

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Friday, June 21, 1991**

10:00 a.m.

Date: 91/06/21

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

O Lord, we give thanks for the bounty of our province: our land, our resources, and our people.

We pledge ourselves to act as good stewards on behalf of all Albertans.

Amen.

head: **Notices of Motions**

MR. ZARUSKY: Mr. Speaker, under Standing Order 40 I would like to propose a motion for the Legislature today, and that is:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta recognize the period of August 1991 to October 1992 as the centenary of Ukrainian Canadian pioneer settlement, further that it acknowledge and affirm the contributions made by pioneers and their descendants who have come to this province from Ukraine, and further that it encourage all Albertans to participate in the many events associated with this important historic event.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

Bill 52

Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 1991

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 1991.

Mr. Speaker, this Act is in response to a request by the chairman and membership of the Electoral Boundaries Commission that the deadline for the interim report be extended in view of the Supreme Court judgment and the pending reference of the Act to the Alberta Court of Appeal. The request is an extension to December 31, 1991.

Thank you.

[Leave granted; Bill 52 read a first time]

Bill 54

Psychology Profession Amendment Act, 1991

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 54, being the Psychology Profession Amendment Act, 1991.

[Leave granted; Bill 54 read a first time]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 54, Psychology Profession Amendment Act, 1991, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-North West.

Bill 269

Non-Degradation of Water Quality Act

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 269, the Non-Degradation of Water Quality Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill proposes that any user of water must return that water to the waterway in a pure state without any extra additives, which are defined in the Bill.

[Leave granted; Bill 269 read a first time]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the 1990-91 annual report of the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee.

MS McCOY: I have great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, in tabling with the Assembly the annual report of the Public Service Commissioner for the year ended December 31, 1990.

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table with the Assembly the annual report of the Alberta Cancer Board for the year ended March 31, 1990. Copies will be given to all members.

As well, I'm filing the financial statements of the University of Alberta hospitals for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1991.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to file with the Assembly the following documents: Feasibility Study of Introducing Emergency Response Systems to Senior Citizen Lodges; The Village of Wildwood: A Disincorporation Study, 1990; and a third report, the Revitalizing of Downtown Alberta: A Self Help Action Kit.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I file with the Assembly the 1991-92 Students Finance Board Scholarships and Awards guide and the 1991-92 Alberta Transfer Guide prepared annually by the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer.

head: **Introduction of Special Guests**

MR. SPEAKER: The Associate Minister of Family and Social Services.

MR. BRASSARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly 34 members of the W.G. Murdoch school in Crossfield in my constituency. They're accompanied today by their teacher Mr. Barrett and parents Mr. Derry, Mrs. Fox, Mr. Havens, Mrs. Cooper, Mr. Cooper, Mrs. Worthington, Mrs. Schlender, Mrs. Lamoureux, and Mr. Gill. I wonder if they would rise and receive the very warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. FOWLER: It's my privilege to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly 58 students from the Keenooshayo public school in the city of St. Albert who are concluding their school year with an important visit to this Legislative Assembly today and a tour of the facility here. They're accompanied by Mrs. Brenda Kane, Mr. Dennis Fitzgerald, and Mrs. June Schreiber, who are educators in Keenooshayo. Mrs. Joan Fowler also accompanies them as a parent and Mr. Harvey Kennedy. I would ask for the traditional welcome of this Assembly for this group if they would stand.

MR. SPARROW: It's a pleasure today to have with us six students from the Leduc junior high school. They're accompanied by their teachers Mrs. Pottinger, Mr. Balkan, and Mrs. Kruger on a tour today. I met with them earlier. They're in the members' gallery, and I ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

head:

Ministerial Statements

Women in the Military

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, the Royal Canadian Air Force, Women's Division, and the Canadian Women's Army Corps will both celebrate 50th anniversaries this summer. The WDs, as they're known, will mark the occasion on July 2, while the CWACs will celebrate their golden anniversary on August 13. It gives me great pleasure, particularly since I am the daughter of a career serviceman in the air force, to rise at this time to acknowledge the important contributions of these women to Canada's military history.

The role of women in Canada's military history has been largely overlooked, yet they made significant contributions to Canada's defence during World War II. The women of the Royal Canadian Air Force, Women's Division, and the Canadian Women's Army Corps demonstrated great courage and patriotism both at home and on the front lines. These women volunteered to go to war when Canada needed every last person's effort to ensure victory and freedom. They faced some unique challenges. About two years ago I hosted a reception for a group of women war veterans who were members of the Canadian Women's Army Corps, and one of these women recalled that she quit her job as a maid to sign up and had to wait months to get an army uniform because the army tailor had trouble designing a jacket that would fit a woman because of all the bulges.

10:10

In the early years women served as cooks, cleaners, typists, accountants, and telephone operators, and like all military personnel, they also took part in parades, marching drills, regular inspections, and other activities. Their pay was less than men's, 90 cents compared to \$1.30, and they were not allowed to enter the men's canteens unless they were of higher rank. As the war progressed, women found themselves fulfilling greater responsibilities. Many became part of the ground crew maintaining aircraft and equipment, many served overseas, and, yes, there were some who did not return.

Both the RCAF, Women's Division, and the Canadian Women's Army Corps have planned 50th anniversary reunions this summer to renew the camaraderie they shared as young women and to relive memories of the happiness and hardship that they experienced during their tenure in the military. Thanks to their efforts women entering the military today have an excellent opportunity for personal development and advancement.

Canadians and Alberta owe a great deal to the women of the Royal Canadian Air Force, Women's Division, and the Canadian Women's Army Corps. I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in saluting these women for their commitment to peace, their pioneering spirit, and the pride with which they served their country.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, we'd certainly stand up and agree with the sentiment of the ministerial statement and also, from the Official Opposition, congratulate the Royal Canadian Air Force, Women's Division, and the Canadian Women's Army Corps, as mentioned, celebrating their 50th anniversaries this summer.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should also recognize that they were women who for the first time worked outside their homes during the war effort. I think we should keep in mind the sacrifices that occurred with women in that way also. The minister

mentions that "their pay was less than men's, 90 cents compared to \$1.30, and they were not allowed to enter the men's canteens." Well, some things still haven't changed, if I may say so, 50 years later. We know, as the minister correctly pointed out, that their work was undervalued financially, but I'd point out that right here in Alberta, at about 65 percent of men's earnings, it's clear that even 50 years later we need equal pay for work of equal value legislation. So I'd say to the minister that we agree, but now we can do something about it, and I expect to see pay equity legislation coming in very quickly.

I would conclude by agreeing with the minister's statement that "Canadians and Alberta owe a great deal to the women of the Royal Canadian Air Force, Women's Division, and the Canadian Women's Army Corps" and leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

head:

Oral Question Period

Health Care System

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health. Every major health advocacy organization in this country is warning about the looming crisis in health care and fearing for the future of our medicare system. We all know the underlying cause of the crisis: the intensifying abdication of the federal Conservatives in meeting their funding obligations to the provinces, the same Conservatives who I believe this minister helped campaign for in the last federal election. In our province there is another cause for the serious problems in our health care system: the shoddy mismanagement and misplaced priorities of our own government. Let's start with a quick example. Due to inadequate funding by the Conservatives in this province, Alpha House, a substance abuse treatment centre, has been forced to close its doors. At the same time, that minister is providing funds to send those needing help to the United States for treatment. My question to the minister is simply this: how is it that the Minister of Health could find over \$5 million last year to send Albertans out of the province for substance abuse treatment but can't find money to keep our own substance abuse institutions here? Is that what we call good management?

MS BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, here we go again with respect to the issues under the Canada Health Act. First of all, it is one of the requirements of the Canada Health Act that individuals be given the right to choose to go elsewhere and have the plan pay for them at the rate that it would pay in their province. So if the hon. member is suggesting that we prevent people from accessing programs outside of Alberta, being supplemented in part from Alberta and the rest they would pay on their own, then perhaps he would like to make his own point of view known to the federal government, which in fact is the one responsible for the Canada Health Act.

Secondly, with respect to the programs that are offered by AADAC and the specific questions that he asked on AADAC, I would ask the chairman of AADAC to respond.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, what we're talking about is the fact that there's money with no controls – we've raised this in the House before – to send people all over for whatever reason, but we're closing down our own institutions. That's shoddy mismanagement.

Now, my second question to the minister is another example of mismanagement Conservative style. It has to do with this government's edifice complex: throw money into constructing new buildings but don't staff them. Right now as we speak the

brain injury unit at Ponoka has 16 transitional units sitting absolutely empty even though it's been open less than a year, because the government refuses to provide funds to staff them. My question to the minister is simply this: will the minister explain how spending money on shiny, expensive new buildings that have to remain inoperative for lack of staffing funds is an efficient use of our tax dollars in health care?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I know that the solution the hon. Leader of the Opposition has for every issue that comes along is to put more money into it. The budget for Alberta Hospital Ponoka is one that I think we can all be proud of in terms of being part of a continuum of health services for mental health in this province. The need to get qualified people to work in that facility is a need that this government has helped that facility with for some time, particularly with the need for people with special psychiatric training.

However, to simply say that the only answer is to react by giving more money to an institution as opposed to saying, "Let's look at the needs; let's ensure that we're supplying in terms of our educational institutions the people that are going be needed in our health institutions" – I think in fact we're doing a far more comprehensive review of that. I am not supportive of his view that all we do is throw the system into debt, because ultimately debt is what will kill our health care plan as well as our vital social infrastructure in Canada, and it's not the way this government or this minister intends to proceed.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, this is unbelievable. This government goes around spend, spend, spend, puts plaques on buildings all over the province, then they can't staff them, and somehow they're blaming us for this. [interjections]

Now, my question is to the minister again. How does it make economic sense and financial good management to build buildings and then have them sit there as is happening with the brain injury unit in Ponoka? Will she answer that?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, the NDP caucus can laugh about building a brain injury unit at Alberta Hospital Ponoka if they wish. I don't happen to think it's a laughable matter. The issue of brain injury and making sure we have the capacity in our health system to deal with brain injury, which frankly is becoming a bigger part of the health profile and the health needs profile, is one that we have recognized as a government. We do need infrastructure, and we do need people to work in that unit. When it's fully operational, which is what we are in the process of doing, it will be able to serve the needs of Albertans not just in central Alberta but right across this province. I think we can be proud of the kinds of facilities we have not just in central Alberta but right across this province and ensure that they are ready to meet the needs and the health needs of the '90s and into the 21st century.

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

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When you build buildings, you need staff and patients.

My second question I'd like to designate to Edmonton-Jasper Place.

10:20 Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, having read the latest draft of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, I now

understand why the Minister of the Environment rudely walked out in question period yesterday. If I was stuck with this . . .

Speaker's Ruling

Referring to the Absence of a Member

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We went through this enough in the last couple of days. Just ask the question, please. I'm sure you have a very important question.

MR. ORMAN: Show some class for a change.

MR. MARTIN: Like you, with a secret fund?

MR. McINNIS: Yeah, Rick Orman should talk about class.

Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act

(continued)

MR. McINNIS: It's clear why the minister would ask for a delay and refuse to answer questions. The legislation is flawed because it almost completely ignores the input at public hearings that were held throughout the province. The worst aspect of this legislation has been and remains sweeping discretionary powers granted to the minister and the cabinet. These were described at the public hearings, and I quote, as "the most disturbing aspect of the proposed legislation." I would like the minister to state to this Assembly why the legislation proposes almost nothing in the way of substantive duty and obligation to the minister while granting the power to waive environmental impact assessments and even the power of the minister to overturn appeal board hearings.

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm astounded that the hon. member has taken this Bill, well over 100 pages in fine print, and has been able to read this overnight and actually understand it, notwithstanding the fact that this Bill in draft form has been out there for two years and as well the recommendations of the review committee have been out there for two years. All of a sudden it comes to light that: my gosh, this hon. member has recognized the ability to read something overnight and put it all together and come up with those profound questions.

Mr. Speaker, basically this Bill will sit and take its time and give opposition members ample time for debate and opportunity to provide their input. I look forward to that debate.

MR. McINNIS: The point is that Albertans came out in droves and demanded an end to these loopholes and this discretion, and he's ignoring their desire for tough new environmental laws. The minister has just said that this latest draft is going to be held over once again for more public input. This is the black hole approach, where input goes in and is never seen or heard from again.

Given that the minister did not listen to the public input over the last year, hearing only the backroom lobbyists, why should we believe that he's going to listen over the next year while it sits again?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, when you talk about backroom lobbyists, I can think of no better example of backroom lobbying than the socialist NDPs over there who sneak into constituencies and ill advise the people in those constituencies on how they can discredit the government, how they can play the games. A good example was the Al-Pac decision just the other day. The former policy adviser of the NDP, Randy Lawrence,

part of this organization, advised the people there to take the province to court on this particular issue. Not only did they lose in court, but they were assessed the highest possible costs that a court could award. That is a good example of socialist, NDP backroom politics. I say that the only thing . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. [interjection] Order please. [interjections] Order. I know that some of us were here till after 1 o'clock this morning, so let's just cool it a little bit.

Final supplementary, Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Yeah. Mr. Speaker, I ask about legislation, and he talks about court cases and things that happened in the night.

I just wonder if he would address another key recommendation coming from the Evans report, which is a reflection of the real input of the real people out there. A key recommendation was the concept of whistle blowers' protection. Typically, the louder voices in the Tory caucus, in the cabinet ran roughshod over the concern of the public that those who report pollution violations and poaching offences are at the mercy of the perpetrators. How can this government spend tax dollars advertising in public for people to come forward and report these offences when it leaves them without a fair and reasonable measure of protection under legislation?

MR. KLEIN: Well, this is another perfect example of socialist paranoia, Mr. Speaker, and I think the hon. member's paranoia has executed a coup d'état on his brain, really. Whistleblower legislation is a matter of policy as it affects all departments of government, not just Environment. If there's going to be a fundamental policy relative to whistleblower legislation, then it should be a policy of government, a policy of this province.

You've got to be very, very careful, because if you hearken back to the philosophies of, say, a Mao Tse-tung and the philosophies of communist China many years ago, that was exactly the kind of thing the socialists wanted to enshrine into policy: to tell on people and get paid to do it. I have more faith in Albertans, Mr. Speaker. Albertans will tell the government and tell the proper authorities what they think when something is being done wrong.

The fundamental principle here is that the basic policies, the very fundamental policies of strength in environmental legislation have been retained in this Act: a legislated environmental impact assessment process, polluter-pay policy, increased enforcement . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you, hon. minister. That's a good lead-in to further study of the Bill.

Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. DECORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My first question is to the Deputy Premier. Environmental protection has not been a high priority for the Getty government. In fact, we need only look at Al-Pac to see how abysmal environmental protection and the handling of that issue went. We now see major weaknesses in the government's new environmental protection legislation. We can even read that legislation overnight, Mr. Minister. I don't think it's too hard to comprehend or to digest. Mr. Deputy Premier, there is no commitment from the Getty government to initiate, to put into effect, this new legislation. It is possible that this new legislation may take a year or even longer to be put into effect, to get to. Regulations aren't included as part of the package, and in environmental protection

that's critical. Finally, it neglects a number of key recommendations that were made by the Evans review panel, which were good recommendations. My first question to the Deputy Premier is this: will the Deputy Premier agree that environmental protection is a high priority in Alberta and agree to calling this session back in the autumn to deal with this very important legislation?

MR. HORSMAN: The matter of a fall sitting of the Legislature, of course, is open for discussion and will be considered.

The minister has made it clear that the legislation, which was introduced yesterday – and by the way, regulations are never in the legislation. That's a very puzzling remark by the leader of the Liberal Party, to say that regulations should be part of legislation. Perhaps he doesn't understand the situation. In any event, it is the intention of the government to bring forward the draft regulations for consideration by the public as part of the review process. Anything worth doing is worth doing well, and we will do this legislation well. It will be the best environmental protection legislation that Albertans are hoping for, and it will be the best in Canada.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, it's time to stop the nonsense of keeping MLAs on a thread wondering whether there will be a session or not be a session. Let's deal with some of the priorities that affect Albertans, and this is a high priority. Why don't you commit yourself to protecting the environment and saying: this is important; we're going to deal with it; we're going to show you the regulations? We know that they don't form part of the actual legislation, but let's see that the government isn't waffling and weaseling out of the protection of Albertans and the environment. Let's see that.

10:30

MR. KLEIN: Well, since it wasn't addressed to a particular minister, I think I would like to answer that, Mr. Speaker. You know, you talk about irresponsibility. Yesterday I was leaving to attend a meeting in Nisku with the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs to clean up a garbage mess and have a discussion with some 13 mayors and reeves, a garbage mess that was left by the Liberal frontbenchers right there. There they are: Decore, Hewes, and Wickman. Because the Liberals delayed question period by more than 45 minutes, I had to leave. You know, if that's all I have to do to get rid of two Liberal members, maybe I should leave four times today.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is probably the . . .

MR. FOX: Best in the world.

MR. KLEIN: Well, yeah; it is the best in the world. Finally the NDP has admitted something.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. Stop while you're ahead.

Final.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the minister acts like a mouse, squeaks like a mouse, and is a mouse.

Speaker's Ruling Parliamentary Language

MR. SPEAKER: Hold it, hon. member. [interjection] Hon. member. [interjection] Order please. Take your place.

It's the honoured tradition of Parliament to refer to members as hon. members, and other kinds of comments are really not in order. Perhaps the leader would be good enough just to realize again where he is.

MR. DECORE: My last question is to the hon. mousy minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. [interjections] Order.

Red Deer-North.

MR. DAY: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the . . .

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, my last question to the minister is this.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. You do not have a last question. Take your place, hon. member. [interjections] Take your place, hon. member.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, you continue not to be fair.

Speaker's Ruling Naming a Member

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Mr. Decore, you are named to the House. [interjection] Order please, hon. member.

MR. DECORE: You're not fair. You're not fair.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member. Just a moment, hon. members. Before the member leaves the House, you will not be recognized to the House for either question period or any other operation of the House until you make due apology. Please exit. [interjection] Order please.

Red Deer-North.

Constitutional Reform

MR. DAY: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. To the Deputy Premier. One thing that was made abundantly clear to the Alberta constitutional task force in its recent hearings is that Albertans do not want any province having special status. We've just seen in a recent release coming from the federal Beaudoin-Edwards committee, the committee looking at the amending process, a proposal which would grant a veto to Ontario and Quebec and relegate other provinces to second-class status. This is repugnant in the extreme to Albertans who presented to the task force and to Albertans in general. I'd like to ask the Deputy Premier: I know it's a fact that the provincial Conservative Party has divorced itself from the federal party, but is that keeping the Deputy Premier from conveying the concern of Albertans to Mr. Edwards in particular, who was in the media again this morning saying that this would be a good thing for Albertans? Is he being limited in conveying this?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the answer is short, and it's no. As I indicated yesterday, I am very offended to think that any Member of Parliament from Alberta would support a proposal of this kind which would relegate Alberta to second-class if not third-class status. I don't know who the hon. Member of Parliament has been talking to in Alberta, but certainly it has been made abundantly clear to us and to all members of the select special committee that special status for Quebec or Ontario or any other province is unacceptable.

Just for example, Mr. Speaker, in a survey I conducted of my constituents, over 700 households – and that would account for at least 1,500 to 2,000 people – responded to this question: "All provinces should have identical constitutional status." Strongly agree, 67 percent; agree, 23 percent. That comes to 90 percent agreeing that no province should have any special status. That is the view of the government, as I expressed yesterday in my ministerial statement, and I was pleased with the support that I received for the statement from the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. DAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate the outcome of that questionnaire in one part of the province, I'm wondering if the Deputy Premier can advise, even though the constitutional task force has not come up with a report and can't until the hearings are done, if it is within his mandate as chairman to at least take some of the interim feelings on this issue and convey those also to Mr. Edwards and to that committee?

MR. HORSMAN: I've already done so in my ministerial statement yesterday, and I repeat it again: Alberta and this government and this Legislature have made it clear that they will not accept a proposal which would place Alberta in a second-class status. In fact, when one looks more carefully at the proposal laid before the people of Canada yesterday, it would in fact relegate Alberta to a third-class status behind British Columbia, because British Columbia would only have to get the consent of either Saskatchewan or Manitoba, whereas Alberta would have to get the approval or the support of British Columbia or the two other provinces. In fact, what the Edwards-Beaudoin committee is proposing is even more offensive by relegating Alberta to third-class provincial status. That, Mr. Speaker, is totally unacceptable to the government of the province of Alberta and I hope to all members of this Assembly.

Livestock Industry Diversification Act

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, my questions today are to the minister of Occupational Health and Safety. As Occupational Health & Safety Week comes to a close, we realize the tragic state of affairs in Alberta when it comes to health and safety in the workplace. Workers have suffered lead poisoning, PCB contamination, and now we have reports that meat plant workers have tested positive for tuberculosis following exposure to diseased elk. I'd like to ask the minister: what measures will he be taking to protect Alberta workers from biological hazards, especially those that have resulted from this government's misguided policy on game ranching?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. minister I'd be very happy to take that question under notice.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, then, perhaps to the Minister of Agriculture, who at least has the decency to show up in question period. Given the documented . . .

Speaker's Ruling Referring to the Absence of a Member

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. [interjections] Hon. members. [interjections] Hon. members. The proper way for the Minister of the Environment to have replied was: yes, as acting minister

I take the question as notice. He doesn't have to say "in the absence of."

Again, Edmonton-Mill Woods, we've been through this more than enough. If it occurs once more, you won't be recognized.

Livestock Industry Diversification Act (continued)

MR. GIBEAULT: To the Minister of Agriculture then: given the documented threats to public health and especially to the health of workers involved, will the minister give a commitment today not to proceed with proclamation of his Bill on game ranching and agree to hold open public hearings on this issue?

MR. ISLEY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark.

10:40 Forest Management

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Delays, delays, delays. One year after the Dancik review of forest management policy in Alberta, the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife has released a review of the review in which he states that, one, he will develop an Alberta forestry conservation strategy, two, he will provide meaningful opportunities for public input, and, three, he will develop a natural resources policy framework. My question is to the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. How can this minister argue that his review of the Dancik review, specifying, as it does, platitudes about what he will or may do in the future, is anything more than a cynical attempt to delay the development of a proper and responsible forest conservation strategy for this province?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark never ceases to amaze me. The response to the report was tabled yesterday. The Dancik report took some 15 months to be prepared by the expert panel. There were some 133 recommendations. They've been responded to in detail in the report. Rather than grandstanding for some political gain of some sort that he might see in some distorted way, he should look at the report, and he'll see that the framework that's established within the document to respond to the expert panel is clear, concise, and offers a very meaningful opportunity for public input, discussion, and review through the process to establish an overall conservation strategy that covers a wide spectrum of Alberta public lands and public issues.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, the government's excuse for the delay in developing its forest conservation strategy is that they're going to seek public input and public discussion: laudable goals. My question is: what has this minister been doing for the past year, when he could easily have structured public hearings, solicited public input, and driven this forest conservation strategy to an urgently needed early conclusion?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Well, I can tell by the tone of his voice that he hasn't read the total document and doesn't understand what it's all about. It's a very comprehensive review by the expert panel of forestry and public lands issues in this province. The framework that will be established throughout the process that will lead to a number of strategies in forest conservation as well as fisheries and others will give the opportunity for Albertans to develop a policy framework that will stand us in good stead through this century and into the next one. Mr. Speaker, it's

a very comprehensive review. I think it's one that's been responded to in a very meaningful way, and he should look at it positively. He's got an opportunity even himself for some input if he were to spend a little time and fully understand the forest conservation strategy and what's needed for this province.

MR. SPEAKER: Highwood.

Highwood River

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of the Environment. The Little Bow reservoir project requires water diversion from the Highwood River; however, the river may not be able to support these withdrawals during the short flush period in low flow years. There's a clear need for upstream storage, whether on stream or off stream, to collect the flush for later release to meet the demands of the irrigation, livestock, and domestic uses and, most importantly, to permit enough water to be kept in the Highwood River to keep it healthy and viable. My question is: what provisions for upstream storage is the minister prepared to support?

MR. KLEIN: Well, as part of the ongoing process to address this very critical issue whereby we need to satisfy the inflow requirements of the Highwood River and at the same time satisfy the traditional needs of the irrigating farmers on the Little Bow, which is supplemented through a diversion on the Highwood River, we've tried to come to grips with the situation of how we not deplete and degrade the Highwood and at the same maintain those irrigating levels on the Little Bow. We're looking at a number of alternatives, and one of the alternatives is to maybe expand the reservoir on Squaw Coulee so if water recedes or becomes in jeopardy on the Highwood River, then we can draw from the Squaw Coulee reservoir or perhaps some other reservoirs. We have committed to doing a feasibility study on the Squaw Coulee reservoir, and we will consider other off-stream storage opportunities upstream on the Highwood River.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is again to the Minister of the Environment. Given that the minister has indicated that he's prepared to consider upstream storage, whether off stream or on stream, is the minister prepared to tie the need for upstream storage in the Highwood River to final approval of the Little Bow reservoir project?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, this has been a matter of tremendous controversy in both the Highwood and Little Bow areas. Basically we have said that we want a full-blown environmental impact assessment on the project, and we will submit all the recommendations to the Natural Resources Conservation Board for a proper adjudication.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Beverly.

Community Recreation/Cultural Grants

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Recreation and Parks. The CRC – that is, the community recreation/cultural grants program – is due to conclude on March 31, '93. Now, I realize this is some time away. However, these grants are crucial to both the municipalities and the community groups which they service. In addition, I think these grants do demonstrate the benefit of co-operation between the province, the municipalities, and the groups that the money is provided for. My question, then, to the minister is this:

when can the municipalities and the community groups anticipate an announcement from the minister as to when a new program will be announced in order that lead time is given to these groups so they can plan for the delivery of their services in 1993?

DR. WEST: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is a good question. We recognize the job that the CRC grants have done in this province. They've delivered some \$240 million to the municipalities and volunteer organizations across this province. When we go back to the early '70s, there has been a commitment by this government to build approximately a billion dollars in recreational facilities and other use facilities in our communities. We do recognize that the maintenance of these and the support of the volunteer organizations that use them is very, very important.

I will indicate to the Assembly that we will be reviewing the community recreation/cultural grants. I will be working with the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism and also linking up with the minister responsible for the community facility enhancement program to look at how we may go into the future in support of our volunteer organizations and municipalities and this infrastructure.

MR. EWASIUK: My supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Recreation and Parks cultural advisory boards prioritize the distribution of the CRC program, as they are viewed as being fair and equitable. To the minister: will any future program retain the advisory board structure to ensure that this representative body is responsible for the distribution of these funds?

DR. WEST: We will certainly be reviewing it, as I said. I recognize just exactly what you say, that these advisory boards have done an excellent job. I will also indicate that if we cannot find any other structure that facilitates the review of such grants any better, then yes, the advisory committees will be used to the fullest.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

Health Care Fee Negotiations

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now that the Minister of Health is back from her meeting with other provincial health ministers with at least a reportedly renewed commitment to medicare and the principles of the Canada Health Act, she must surely have discussed with her colleagues how it is that government needs to work much more closely with doctors both to control costs as well as to improve equity, efficiency, and quality of care for patients. No doubt she heard how the recent financial agreement between the Ontario government and the Ontario Medical Association was so successful because of the fact that the government there agreed to recognize the Ontario Medical Association as the sole bargaining agent to which all doctors pay mandatory dues with binding arbitration as their negotiating mechanism. When will this minister and this government similarly commit itself to enable the Alberta Medical Association to be the sole bargaining agent for all doctors in the province, as per the Rand formula, and get on with providers for improving the quality of medical care for all Albertans in the province?

10:50

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, the negotiations with our physicians will begin in late summer, early fall. As the hon. member may be aware, we have a three-year agreement with our

physicians here in Alberta which will come to an end at the end of March 1992. I think that however those negotiations are going to proceed and what items may be on the agenda would be very improper to discuss in this House except to say that it truly is a negotiation. I'm hopeful that we can reach an appropriate solution for all involved and, most importantly, provide the access to services which we of course want to do not only under the Canada Health Act but beyond.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I'm very disappointed by that answer. I'm not talking at all about the contents of the negotiations that need to go on before the end of March; I'm talking about the processes by which those negotiations will come to the table. The minister knows that not only does the contract need to be renegotiated, but the significant majority of the members of the Alberta Medical Association itself have asked for the Rand formula with binding arbitration as the mechanism to go to the table. I'd like to ask the minister: is she going to continue the sort of right-wing, Reform Party agenda of undermining the rights of working people and undermining universal social programs, or is she going to begin to act on principles of true collective bargaining and work with all doctors and other health providers, their unions and associations, to ensure fairness and quality in our health care system?

MS BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the Member for Edmonton-Centre, I am not going to be part of the negotiations here on the floor of this Assembly. It would be highly improper. It may well be that that will be an end result of those negotiations. There are some other things that I think are important parts of that discussion too, and I'm not prepared to give to the two sides and beyond with respect to arriving at an agreement except to commit to this House, the public, and the physicians of this province that we will work together to find a suitable agreement in order that all parties, including the public of Alberta, are well served by our medical profession.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Heart Surgery

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Examples that prove we're experiencing a steady erosion in health services come into our offices in frightening volumes. The most tragic stories we hear are those affecting families of children who are waiting for heart surgery. These families can't understand how their young and very fragile children must go through life threatening delays for surgery in a province that has always boasted of compassion. They've been put on hold waiting for recommendations from a task force. My questions are to the Minister of Health. It's my understanding that the minister's advisory committee on pediatric cardiology will be making their recommendations today. Will the minister make this report public immediately along with her action plans for more beds, a step-down unit, and relief for Calgary?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct that there is a meeting today of the cardiovascular task force. With respect to the issue of pediatric cardiology, we are obviously looking at what that task force will recommend to us with respect to ensuring that we continue to manage well the waiting list for not only pediatric but adult cardiac surgery as well. I am not prepared to commit at this point that I would make an advisory report to me public except to say that I

certainly will await the recommendations of that full task force. They are looking at ensuring that we get the best value for the resources that we dedicate to cardiac surgery in this province, and I support them in meeting that and in ensuring that that is the goal.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you. The waiting lists grow, however, and children get sicker. Mr. Speaker, will the minister at least ensure that Calgary children's hospital gets the needed angioscope machine, since it's been sitting in a packing case at the Lougheed hospital for the last two years? Let's at least make use of the equipment we have to ease this situation.

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, a couple of points with respect particularly to the issue of child cardiac surgery. Some surgeries are inappropriately performed on children before a certain age. While they may appear on the waiting list, they are not good patients for that surgery until an appropriate age. So that is part of a waiting list, but I don't think it's one that could be equated to the adult waiting list.

Secondly, the hon. member is correct with the information that an angioscope machine was purchased originally for the Peter Lougheed hospital in Calgary. When the review of programs went through, it was decided that it shouldn't be used. Another surgery program hopefully would not have to be set up in Calgary, but we could concentrate the resources on the University of Alberta's surgery program. That doesn't mean that there isn't cardio work being done on a program basis in Calgary, but just not the surgery component.

The machine itself does not create a surgery program. Making the best use of that machine, including the option of selling it, if that's the best option, is part of what the task force will be recommending to me, and I await their recommendations.

MR. SPEAKER: Banff-Cochrane.

Calgary Annexation

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 1989 the city of Calgary applied to annex some 100 square miles of area around the city, and included in that annexation application was about nine square miles in an area west of the city in the Banff-Cochrane constituency known as the Springbank area. The city's annexation application insofar as that area was concerned was denied; however, that did not end the issue. There is, in fact, increasing polarization in that area between people who wish to become part of the city of Calgary and those who wish to remain in the municipal district of Bighorn. The Minister of Municipal Affairs has met with the city of Calgary, the municipal district of Bighorn, and local residents in an effort to try to bring these people together. In fact, there is work being done now on a joint general municipal plan . . .

MR. WICKMAN: Forty-eight seconds.

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon. member. It was 38 seconds.

MR. EVANS: To continue, Mr. Speaker, I'm just trying to lay the groundwork here.

There is work being done on a joint general municipal plan. As a part of that, I should mention as well that there's a citizens' advisory committee. However, the citizens in the area are concerned about the speed with which this process is taking

place. My question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs is: what is he doing to facilitate the organization that would bring together the city, the municipal district, and the residents to reach a decision on this important planning matter?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question from the hon. member. As of this week we've been able to agree on a set of terms of reference to be used for a joint general municipal plan study in that respective area to look at the various needs and decisions that need to be made to satisfy those citizens. At the present time, along with those terms of reference will be the involvement of an advisory committee that involves citizens in the area of Springbank along with representatives of the city of Calgary and, as well, representatives from the municipal district of Rocky View.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, brief.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to hear of that progress.

My supplemental question to the minister is: can the minister identify a time frame wherein he may expect a report back on this plan for the Springbank area?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in the terms of reference that have been established, there are four stages to the study that will go on. The first stage is a collection of all of the information, all of the background data, and some very in-depth surveys of attitudes in terms of the residents of the Springbank area. That information will be presented this fall, somewhere in the time period between September and December, for the local residents' examination. Following that, into the year 1992 we will go into stages two, three, and four. I would think that towards the end of 1992 we will have a recommendation that's well founded and well massaged through the public process and that will involve the citizens of that area. I want to say that that has been one of the very strong recommendations with regards to this matter from the local MLA, and we have tried to accede in that direction.

MR. MITCHELL: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Might we revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

In this order: Redwater-Andrew, Stony Plain, Lesser Slave Lake, Minister of Agriculture.

Introduction of Special Guests *(reversion)*

MR. ZARUSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me today to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a group of 12 bright, energetic students from the Waskatenau school, which is in the heart of the Redwater-Andrew constituency. I'm sure they're enjoying their morning here and probably will enjoy the afternoon. They're accompanied by teachers Mr. Patenaude and Mrs. Doshewnek and parent Mrs. Stachnik. They're seated in the members' gallery, and I'd ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

11:00

MR. SPEAKER: Stony Plain.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to introduce a group of students from Graminia school in the Stony Plain constituency who are accompanied by teachers Mrs. Rhonda Cummins and Mrs. Gwen Pitman, and parents Mrs. Judy Zender, Mrs. Swanston, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Horlick, Mrs. Lapointe, Mrs. Pooley, and Mrs. Hunter. They're here to visit the Leg. Assembly and watch us in action, and I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the members.

MR. SPEAKER: Lesser Slave Lake.

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great privilege for me today to introduce to you and all members of the Assembly 21 students from Kinuso school in Kinuso, Alberta, approximately three hours' drive away from here. They've been touring Edmonton for the last three days. They've gone to West Edmonton Mall to get some action; they've come to the Legislature where the real action is. They're accompanied by their teacher Ms Lorrie Shelp and parents Mrs. Annette Lavallee, Mrs. Rose Hunt, Mrs. Karen Abel, and Mr. Rob Brown. I would ask that they all rise and receive the warm welcome of the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. ISLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague the Hon. Ken Kowalski, the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services and Member for Barrhead, I take pleasure in introducing to you and through you to the Assembly 21 students from Rich Valley elementary school in the Barrhead constituency. They're accompanied today by their teacher Miss Huard and parents Mrs. Judy Hove, Ms Laverne Dehek, and Mr. Harvey Hove. They're seated in both the members' and public galleries. I'd ask that they stand and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Lesser Slave Lake.

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's rare that I get to introduce two groups in one day. It's a pleasure for me to introduce to you and members of the Assembly six esteemed people from various parts of the world visiting our Legislature today. I'm sure they've found that the actors in this Legislature are extremely interesting, especially those that are more dramatic than some of them. These people come from England and New Zealand and have the same parliamentary system as we do. I'd ask that they rise as I call out their names: Marcella Kinsey, Kathleen Devine, Marcelline McNally, Bernadette Wright – all these people are from England – Jackie Boyle from New Zealand, and a good friend, Phil Boyle, who is an ex coworker of mine. I'd ask that the Assembly give them a very warm welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there additional? I have a mysterious note here about some other groups to be introduced, but no signature. Okay; thank you.

We had points of order arising in question period. The first was Edmonton-Whitemud.

Point of Order Impartiality of the Speaker

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cite *Beauchesne* 168(1), and I also cite Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, 11(1). I want to key in on two particular aspects that are covered in those two sections, one dealing with impartiality and the other dealing with the question of the Speaker participating in a debate of the Assembly.

Now, I first address impartiality. When we look at *Beauchesne* 168(1), impartiality is referred to on a number of occasions: "Confidence in the impartiality of the Speaker is an indispensable condition," "to ensure the impartiality of the Speaker," "a general recognition of the Speaker's impartiality." In other words, *Beauchesne* recognizes the essentialness of impartiality.

Mr. Speaker, I've tended to kind of sit back here and watch proceedings in this term a good period of time, but I've got to refer to what happened this morning to the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, and I'm talking here about impartiality. It's not that many days ago when I watched the Premier of this province get up and refer on two occasions to the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry as being Slippery Larry. Now, you stop and think. Slippery Larry: what does that imply? On the other hand, we have the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry referring to the Minister of the Environment as Mousy Ralph. Now, what does that imply? What would possess either one to make that type of reference? Possibly the Premier of the province believes the member is slippery, and possibly this member believes the Minister of the Environment is mousy. Possibly one or both of them are trying to make political points. Who knows? Who can second-guess?

Nevertheless, the difference between the two. In the one case, when the Premier made reference to Slippery Larry, he was not reprimanded, he was not asked to cut his response short, he was not named: nothing. On the other hand, when the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry . . . [interjections] He did not withdraw; he refused to withdraw. However, when the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry makes reference to Mousy Ralph – which to me is no big deal. Mousy Ralph is simply an adjective that describes a person's behaviour, the same as "slippery" may to some . . .

Speaker's Ruling Criticizing the Speaker

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Let's not complicate things any further. Previous members called to order for that, along the lines are referring to all hon. members. At the moment you are challenging a decision of the Chair. Now, if you'd like to deal with your remarks in a much more temperate manner, that would be fine. Then let's hear what you have to say with respect to your point of order, which is purported to be one.

Point of Order Impartiality of the Speaker (continued)

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, it becomes extremely important to demonstrate impartiality. I'll go to a second instance that occurred recently. The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark had a preamble, by somebody's count, of 39 seconds. On the other hand, I watched the Member for Banff-Cochrane this morning. It must have been 60, 70 seconds: clearly a difference, clearly again a question of what impartiality is being offered

there. When two members are treated differently, without question that is not demonstrating impartiality.

I go to my second point, Mr. Speaker. Both points hinge on that key question, I believe, of fairness, where the Speaker is not to take part in any debate before the Assembly. There are two ways of participating in debate, in my opinion. One would be to actively participate, to actively make an argument on a position for or against. The other is a little more subtle, and that's as to how that debate is being directed. If it's being directed in such a manner that it favours one particular side over the other, that then to me is a psychological participation in that particular debate. I submit to you that the Chair has clearly demonstrated a lack of impartiality in this House on a number of occasions, but I'm referring specifically to this morning and a question of a form of debate in this House which in my opinion is not fair. I would ask that you not only rule in my favour but that you reverse your earlier decision to name the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. DAY: Just quickly on the point of order, Mr. Speaker. First, on the issue of the two incidents that happened between the leaders, I don't know where that member was when the incident happened with the Premier. The Speaker very clearly brought that to the Premier's attention. When the Speaker stood up and addressed it, the Premier immediately sat down. What has happened today and yesterday was that the two members continued to stand, shriek, pound their feet, jump around like little gophers on a griddle. They did not sit down when they were addressed and told to by the Chair on a number of occasions: a very clear difference in terms of how they handle themselves.

On impartiality. This day as I was bringing out an issue that I felt was very important to Albertans, the Speaker in his wisdom deemed I had gone too long. I didn't like the fact that you were cutting me short, but I accepted that as a ruling from the Chair. Let's dispense with these petty little arguments and get on with the business of the House. Look at the record; you'll see that the opposition members clearly have an abundance of questions, far more than we ever get here. The preambles are longer. Let's dispense with this petty stuff and get on with the business of the House.

11:10

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. This is not a point of order. It is a thinly veiled attack upon the Chair. It's contempt of the House, in actual fact.

First, hon. member, as has been pointed out, on the occasion when the Premier made some comment about the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, the Chair did intervene. The Premier did sit down, and the Premier did retract. Another occasion with respect to the use of the word "slippery" occurred when the Speaker was not in the Chair, and at that time, when it was brought to the attention of the House, a letter was sent by the Deputy Speaker apologizing to the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry for not having dealt with that matter in the House at that particular time when the incident occurred. I know the letter was sent and the letter was received by the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry; therefore, there's no need for that matter to be raised in the House.

Now, the other problem that occurred today, which has happened on a number of occasions with the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry. The attempt to intimidate the Chair and the House by not taking his place when the Speaker rises and by constantly shouting at the Chair when the Speaker has risen.

That has happened on a number of occasions, and that is the reason for the member being named today. It is also doubly reprehensible that it is the leader of a political party in this House that carries on in such manner, because those who are leaders of parties or carry responsible roles have the additional responsibility of knowing full well what the operation of Parliament is and adhering to the proprieties of the House. That has been violated on a number of occasions. Again it was brought to the attention of the House yesterday in the unfortunate situation whereby it occurred with one other member of the same caucus. That was the reason for the naming yesterday; that was the reason for the naming today.

Because we've had this incident, the unfortunate incident of three members from the same caucus having to go for a walk within two days, far be it for the Chair to speculate what other motives might be involved. It then is just making the issue that much more significant, and therefore the punishment today was brought down. It's very clear to this House: the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry is in contempt of the House. The member will apologize to the House before being recognized in any proceeding of this House.

MR. MITCHELL: Can he write a letter?

MR. SPEAKER: Order. No, he cannot.

MR. MITCHELL: The Premier can.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The Premier did not. It was the Deputy Speaker. [interjection] There will be no more interruptions, or you will take a walk for the second day in a row.

Because there's some defect with somebody's hearing and their inability to read, the Chair will again read to the House *Erskine May*, page 397. Roll your eyes to the ceiling if you wish, hon. member, but if your caucus will not listen, so be it. It's not the fault of the Chair when the necessary actions have to take place. Page 397 of *Erskine May*:

Whenever the Speaker rises to intervene in a debate, he should be heard in silence, and any Member who is speaking or offering to speak should immediately sit down. Members should not leave their seats while the Speaker is addressing the House. Members who do not maintain silence, or who attempt to address the Speaker, are called to order by the majority of the House with loud cries of 'order' and 'Chair'. A Member who persists in standing after the Speaker has risen and refuses to resume his seat when directed by the Chair to do so may be either directed to withdraw from the House for remainder of the sitting or named for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

The Member for Edmonton-Whitemud also raised complaints with respect to the timing of questions. The Chair indeed does time the questions and the answers. They're here. We can go through every one of the files for all of this session, and when you do the averaging out, you will see that in actual fact perhaps you have not been done a disservice.

The final thing. The Chair is really quite taken aback to have the comments made that the Chair is supposed to be absolutely, totally not only quiet but brain-dead, and now the Chair is being castigated, if you will: how dare I even get myself involved in debates in a quiet, psychological manner. Please, hon. member; the Chair is doing its job. There's no point of order.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. There's no need for any further discussion. [interjection] Order please, hon. member. If this

is . . . [interjection] Thank you, hon. member. It appears to be part of your game. Now you will be quiet.

Edmonton-Meadowlark, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Brevity in Oral Question Period

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of order under 409(2) and 410(8), which refer to the nature of preambles to questions. In my question yesterday the Speaker, you, sir, cut me off during my preamble. It's interesting to note that you measure time, because after this episode yesterday we went back and measured time: after 39 seconds of preamble. The ruling in *Hansard* and in fact the ruling that you implied at the time says "Brevity in Oral Question Period." I was cut off, clearly in your mind, because I wasn't being brief in my preamble. Thirty-nine seconds was the time I had in that preamble. I noted on the same day that the Leader of the Opposition had 61 seconds for his first preamble. I noticed that on Wednesday the 19th the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche had 61 seconds for his preamble. In both cases, they were not cut off, and they were allowed to proceed.

I was going to let this matter lie, yet today I see that the Member for Banff-Cochrane was not cut off at 38 seconds – mentioned by the Speaker himself – and was not cut off a second later at 39 seconds. In fact, we weren't timing, but he probably went on a good deal of time past that, maybe a minute, maybe a minute and 10 seconds. I hate to bring it down to that kind of argument, Mr. Speaker, but in fact that raises a question of an inconsistency. Now, if the Speaker argues that there was another reason I was cut off – for example, he might argue because I referred to a minister's absence. In fact, there's no clear indication in the subsequent rulings that day that I was mentioned in that light or that I was cut off for that reason. In fact, I'd gone well beyond that particular point in my preamble before the Speaker cut me off. In fact, that very day the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place referred to the absence of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. This is nothing but a veiled attempt to try to rationalize what occurred yesterday.

MR. MITCHELL: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Take your place, hon. member. [interjection] Take your place.

MR. MITCHELL: You can't do that.

MR. SPEAKER: As a matter of fact, the Chair can, hon. member. You are questioning the decision of yesterday. Now, if you'd be good enough, hon. member, to have bothered to read, not only just with your cute little stopwatch, page 1852 of *Hansard*, you would realize that in actual fact you had about five or six sentences in your preamble, and they were delivered in a very excited tone. The Chair intervened and said: "Thank you. Now that you've let off that amount of steam, let's have a question." Instead of proceeding to ask a question, you then made a very snide remark to the Chair about the Chair being embarrassed about that member.

MR. MITCHELL: That's not why I was cut off.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. That is enough. You have no point of order.

head: Motions under Standing Order 40

MR. ZARUSKY: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Assembly today to give unanimous consent to the motion on congratulating the 100th anniversary of the first Ukrainian settlers in Canada and in the province of Alberta. The urgency of debate for this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: There's a request under Standing Order 40. May the matter proceed? Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried.
Redwater-Andrew, speaking to the motion, please.

Ukrainian Settlement Centenary

Moved by Mr. Zarusky:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta recognize the period of August 1991 to October 1992 as the centenary of Ukrainian Canadian pioneer settlement, further that it acknowledge and affirm the contributions made by pioneers and their descendants who have come to this province from Ukraine, and further that it encourage all Albertans to participate in the many events associated with this important historic event.

11:20

MR. ZARUSKY: Mr. Speaker, I want to just thank all members of the Assembly for the unanimous consent for this important event.

Firstly, I want to tell you and the Assembly that the first settlers from Ukraine did, in fact, come into the Edna-Star area, which is in the constituency I represent and near the town of Lamont. At that time it was two gentlemen that did venture out by the names of Mr. Pylypiw and Mr. Eleniak, and they saw this great land. Many of their descendants still live and work and contribute greatly to the success of our region.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, among the first waves of Ukrainian settlers that did come were my own grandparents, which makes it very, very important at this time. During this time they've told many stories of hardships and also stories of happiness and other things. One thing that remains vivid in my mind that my grandparents spoke of is that they left the country of oppression and many other things and different kinds of rules, and they came to this great country of Canada and the province of Alberta to have their freedoms: freedom of speech and freedom of religion and many other things. This is the spirit they lived in, the family spirit, the community spirit. I think that's what this province and this country were all built on, and I think they left it vivid in my mind that it's very important that we continue this spirit of free enterprise and not let some underground movements take over, as sometimes the indications might be. This is where our challenge is from these great pioneers that did come in the early days 100 years ago.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Alberta Multiculturalism Commission it's my responsibility to include the awareness of the values of Alberta's cultural diversity. Diversity is, naturally, people with different cultures and backgrounds, and as I said, this was the backbone of Alberta's development, and I think it continues to be our strength today.

Mr. Speaker, this centennial reminds us of the tremendous contributions that settlers of Ukrainian origin have made to this province and this great country, and it also reminds us of

contributions all immigrants have made to our province and our nation.

Mr. Speaker, one final point that I want to bring up very strongly is that we are the host province for the official opening ceremonies this August, and it is fitting that we should honour this great national historic event through this special motion.

Once again, I want to thank the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to support this motion, and I thank the member for bringing it forward. Our province and our nation have benefited from 100 years of the contributions of the Ukrainian settlers. They were industrious, hardworking people, often came to a very harsh reality in a harsh land, and experienced many difficulties in their early years, often in rural communities and starting rural communities, agricultural communities in this province.

Their contribution over the century has been in many avenues of our lives and our society and business and industry and the professions, in the first estate, as academics, and in government. We have also been continuously enriched in great measure by many cultural elements that they have maintained through their years in Canada. They're noted, Mr. Speaker – and influence others in their communities – for very strong family life and for their commitment to community and certainly for their loyalty to our nation.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta has been blessed by the continuing energy, the wisdom, and the caring of our citizens of Ukrainian descent. On behalf of the Liberal caucus I acknowledge this centenary, and I'm hopeful that all of us will have opportunities to participate and to share in the celebration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

MR. MAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would of course want to speak in support of this most important motion recognizing a most important occasion, which is the centennial of the arrival of Ukrainian settlers in Canada. The Ukrainian people were unique in that they were the first group to come straight to the centre part of the nation, straight to Alberta, and begin a settlement here. Most others worked their way in from the coast, but in 1891 two farmers came here. They saw land that they felt they could make a new life for themselves and their families on just northeast of Edmonton and the following year brought back their families and began the process that we now have 100 years later, where the Ukrainian people have made a huge contribution to this province not only in terms of their contribution to just breaking the land and opening up the country but in literature and the arts, in dance, in music, and in enterprise not necessarily associated directly with agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, the contribution and some of that history is described in great detail in a living farm just on the outskirts of Edmonton at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, one of the centrepieces of the Department of Culture and Multiculturalism in its mandate of recording and presenting and interpreting the history of this province. The village is involved in not only presenting interesting stories to the public in a museum setting, but it's also involved in a great deal of scholarly work on historic architecture, on language, on the effects of migration both in Ukraine and in Canada. We look at the history, the customs, the traditions, the language, the costumes of the Ukrainian people and do a great deal of scholarly research.

One of the interesting aspects of the centennial that relates to that scholarly work and the village is an exchange of conferences on the historic migration. I had the privilege, and indeed a wonderful experience it was, to be in Ukraine last fall in the first half of that conference, which took place in co-operation with the Chernovtsy university and the institute of Ukrainian studies there. I led a delegation of eight scholars from the University of Alberta, Grant MacEwan Community College, from the Manitoba museum, and of course from our own department. We spent several days in Chernovtsy, and then the group stayed on and traveled through Lvov and some of the other places in Ukraine and exchanged work on architecture, on church history. Then that conference was repeated with a return visit by Ukrainian people, who came here to Alberta, to Edmonton, involved with the University of Alberta, just a few weeks ago.

But, Mr. Speaker, the most important aspect that remained with me was not the level of scholarly research, not the visit to Ukraine, not the 14 hours overnight on the train from Kiev to Chernovtsy, but it was the spirit of the people that is still there, still evident despite decades and generations of oppression under the iron fist of Communism and under Kremlin central planning. Despite that fact the Ukrainian people's spirit and resolve, to do what they believe is the right way to do things, remain. Ukraine was fortunate in not being under the Kremlin's rule from 1917 but only since the postwar era. Nevertheless, when the Ukrainian people declared their independence just about a year ago now, the first thing that happened was that that pride that was just underneath the surface came forward. The highway signs that were in Russian were removed and replaced with signs in the Ukrainian language. Those church buildings that were not allowed to be operated as houses of worship were transformed from party headquarters buildings into churches virtually overnight. We saw that loving restoration work being conducted by the Ukrainian people, that spirit of wanting to get on with life, that ability to make something of nothing, to do hard work, to see a problem and face it head on, that dedication to family. The willingness to sacrifice is there in Ukraine today, as it has been for years, and it's that same spirit that made such a huge contribution to this province.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I believe that the resolve, the hard work, the dedication of the Ukrainian people is one of the prime ingredients that has made Alberta the leader in government, the leader in economy, the leader in agriculture, and viewed globally as the leading province that it is today.

11:30

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Beverly.

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to rise and speak to the motion. Indeed, I want to support it on behalf of the New Democratic Party. I think it's very significant that in this year of celebration of the centennial of the Ukrainian pioneers in Alberta, this motion should come forward, and I commend the member for bringing it before us today.

Mr. Speaker, the contribution the Ukrainian pioneers made to the development and growth of this province is well known and recognized. Because they were people of the land and people of the soil, they're the people who cleared and plowed and sowed the vast prairies of this province, who produced the resources and the food that fed not only our province but certainly fed Canada. Indeed, we've been able to export the products of our work throughout the world. The motion makes reference to the descendants of those early pioneers, and of

course we're very proud of the contribution they have also made and continue to make in our province and in our country.

Probably in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the most important thing we have provided, in addition to all the other things, is our song and dance. The cultural aspect of the Ukrainian community, I think, is well recognized certainly throughout this province. Indeed the tours that our dancers and singers make are viewed and they are in demand throughout the world. I think the kind of cultural component that they brought to our country and that we can enjoy here as peoples is very significant.

I would, of course, want to support the member in bringing this motion where he encourages all Albertans to participate in events that are going to occur during this centennial year throughout the province. I certainly join him in extending that invitation to the members of this Assembly, of course, and to all Albertans. I know that no event is going to go by without a good feed of borscht, pyrogy, and holubtsi. When you wet your mouth with those kinds of delicacies that you're going to enjoy, I know that you will want to travel to all the events and participate and join with, in my opinion, a very fine group of people who have made our province a very fine place to live in.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [remarks in Ukrainian] My grammar may not be quite accurate, but I'm just expressing my thanks to the Member for Redwater-Andrew for bringing forward this motion. As the MLA for Vegreville I do want to offer my wholehearted support for it. This is a very special year for descendants of Ukrainian pioneers in Alberta and indeed in Canada. We're not just celebrating the 100th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in northeastern Alberta; it's the 100th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada. It's a very significant event that will be acknowledged in a number of ways over the period outlined by the Member for Redwater-Andrew in his motion.

The original settlers Wasyl Eleniak and Ivan Pylypiw came to the Star-Edna area, as the Member for Redwater-Andrew said, and their excitement about the opportunities offered them in Canada encouraged them to go back to their homeland and urge their friends and neighbours and family members to follow them to Canada. They were encouraged in some measure by the government of Alberta, which was attempting to open up large portions of the province of Alberta to settlement. The first large wave of immigration from eastern Europe into Canada and specifically Alberta began, I believe, through the latter part of the 1890s and the early part of the 1900s. There were two more distinct waves of immigration into Alberta. What we have, as a result, is a significant percentage of people in the province of Alberta of Ukrainian ancestry who have worked very hard to build futures for themselves and their families, and that effort has benefited all of us, Mr. Speaker.

As the MLA for Vegreville, which has become known quite properly, I think, as the centre of Ukrainian culture in Canada, I'm very proud of my association with people in the Ukrainian community. I know that when I first put my name before the people in the Vegreville area in 1986, some suggested that I would not receive support because I was not of Ukrainian background. I'm proud to say that that was not an issue for the people in the Vegreville constituency. I've found them to be a very open and welcoming people, and I've always felt like I've been able to become part of the community. The onus was on me to express that desire, and once expressed, I was welcomed with open arms.

We have a very rare opportunity in northeastern Alberta, Mr. Speaker, to actually have contact with the people who helped build our communities and the institutions in our country. It's not an opportunity that exists even in other parts of Alberta, because the southern regions of the province have been settled for an extra generation or two relative to northeastern Alberta and other parts of Canada have been settled for many hundreds of years. So we have a unique opportunity to have direct contact with the women and men who paid the price, who made the sacrifices, and who helped build this great province of ours. I consider it a real honour to be able to sit down and chat with these pioneers and settlers who helped create many of the things that we value so much.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to mention a few things that hon. members might be interested in that will help commemorate this 100th anniversary. We've got the annual pysanka festival in the town of Vegreville, July 5, 6, and 7. Everyone's welcome, and it's a fabulous extravaganza, a showcase of Ukrainian culture. There's an event in Lamont on July 27 to kick off this one-year celebration. The weekend of August 9, 10, and 11 at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village there is a celebration sponsored by members of the Eleniak family, many of whom continue to farm and work in northeastern Alberta. They're doing this to pay tribute not only to the 100th anniversary but also to their guido, great-grandfather Wasyl Eleniak, who helped it all begin.

There are other things out there that would attract the interest of members, and maybe this is the time to make northeastern Alberta your destination during the holiday season. The Basilian Fathers in Mundare have built a fabulous museum that will pay tribute to various aspects of Ukrainian culture. The Lakusta Heritage Foundation has a museum in Vegreville. Indeed, the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar has sat on the board of directors of that.

So I just want to encourage all hon. members in this Assembly to participate as much as possible in the many special events that will occur in Alberta over the next 13 months commemorating 100 years of determination and successful settlement by Ukrainian pioneers in the province of Alberta and in Canada. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just have a few brief comments to make in support of this motion. We have heard from previous speakers the heartfelt comments that I share with respect to the outstanding contribution the Ukrainian community has made to life in this province. Whatever aspect of our community endeavours, whether it be through politics at the provincial or municipal levels, whether it be through the richness of their culture and their cuisine, they've had a profound effect on this province.

I'm particularly pleased as a member of the Jewish community to note the excellent relations that prevail between our communities, and I might say that I note that in particular with respect to the excellent relations that I have had personally with individual members of the Ukrainian community and collectively with the Ukrainian community. There are, of course, always a very few who would seek to open frictions of other times and other places, and I know that the Ukrainian community as a whole has no time for that. I'm appreciative of it, and I congratulate the community on this very auspicious occasion. I'm looking forward to taking part in and participating with them in the celebrations.

11:40

MR. SPEAKER: Call for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Redwater-Andrew, summation.

MR. ZARUSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I want to thank the Assembly for the great support for this very historic and commemorative celebration which is coming up and once again encourage everybody to participate. It was mentioned that an official opening will be starting here in Edmonton the last weekend in August and will carry on to the Star-Edna area and on into the Ukrainian village, and then all kinds of activities will be going on throughout the province and indeed throughout the whole nation. Also I want to encourage everybody to make sure we can live in the free spirit and free enterprise these people have laid out for us.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, [remarks in Ukrainian].

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried, let the record show unanimously.

head: **Orders of the Day**

head: **Government Motions**
Summer Recess

20. Moved by Mr. Horsman:

Be it resolved that when the Assembly adjourns to recess the Third Session of the 22nd Legislature, it shall stand adjourned until a time and date prior to the announcement of the Fourth Session of the 22nd Legislature as is determined by the Speaker after consultation with the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd point out to members that this would adjourn the Assembly subject to recall by Executive Council in conjunction with the Speaker for a fall sitting, if one were determined to be necessary. I would ask for support of the members of the Assembly.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, of course I speak in favour of the motion. I would like to put one comment on the record, though, and that relates to the fact that we never know from one spring sitting to another if we're going to have a fall sitting. I would like to see some parliamentary reform and, in the absence of that, a commitment by the Government House Leader in his summary comments that it is the government's intention to call the House again in the fall.

I remind the members of the Assembly that the hon. Provincial Treasurer declared in April that his budget was balanced, and that is still the declaration of the government, despite the fact of having introduced and sponsored through the Assembly a government Bill which calls for an extra \$2 billion in deficit spending; that is, accumulated debt spending. Therefore, I would suggest that there's very likely a need for a fall sitting, not just to deal with an updated budget, which inevitably will be needed, but also to deal with legislation such as the hon.

Environment minister's new legislation, tabled yesterday but declared with intentions for it to sit over. Sit over till when, one asks. I suggest that perhaps the fall would be a good time to debate that legislation along with any other Bills that are left to die on the Order Paper.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Government House Leader to declare the intentions of the government to recall the House in October, as the Official Opposition would like to do, and deal with business that may occur over the summer as well as the stuff to which I have already referred.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're going to support the motion as well, but I would also like to raise our concerns with respect to the need for a fall session. There's a number of very important issues, some of which have been mentioned by Edmonton-Highlands, with respect to the environment, a budget update, and so on.

However, another area which I think is of primary concern is the need for this House to address the issue of the views of the House with respect to the direction of constitutional reform. As I have said on a number of occasions in the deliberations of the select special committee that's been set up by this House, I'm quite concerned about the slow pace of progress. We're not going to conclude our public hearings until September. By the time this House gets around to dealing with the issue, we may very well find ourselves irrelevant in light of the pace of events, the fact that the committee of the federal Parliament being struck by Mr. Clark is going to be moving across the country consulting, reporting by February. I'm very concerned that we'll have no input, no collective input, to provide with respect to the views expressed by this House collectively.

So I would urge the government to give this a power think, take it into consideration, and see whether or not there isn't some way in which we can expedite matters and get this issue of the Constitution before the House sometime in the fall so that we can at least come up with some form of preliminary view with respect to a sense of direction, because many views are being put on the table nationally and positions are being staked. I don't think it's healthy to be too firm and to stake firm and inflexible positions, but some sense of direction is essential, and I think it's important that that matter be debated in this Legislature and that we don't simply hear unilateral statements of the government's point of view.

MR. HORSMAN: I've noted the representations made by the speakers on behalf of both opposition parties, and we will take those representations under consideration. In due course, after consideration of all appropriate factors, members of the Assembly will be advised as to whether or not it is necessary to call a fall sitting. I would urge members to pass the motion at this time.

[Motion carried]

Pacific Northwest Economic Region

18. Moved by Mr. Horsman:

Be it resolved that Alberta become a full participant in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region consisting of the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington and the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia in order

- (1) to promote greater regional co-operation among the participating states and provinces in a wide variety of areas, including international trade, economic development, human resources, the environment, natural resources, energy, and education;
- (2) to enhance the overall competitiveness of the participating states and provinces in international and domestic markets;
- (3) to increase the economic well-being and improve the quality of life of the citizens of the participating states and provinces; and
- (4) to identify opportunities for economic and social development in the participating states and provinces.

Be it further resolved that four members of this Assembly be appointed by the Assembly to the delegate council of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region and that one of those members be appointed as a member of its executive committee.

MR. HORSMAN: Motion 18 is for the purpose of establishing Alberta's membership in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, which would bring legislators from five U.S. states and two Canadian provinces to identify opportunities for regional co-operation. Participating jurisdictions will include the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, and the Canadian provinces of British Columbia and Alberta.

The idea for this group came from a former Edmontonian, Senator Alan Bluechel, who's now a Senator in the state of Washington, a strong proponent of close ties between Canada and the United States. In October of 1989 he invited legislators from the states and the provinces to go to Seattle to discuss the possibility of establishing some means of formal co-operation. Alberta was represented at that meeting by the hon. Speaker of this Assembly. For two days the legislators brainstormed and came up with a lengthy list of areas where regional co-operation could be beneficial. Since that time the legislators have met four more times to refine their ideas and to establish a work plan.

One of those meetings was held last June in Edmonton, ably hosted by the hon. Member for Red Deer-North and other members of the Assembly. The priorities that were established at the Edmonton meeting were in six areas in which they felt the most opportunities to achieve benefits through co-operation were promising. The six areas were tourism, value-added forestry, advanced education, marketing recycled products, environmental technology, and human resource programs. They also agreed the forum would not be the appropriate place to try to deal with outstanding trade disputes between Canada and the United States, such as the softwood lumber issue.

As the motion states, the aim of the group is to promote the economic and social development of the provinces and the states in this region. In achieving that aim, we think this initiative will help to enhance the economic well-being and quality of life for the people of the Pacific northwest.

11:50

What it is not, however, is important to define. There are limits to our ambitions. As mentioned, we do not believe we can solve outstanding trade disputes. Those, of course, will have to be worked through with our respective federal governments until they are resolved. We are not expecting to address them in this forum. In addition, we would stress that this group is focusing on promoting the economic development and well-being of our citizens. It is not, however, as some speculative journal-

ists have wondered, a step to some form of political integration. It is definitely not that. Co-operation with our neighbouring states does not somehow mean that Alberta is making steps to leave Confederation or to create this mythical country which has been called Cascadia.

In the international context we believe that for our province we must continue to play an important role in order to have prosperity internationally. Our economy is very dependent on our exports and greatly affected by the actions of our major trading partners. For at least 20 years Alberta has been the leader among Canadian provinces in its international outlook and activities. Through the course of these years we have devoted considerable resources and expertise to the promotion of Alberta's goods and services throughout the world. At no time have such initiatives been more important than now. The trend today is very clearly towards the increasing globalization of economies. No country, no province, no state can afford to be isolationist. This is consistent with other provincial and state initiatives. Membership in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region is consistent, as I indicated.

As members are aware, as Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs I have been very active in meeting with state legislators in a number of fora. Till recently I was the Canadian co-chairman of the Canada/U.S.A. legislative project. I'm currently honorary board member for the State Legislative Leaders Foundation. Alberta has become an honorary member of the Western Legislative Conference. Over the years I have attended and participated in many meetings of such organizations as the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Council of State Governments.

Since 1986, by a resolution of this Assembly brought forward by the Member for Cypress-Redcliff, Alberta and Montana have also met on a regular basis on a forum called Alberta/Montana Boundary Advisory Committee. That is chaired by the governor, Governor Stephens, who I note is a native Calgarian who in his younger days went to the United States to find employment and has risen to a high, state government, governor's level position. I co-chair that conference with Governor Stevens, as I indicated. It meets once a year to discuss areas of common interest such as agricultural, trade, and energy issues to identify opportunities for co-operation and sort out any problems.

Just recently discussions by the committee have led to the upcoming signing of two agreements. One deals with the joint vehicle inspection station at Coutts, and the other is a vehicle weight agreement allowing Alberta trucks to travel to the Shelby reload facility, small matters perhaps, but nonetheless important for the commerce of this province.

I found all of these opportunities very useful as a means of raising awareness in the United States about Alberta. Attendance at these meetings and membership in these organizations has been a way of conveying messages to states about the importance of Alberta as a trading partner. I and my colleagues who have attended the meetings have also used them to promote a greater trade to disabuse Americans of some notions such as the fear that sometimes we want to flood their country with cheap natural gas. We want to sell natural gas, but we want a fair price for it.

Since the implementation of the Canada/U.S. free trade agreement, there has been an increasing focus in Canada on the importance of state governments. The government of Canada has recognized their influence over trade and other economic policies. Alberta has also witnessed the blossoming of international activity at the state level. State governments have begun playing a more active role in the international sphere. In fact,

many state governments have international offices in foreign countries now, similar to those maintained by the provinces, including Alberta.

Why the Pacific Northwest? Well, when Senator Bluechel first raised the idea, Alberta welcomed the opportunity to discuss regional co-operation in this region. We feel we have many ties with the states in the region, ranking, of course, along with our sister province of British Columbia, and we are important markets for each other's exports. Alberta ships a great deal of livestock, beef, and processed foods to the Pacific Northwest. Our economies are very similar in many ways, we face many of the same pressures and challenges arising from distance to other markets, and we share aspirations to compete successfully in the global marketplace.

What do we hope to achieve through this co-operation? As mentioned, we have identified six areas of potential co-operation, and last December we met in Seattle and set out a work plan for this year. The first order of business was to obtain legislative authorization in each state and province to allow this initiative to proceed. So far membership has been approved by Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska. Oregon expects to have its legislation in place by July 1. British Columbia will not be proceeding through a legislative measure, but has paid its membership fee of \$30,000.

Rather than waiting for these measures to be passed, however, we decided to proceed on three initiatives as priorities. The priorities are environmental technology, value-added wood products, and tourism. British Columbia has taken the lead in the environmental technology field and held a conference in May to discuss the opportunities for joint promotion of expertise, Oregon has taken responsibility for investigating chances for enhancing the value-added component of the forestry industry in the region, and Alberta has taken the initiative on the tourism issue, since we are the recognized leader in this field. Under the chairmanship of the hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek we will be inviting legislators and industry officials to come to the province in September of this year. The group will be discussing how to raise public awareness of the importance of tourism to economic development, how to involve the private sector more fully in the policy process, and how to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise in the region.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that I think there are many benefits to Alberta from membership in this group. I think the advantages in co-operating with other jurisdictions to share ideas and information is undeniable. Besides the economic efficiencies that can be realized, co-operation can lead to the development of creative new approaches to problems. In an era of increasing globalization, our province will only benefit by extending its ties with other jurisdictions.

There are, of course, some costs. In fact, Alberta will be paying an annual membership fee of approximately \$30,000 to cover the costs of the staff work that is being provided by the University of Washington of Seattle, and that money will be coming from the budget of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. We anticipate the returns to this expenditure will be numerous. Through membership in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region we think we are establishing a framework for co-operation which will benefit Albertans for years to come. I would point out that there will be four members who will be named by a subsequent motion of the Assembly. Because this is a bipartisan approach in the United States, each state will name two legislators from the Republican Party and two from the Democratic Party. In this case, we are proposing to name two members from the government and one member from each

of the opposition parties, and those names will be brought forward later for the purpose of concluding the membership in the Assembly. I know that there is interest on the part of both opposition parties in having their members serve with members of the government in a nonpartisan way in the proposal which I now lay before the Assembly, and I urge the members of the Assembly to support the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is our intention on this side of the House to strongly support this resolution, and in fact, I commend the minister on his excellent presentation of the purposes and goals of this organization. As a matter of fact, I've been following this organization since its inception, I think, a couple of years ago and have had a fair amount of literature on it and recently took the occasion to send in my membership dues and am now a full member of the organization. I particularly commend the minister on his approach here of asking opposition members to sit on this committee of four. It is something that this party on this side of the House has asked for on many occasions on a lot of committees, that this Assembly go to a more multiparty approach to a lot its committee work. So I think that this is a good example, and I think it will prove to be very worthwhile and beneficial to all of us.

12:00

The idea behind the Pacific Northwest Industrial Development Council is an excellent one. It seems to me what it's doing is refocusing some of our attention back on our own region as opposed to what has been happening in the past where the focus has been on international and global competition. I think of the free trade deal left between Ottawa and Washington, and that's sort of eastern Canada, and they use Europe as the example of how they've got to get some agreements with GATT and so on. The orientation to the globalized market can very easily bypass those of us in this region, so we need to take a look at our own resources and our own neighbours and see what we can do for ourselves. Certainly when you think that Washington and Ottawa control the politics of North America and that Bay Street and Wall Street control a lot of the finances, it does mean that the main economic powers are outside this region we're talking about.

Just a comment or two about this region and how big it really is. There are some 15 million people in the region named, in these five states and these two provinces. It's sort of a natural trading area on the edge of the Pacific Rim on the western side of North America. It makes a lot of sense that we should take a close look at each other and what we can do for each other and how we can co-operate to see that our own economies are healthy.

I just want to raise a few points around that theme. A former member of the Economic Development and Trade department – I believe he resigned a couple of years ago – made some interesting points, I think, which are relevant to this approach to economic development in western Canada. He was speaking specifically of Edmonton, I believe; nonetheless, he was looking at Edmonton also as part of this western part of North America. He talked about how we could develop value-added industries based on our natural resources, because this is a very rich region of the world and Edmonton is in the centre of a very rich economic region for resources, both oil and forestry resources. So he felt that that was an important orientation for Edmonton,

developing as a centre for economic development in this part of the world. He suggested also, though, that the idea of subsidizing foreign corporations based in other parts of the world to come in and develop our resources was not necessarily the most efficient way to do that. The idea of developing local co-operation should be taken further than just between the states and the provinces right down to the local level also. The reason I mention this is that I'm pleased to note that the Deputy Premier said that Oregon was the one that was going to lead the way in developing secondary industries associated with the wood and lumber industries.

The economy of Oregon has been very dependent on the lumber industry in the past. In 1982 when lumber prices collapsed, they found themselves in real dire straits, and one of the things that they did was to set up some local initiatives. In fact, they called it import replacement programs. I know people that are in favour of free trade tend not to like the terminology, but really all it amounted to was for local communities to take a really good look at what they could produce themselves and start working together with the next-door neighbour and then with the regional area and then of course the state area and then finally . . . I'm sure that part of this initiative comes from Oregon, where they're saying: "We've done our homework. We've got our towns and communities seeing what we can produce ourselves." Then they started co-operating town to town and region to region within Oregon, and then the whole state. Next, they started talking to the states next door. Now they're talking to the provinces next door, and so I wouldn't be surprised if Oregon was one of the main states behind this push. I think we all need to look at that local initiative and local development and co-operation.

With those few preliminary remarks, and certainly all the things the minister said about this organization sounded good to me, I would like to say that this caucus is firmly in support of this motion and intends to name a member to that committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to just make a few brief comments. It's rare when I listen to a minister make a statement where I agree with everything he said, but I found this to be one of the best statements I've heard, and I congratulate the minister. It was an excellent overview. In particular, I think the comment that he made . . . I hope he doesn't get too swelled a head on that. In particular, I really think his comment was exactly right that we are Canadians here, and we are proud to be Canadians. Although we enjoy many benefits through and with the United States, I want us to remain Canadians. I don't want to form some new country by whatever name in this association, and I was pleased to hear the minister make a comment with respect to that particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, the first time I learned of this particular concept, I guess, was when I had the good fortune to attend a conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma, two years ago, in 1989, as a representative to the national convention on state Legislatures. The Senator gave me a ring, and we chatted about this very issue. At that time I was very interested and involved with the idea. I thought it would be a good direction for us to proceed.

I'm pleased to see that we've gone a little further, at least in part, with the direction with respect to identifying some of those areas. You know, the minister mentioned tourism as being one of our areas for particular growth of which we can be proud. I recall seeing in our budget this year that the Department of Tourism is expending about a million dollars or so to build a

tourist information booth in Montana. When I first looked at that, I must confess I was rather puzzled. I thought: why on earth would we want to do something like that? Then I considered the location of where it's being built and the purpose for that. I thought, you know, the idea there of perhaps steering some of those tourists, maybe Canadians who haven't been this way or Americans who haven't been this way near the Logan Pass, and saying, "Well, listen; why don't you come on up and see Waterton park, and why don't you come on up and see that new museum we had the good opportunity to see in Cardston, the Remington museum that's going to be ready shortly?" started to make a lot of sense. Let's get some co-operation going on there.

MR. MAIN: Or the western heritage centre at Cochrane.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, that might be a little hard sell there, but it's worth a shot. I suppose they could have a brochure or two in the back, once the thing is built. They may even want to go all the way up to the Fort McMurray tar sands and see that as well, and maybe they could stop at the western heritage centre on the way.

But I think it's a good concept. The idea of co-operation, Mr. Speaker, is really what I'm talking about here as a good concept. So I think that's an interesting direction.

The value-added forestry: the obvious links are there between the regions mentioned. The jobs: the minister mentioned that a couple of the key players who are involved with this are former Albertans. I think that shows kind of a unique and obvious linkage. We get people who are raised in Alberta, and of course we don't all stay here. Some travel elsewhere and have impact in other places. Obviously, I think the indication just from those two individuals shows that we do get people traveling elsewhere, and let's look at creating more commonalities between those areas.

Environmental issues: of course, obviously we have our waters from these two provinces, British Columbia and Alberta, ending up going through some of these states that are mentioned, so clearly there's a linkage there; obviously, the same thing with air. Human resources: well, that's obviously tied to the advanced education issues.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a terrific idea. I look forward to the proposal. One of the things the minister did mention is that there has been some preliminary work, I guess would the way to describe it, that's already occurred. Once this committee has been established and gets going with the different representatives from the states and the provinces mentioned, then I hope we'll get that sharing of information occurring. I think the particular aspect that the minister mentioned as he was wrapping up, the concept of two members from the government side and two members from the opposition side, is especially an encouraging concept. It's an obvious carryover, I guess, in a sense from the American system, which has two parties. Here in Alberta we have three parties, of course, and I guess we're kind of unique in that regard, in that we have three different parties represented in our Legislature, which is probably unique compared to the other bodies mentioned. I'm pleased to see that happening, because what we're looking at really has nothing to do with partisan politics. It's what's in the best interests of our province, and we're going to be working with other representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I must admit I'm quite encouraged and quite pleased with this direction. I think it's positive for Alberta, for British Columbia, and probably also for the states. If we can all

help one another be more successful, I think that's a good direction to be headed in, so I look forward to the future.

Thank you.

12:10

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a small but significant point in respect to this motion. When I first looked at it, I thought it was just as it says, the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, and that the emphasis would be all on economics and economic development. But as I read through it, of course, it's broadened to things such as human resources and social development as being parts of the mandate of this council or whatever.

Insofar as that is part of the mandate and the parameters of it, I just want to point out an interesting thing that I'm quite aware of and increasingly aware of. It's the way in which a variety of states in the United States are envious of and want to model themselves after the Canadian health care system. I know that particularly the state of Oregon, for one, and even the state of Washington have made a number of strides to look at what they call a single-payer system for health services and expanding the title not just for medicare or medicaid recipients but for all the population. In fact, part of their economic malaise is that they've got insurance companies that are running all the way to the bank with a variety of competing health plans, and to have a single payer for entitlement and insured services for health services is a way that many of them want to go. The state of Oregon, for instance, has gone even further and done this very difficult issue that we are somewhat into, the whole business of rationing services. I don't want to talk about rationing services, but how far entitlement to certain services can extend and this whole business of ADL and home care and other things are pressing issues for us and I know for those states in the union as well.

I did hear, I think, the Deputy Premier refer to at least three items that are on top of the priority list, in terms of tourism, environmental technologies, and the rest. I would just hope that given what's going on in a number of states, particularly Oregon and Washington state and others, we could begin to do a bit more exporting of the knowledge of our health care system – what makes it work, how it works – and help various states in the union develop not only economically but socially in this manner, and hope that it will get on the priority list for discussions with this group sooner rather than later.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, think that this is an important and worthwhile initiative. As I've mentioned on previous occasions, if we're really serious about trying to develop an industrial strategy in this province and diversifying the economy, one of our major problems is the relatively small population we have, two and a half million people, and our distance from markets and the cost of getting to those markets. If you compare Calgary's situation with Toronto's, for example, Toronto would have an immediate market of some 60 million or more people, and it's on a waterway. We're 800 kilometres from a port. So I would hope that in some ways this motion and the group that's being set up as a consequence of this motion would help to further that kind of economic objective of expanding our market opportunities.

I do have, I suppose, a concern or a question with the notion of being a full participant in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region. I'm not quite clear what that means, especially the words "full participant." My assumption, I guess, would be that what's being contemplated here is that this is an advisory body or a recommending body only and that if measures do come out of it, they'd be subject to agreements between Alberta or whatever province and the states and also subject, I suppose, to international agreements that might exist between Canada and the United States. I would appreciate any comment that the minister might care to make on that point in his summation.

The second issue I'm concerned about is, of course, that whatever is being proposed here would have to be part of the larger trade agreement that we've entered into with the United States. Now, social democrats and the New Democrats in Canada are basically supportive of freer trading arrangements. We believe in that. It's a cornerstone of most of our economic theorizing. But we've had some profound reservations, as members opposite know, about some particular aspects of the trade deal that was entered into between Canada and the United States. It's related very much to some of the objectives of this motion that's being presented by the deputy leader.

One of our concerns is that because of the different sort of social structure that exists in Canada compared with that which exists in the United States, if we open up the border to completely unrestricted trade between Canada and the United States, it either puts Canadian companies at a disadvantage or we're going to have to change our tax structure and put our Canadian companies on the same basis American companies are on, and that puts a lot of our social programs at considerable risk. For example, in the United States they don't have the same health care system, as the Member for Edmonton-Centre just mentioned, and they don't have the same commitment to basic public education that we have in this country. That means the taxes that are imposed on working people in the United States are lower than the taxes that are imposed on our citizens.

In addition to that, their corporations historically have paid lower taxes. So for our corporations to compete on the same basis as their corporations, we've had to shrink our tax base, and we've seen the consequences of that. The federal government has had to run up a deficit of over \$400 billion. We're having trouble in our province; all Canadian provinces are having trouble balancing their budgets because the federal government has cut back in transfer payments to the provinces. What I hope would be a corollary of what's being proposed here is not just the expansion of business programs and business opportunities but also that we may take into these deliberations which are going to be taking place some aspects of what we have in Canada that are important to us: our health care system, our commitment to public education. If they can begin to embrace some measures in their society that are comparable to what we have in this country, then we're going to have a level playing field. Our corporations will no longer be at a disadvantage. If they put the same proportion of their productive wealth into supporting the kinds of social institutions we have in this country, then our corporations would be able to flourish in competition with their corporations in business enterprises.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I really welcome the goals that are spelled out in (3) and (4) in this motion; namely, to increase not only the economic well-being but to improve the quality of life of the citizens participating in this project, and to identify opportunities not just for economic development but also for social development. I think those are really worthwhile goals, and as such I support this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a very important initiative, and I don't really think it should be taken lightly by any member of this Assembly. The Pacific Northwest Economic Region does offer tremendous potential for those of us who are blessed to live in this region to help obtain some of the goals that the government has laid out for us in the resolution that's before the Assembly, Motion 18. It focuses on some of the benefits that may come from participation with our neighbouring states and provinces.

I would like to focus for a brief moment on the area of environment, environmental enterprise, markets for recyclables, and environmental technology, the latter item being one that the Deputy Premier mentioned as a current priority for the Pacific Northwest Economic Region and that British Columbia is taking the lead on that particular issue. I think Alberta needs to get involved with our neighbouring jurisdictions in these important areas, but we need to do a little bit of work ourselves to make sure we're able to participate effectively in the proposals that are being made.

I think that members should obtain information about the Pacific Northwest Economic Region and what they're actually doing so they can see how far we have to go as a province before we can participate effectively. For example, I'm looking at a recent newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region dated March of 1991, a focus article on Expanding Environmental Enterprise in the Northwest States and Provinces. The article refers to the fact that

environmental services and technology transcend political boundaries and open a [new] range of opportunities for the economies of the Pacific Northwest.

That's a quote from Chris Watts, who's a member of the steering committee from the province of British Columbia.

Well, I suppose it does, and perhaps it even opens up opportunities for others of these partners of ours to start to export hazardous waste material from their jurisdictions into ours, where we have a facility which is losing money hand over fist thanks to the excellent management skill of this provincial government and where we have an Environment minister who has many times referred to the desirability, from a bottom-line financial point of view, of increasing the market for that facility.

12:20

The news article goes on to say that "governments must act as facilitators of this idea by providing the regulatory framework necessary to stimulate enterprise growth," which I think makes it quite clear that this entity is involved in trying to promote free trade of environmental services within that particular region. I have a concern about increased amounts of hazardous waste material traveling through the major highways of the province of Alberta from other jurisdictions within this region, and I think it's a question that's presupposed by the literature published by the Pacific Northwest Economic Region. I think the government and members should be a little more clear in terms of what we're getting into.

A second major issue that's dealt with in the March '91 newsletter is Creating Regional Markets for Recyclables. Now, this is a particularly interesting area because we already have our partners in the Pacific Northwest region who are involved in the Alberta marketplace for recyclables trying to tie up our sources of recyclable material. It's interesting that British Columbia is spearheading this area because British Columbia is exactly the province that's trying to round up supplies of newsprint in the

province of Alberta, with some success. In the city of Calgary they have cut a deal with Southam, the publisher of the *Calgary Herald*, and if I'm not mistaken, I believe that the *Calgary Sun* is involved as well. They've established a limited collection system whereby they're going to send our wastepaper to British Columbia to be processed and sold back to us as recycled paper.

Now, I'm not so certain that that's the way we want this market for recyclables to develop. I think maybe we should look at processing some of that material here in the province of Alberta, but you're not going to be able to do that until you have a collection system in place which is of a scale and a size which allows for manufacturing in Alberta. We have a company in Alberta, Alberta Newsprint, which is interested in establishing a deinking line in their paper mill. The capability is there to handle a hundred percent of the wastepaper in the province of Alberta, but if suddenly we're in a regional market for recyclables, which is the proposal put forth in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, all of sudden we may be exporting our waste material for processing elsewhere, a familiar pattern throughout the history of Alberta. I really think that in this day and age and especially in the more sustainable type of industry, which recycling represents, we should be looking at doing some of that processing right here in the province of Alberta.

It refers to "a 14-state western paper buying coalition" whereby the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington and nine others are involved in purchasing recycling paper at a discount using their economic muscle in the marketplace. Is that what we want to buy into, a purchasing coalition whereby we can access cheaper materials imported, no doubt, from the United States? I'm not so certain, but it is clear that the primary steps for action in 1991 set forth by the Pacific Northwest Economic Region are, number one:

Examine Barriers to Regional Cooperation on Creating Markets for Recycled Materials. Specifically, review lack of procurement policies, and lack of uniform recycled material content standards, and the constraints to the development of such standards.

So it does seem clear that they are interested in gathering up more of our raw resources for processing, and it doesn't surprise me one little bit that British Columbia is at the head of this.

I think we should participate, but I think we should do it on the basis that we have our act together, that we have a good idea as a province where we want to go in terms of processing of recycled material, in terms of jobs and opportunities for our young people in Alberta. We don't have that in place today. All that we have is another grant program from Alberta Environment, which is discretionary, capital funds only, a ribbon-cutting type of program. We don't have a provincewide collection system; therefore, we don't have the forward link in the processing system. All that we have to offer is a place where we can dispose of their hazardous and toxic wastes, which I'm not sure that Albertans support at this time. So I believe that we should exercise some caution in what may come of this from the point of view of our own economic future.

MR. SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, summation.

MR. HORSMAN: Well, very quickly, I would thank all parties in the House for their support of this motion. I can assure the hon. members that "full participation" means that we're going to pay our dues as well as take part in meetings. That's really what it means. It does not, obviously, transfer any jurisdiction from our province or this Legislature to any other body, and it will be a consultative body only. But we hope that out of that consultation will come some policies which will benefit the people of

Alberta and British Columbia and the five states which will also be participating.

I just want to put on the record that with respect to the health care issue, and this is somewhat aside from this, I did mention in my opening remarks that I'm an honorary director on the State Legislative Leaders Foundation. At my invitation several state legislators will be coming to Kananaskis in July. At least 60 state legislators will be coming to Kananaskis, perhaps more than that, to review with us the medicare system, the health care system, in Canada because there is a great deal of interest. That particular conference is outside this particular Pacific Northwest Economic Region, but I thought I'd just mention that since the question was raised about our role.

I thank the members for their participation. I recognize the caution that has been urged upon us. Since there will be, as I indicated, a bipartisan or multipartisan approach to this, it will, I hope, be an opportunity for all caucuses to better get to know and understand this region, which has a population of 15 million and great opportunities for economic development and, with economic development and growth, a greater opportunity to provide the social services that flow from that economic prosperity.

MR. SPEAKER: The question before the House is Motion 18. Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

May the record show that the motion passed unanimously.

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

Bill 50
Family and Domestic Relations Statutes
Amendment Act, 1991

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Highwood.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm delighted and pleased to move second reading of Bill 50, Family and Domestic Relations Statutes Amendment Act, 1991.

These amendments recognize the rights of children born outside of marriage and provides a process for establishing parentage. Section 47 of the Domestic Relations Act provides that the father and mother of a child are joint guardians. However, in the case of a child born outside marriage, the mother is the sole guardian. This denies children born outside of marriage a legal relationship with their father. Based on recommendations from the Alberta Law Reform Institute and consistent with other jurisdictions, the proposed amendments provide that only fathers falling into specific scenarios are automatically joint guardians with the mothers. In situations where a father does not fall within one of the scenarios, he will require a court order establishing his paternity and granting him guardianship status. However, before a guardianship order is granted, the court must be satisfied that it is in the child's best interests to appoint the father as guardian.

Part 8 of the amendment sets out the legal presumptions of who is the father of a child and the procedure to be followed in the declaration of paternity. This provides, then, the legal mechanism for children born outside of marriage to have a legal relationship with their father.

In the Family Relief Act, if a person dies without making adequate provision for maintenance and support of his or her spouse and dependent children, the spouse and dependent children can apply to the court for an order that such provision be made out of the estate of the deceased, notwithstanding the terms of the will. However, children born outside marriage can claim support from their father's estate only if the father acknowledged paternity or is declared to be a father in the proceedings under the Parentage and Maintenance Act. The proposed amendment allows children born outside marriage to apply for maintenance and support from their father's estate under the Family Relief Act in the same manner as legitimate children.

12:30

In the Intestate Succession Act, particularly sections 13 and 14, when a person dies without a will, that person's estate is distributed to his or her spouse and children in accordance with the Act. Currently, legitimate children and children born outside marriage inherit from their mother's estate in the same manner; however, children born outside marriage can inherit from their father's estate under an intestacy only if the father leaves no widow or legitimate children and he had acknowledged paternity or was declared to be the father during his lifetime. The proposed amendment allows children born outside marriage to share in their father's estate in the same manner as legitimate children.

[Mr. Moore in the Chair]

I look forward to the timely passage of this important set of amendments.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support this legislation, and I know my colleagues in the Alberta Liberal caucus do. Simply a note that this provides a leap beyond the Victorian age and the social evils chronicled by Charles Dickens. It's a small and short piece of legislation and won't be debated for any lengthy period of time here, but I think it's significant in a social sense and I congratulate . . .

[Mr. Gibeault approached the exit on the government side of the Chamber]

Speaker's Ruling
Decorum

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. Order in the House.

Hon. member, you know the rules of the House, and I'd ask you in future to respect them.

Debate Continued

MR. CHUMIR: I congratulate the member and the government side for bringing forward this progressive piece of legislation. We're very pleased to support it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion carried; Bill 50 read a second time]

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

[Mr. Moore in the Chair]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Will the committee come to order.

Bill 41
Natural Gas Marketing Amendment Act, 1991

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is an amendment.

Hon. minister.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Last time in our discussions at . . .

Point of Order
Beverages Other than Water in the Chamber

MR. GIBEAULT: Point of order.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Point of order, hon. minister.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Chairman, perhaps you'd be good enough to remind the Minister of Health about the rules against any beverages other than water in this Chamber when the Speaker is in the Chair. The minister brought in a beverage other than water, and you know that's not allowed.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This is Committee of the Whole, and we cannot deal with that.

Hon. minister.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Chairman, are you going to deal with that?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Chairman, I do apologize. I did walk into the House with a cup of coffee. I had thought we were in committee and I didn't stop. I apologize to the House.

Debate Continued

MR. ORMAN: Unbelievable, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, we had a fairly good discussion on the principles of the Bill in second reading. Just to briefly recap, the Bill simply allows for producers to vote on offers or changes to existing contracts that are negotiated between affiliated companies when the producers are not at the negotiating table. It also addresses an important issue of sanctity of contract, and I should point out that some of the discussion at second reading circled around the issue of whether this is reregulation. As I indicated, it is not reregulation. It is in response to regulatory intervention in other jurisdictions in at least setting a context for agreements that may come under attack. This Bill has nothing to do with the setting of price, nor does it have anything to do with market intervention. It simply sets a framework whereby meaningful negotiation can occur between a buyer and seller.

Mr. Chairman, as you indicated at the outset, there is an amendment. This amendment, as I understand, has been circulated to all members of the House. I will just briefly refer to the necessity of providing this amendment to Bill 41. This amendment is essential to provide flexibility to producers who

supply gas under netback agreements. There was a settlement agreement, as it's referred to, in September of 1990 whereby the California Public Utilities Commission through their order instituting rule-making, the OIR, came to an agreement, a compromise with producers to provide access for 250 million cubic feet a day of natural gas in the Pacific Gas Transmission system into northern California. This access agreement was agreed to by the group that represented producers at the hearing before the public utilities commission, and when we drafted this legislation we did not realize the legislation would not provide the producers to seek support for a verbal agreement they had through the settlement of the OIR. So this amendment will provide the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission, as the administrator of the Natural Gas Marketing Act, flexibility necessary to amend their netback agreements should it become necessary as a result of the settlement agreement.

Mr. Chairman, that's basically the essence of the amendment. Without this amendment there would be no provision in the legislation to amend the netback agreement and accommodate the settlement under the OIR.

Mr. Chairman, I'd be pleased to take any questions or hear any comments on this important piece of legislation.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Calgary-Forest Lawn, speaking to the amendment.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to indicate that we do support the amendment and do support the Bill itself.

If you'd permit me just a few minutes to perhaps talk about the Bill itself, as unfortunately I had to be at a very important constituency function at second reading last night, at the outset I'd just like to say that I appreciate the fact that the Minister of Energy provided considerable opportunity to meet with him and his executive assistant responsible for energy matters. We discussed both the Bill and the amendment at considerable length. I appreciate that opportunity that was provided. On many occasions in this Assembly, Mr. Chairman, I've mentioned that much of the work of this House could be expedited through co-operation, particularly in the preparation of Bills. I think this was a good example of how this kind of co-operation can expedite matters that are essentially in the interests of the Alberta public.

12:40

This Bill is really quite critical. On the surface it looks like a very simple piece of legislation. It's not very lengthy, and in fact the content of the Bill itself, I think, is very simple. It just extends until 1994, unless the cabinet should choose to do otherwise, a netback pricing arrangement that's already in place. What that does is requires, in fact, that if there is a shipper affiliated with a downstream buyer and a netback agreement in place expires, this Act extends the netback pricing arrangement if the sellers are so agreed. That's my understanding of the basic Bill.

This amendment would also permit the sellers, if they're so agreed, to modify that agreement in ways that have already occurred. So the Bill itself is generic. It's not aimed at any one particular group of sellers or buyers. I think that's important in this context.

I'd just like to make one other point. I do have a concern about why we need this Bill, why we needed an Alberta gas marketing Act in the first place. It did come out of the deregulation that took place in 1985 and 1986. I agree with much of

the comment that was made by the Member for Calgary-Buffalo during second reading. In entering deregulation in the way we did, we really created a situation in which there was a lot of surplus gas on the market, and that engendered a ferocious competition between sellers. A lot of producers are under considerable distress. Their cash flow situation has been severely weakened, so they have to put their gas in the market to survive or to exist. I don't think when we entered deregulation we thought through as carefully as we might have what would happen if suddenly you removed all the surplus tests and had this huge volume of gas. How do you deal with that? How do you prevent prices from collapsing? I think we tried to put a little order into the selling of gas through introducing the Natural Gas Marketing Act. There may be other things we could look at in this province, because I think it's pretty clear we're really suffering from these low prices. Not only are our producers suffering; the provincial Treasury also suffers in terms of the take it gets from the royalty.

There may be some measures the minister could look at to try to strengthen returns to Alberta through the marketing in natural gas. I've suggested this before, and I'll offer it again as a suggestion. I haven't the resources to look at the full implications of this. Perhaps the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission could market gas in the same way it markets oil. It could market the Crown share of natural gas. Other things that might be considered, that would be in environmental interests of ensuring there's some sanity to the production of gas, would be to enter into some kind of prorationing scheme to ensure that producers could have a minimum take from pools and things like this. There may be alternatives that would in effect not involve a reregulation of all aspects of gas marketing and delivery; in the interests of enhancing the opportunity to develop our natural gas resources in an effective and efficient way, action we could take that would allow that to happen and at the same time work to stiffen prices for this very precious commodity we have.

One real concern about natural gas, in my view at least, is that it's very undervalued in the marketplace relative to its actual value. It's a fuel that burns much more environmentally friendly than other fuels with equivalent Btus. I noted recently California is going to be moving in the direction of establishing a network of service stations that would make natural gas available to automobiles in their state. They realize pollution problems are such in California that they're going to have to require more use of natural gas in their automobiles in order to have any kind of reasonable environment.

So in the future we're going to see considerable upward pressure on the price of natural gas. It's going to be seen for what it really is, a truly valuable energy commodity. But at the moment, because of the distress situation we're in with respect to many of our producers in this province, we have to sell that gas at incredibly low prices. To me that's wasteful, and it's economically disadvantageous to the province.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, to respond to a few comments by the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn. First, I should say that with regard to the ability to sunset the legislation, the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn did point out one mechanism, and that is in Executive Council or through the Lieutenant Governor in Council. But the legislation will also sunset if there ceases to be an affiliation between the shipper and his downstream buyer, and in the event the minister is petitioned and consents to hold a vote to remove the designation of the shipper under the Act, there is in fact a finding of producer support in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, we have looked at the possibility of the Petroleum Marketing Commission marketing the Crown share of natural gas. Unfortunately, it's a little different situation than oil. Because there is a world price for oil, it is just a matter of fitting into that world price and marketing your product. With natural gas we would then be competing with all the other producers for a market share, and we do not believe that would be appropriate.

Prorationing is something the state of Texas is considering. We met with one of the commissioners for the Texas railroad commission. They have looked at prorationing. We've just moved away from that type of regulation in the market, and I'm not sure it would solve the problems we're faced with.

I should say that I, too, believe natural gas is priced too low. It is a valuable commodity. I believe that will change. We're seeing changes in the northeast United States, people moving away from the use of fuel oil and replacing it with natural gas because of the pressures of legislation. So I believe it's just a matter of time.

Those are basically my comments, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHUMIR: I and my colleagues in the Alberta Liberal caucus are supporting this legislation, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PASHAK: Perhaps just a question to the minister. I note that in the state of California much of the gas that enters southern California is in a way through a system of monopoly, and the price is fixed substantially higher than what it is for gas currently entering the northern part of the state from Alberta. As I understand it, the average cost of gas going into the southern part of the state is approximately \$2.81 an mcf, whereas our Alberta gas is currently \$2.41 into the northern part of the state. The effort coming from the consumers is to see that price drop even further. I wonder if the minister would care to comment on why this differential in price, whether the state of California is taking any action with respect to lowering the price to their southern consumers, and the extent to which that's a factor in their current objections to the price being paid to their aggregator, I guess is what it would essentially be.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, prior to answering the specific question on the California market, I should again point out to hon. members that this legislation is in fact generic and could impact on domestic sales of natural gas as well as export sales. There are four other netback agreements that could be affected by this particular legislation along with the Alberta and Southern contracts to California, so it is not just one contract arrangement to California. There are others that will be impacted.

12:50

Mr. Chairman, the most troublesome aspect of the California situation is that Alberta gas does beat the market. As a matter of fact, as the hon. member pointed out, we are selling our gas slightly less than domestic gas into the state of California. It is our belief that the market for natural gas should be set where it is bought and sold and where it is consumed, and that is basically the principle behind netback pricing: the price is established in the marketplace where alternatives are competing. I can tell the hon. member that without the netback agreement, without this legislation, we certainly see a scenario where Alberta producers could be whipsawed in terms of price negotiations with concurrent negotiations for domestic U.S. gas moving through the El Paso pipeline into southern California in an effort to bid down the price. So in fact U.S. states producing

gas into California are allies in many ways with Alberta producers, because it is in our best interest to try and create an environment where negotiations are meaningful and the best price is determined. I would say that the state of Texas is just as troubled by regulatory manipulation of the process to determine price and deal with other contract issues as we are in the province of Alberta.

What we are enabling through this legislation is the opportunity for all producers to make a judgment on issues such as decontracting, volumes, price offers, other issues that are affecting their contractual relationship with Alberta and Southern. As I indicated, the same would occur with other arrangements where a netback agreement exists, and they would become designated under this legislation if the same circumstance occurred beyond California. So although we may be troubled with price, it is not price this legislation deals with. It is an environment to allow for a market-based price, a price where California consumers consider their alternative and then negotiate a take-off price from there. Unfortunately, that's not occurring today with the producers. They are looking at a price that is totally irrelevant to the market price, and we believe in principle that is wrong, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question has been called on the government amendment to Bill 41.

[Motion on amendment carried]

[The sections of Bill 41 as amended agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

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

[Motion carried]

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration certain Bills and reports Bill 41 with amendments. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by the Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Do hon. members concur in the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

[At 12:55 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]

