they get involved. That's why I get a little excited about a certain man in Alberta named Mr. Jim Gray, who, Heaven knows, has lots to do in his own business but has taken the time to encourage us to get involved in a thing called the Science Foundation because we've got to get our young people more involved. Mr. Speaker, I encourage members who don't think we're doing very much to visit some of those schools. Their faith in our educational system would be restored.

MRS. BLACK: He's from Calgary.

MR. GOGO: Yes, he's from Calgary, and we'll forgive him for that. He's well known throughout the province. He's traveled tens of thousands of kilometres to make Albertans aware that the future lies with those who are educated, who are trained, and that science is part of their future.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, that today, March 27, a fellow named Gagarin, that people may remember, was the first man

in space. It happened to be on March 27 that that honourable Russian passed away. I don't know why it's significant, but it's related to science.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's probably very important for me to comment on another area that I feel strongly about and that I continue to hear about not only from the Constitution Act, 1982, but ad nauseam in other areas, and that's this business of rights. Whether they're charters of rights or any kinds of rights, the one word I never seem to hear is the word "responsibility." I never hear the flip side; I never hear the other side. It's "I'm entitled to this; therefore, it's my right." As minister I continue to get mail saying, "It is my right to attend the U of A; it's my right to attend the U of C; it's my right to have a student loan." Never a word about responsibility. Never a word that, "I'm expected to achieve a 60 percent average to maintain a student loan." Never a word that, "Surely I've got to have some responsibility in this game."

It concerns me, Mr. Speaker, because in my years of experience I have learned that whether it be in health care, in education, in self-betterment, in working, in alcohol treatment – I've had some experience at that – people who have a vested financial interest seem to value things more. That's why I think it's fundamental in Alberta that we have not only a tuition fee policy for the postsecondary system, but that we have tuition fees that are meaningful, tuition fees that will pay a reasonable part of the cost so we can maintain quality in our system. I'm told by the opposition day after day that the system's falling apart. Well, I would just offer to them, like I hear so much about from the experts on Quebec who haven't been east of Medicine Hat: go to the other jurisdictions and have a look. Across the river in the last 10 years we spent \$355 million alone on bricks and mortar at the U of A. I know provinces who haven't spent that much totally in 10 years. The point remains: I think people have a responsibility. I'd like to see more people coming forward and offering to our young people some opportunities to shoulder that responsibility. I look at the Junior Achievement movement, which teaches that, teaches the fact that there's no free lunch.

Mr. Speaker, I simply want to conclude on this basis. I am very proud to have represented Lethbridge-West for these past 16 years. I'm very proud of the fact that the work ethic is alive and well in my community. I'm very proud of the fact that people still lend a helping hand to other people. I want to remind hon. members that everybody likes clean air, everybody likes clean water, but I think more and more people are beginning to understand that it has a price tag. The price tag is – and I don't like to use the cliché of sustainable development. For hon. members who aren't certain of the year that was born, it was born 700 years ago with a certain poet. I guess it's in fashion, so they brought it back. We all like to have clean air and clean water, but we must recognize the fact, just like Athabasca-Lac La Biche, that if we want people who are four-fifths on social assistance to have their dignity restored, it's got to begin with meaningful work and meaningful employment, and there's got to be a trade-off between the environment and economic development.

4:50

Mr. Speaker, although I come from Lethbridge and people may think it's Archie Bunker country, I would point out that the strength of this province in many ways is built not by the capital cities but by the people who come from all corners of this province. Although I've always restricted myself from criticizing any member of the House, when I hear people say that we'll put

an extra tax on those who have a larger car – they're not all Cadillacs. Sometimes people can't afford newer cars, and it's fine when you live in the capital city with all the services available, with LRTs available, with even the belching diesel buses available, to say that we'll solve our environment by imposing a cost on those who really built this province, who live outside of the capital city. I find that a little difficult to take. I suppose it would be realistic in the not unforeseeable future, with the views of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, who wants to put more and more rules in and outlaw automobiles, that he would probably end up on roller skates. That might be appropriate.

I congratulate the hon. mover of this speech, the Member for Smoky River, and the seconder, from Calgary-Bow. I think we as Canadians, we as Albertans, and we as legislators are in the finest province in the country, and we got that way not because of us; we got that way because of those who walked before us and built this province. For that, Mr. Speaker, I'm extremely proud to represent Lethbridge-West, and I'm extremely grateful they sent me here to Edmonton.

Thank you.

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

MS M. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure today to rise in my place to respond to the Speech from the Throne and to comment on the passionate speech just given by the Member for Lethbridge-West. I hope that he will speak and consult with the Minister of Education in regard to community schools. I, too, have two wonderful community schools in my constituency, and it has saddened me to see that that program has been frozen and that there are a number equal to those that have been created who are still waiting for funding.

Mr. Speaker, I would congratulate our new Lieutenant Governor and hope that he finds his new role challenging and satisfying. I would also comment on the excellent work of our recently retired 'Loo-tenant' Governor . . .

MR. MAIN: 'Lef-tenant' Governor. This is Canada.

MS M. LAING: That's right. I was born in rural Alberta. Right. [interjection] Yes, it was, actually. Anyway, she did a commendable job and has been a wonderful role model for women in Alberta.

In formulating my response to the throne speech, I hold in my mind's eye the image of a little girl with wispy blond curls and big blue eyes that open each day with a twinkle and are filled with wonder and joy and with a gentle smile that reveals both her enthusiasm and her reticence as she reconnects with her world. I tremble with her. I tremble as I behold her because I am struck again with the wonder and fragility of life. Through her my concern for all the world's children and the future of our province, our country, and our world takes on a kind of immediacy that cannot be denied.

We live in difficult times, Mr. Speaker. With the Gulf war, our dream of a new world order founded on dialogue, co-operation, and justice died. As we witnessed the Meech Lake saga, we saw a Prime Minister who subscribed to the old order of power politics as he pitted our country against itself and tore apart a fragile but enduring nation. We have seen our aboriginal peoples across Canada and Alberta treated in ways that have been cause for censure at the international level. In our own province we see the destruction of our forests, the pollution of

our rivers, and the erosion of our social safety net. In the name of fiscal responsibility this government will create human, social, and environmental deficits that will never be overcome.

My heart aches as I contemplate my granddaughter's future, the future we are creating with the policies of the present founded on the philosophies and ideologies of the past. These philosophies include a commitment to competition and survival of the fittest, social Darwinism, which finds its expression in the free market system that decries government interference in the marketplace unless it is, of course, in the form of loans, grants, loan guarantees, royalty holidays, and tax loopholes, and an unending call for reduction of taxation through the cutting of social programs.

I recently read a quote about this form of economic fundamentalism, which was described as the rich to get richer and the poorer to quit complaining. This philosophy means we do not have pay equity in this province or employment equity legislation. It means a balanced budget is an obsession even if the government denies this analysis. It means closing one's eyes to the human reality behind the statistics. Three hundred and five jobs lost: what does that mean in the lives of 305 people and their families? It means unemployment insurance and then social assistance, living below the poverty line because of the loss of one or maybe the only income. There's worry, desperation, families destroyed, because poverty is the major threat to families at this time in our history. What does a 7, 8, 9, or a 10 percent unemployment rate mean? How many families, how many fathers and mothers, how many young people starting out feel hopeless, desperate, suicidal? What about farm and business bankruptcies? What dreams destroyed?

The free market orientation means social spending is blamed for destroying initiative, allowing people to live lives of irresponsibility and idleness. And the deficit: even as we watch, hundreds of millions of dollars lost through fiscal mismanagement. All of these things are blamed on social spending, even as we see high interest rates that mean much money is spent servicing the debt and increasing the profit of lending institutions, even as we see unlimited funds go to war. Let me give you a quotation:

Canada's contribution to the Gulf War [was] about \$90 million a month, approximately \$270 million . . .

This is equal to twice the Canadian annual budgets for vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons, young offenders programs, senior's programs and child care programs combined.

What a waste.

We hear that there are not enough dollars for the social support system, for health care, for education, but there is no shortage of dollars for business. The free market orientation means the dismantling of our safety net for children who are in need of care and protection. The methods? Privatization and commercialization, even as the government states its commitment to the community and volunteer sector, something eloquently spoken of by the last speaker. The volunteer service sector agencies were built out of the blood, sweat, and tears of committed professional and community volunteer people who responded to the needs that emerged in their communities. Their dedication and creativity are often at the forefront of finding solutions and developing expertise in dealing with the needs of various groups of people. This sector provides for advocacy and education of other professionals, of the community at large, and even the government so that more appropriate policies and laws may be formulated and implemented. These agencies are particularly sensitive to the needs of their clientele in a way that government ministers and bureaucrats often are

not. This government has often stated how valuable the volunteer sector is, even at this time as it moves to undermine and destroy community based agencies through a change from grant to fee-for-service funding structures, which will not provide for advocacy and development and supervision and monitoring of the services provided.

### 5:00

Mr. Speaker, I recently heard of a senior bureaucrat who said that a child abuse survivor does not need the support of a trusted therapist at a time of great trauma; that is, when that child has to go to court and face the perpetrator, the person who violated her or him. I can hardly express my dismay at this level of ignorance of a senior member of the Family and Social Services department. This same person said that services will spring up to fill the void created by this destruction of the volunteer sector. Quality service does not just spring up. It requires the kind of hard work and dedication and expertise that we have seen in the volunteer sector, and our communities will be poorer for the loss of these agencies. The free market system does not value the volunteer sector, does not understand it because it is not founded on the profit motive. It is founded on concern for people and its commitment to service.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard about the Premier's commitment to the family, but where is his commitment and the commitment of his government to families in trouble, families in which one member is violent and harms other members of the family? Treatment programs for abusers are closing down. One is due to close at the end of this week for lack of funding. There are no treatment facilities and programs for children who witness violence in the family – that is, the physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual abuse of their mothers – and often they are the targets of that abuse. There are no treatment programs even though we know that treatment of children is the primary way of prevention of violence in the coming generations. Shelters are filled to overflowing. More women and children are turned away than are sheltered. Motel rooms are not an acceptable alternative to the support and security offered in shelters. Public relations campaigns must be in concert with programs and alternatives to all members of these families. At the present time battered women face a cruel choice. They can choose to live in a violent, potentially lethal environment or face a life of poverty due to inadequate social assistance allowance, lack of pay equity, and the failure of this government to enforce maintenance orders.

The Premier's commitment to decentralization demonstrates an astonishing lack of understanding of today's families. Many families are two-income families, and children's roots in their community are important. One of the major social upheavals that may account for weakening in families is the marketplace and its demand that people follow jobs. Decentralization, Mr. Speaker, does not create jobs; it merely moves them around. If this government cares about families, it will create jobs and offer real support for rural Albertans that does not bring harm to urban families. This government would say it cares about children, but we have seen child care reforms reduce the quality of care that will be offered to children from the age of 13 months to 36 months because the number of staff people that are with children at this age, a most vulnerable age – a most vulnerable age – will be reduced, and the subsidy restructuring may legislate women on marginal or not so marginal incomes back into the home. What women want are choices about whether or not they will be employed in the paid labour force. They want choices about how they will raise their children. They

want choices as to whether or not they will have children, and they want choices about who will deliver their babies and where. I call on this government to bring in policies and laws that support women's choices.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Another area that seems not to be a concern of the marketplace is advanced education, as we rely on these institutions to educate people so they can take their place in the workplace of the future, which will require increasingly highly educated people. Similarly, we have seen cuts in health care, which have meant a loss of jobs, a lack of service. I daresay there are many of us in this room, in this Assembly, who have heard from constituents in regard to lifesaving surgery that may come too late. We see a reduction in early intervention and preventative care, which means more costly care will be required in the future. Over and over again we've heard that a dollar saved now may cost \$7 to \$10 in the future.

Mr. Speaker, we've seen this government voice its concern about constitutional reform, but we are now caught in a process that may be plagued by time deadlines, not unlike the time deadlines that spelled disaster for the Meech Lake accord. Is this government really serious about the Constitution when it has a time line for hearings and collection of information and formulation of a report and recommendations and printing of that report of three months? Three months to deal with the most serious issue a province and a country can face?

Similarly, we have the issue of electoral boundaries, which has been used by this government to pit urban voters against rural voters. It's the government, with its disproportionate number of rural members, who has allowed and facilitated the erosion of rural Alberta, its deterioration through the closing of schools which serve as centres for our communities. Rural schools in many cases are like the urban community school, where the school is a gathering place for the community. We would ask: who will move to a rural community that does not have a school, does not have a place of gathering in its community, does not have a place for sports and extracurricular activities? We will ask: who would move or want to stay in a rural community where their children are faced with long bus rides? Long bus rides mean those children have less time at home, so there is a deterioration in the quality of life at home, and parents are less able to be involved in the education.

It was not urban members that failed to recognize the needs of rural Alberta. It is this government, with many, many rural members, who have not listened to the people of rural Alberta. Mr. Speaker, it requires a commitment to the rural way of life and the political will to support that way of life. It is not a place of birth or residency that determines what we value. It is a willingness to consider the well-being of the whole province and the interrelatedness of the well-being of all Albertans that is important. What is needed is a vision that sees Alberta as a unity and a government that will work to make this a unified province, not a government that would pit one group against another.

Mr. Speaker, the ideologies and solutions of the past place us all in jeopardy. Our world is one, and we can no longer pit one group against another, be it at a provincial, national, or international level. Competition means justice is not a consideration. Survival is the operative word, and profit is the bottom line. That can no longer work. We have a province that fails to provide pay and employment equity legislation, to provide human rights protection on the basis of sexual orientation. We

are told that Albertans are not ready for this legislation, but surveys have shown that Albertans are indeed ready for this legislation. It is this government that is not forward-thinking enough to bring in this legislation. It is this government that is out of touch with the people, and hopefully it will soon be out of office.

#### 5:10

Mr. Speaker, a commitment to power politics and manipulation at the national level has torn our country apart, and at the international level another war to end all wars, to establish a new world order, we are told, in the name of democracy. In the name of democracy there was a war to reinstate an emir with 80 wives and a regime that stones women who commit adultery, often through being raped, and cuts off the hands of thieves. We are told a UN initiative, but nowhere did we see the United Nations flag. When an island off the coast of Kuwait was regained, it was an American flag that was hoisted aloft. The United Nations secretary-general was not even informed prior to the outbreak of bombing. This was an American war in the tradition of American wars: to protect and advance American interests, to test U.S. weapons with live ammunition and human subjects, the humanity of the casualties denied through words such as "target" and "collateral damage." In reality, the casualties were men, women, and children like my brothers and sisters and children. That is the reality of that war. We witnessed a massacre of fleeing soldiers: men, sons, fathers, husbands.

Mr. Speaker, our soldiers acted with courage, and our hearts yearned for their safe return, but the decision of our political leaders demonstrated unprecedented stupidity. They lacked the courage to work for peace through nonviolent means, so a nation's lands were devastated, and the air and the waters of this planet have been fouled to an extent and with an impact that will be visited upon the coming generations. It would have been much better to have spent that money on international aid.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I look at my grandchild and I ask: will she be the one in eight females who is sexually assaulted, half of them by the time they're the age of 17? Will she be the one in eight women who is battered by a man who says he loves her? Will she have reproductive choices and birthing choices? Will she have access to universal health care? Will she be able to receive postsecondary education on the basis of her ability and her interest, or will that access be determined by the economic status of her parents? Will she experience economic equity, fair pay for her work? Will our country exist? Will our world be habitable?

Mr. Speaker, these are challenges, challenges that are not a concern to the free marketplace, but they must be the concern of people committed to justice and to a world that lives in peace; justice and peace that include my little blue-eyed, blond baby and little brown-eyed, dark-haired babies, and babies with all colours of eyes and skin and hair, no matter where they live. We need a world founded not on an animal world of survival of the fittest but a human world of justice, a world that includes all of the Earth's people and a concern for our planet Earth. I call on this government to get in touch with the cry for that justice and that care that is being heard throughout the world.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to participate today in the debate of His Honour the Lieutenant

Governor's speech and to echo all of the other good things that have been said both about His Honour and about our previous Lieutenant Governor. I also want to add my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the speech, my friends from Calgary-Bow and Smoky River, who I thought served us well and with great honour in the presentation of the motion that we now are speaking to.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, I also do want to personally add my thanks and respect for the work that you do in this House. It's not an easy place to run. We're not the most calm and serene people at all times to keep in line, but you hold the decorum of this House together well, and you make sure that we continue to show Albertans the respect they ask for in our representation of them.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne dealt with many things. The speech, of course, covered the broad spectrum of the government's plan for this next year, but inherent in that speech was the underlying point that we have a plan and a vision and a way of dealing with this fast-moving future that would be in the best interests of all Albertans. Last night as I addressed the motion on our constitutional committee, I talked of the rapid change that the world is facing. Members who have spoken before me have also alluded to that change. In this province the planning and the decisions, the balance that must be taken by a responsible government and a responsible Legislature have been complicated significantly by up-and-down, unpredictable waves of oil prices; by the movement in and out of people as the various aspects of the economy have affected people's lives and directions; of the changes that take place in this modern world because of international trends such as the baby boom, which is now causing an aging population, and the other factors which are moving us along faster than our forefathers moved. I believe the Speech from the Throne addresses those well.

I want to first speak to the budget dimensions and the commitment towards a balanced budget that is in this particular address. The speaker who addressed us before me talked of many things and sincerely expressed concerns about many aspects of our society, but I fundamentally disagree with the tone that was inherent in that address because it suggested to Albertans that the problems that individuals sometimes face – the environment which is sometimes damaged, the difficult challenges that we all sometimes have to address – are pervasive and in fact speak to all of Alberta that this place we live in is an environmental nightmare. That was the suggestion that seemed to be made: a place where people are constantly in jeopardy, where individuals can't fulfill their goals, where families are unable to respond to their needs. Mr. Speaker, while we have difficulties, while there are individuals in those positions, nothing could be further from the truth about the general direction of Alberta. We have an economy which is burgeoning beyond all others in the country. Though it was suggested that the whole base of it is not in keeping with what we require, that economy is in fact allowing for an unprecedented number of jobs for Albertans in a variety of areas and with potential for our future generations that nobody else has.

The Conference Board of Canada says that since 1985 we have created about 89,000 new jobs in this province, 89,000 jobs not in the traditional sectors of oil and agriculture but in tourism and forestry, in service industries and high technology, in a variety of areas. Mr. Speaker, that hasn't been an accident. That has been part of a plan, a plan enunciated by the Premier when he said that we have to diversify this economy, and he

created the ministries of Tourism, of forestry, of Technology, Research and Telecommunications. We have seen in each of those areas, along with many others, a great deal of growth. Today we stand at a position in the country economically where again that Conference Board – not any Alberta government or Conservative Party source, but the Conference Board of Canada – says that over the next year there will be roughly a .3 percent increase in economic growth in the country, but in Alberta it will be between 1 and a half and 2 percent: six, seven times the national average. Over this next year it's also indicated that we in Canada will have 85,000 fewer jobs because of the economic difficulties being faced in the country, but in Alberta we will have 10,000 more jobs than we had last year, certainly an endorsement of the direction that's been taken by this government over the past number of years. That's with respect to the economy.

5:20

His Honour mentioned in the Speech from the Throne moves that we are making with respect to social programs, with regards to the environment. While all of us are appropriately conscious of the need to deal with aspects of the environment in coming years, to be part of the world's awareness that we must treat that which we have with a sensitivity and an understanding that it is there for the existence of this planet, we have in fact initiated programs that are not paralleled elsewhere: the environmental protection and enhancement Act, which the hon. Minister of the Environment has put together; the Natural Resources Conservation Board, to deal with projects in the future, ensuring public involvement and an independent adjudication of what they will do to the future as well as the economic benefits of any such project. I agree that the day is gone when we could just deal with the economic benefit without looking at the environmental concerns. This government was among the first to recognize that, establish the standards, and put in place the mechanisms to deal with the difficulties.

Mr. Speaker, the social area I think is one of the most difficult fields which we as individuals deal with, because they are real Albertans who need assistance, who are in difficulty or are facing problems. We will never have completed our task in this area; there's no question. With regards to those who need our assistance, I know that that will continue, but to suggest that we are in any way not sensitive to that or not doing our best in that regard is something that is far from the truth. I have to congratulate the hon. Minister of Family and Social Services, who this year has shown a great deal of innovation in dealing with his budget needs by bringing together programs to ensure that the dollars are going where the need is the greatest. In the day care area he has been putting the same amount of dollars into those families which need it the most and has reorganized to meet those changing needs of today. There is much yet to do, but it is a challenge, and there is a vision that I believe we can all be thankful for.

Mr. Speaker, I could speak for some time with regards to my own portfolio of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, where we, amidst this fast, global change, a marketplace which is highly technological and where there are many options for individuals, are uniting Alberta in a partnership plan between business, consumers, and government to police that marketplace and help educate consumers to deal with difficulties. I could talk for a long time about one project that I very much believe in, and that's the move to plain, understandable language so that individual Albertans will always know what it is they are signing and be able to make objective decisions with regards to the

choices they make. I could speak for a great deal of time with regards to our securities markets, which have to deal with that rapid change and where we have put stricter, tighter rules to ensure that Albertans feel confident about investing in our economy. We will be making further decisions with respect to that in the near future.

But given the hour and the time of the month, which is time for a break, for us to take a much needed rest with family and constituents, I would just take this opportunity to wish every member of the House – the Liberals, the New Democrats, and the Conservatives – the very best for the Easter season and hope that they with their families have an enjoyable and restful time. I would especially give my best wishes to my colleague the Minister of Transportation and Utilities, in hopes that his illness will soon be over. I extend that to all other members of the House who may not be feeling too well or may be having some difficulties at this time.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion carries.  
Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, on the good wishes being given by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, I would move that the House now adjourn for the Easter recess pursuant to Government Motion 4, passed by the Assembly on Monday, March 25, 1991.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Before the Chair puts the question, the Chair would just briefly indicate to the House that in the last hour I was able to visit with the Minister of Transportation and Utilities. He is in good heart mentally, and hopefully within a week he will be in good heart totally. I, of course, gave him the best wishes of the whole House.

[The Assembly adjourned at 5:27 p.m.]