

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Friday, September 3, 1993**

10:00 a.m.

Date: 93/09/03

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our divine Father, as we conclude for this week our work in this Assembly, we renew our thanks and ask that we may continue our work under Your guidance.

Amen.

Please be seated.

head: **Ministerial Statements**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the minister of agriculture and food.

### Gainers Inc.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to give notice that the government of Alberta is taking further steps to sell its interests in Gainers. The sale of this company remains a key priority of this government.

Since 1989 various steps have been taken to sell Gainers as an operating business, to turn it back to the private sector where it rightfully belongs. Recently negotiations have been held with prospective purchasers, but these discussions did not progress to a successful conclusion. During these negotiations a number of other firms across North America have shown interest in the company, but because of the ongoing discussions with these prospective purchasers others could not be fully dealt with at that time.

Today I'm inviting all interested parties to submit proposals for the purchase of Gainers. This invitation is open to interested investors around the globe. We are confident in Alberta's pork industry, indeed in the Gainers operation, confident that there will be tremendous opportunities for growth. Potential investors are advised today that the government will not participate in the financing of the sale transaction. Albertans have made it clear that government's role should be a supportive and a facilitative one, not as a direct participant.

Our objectives in the sale of Gainers are: to enhance value-added processing and diversification within our borders, to further the development of the pork industry, to respect the interest of Gainers' employees, and to maximize the return from Gainers' assets. Mr. Speaker, our objective is to have these actions completed by the end of 1993.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, tens of millions of taxpayers' dollars have gone into the propping up and the involvement of the government in Gainers, a manoeuvre that skewed the marketplace – that is, by government being involved in the marketplace – to the disadvantage of other players, other people involved in the marketplace. It was a most unfortunate experience for Alberta taxpayers and for people in the marketplace. Sixty-nine million dollars in loans and loan guarantees are at peril. Last March \$9.2 million was pumped in. It's clear that more money is likely to be pumped in.

The Liberal opposition has been calling for this particular initiative for a number of years now, that this matter should have been put to open tender process with the qualifications that the employees should be protected and that the government should not be involved. It's sad that it's taken so long to do. It's sad that

we were involved at the outset. The only positive note here, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the government has clearly indicated that it will not finance this sale and that there is respect for the Gainers' employees.

Thank you.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether we could ask for unanimous consent to return to Notices of Motions so that we could provide notice of a Standing Order 40 motion that we would like to raise.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there unanimous consent to allow reversion to Notices of Motions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

head: **Notices of Motions**

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I simply wish to give notice that following question period I will rise again under Standing Order 40 to seek unanimous consent to propose the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta send congratulations to Alberta singer K.D. Lang on the occasion of her winning best female video at last night's MTV awards for the song *Constant Craving*.

head:

### Oral Question Period

#### Liquor Sales

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I support the privatization of the Alberta Liquor Control Board. [applause] They're eating up my time, but they should have waited for the next shoe to drop. I do not support the manner by which this was done. You will recall that I complained in this Assembly yesterday that I was given notice of this sale just moments before I entered this Assembly. This decision was made in back rooms; it was made without consultation, and that flies in the face of what the government has been bragging about, the consultative process.

Now, most alarming is the fact that if we watched the news last night, we would have seen a former Conservative minister, who has an off-sales licence, already putting up his shelves in anticipation of further liquor sales. Mr. Speaker, that former minister knew something that employees didn't know, that I didn't know, that Albertans didn't know, and I'd like the minister to stand and explain how that minister could have had inside information.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, he did not.

MR. DECORE: It was just a message from heaven, I'm sure the minister will tell us. Nobody will believe that, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Speaker, in the last process two years ago in giving out wine boutique licences, it was clear that those licences went to Conservative friends. Now knowing that a former Conservative minister is already putting up his shelves, I want to know, Mr. Minister, I want your assurance for all Albertans that they're going to be treated equally, that Conservatives aren't going to be given the inside track on these licences.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, I want it to stand on record unequivocally that all Albertans from all walks of life who qualify for a

class D licence will be eligible for one of these free enterprise models.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, in the shoddy and hasty way in which the government acted, even the minister's own statements yesterday are contradictory. In the news release it says that employees will not be allowed to participate. In the backgrounder it says that they will be allowed to participate in getting the licences. Now, I want to know, I want an assurance for these employees, Mr. Minister, that they're going to be treated properly, equitably, that they don't have to quit before they can apply, that they're going to be treated as fairly as every other Albertan in getting licences if they want them.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, all Albertans are eligible except those that are precluded by the guidelines, those working for manufacturing or distillers or what have you. If you're still working for the ALCB, you are not eligible, but the 1,500 people that will be affected by this will be given notice of termination, and all of those 1,500 are eligible then to apply for a class D licence. Let me reiterate that one more time. The outline said that if you're an employee of the ALCB, you're not eligible, but once notice has been served that your job will no longer be continued with the ALCB, you are fully eligible for a class D licence on application if you meet the qualifications, as all Albertans are.

#### 10:10 Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, Alberta social agencies, welfare offices, our constituency offices are besieged with calls in the last two weeks by terrified AISH recipients and their families. These people have already been certified by their doctors as unable to be employed, and they're now subjected to this minister's cruel, punitive, heartless quotas. We've even heard complaints from your loyal Conservatives who say: yes, we expected constraints but certainly not on the backs of disabled and helpless people. My question is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. By imposing this quota, Mr. Minister, does the minister really believe that there are 3,000 Alberta citizens who got on AISH fraudulently?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I've never said anywhere that there are any fraudulent cases when I'm dealing with AISH recipients. I'd just like to advise the hon. member also that we do not have quotas; we have targets of how we are doing our welfare reforms in Alberta. I'd like to advise the hon. member that out of our \$1.6 billion budget our budget for AISH is \$158 million. In fact, the AISH budget this year has been increased by \$3 million. We are concerned. We are sincere. As our caseloads drop across the province, which they have very successfully, you will see that we will be redirecting dollars to the most needy areas.

MRS. HEWES: You just don't get it, Mr. Minister. You just don't get it. These are helpless, disabled people, and they're hurting, and so are your workers; they're hurting too.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the minister: is the AISH program in fact going on the chopping block? Are you going to discontinue it? Is that what this whole move is about? We want the straight goods for once, Mr. Minister.

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to advise the hon. member that just because the person is under the assured income for the severely handicapped program does not mean that they

aren't employable or trainable or at least partially employable in some cases.

Mr. Speaker, AISH is not on the chopping block, but the whole welfare program, the \$1.6 million, is under review. Like I say, we will be redirecting the dollars in the proper places in the future.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, that verifies, I think, what people have been frightened about right along. The whole program is on the chopping block.

Mr. Speaker, if AISH is not to be cut, will the minister now please show some mercy and discontinue these absurd and punitive quotas?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, we will on an ongoing basis continue to review my department's budget. That's what Albertans told us on June 15. The welfare reforms that I announced before the election were supported by Albertans, to review the programs we have out there. All we are doing with the program is reprioritizing the needs in the program. We want to make sure that the people that need assistance will get the assistance they require, but the people that want to get back into the work force and should be back in the work force will also get assistance to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Taber-Warner.

#### Gainers Inc.

MR. HIERATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many of my constituents are pork producers and have voiced their concerns about the government ownership of Gainers. My question this morning is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. I would like to ask him: what really is the status at this point of the sale of Gainers?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister of agriculture.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question from the hon. Member for Taber-Warner is one of great importance to our agricultural community because our pork industry is a thriving and a growing component of our agricultural industry. It has grown from approximately 1.1 million hogs in the year 1983 to well over 2 million hogs today. So obviously it is a very important process that we are involved in here today.

The status, as I announced, is that after lengthy discussions with several groups who are interested we have decided to open discussions to a broader segment of the processing industry, and this is a result of industry people that have come to us and expressed an interest in becoming involved in the pork industry in Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. HIERATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplemental question is really then: why does the minister think he will be able to sell Gainers now when a sale up to this point has not been possible?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, we have had additional representation from a broader spectrum of the processing industry, and it is a result of this interest that seems to be coming forward. It's a result of the ongoing and the thriving industry that is growing in Alberta that we are having this additional interest. As I had mentioned earlier, the processing in proportion to agriculture

is growing at three times the rate of the primary industry of agriculture. That is the growth area in agriculture, so it is of essence and of utmost importance that we work and co-operate with all aspects of the industry.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray.

#### **Electric Energy Marketing Agency**

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you and good morning, Mr. Speaker. Members of this House will recall that there is an electricity rate equalization program in Alberta called EEMA. My question, therefore, this morning is directed to the Minister of Energy. The minister has been hoping that Alberta Power, TransAlta, and Edmonton Power would solve this complex issue for the government. They haven't been able to do that. Our information is that the power companies are unable to reach agreement. Their deadline has passed. As a result, to the Minister of Energy, I wonder if the minister can advise the House and assure northern Albertans that they will not face power rate increases of up to 50 percent if the EEMA program collapses in this province.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of all members, EEMA was established in 1982 with its main objective to lessen the disparities of electrical cost throughout the province. About two years ago a review was undertaken to determine whether in fact EEMA was effective, was necessary, and if it wasn't necessary, what alternatives should be made to the program.

Last February I filed a document that had been a study of the process by independent Albertans. It came forward. I filed it in this House. I then sent it out to all people who had participated in the process for their comments on the recommendations contained in that report. At that point, Mr. Speaker, I called together the major stakeholder groups, the four major utility people within this province, and asked them again to make comments on the report. I asked them: don't tell me that you don't like it; if you don't like it, give me a plan or an alternative to the recommendations contained in that report.

They have been charged with this task now for a number of months and have met continually over the last six months to try and look at a new structuring on electricity within the province. The direction that I gave the group was to remember that this had to be fair for all Albertans, because this is an issue, Mr. Speaker, that affects every Albertan, not just a small group but every Albertan within this province. I have just recently actually received some of the final reports this week from that group. Their final meeting, in fact, was this week. So I will be reviewing those reports and recommendations and reporting back.

10:20

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplemental question, then, to the minister. The minister will recall that in the throne speech on Tuesday there was talk of 110,000 jobs being created. The minister will appreciate that there is a direct correlation between those high taxpaying jobs found in the north and the ability of the government to balance its books. Will the minister, then, please tell the House this morning what her contingency plans are for all Albertans if the EEMA program collapses?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, the EEMA review has been a long and very complex process. It would not be prudent of the Minister

of Energy to come out with a plan without first of all reviewing the submissions from the utility companies, that they have spent six months pulling together. While they may not agree on all issues, I'm sure there's some very valuable information in the reports that have come forward, and I will be reporting back at a later date.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

#### **Game Bird Releases**

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my constituency there's a great concern about private hunting grounds releasing domestically raised birds, in particular pheasants. I'm wondering if the minister of the environment could advise me on the government policy on this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's beyond policy. The current legislation that we have allows only pheasants to be raised and released on these game bird shooting grounds around the province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Yes. It has come to my attention that just to release pheasants is not really economically viable. I'm wondering about the possibility of releasing either domestically raised grouse or domestically raised wild turkey. I'm wondering if the minister could respond to that, please.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have this legislation in place because there are some concerns to our wildlife in the province if we are to expand beyond pheasants. As a matter of fact, last year in the Carstairs area, last fall, we had some turkeys released, and there were some problems with disease. [interjections] The opposition may think this is funny, but the poultry producers in Alberta certainly don't think it's funny. This mycoplasma disease that some of these turkeys carry can very easily come in contact with the domestic poultry, and that can create problems. But certainly I'll take a look at the comments that the hon. member has made, and I'll see whether we can expand the allowed release and capture provisions that we have now currently under legislation.

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

#### **Gainers Inc.**

(continued)

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From a money standpoint NovAtel stands out as this government's greatest boondoggle fiasco ever, but, you know, when you look at Gainers and the government's involvement with Mr. Pocklington from a time and money standpoint, this government's involvement there is absolutely shameful. My question today is to the minister responsible for Gainers and other things. Will the minister finally admit today as a result of his ministerial statement that the reason we can't sell Gainers is because of plant obsolescence, huge debt, and their absolute inability to compete in the private sector and that's why nobody is coming forward to buy it?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Who is the minister of "other things"? I'm not clear on that.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I'd be delighted to answer that question. The fact is that one of the things we've been trying to do is take the Gainers operation, an operation that has value especially in the line of products it has, value in the inventory that it has, value in the receivables that it has, and tries to sell that asset into the private sector, where it rightfully belongs. We've been trying to do that for the last four years. I believe that with a new mandate, with this government intent on fulfilling its promise to get out of that business, we are poised more than ever to be out of the business, with interest expressed to the minister of agriculture, others who are interested, people locally, people nationally, companies internationally who've expressed an interest in this viable operation. We're anxious to get it out into the hands of the private sector where it belongs.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, I certainly agree with that last portion. It certainly does belong in the private sector, but it belonged there 10 years ago, before the government got involved with them in the first place.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll direct my supplementary question to the Treasurer, since the minister responsible for pork and cookies doesn't seem to have any answers. My supplementary question to the Treasurer . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Points of order will have to be dealt with . . .

MR. BRUSEKER: How much more is the Alberta taxpayer going to lose before we finally get rid of Gainers?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, frankly the answer is none. But we want to make sure that as we sell this operation, while getting it into the private sector, we try to fulfill exactly what the minister of agriculture said earlier today, four fundamental objectives that are of importance to this government – and apparently not of interest, obviously, because they don't have many members outside of Edmonton or Calgary; they really don't understand what rural Alberta is all about – the fact that there is a viable pork industry in this province, that we are there to facilitate, create the right environment whereby that industry will flourish and will grow. The minister of agriculture earlier said that our objectives in the sale of Gainers are:

to enhance value-added processing and diversification within our borders, to further the development of the Alberta pork industry, to respect the interest of Gainers' employees, and to maximize the return from Gainers' assets.

Mr. Speaker, we believe the action we've announced today will achieve just those objectives.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Medicine Hat.

### Capital Expenditures

MR. RENNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people of Medicine Hat are concerned about the provincial deficit, and they support the government's programs in their attempts to balance the budget and our commitment to balance the budget over the next four years. In my discussions with my constituents some have advised me that they have been told that the government could eliminate up to \$800 million from the provincial deficit by cutting capital spending. I was wondering if the Provincial Treasurer

could answer my question: has your department considered this alternative, and if so, would you comment on the feasibility of this suggestion?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. DINNING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have certainly said publicly and we will continue to say that we welcome all ideas, and certainly ideas from the people of Medicine Hat are as valid as the people from Edmonton or from Rimbey or from Grande Cache. I must advise the hon. member that we really have considered that approach but rejected it outright.

There is some \$817 million in projects that are spelled out in our budget that came down on May 6, that will be revisited again next Wednesday when we bring down the budget. I have to advise the hon. member that an \$800 million cut to the capital program would place in serious jeopardy, would virtually stop projects like the Grant MacEwan College. It would stop the University of Calgary professional building. It would stop expansion to the Royal Alex hospital, which is in place now. It would stop senior citizen grants. It would stop transportation projects. It would put in jeopardy the payment of debenture payments so that school capital programs that were agreed to in the last number of years – we wouldn't be able to pay that debt. We would download that debt on to school boards.

Mr. Speaker, we believe not only would it be inadvisable; it would be more painful than even the brutal cuts suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. I've heard of this idea. I've heard it throughout the campaign. I heard it from the Liberals. Unfortunately, Albertans rejected that very notion put forward by the Liberals.

10:30

MR. RENNER: My supplemental, then, Mr. Speaker: if this indeed would bring true hardship onto Albertans from a point of view of supply and of having necessary infrastructure in place, I wonder if the minister could comment on what the effects on the Alberta economy might be from cutting \$800 million out of capital spending in one year.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, it would be shortsighted to say the least, and frankly I think it would be downright cruel, because what you're looking at is: \$800 million is about 10 percent of the residential and nonresidential construction throughout the province of Alberta this year. It's about half of all of the government – provincial, federal, municipal, school – capital spending that will take place in this province this year. I know, because I've done some serious analysis of it, that it would drop our gross domestic product by 1 percent. It would raise our unemployment rate by 1 and a half percent, putting out of work over 14,000 people, the very people that the Liberals, standing up today and the day before, are supposedly speaking in their best interests. Their very plan would put 14,000 of those people out of work. I think it would be cruel.

The hon. member talked about necessary infrastructure. Well, we believe in the schools in this province, Mr. Speaker. We believe in the universities. We believe in the Grant MacEwan College project. But I think Albertans would wonder: is it necessary to spend \$220,000 to upgrade the offices of the Liberal opposition? I think they'd say, "No, it's not necessary."

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

### Surface Rights

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of surface rights access and access to private and Crown lands and the compensation rates levied on those lands has been a matter of concern to the energy industry for some time now. As a matter of fact, it's been a matter of concern for about five years. The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers is due to release their report on this very matter any day now. My question is to the Energy minister. The minister claims that she is committed to reducing the cost burden faced by the energy companies. Can the minister explain why it has taken her department almost five years to identify this as a priority item?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I became the Minister of Energy on December 15, and one of the first meetings I had, in fact, was with the industry association groups to identify a priority list. Within the second week of being the Minister of Energy, I identified that surface access was one of the major areas that had to be addressed for this industry. I then went to the industry and sat down: how are we going to deal with this? We gathered together the players that needed to come to the table. In keeping with our Premier's consultative process and getting out from under the dome, I sat down with members from the Cattle Commission and from the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. We sat at a roundtable discussion, the former minister of agriculture and myself, with the two bodies to determine the direction that we should be going forward with on surface access issues. It is a priority item with this minister. I identified it in my first week of being the minister.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: The issue of royalty regime was a priority with the department as well, and it took nearly two years to revamp that regime. That was done when the energy industry was experiencing massive layoffs and the worst drilling season in memory.

The minister may recall that the issue of surface rights has not been seriously examined since the early 1980s. Will the minister make a commitment to end this foot-dragging and work with her colleague the minister of agriculture, affectionately known to me as the cookie minister, to establish a process which reflects the contemporary economic realities being faced by the energy industry?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, had the hon. member been reading the press earlier, in the springtime, or attended any of the industry meetings, he would have been well aware that that process is well under way. There is in fact a structured task force that has been co-ordinated between the department of agriculture and the Department of Energy, and the two ministers have sat side by side and encouraged the two groups to come to some resolve and a solution to this situation on access. I will say that it was the first time, and through our new management style with the Klein government, that two groups that had never sat together before actually sat at the table and were asked to resolve a problem without – and I will stress this, without – government interference.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Wainwright.

### Rural Physicians

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health regarding rural physicians. Obtaining and keeping rural doctors has been a problem in our communities for

a number of years now. I appreciate that the minister has had contact with our Provost municipal health care system. Right now we have an extreme situation where one of our permanent physicians is leaving and relocating in another area. I would like to ask the minister: what steps are being taken to replace that physician?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am aware that Provost community is facing a difficulty in recruiting a physician. The Department of Health has put in place a rural physician action plan with a number of partners to try to alleviate this situation in rural Alberta. Part of the plan is working with medical students to ensure that they have an opportunity to experience a rural practice and may therefore be encouraged to set up practices in rural areas, also in the locum program, and certainly by providing encouragement and support to the physicians. The rural physician action plan has met with some success. Not having been in place very long, it's difficult to assess yet whether it's going to be completely successful, but we are reviewing that program now and will be looking at what successes it has gained and where we might adjust it. I will be meeting with the group from Provost to talk about their issues and to see if there is anything we can do to assist them.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. FISCHER: Thank you. I understand that the College of Physicians and Surgeons is currently changing the licensing requirements for physicians, and these requirements could allow a shorter postgraduate training period that many of our out-of-province or out-of-country doctors do not have. Could the minister enlighten us on where we're at with that?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member is correct. Alberta Health and the College of Physicians and Surgeons are working together to review the Medical Profession Act bylaws. Under the proposed revisions rural communities will actually have more opportunities to recruit graduates of other medical schools. The college today does have the opportunity under the bylaws to make exceptions in its licensing practices in order to meet those special needs that some communities might experience. Certainly a clause in the proposed revision will assist in that. We'll continue working with the college on that issue and try to ensure that our placement of physicians and indeed the areas that they practise in meet the needs of Albertans.

10:40

### Consideration of Estimates

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, the process of interim supply debate and review in this province is a disgrace. The members of this Assembly are asked to review two-thirds of the budget in a two-day period under threat of closure. We have six pages of material, two lines per department. How does this jibe with the minister's alleged commitment to openness and accountability and thorough review of budget documents?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I can't quite recall the word he used. What did you say the process was? [interjections] Disgrace. He said "a disgrace." That's the word. Process: the hon. members across the way have an infatuation with process. This government is interested in substance. Albertans are interested in substance. What I would call a disgrace is the exhibition put on by the members across the way last night in Committee of Supply. We have 17 members of Executive Council here, available to

answer every single question that is put by hon. members across the way, questions that their constituents have asked them to raise. I hope all Albertans will see the *Hansard* transcript from last night. It's atrocious. There was nothing but political rhetoric that reminded one that the NDP is alive and well and living in the bodies of the members across the way.

What I would encourage hon. members to do is to take the budgetary documents of May 6, use them for the debate in interim supply today, and then when we get into the September 8 budget and we go through 39 days of estimates, they will have a golden opportunity to ask all of the questions in all of the detail that they're looking for.

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, my supplemental is to the Provincial Treasurer. Which budget are you talking about: the philosophical document the Premier discussed or is it the quarterly report that is \$279 million out? Where do those numbers fit in these six pages? There is no context whatsoever to review and debate the budget documents. You are asking us to approve \$8.91 billion in two days under closure.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, Alberta taxpayers should know that they are paying 1 and a half million dollars for that kind of research. They're getting a raw deal, because what is in this documentation is in the legislative library, is available from the Provincial Treasurer's office any time they want, all of the detail, seven documents right here that respond to virtually all the information they need so they can then ask intelligent questions, which their constituents are expecting them to ask.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

### Social Policy

MRS. FORSYTH: Mr. Speaker, thank you. My question today is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. I have been involved with the department since 1988. The majority of the people on the system want to work. It's unfortunate that all we hear in this House is the negative and nothing focusing on the positive of the people who have gotten into the work force or into the schools. Getting the recipients who shouldn't be there and don't want to be there off the system allows the social workers to do their job and truly help the people that need the help. My question is to the minister of social services: can the minister tell this House what the latest caseloads are as a result of the recent welfare reforms?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, when I announced the welfare reforms in April of '93, my target at the time was to reduce the caseloads by 13,000 people. I'd like to advise this House that within just five months we've achieved a target of 10,000 already. With the co-operation of frontline staff and management the caseloads have been reduced to 10,000. Now, a lot of these people have moved on to training programs and the work force.

Of course, the issue of people on AISH not being able to work was brought up in this House this morning. I'd just like to clarify that out of the 10,000 cases I would hope that some people that were on AISH are back in the work force through that. I have a press release here dated August 30 by the Canadian Paraplegic Association, the Alberta branch, that says that they support the welfare reforms that this government is moving forward. They represent 2,000 Albertans on AISH, and they fully believe that a lot of their members they represent are employable and trainable. That was the question that was brought up.

MRS. FORSYTH: Thank you.

Can the minister provide the House with any information on assistance provided to Albertans about these changes? Is there information being sent to clients to tell them about the changes, and is there a line for people to call and get the information?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to advise the hon. member first of all that we do have our offices set up. We are collocated in some cases with other departments, such as career development and employment, employment and immigration, and Family and Social Services, to make sure that when families enter our offices, they have full opportunity to have a career assessment and possible placement into a job or training opportunity. I believe that's why our program is so successful.

I'd also like to advise the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that there was an insert in last month's cheque advising the clients that we have a 1-800 number. The number is 1-800-363-3499 across the province and 455-8279 for calls in Edmonton. This is a help line and is manned fully by trained operators to make sure that we can provide the proper information to our clients so they don't get into problem situations.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

### Health Care Funding

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday in the House the Minister of Health admitted that her department needs to develop health intervention outcomes and that these outcome measures are key in determining health funding priorities. However, prior to the development of these critical outcome measures, the minister is forcing \$200 million in across-the-board cuts from her budget. How could the Minister of Health implement these arbitrary cuts that are hurting sick Albertans and threatening health care workers when the standards against which these decisions have to be based have simply not been developed?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member has selective hearing, because while I did certainly support the need for further work on health outcomes, I also gave a list – I've done it, I think, three or four times in this Assembly to date, both in question period and in the debate last night – of the review process that has occurred in the health community. This has been done in co-operation with the health community. I put a great deal of stock in the information that I receive from that health community. I believe that these are the people we should be working with along with the public to talk about how we address the health needs.

I spoke about The Rainbow Report and our response to it and the initiatives that had occurred from it. I think I spoke about the extended care report on how we deliver long-term care. We talked about the establishment of health goals for Albertans. We talked about the process of regional meetings that were held across this province last year. We talked about the further follow-up that I had with the health community in January of this year. We talked about the roundtable in Red Deer. We talked about the follow-up roundtables that are going to occur. We have had an extensive consultation, and rather than continue to give you these details in the House, I will table it so that the hon. member can read it, pursue it, and perhaps read some of the very valuable information in it and understand the work that has been done by the health delivery community and interested people in this province.

MR. SAPERS: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, well, with all of that information and with all that input, then, can the minister please inform the Assembly what indicators, what outcome studies, what needs assessments, what health measures, or what of anything was used to prove that 1.5 percent across-the-board cuts to each and every rural hospital make any sense at all?

10:50

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your patience and your indulgence, because we also covered this area. I talked about the fact that we have an acute care funding plan for hospitals in this province of a certain size. I said that we were working on an acute care funding plan with the rural hospitals or, indeed, the hospitals that are less than 50 beds or 40 beds in this province, wherever they are located. We have had a lot of ongoing consultation and work with a committee of affected people, so we have the best input coming from those very communities that have those facilities. We have consulted with them on the funding that they receive and, incredibly, the health community understands very clearly that we must reallocate the dollars that we're spending in health. We have to look at about \$4 billion that we're committing in this province to health and say: "Are we spending it in the best way? Are we doing it with the most efficiency? Are we receiving the best outcomes?" I really invite the hon. member to take advantage of all of the very good information that is available on health care and the review of this system and make himself acquainted with it.

#### Speaker's Ruling

##### Brevity

MR. SPEAKER: Before going on to points of order, the Chair is happy to say that we've gained two questions, but we probably should have gained four over yesterday. There's still a little problem with the length of preambles and in some cases length of answers, but lengthy preambles breed lengthy answers, so this is a two-way street. I urge members on both sides of the House to tighten up next week whenever we come back. In any event, that will be dealt with very shortly.

There are two or three points of order that the Chair has had notice of. First of all, the Government House Leader, followed by the Opposition House Leader.

#### Point of Order

##### Parliamentary Language

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 23(j) on the point of order with respect to statements made in the enthusiasm that was brought forth by the Member for Calgary-North West. Now, the Member for Calgary-North West really is a veteran in the Liberal caucus. He's exuberant; he's enthusiastic. [interjections] It seems he's also attracted the fancy of at least one member on the other side. The hon. member knows full well that when he wishes to address a member of Executive Council, there is a tradition in the House that one refers to the minister by the correct title.

The reason that it's important and that I do rise is that the Member for Calgary-North West, a veteran now of this House – he's now entering his almost fourth full year – may very well become a model for some of the other individuals in the Liberal caucus. When the Member for Calgary-North West today rose and referred to the distinguished Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, he referred to him as the minister of cookies and pork. Now, in itself I do know that the Member for Calgary-North West would want to correct his actions in the future. As the question period went on – and really the point of my point of

order – mimicking of the position taken by the Member for Calgary-North West then went on by at least one other member of the Liberal caucus, the Member for Calgary-West. Then when he got up and was addressing questions to the Minister of Energy, he referred to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development as the minister of cookies.

Now, the point that I'm making here is that the Member for Calgary-North West fully knows what the rules are. I'm quite prepared to accept that the new Member for Calgary-West does not, and he probably thinks it's kind of humorous to mimic, perhaps, what the positions are of another member of their caucus. Mr. Speaker, 23(j) clearly points out that an hon. member should not use "abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder." We certainly would not want to have disorder in this House. We certainly would not want to have it on a Monday or Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. We all know that on Friday hon. members, at least in the opposition, tend to get a little giddy and tend to take a few liberties. We would ask that the hon. Member for Calgary-North West in fact understand the senior position that he has in his caucus and that he would in the future correctly use the titles of ministers in dealing with it and would hope that in fact the osmosis that seems to fall onto other members would not. I would just advise the Member for Calgary-West that in fact the model that he looked at this morning perhaps is not the best one. He might want to look perhaps at other members who use correct titles of ministers in dealing with this.

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

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, it certainly wasn't my intention to use "abusive or insulting language," and if the hon. member feels insulted, I certainly do apologize. However, the title of the minister is a little long, and it's hard to spit it all out: the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. Given the announcement made on Wednesday about Beatrice Foods and the announcement made today about Gainers, the only thing that sprang to my mind was pork and cookies and these little porkers wolfing down the cookies that are going to make so much money for us. I just thought of all this money going. I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. That was just the vision that sprang to my mind, and I certainly do apologize. That's the image that was portrayed by the government given the two announcements that were made today.

MR. SPEAKER: It appears that the hon. members have reached a mutual agreement, but the Chair was going to comment on this and refer hon. members to citation 484 in *Beauchesne*, which points out the way ministers should be addressed. It does lead to confusion. I think part of the confusion was the sound. I myself have got to learn to stand back to be heard. I think the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development didn't really understand who was being questioned. He didn't hear the question properly, and that led on to this. The Chair believes that members should try to follow proper designations for the purpose of clarity.

Did the hon. Opposition House Leader have a point of order as well?

#### Point of Order

##### Brevity

MR. MITCHELL: I do, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. To some extent your earlier statement immediately after question period anticipates my point of order, but I would like to reiterate a point. That is under *Beauchesne* 417, which specifies that "answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate." Yesterday you were critical of

the opposition benches and the manner in which we were asking questions, pointing out that some of our preambles, some of the approach that we used to asking questions used more time than was absolutely necessary. We accept that criticism. We have addressed that criticism today in an effort to reduce our preambles and to tighten our questions, and that will be a focus of our caucus day after day. I would simply like to draw the attention of the ministers to *Beauchesne* 417 so that we might acquire their concurrence in this effort to streamline question period, get to the heart of issues, and allow back-bench members, not just from the opposition but also from the government benches, to have as many opportunities to ask questions in this Assembly as is absolutely possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair certainly will not disagree with the hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

#### **Point of Order Imputing Motives**

MR. SPEAKER: There is a matter, being a point of order. [interjection] Well, Standing Order 40 has to come. The Chair recognizes that, but points of order are supposed to be dealt with before that.

Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition rose on a point of order arising from a response in question period by the Minister of Family and Social Services. The Chair has had the opportunity of reviewing the proceedings and is of the opinion that this is a disagreement between two members over the meaning of certain words. Therefore, the Chair cannot find a point of order.

11:00

Somewhere amongst this material there's another. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre raised a point of order. The Chair would like to deal with that, but it may have to be after Standing Order 40. It doesn't appear to be here.

head: **Motions under Standing Order 40**

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

#### **MTV Award Winner**

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise under Standing Order 40 to ask for consent to deal with the motion. I have had the copies for distribution already given out to members of this Assembly. This award was bestowed on K.D. Lang just last night, and therefore it is very timely that we provide immediate recognition, because it is a highly coveted and internationally recognized award. It's particularly urgent at this time given that we heard yesterday that this House will not sit again until next Wednesday. Accolades of this magnitude coming to Albertans are not that frequent, so I would ask all members to allow this motion to please be dealt with today.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the argument regarding urgency made by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore, is there consent that this motion may proceed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Hearing no opposition, the Chair would recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore to move the motion.

Moved by Mr. Zwozdesky:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta send congratulations to Alberta singer K.D. Lang on the occasion of her winning best female video at last night's MTV awards for the song *Constant Craving*.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to all hon. members of this Assembly for endorsing this recognition to K.D. Lang. By winning this very prestigious award last night, K.D. Lang has again focused the attention of the international arts and entertainment community on Alberta. It again points out that people are important in Alberta and to Albertans, and in this case we are truly honouring an international superstar who is very proud of being an Albertan. I'm happy we can come together on this point.

In addition to her many recognitions which reflect such areas as best female vocalist, best country vocalist, a few months ago a Grammy winner, and earlier a winner of two Juno awards, she's also won three awards from the Canadian Country Music Association and numerous awards from our very own Alberta Recording Industry Association. In addition to that, her photos have also graced the front covers of nearly every major daily newspaper known to us and elsewhere in the world, as well as the covers of numerous other magazines.

I might also point out that when the Great Canadian awards were created not that long ago right here in Alberta, the general public of Alberta submitted names of deserving Albertans who have brought international recognition to our province through their acts and deeds. The unanimous choice of literally thousands of Albertans from across the entire province was that the inaugural Great Canadian award be given to K.D. Lang. So this Assembly is well supported in providing this congratulatory note to her.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I am personally grateful to have been given this opportunity to be among the first to express our collective thanks and to wish Kathy Dawn Lang, better known as K.D., continued success with her career as a great Albertan.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this motion to extend congratulations to Alberta singer K.D. Lang.

MR. MITCHELL: Free votes. Free votes.

MR. KOWALSKI: There is some echoing here coming forth from the Member for Edmonton-McClung, and quite correctly, Mr. Speaker. All members of the Assembly should be able to rise and express their views on this motion as they so choose. I would sincerely hope, as we deal with this motion, that members would in fact do that. If people want to make a comment with respect to the positions taken by K.D. Lang, they should be encouraged to do that. That is what this government is all about.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the motion, because I do believe that K.D. Lang has in fact done a series of wonders for the people of Alberta. Here's a young lady who comes out of east-central Alberta, and I sincerely hope that the Minister of Health, who is the MLA who represents K.D. Lang, would want to participate this morning as well. K.D. Lang emerged out of east-central Alberta in the early 1980s with a considerable talent, and this government was very, very pleased to be in a position to in fact assist Miss Lang in the development of her talent and the development of her trade through one of the many lottery-funded



foundations we have in this province. We have one foundation called the Foundation for the Performing Arts. Miss Lang, in fact, was provided with a modest grant in the early 1980s to allow her to develop her talent not only in this province but to go to other parts of this country of Canada to gain some degree of recognition. As the years have come and the years have gone, she has in fact attained international stardom. There's absolutely no doubt at all in my mind that this young lady has a certain uniqueness about her style, has a certain uniqueness in terms of her creativity, and has a certain uniqueness about the delivery of her message. As an Albertan born and raised in the province of Alberta I am very, very proud of the multitude of Albertans who have gone on to attain international recognition. K.D. Lang is one of them, and I think we should all be proud.

I think the member who raised the motion this morning has been long involved with an organization called the Great Canadian awards. Just a few days prior to July 1 in any given year, now for the last four or five years, a provincewide process has in fact allowed citizens of this province to nominate outstanding Albertans for these Great Canadian awards. In the first year, the inaugural year, of the Canadian awards K.D. Lang was given such an award.

I as an individual in this Assembly would want to echo congratulations with respect to K.D. Lang, and I know that I would be echoing that on behalf of the Premier, who is not here this morning. Mr. Speaker, hon. members should be encouraged to voice their views and their opinions. I would hope only one thing: her song *Constant Craving* is a wonderful song, and if she only had the craving for one of those unique products that we produce in the province of Alberta, it would be absolutely complete. Given time, I think Miss Lang may in fact see that the roots of her heritage are very important to other people in the province of Alberta.

This morning we are very proud of K.D. Lang and certainly want to echo congratulations to her on the occasion of her winning the best female video award at last night's MTV awards for the song *Constant Craving*.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to add my congratulations to Kathy Dawn this morning, better known in the music world as K.D. Lang. I'm sure many of the members know that Kathy was a member of my constituency. Her family contributed greatly to the constituency. Her mother retired only recently as a teacher who dedicated her years to the education of rural children. That is where Kathy received her education. Kathy has remained very proud of her roots and has always recognized her community and the efforts that they made on her behalf.

She is a talented young lady. Beyond her musical talent she has offered her assistance to other young artists who are endeavouring to enter into the field of the arts. I applaud her for that, because our young people do need our assistance.

I want to recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore, who has raised this. I know his long dedication to the arts is recognized in this province. I thank you for raising this and add my congratulations to K.D. Lang on the occasion of her win last night.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the Assembly ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour of the motion proposed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore will please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Those opposed will please say no. Let the record show that the motion carries unanimously.

## Point of Order

### Questions by Standing Policy Committee Chairmen

MR. SPEAKER: There's one remaining point of order to be dealt with, and that arises from the point made on Wednesday by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre. The hon. member cited *Beauchesne* 413 as his authority, and the paragraph reads:

Those such as Parliamentary Secretaries who are clothed with the responsibility of answering for the Government ought not to use the time of the Question Period for the privilege of asking questions of the Government.

The point of order was raised with respect to the sequence of events whereby one of the chairmen of a government standing policy committee asked a question of a minister. Shortly thereafter another chairman of a government standing policy committee was asked a question with respect to her committee's area of concern. It was at that time that the point of order was raised.

## 11:10

The Chair appreciates the logic of the hon. member's point of order; however, the Chair is unable to rule on the matter at this time. Hon. members will appreciate that we do not have parliamentary secretaries in Alberta. Those offices exist in the House of Commons, and in fact the Standing Orders of the House of Commons officially recognize their role in Parliament. The Chair therefore finds it necessary to determine the role of these standing policy committees and their chairmen in order to determine whether they are, in the words of *Beauchesne*, "clothed with the responsibility of answering for the Government." For the moment, it is difficult to conceive that committees dealing with a number of agencies or departments would be answerable as a parliamentary secretary might. In Alberta we have acting ministers who are answerable on behalf of ministers, if they should be absent, rather than parliamentary secretaries. The Chair will rule on the point of order after making that determination but in the meantime invites the Government House Leader or other members of the Assembly to speak on that either today or later next week. I'm certainly not requiring it to be done today. People may wish to consider this matter further, and the Chair will give the opportunity for those further points next week, if that's satisfactory.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for that overview. I think the prerogative that we would like to take is to read the statement out of the Hansard Blues and assess it over the weekend and participate next week.

head: **Orders of the Day**

head: **Government Motions**

### Adjournment for Labour Day Weekend

11. Moved by Mr. Kowalski:

Be it resolved that when the Assembly adjourns on Friday, September 3, 1993, at 1 p.m. it shall stand adjourned until Wednesday, September 8, 1993, at 2:30 p.m.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I received unanimous consent of the House to have placed on the Order Paper Motion 11, and I would now like to have it advanced. The motion is self-explanatory.

[Motion carried]

head: **Committee of Supply**

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Last evening we had a general agreement to keep the talking down to below a dull roar, and that was very much appreciated. Hopefully, the same co-operation can occur today.

**Point of Order  
Parliamentary Language**

MR. MITCHELL: A point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. A point of order, Opposition House Leader.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I rise on a point of order under Standing Order 23(j) and *Beauchesne* 491. Section 23(j) talks of the prohibition against the use of "abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder," and *Beauchesne* 491 really underlines the sentiment of that standing order.

Last night, Mr. Chairman, the Treasurer made much of the opposition's approach to interim supply. Now, I will point out that it is our prerogative to address interim supply in any way in which we choose, provided it is on topic. Each of our speakers was on topic, but the minister made a great deal of the necessity that our members should be asking questions. Well, that would not in and of itself be insulting, as would be consistent with the message in 23(j). When I look today and I see that as many as nine cabinet ministers are missing, then it does become insulting, because we have members here who are prepared to address interim supply, who are prepared to address it in a variety of ways, among them in fact in the way that the Treasurer would have us address them: by asking questions. He insisted over and over again that we do that, and I note that there are many, many absent cabinet ministers. I'm not mentioning any names, but clearly they wouldn't be here to answer questions.

So I would argue, Mr. Chairman, quite vehemently, that in fact 23(j) has now de facto been broken by the Treasurer. If he is about to make these kinds of assertions and these kinds of directives to any member of this House, then it seems to me that he should be prepared with the support of his cabinet to back them up so he could follow through in their intent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Deputy Government House Leader

MR. DAY: Well, thanks, Mr. Chairman. This should hardly even be dignified with a reply. Here we are again wanting to deal with questions, deal with estimates, and we get more time wasting by the Opposition House Leader. Absolutely no point of order at all. It's stretching it to the very limits. There's no point of order. The Treasurer may wish to supplement. We're here. We're ready to answer questions. The time is being wasted by the member opposite.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know that we can continue on long with the point of order. The Chair cannot supervise the attendance of any members of the House, let alone ministers. The member has made his point, and the Chair finds no point of order. However, I had been assured previously that ministers would be available if requested, and we can test that to see whether or not that would work. If we have questions for ministers, we might

place them and those ministers may return from their offices to answer such questions.

The Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

head: **Interim Estimates 1993-94  
11:20**

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me begin by congratulating you on your office, a very distinguished office indeed.

Mr. Chairman, we had the opportunity to start debate last night dealing with the interim budget, and a great deal of noise was made from the other side on the so-called extensive documentation that was provided to this Assembly and how we had every opportunity in the world to be in a position to know enough information to ask very, very detailed questions.

When we talk in terms of documents, when we talk in terms of the interim approval of \$8.6 billion, the document that I have to look at is this document. This is the only document that is currently in front of us. It is impossible for us to go back to a document that had been submitted to this House prior to the election, when there were a whole number of members that were there at that particular time that are no longer here. At least I make the assumption we can't do that. Whether one goes to that particular document or one goes to this particular document, which I really have no choice but to go to, it does bring forward a great number of questions. One of the questions is going to be: is there a contradiction between the philosophy or the supposed mandate, the direction by the previous government as opposed to this government? Or does that same distinguished or exact continuity follow through what the previous cabinet, what the previous government caucus had decided? Do we assume that that still holds true? If it does, Mr. Chairman, I have to ask a number of questions, and I would hope that the various ministers will respond. If they don't respond today, I would hope that they respond at the first opportunity.

The first one I'm going to question is the Department of Health. The Minister of Health got up on several occasions last night and spoke defending the need for restructuring budgets, the need for community sensitivity, so on and so forth. Many members of this particular caucus got up and questioned very, very closely some of the changes that are occurring.

Two questions I have in this area. First of all, did the previous document anticipate a letter being sent out to all extended care centres throughout this province on the heels of the Premier making an announcement of an additional \$67 million cutback in health care? Did that document anticipate that there was going to be instruction given to every extended care, long-term care facility throughout the province that rates for the patients were going to increase? For those that were in the standard wards, by \$3.15 a day; for those in semiprivate I believe it was \$1.90 a day, and for those in public, by 95 cents a day. Now, did that document anticipate that there was going to be this increase on top of an increase that was given January 1, which was only 10 cents across the board, which was readily accepted by all persons and friends and relatives of persons in extended care centres? To have this one follow a few months later led to an assumption by many, many people that this direction was being given to accommodate partially the request by the Premier to reduce immediately \$67 million in health care cuts. That, by the way, in my opinion is not a cut. That's an increase in revenue, something that this government has statedly said that they're not going to do, but to do it on the backs of those that can least afford it becomes very, very deplorable. Nevertheless, the question is: was that anticipated in the budget?

Secondly – and again we're getting conflicting information – we have the Premier on the front page of the paper one day saying that the Westlock hospital is a go-ahead. It's a go. We have the Minister of Health saying that, no, there has not been any decision made on that hospital or any other new hospital at this particular time. Meanwhile, the Deputy Premier is sitting back kind of smiling, which leads me to believe that the one hospital in Westlock, without any question, has been approved or there has been a deal cooked. I would like the minister to answer that particular question: is that Westlock hospital approved, any dollars in the operating portion or capital portion for planning, whatever, approved towards that particular facility?

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to swing over to the minister of social services. This is one that particularly grieves me, grieves me very, very deeply. I want to say at the outset that I respect the minister as being a man with a degree of compassion. I really do feel deep down inside that he means well. Possibly the old expression applies that if you run with the dogs, you get the fleas, but something has gone astray here. The minister's not acting in accordance with what I would have anticipated from a man with a degree of compassion. To try and lash back at the opposition by throwing in red herrings about some statement referring to native children is not addressing the problem. The problem, of course, relates specifically to the cutbacks in those areas of social services where the people can't afford it, those that can't fight for themselves, those that are in the most disadvantaged position.

I can go back to the early '70s, and I can recall some of the demonstrations and some of the political actions that myself with many, many other people in the community representing disabled persons were involved with. We fought for things and we got things done. The government of that day led by Peter Lougheed was fresh. They did things and they listened to us. One of the things they listened to was the need for an assured income for the severely handicapped. It went along nicely, and it was filling a need. It was a program that was picked up by other provinces such as B.C. and Ontario. They looked at the province of Alberta and said that what the province of Alberta was doing was good, and it was good in the early '70s under a Tory government. Compared to today, it was probably brilliant leadership.

Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, to ask specifically for the minister to respond: is there a quota system in place in AISH? Has there now suddenly been a redirection, that the minister is going back to the bureaucracy and saying: you people approved 2,000 applications, 3,000 applications, whatever, that should never have been approved in the first place? Are they now saying that errors were made in all those instances, or is the minister saying that he is being misdirected by his fellow colleagues in becoming so harsh to the so-called reality of economic soundness on the basis of whoever? Is that the motivation behind it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Government members, if we could have the conversation down at a lower level, or we ask you to conduct it in the Confederation Room or behind. I'm having difficulty hearing the speaker; other people are having difficulty hearing the speaker. I'm not sure whether *Hansard* is.

Sorry for the interruption. Continue.

MR. WICKMAN: I appreciate that very much. I normally don't talk as loud as I am, but because of that roar of noise that was coming from the back there, I had to try and somehow get over it, so I was speaking in higher tones than normal.

I would hope that the Minister of Health has gotten the questions that I've asked. I would hope that the Minister of Family and Social Services has gotten the questions that I have asked.

I've got some others, and unfortunately the minister responsible for economic development isn't here. There are questions that have to be answered there. If he can't answer them today, possibly he could answer at a later date. Did that document that was referred to, that was tabled in this House prior to the election, or this particular document anticipate expenditures such as the \$50,000 consulting contract that was given to a failed leadership candidate in the Tory race? Is that document laying out detail or anticipating any other similar deals that may have been made with any other defeated Tory leadership candidates who may have found themselves behind the eight ball when it came to squaring off the bills? What else is there, Mr. Chairman, that we're not aware of at this particular time? If somebody can assure me that when that document was laid down months and months ago it in fact anticipated that type of expenditure, I would be very, very pleased to know that.

Again, to the minister responsible for economic development and the minister responsible for agriculture: was it anticipated at that time that we would see this additional handout, this guarantee being given to another company despite all the promises that had been made repeatedly, repeatedly, repeatedly in this House that no more handouts would occur, that that was the end of those particular handouts? Did that budget, Mr. Chairman, anticipate that the government is going to, in all likelihood, have to make good for a guarantee of close to a million dollars for a riverboat that is sitting in dry dock, that in all likelihood is never going to see water, a proposal that was ill conceived, that was not thought out? Did that particular document anticipate that everything was a go and that that thing was afloat? May I remind the government that it's not afloat.

Because of the emphasis that has been placed on all that documentation that was provided at that time, did that documentation anticipate the privatization of the Alberta Liquor Control Board? If so, why was that announcement not made at that particular time or made during the election? Why was it made at this particular time? In that formulation of that policy, which I assume was in that document – or is it in this document? – was it anticipated that there were going to be certain costs that would be involved in terms of trying to work out package arrangements or severance packages or some consultation, some agreement with employees that are going to be affected? Is the minister responsible telling us that 1,500 employees are going to be there high and dry, in fear of losing their mortgages, that there was no consultation that took place with them even though that type of consultation will take place in the private sector? For example, when Canada Safeway had to change their corporate structuring, they changed it in consultation with the union, and they arrived at a deal that was workable so that the hardship to those employees was minimized.

11:30

In this particular case, I would suggest that the hardship is going to be magnified tremendously because of the way that the announcement was made, with the uncertainty that was behind that particular announcement. Suddenly you have 1,500 employees that are contributing members of this province having to go home, face their families, and tell their families, "I'm sorry; the paycheque has come to an end," because this government has deemed that we must privatize ALCB without taking into consideration the feelings of those employees or trying to work out some type of workable arrangement.

Those are a number of the questions that I had that I would hope would be answered today. I don't want to take up any more time, Mr. Chairman, because there are many, many other questions

that are forthcoming from this caucus. Now we want to put the government to the test. Are they going to answer those questions or not?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the member getting focused on some of the areas that he's interested in. First of all, I would like to comment on the question on long-term care increases. Now, I realize that a number of the members across the way were not here in the past Legislature, but I do believe that the hon. member was, and I'm sure that he is acquainted with this book, *A Financial Plan for Alberta: Budget '93*, put out by the Provincial Treasurer in May. It was presented, in fact, by the Provincial Treasurer to the Legislative Assembly on Thursday, May 6, 1993.

If the hon. member will refer to page 85, under Health he will find a considerable amount of detail. Point 2 under Major Operating Changes outlines a

\$5 million savings from higher room and board fees charged to residents of long-term care facilities. These fees will continue to be among the lowest in the country.

I just refer you back to that in case there are some other questions on reductions. This clearly outlines the ones that were identified previously. So I refer you to that; I think that will be helpful. It might be helpful to some of the newer members that have not availed themselves of that.

On the question of capital projects and specifically the hospital I have spoken, I think, in this House more than once on that issue. I have clearly outlined that the decisions on the hospitals that were proceeding were made in the best interests of the health needs and safety of the workers and patients and that there were some projects that we feel are imperative to proceed. I would only say to the hon. member: sometimes, although we look to the papers for information, if you have questions, you should raise them with the individuals because sometimes the papers are not as accurate as they might be.

As I recall, the question I was asked was whether I had made a decision on the moratorium that was suggested at the roundtables. My suggestion back was that cabinet, caucus, et cetera, had not reviewed those, that I was awaiting the summary, and that those recommendations would be looked at in the future.

So I believe those are the two areas.

MR. WICKMAN: Westlock hospital.

MRS. McCLELLAN: I believe I've spoken to that in the House, where I outlined the need for that facility and that our first interest is the health and safety of both the people it serves and the people who serve in it. I've outlined that this hospital was built in 1927, that it does serve a very large community north and west of there, and that this is a matter of need. I also outlined that I found it interesting that I have not had a call from anybody from that community suggesting that it should not be built. I also would want to remind the hon. members to go back to the period of time up to June 15 and suggest they review their own position on that hospital.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other responses from ministers? The Minister of Family and Social Services.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to advise the House, I guess, that the amount, the interim supply, for our Department of Family and Social Services covers two areas: one is the operating budget, that \$1.2 billion, and the other is

capital of \$2.2 billion. I won't go into detail as to what areas that covers because it takes up so much time.

The Member for Edmonton-Rutherford had some concerns and brought up some good points. I think he knows that I am sincere in doing a good job for Albertans in providing services for people that need services from my department. It means an increase in budgets, exactly what we did for the high-needs area. We in fact increased by \$3 million the AISH budget, from \$155 million to \$158 million. Widows' pensions, again, was increased by \$2 million, and child welfare by \$4 million. So my target, again, is not to pick on people that cannot fend for themselves – that was the big concern he had – but to target people that are employable and trainable. A high percentage of the caseload we have – I believe it's over 81,000 – over 60 percent are people that are employable: young, healthy people or couples without children that should be back in the work force or training. That is what the people want to do. The people on welfare want to get off and get back into the work force. The design of the welfare strategy that I put forth, the three-year plan, is exactly designed this way: to make sure that we provide an opportunity for the people that are employable and trainable and healthy, young people or couples without children to be able to get back into the work force, and that is what's happening. As I announced today, our caseload has been reduced by 10,000 cases, which means over 20,000 individuals have been moved back into training or the work force. That's what Albertans want.

On the other hand, we will continue reviewing our programs and, wherever it's needed, make adjustments to make sure that the people that can't fend for themselves are looked after. I'm willing to do that as the minister. In fact, I asked a Liberal in this House, I believe back in January of this year when we talked about a major three-year welfare reform package, that they, too, have a plan when dealing with the Department of Family and Social Services in relation to welfare reforms. I asked them at the time, a long time ago now, to come up with their plan of what the welfare reforms should look like in Alberta. To this day I haven't had one letter from any member of the Liberal caucus, not one phone call even from the members, no plan as to what they would like to see incorporated into the package. I challenge them to participate in designing programs in my department the way they should be designed, the way Albertans want them. I challenge them to come up with a plan so I can look at their plan and incorporate their plan with my department.

**11:40**

Now, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford felt that the cutback on social services was on people that can least fend for themselves. There again I think we have to look very closely at how we define who can fend for themselves, because I've seen times in northern Alberta, a little over 40 years ago, when there was no welfare at all. Zero. Nobody was on welfare. The communities were completely independent, completely self-sufficient. They lived in harmony. They were happy, and things really went well. The welfare system was introduced in very early 1950. Within 18 years we had 80 to 90 percent of our native people in those communities become completely dependent on the welfare system, not at their choice. That's not what the people wanted; the people wanted to continue living independent of government support. That is why I am so strong in seeing that we provide the opportunities for anyone that's on assistance to be able to get off welfare. That includes people on AISH. A lot of people on AISH don't want to be on AISH. A lot of people on AISH want to participate in training programs. A lot of people on

AISH want to go to work every day like the rest of us. This minister will make sure that we continue doing that.

There are no quotas set. We had to have part of our three-year plan an annualized plan as to how we're going to reach our target. In order to do that, we had to review the whole department. The 13,000 people targeted the first year were mainly people that were employable and trainable. The 65,000 cases out there under our department that are young and healthy people, couples without children that should be back in the work force and want to be back in the work force should be assisted. That was my target when I targeted 13,000 people. That did not exclude people on AISH that were employable and trainable and wanted to participate. That is the direction we are going. We don't have quotas; we have targets. Those targets were laid out to all the offices across the province based on the existing caseload they had and the economic opportunity in the region. That is how we do that.

The other question that was brought up of course: do I as a minister feel that the existing clients under AISH are not eligible any longer? Well, the clients on AISH tell me that they are employable and trainable and want to get back into the work force. Who am I as a minister to say, or the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford, that we should leave those people alone because they're on AISH. I as a minister will make sure that if a situation changes for anyone on assured income for the severely handicapped, if they become employable or trainable, we'll give them every opportunity we can to make sure that they get that assistance. When I say that the caseload dropped by 10,000, I would hope that a percentage of that 10,000 are people that were on AISH, because they, too, want to participate in our society. We want to make sure we continue doing that.

The other issue the member brought up of course is in relation to economic development and trade. I just want to mention to the hon. member that I'm the second Acting Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, and I'd like to just put on the record in *Hansard* that I will advise the staff of Economic Development and Tourism to review *Hansard* and provide in writing to the hon. member in the near future the issues he's brought up.

In addition to that, I'd just like to mention to the hon. member that I don't believe as a minister that it's easy to do a complete review of a department when you're generally serving a high-needs area, but I don't think we're in any position that we cannot review all our programs in each department and reprioritize the programs. It may mean bringing back some of the programs at a higher level than what is out there now, but we cannot do that if we maintain the departments as they were in the past. We need to review them, and I would hope that we continue in that direction.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If there are no further ministerial responses, I'll recognize Calgary-Cross.

MRS. FRITZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today I'd like to ask a question of the hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities. That question deals with the transportation capital grant program. I understand that three years ago the capital grant program had a per capita funding to municipalities of \$75, but over the three years that has been reduced to \$25 per capita. Certainly I understand, as well, that the funding envelope is allocated to the municipalities, and then the municipalities make the decision on behalf of the request of the communities. Quite frankly, the communities have become very astute, especially with what's been discussed in regards to budgets recently, and the communities are

realizing that that funding comes from decisions that are made through the minister's department and on through this Legislature.

Mr. Chairman, one of the overall benefits of this grant is that communities such as those in Calgary-Cross have projects funded that enhance the overall safety of the community, and those projects include traffic safety lights or pedestrian crosswalks, LRT improvements. Certainly at this time of the year, with school just beginning, we're hearing back from communities that they'd like more traffic safety lights, and we know that the allocation has been decreased. My question to the minister is: would he please report on the current funding status of the basic transportation grant and whether the funding is anticipated to fall below the \$25 per capita? Then I can take that back to my constituency.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Transportation and Utilities.

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to you.

That's an important question, and I thank the Member for Calgary-Cross for raising it. As I sat here last night and again today, I noted that we have all of Edmonton and a number of other cities represented by the members across the way and not one question raised by them in respect to what's going to happen, whether it's Edmonton, Lethbridge, or Fort McMurray. I wonder if the people that elected them are as concerned as they should be.

11:50

I've made two notes from last night. Someone across the way mentioned that we don't have civilized behaviour and that we're misleading Albertans. Well, let me talk about the behaviour. I've sat here in this Legislature for 22 years. I've watched the questions being put, and I've listened to the answers. As soon as a question has been put, and again this morning, the heckling, the kind of banter going back and forth from the questioner to the minister is unreal. It's terrible. It's disgraceful for this Legislature. That happens on a daily basis. So if you want to get civilized and have civilized behaviour, let's get back to: ask the question, sit down, keep quiet, and listen for the response. [interjection] Never mind. Ask it again, but keep quiet till you get the answer, and if you're not satisfied, ask it again the next day. For gosh sakes, let's have some decorum in this place. You know, the children come here from the schools and watch the performance. They ask me when I get home, "How did you enjoy the zoo?" Is that what you want to hear? [interjections] Now, there you go. Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to address this Assembly, and what do I get? Just exactly what I said shouldn't happen: somebody across the way has challenged me. I will sit down. If this person wants to say something, I'll respond to her too, but for gosh sakes, just wait till I'm done. I'm sure you'll have your chance. Okay?

I think I've said enough on behaviour. I hope that we will give a second thought to how we act in this Assembly.

#### Point of Order Relevance

MR. BRUSEKER: A point of order, Mr. Chairman. Section 459, relevance. What's this got to do with debate on the estimates? We're supposed to be dealing with questions and answers, so let's get some answers. Let's get on to the debate.

MR. TRYNCHY: I was getting to that, because just last night this was . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, a few moments ago you were commenting that some people had not asked their questions. There is a long list, and they haven't had a chance yet. If you could address the question asked by Calgary-Cross.

MR. TRYNCHY: That's what I like about this place: last night we had different rules; today we have different rules.

### Debate Continued

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, let me make one more comment in regards to the question raised yesterday accusing me of misleading. The Member for Leduc – and I'm sure he didn't mean it – accused me in *Hansard* of September 1:

Why he will not release the full report of the task force that was commissioned as a result of the 1991 Carseland fire.

Mr. Chairman, they get a million and a half dollars for research. That report was released April of '92. So I hope that the member that raised that concern and accused me of not doing it will think about it and get back with an apology.

There's a saying, Mr. Chairman, as I close my comments: in the world half of the people have something to say and can't say it; the other half have nothing to say but continue saying it. That's what I refer to the Liberal side of the House.

There was a question asked in regards to grants to the cities, and I thank the Member for Calgary-Cross because it is important. I met with the city of Edmonton just recently. We have provided in this budget which is being debated some \$17,928,325 to the city of Calgary under the transportation partnership grant of \$25 per capita. Yes, it's been reduced from \$70 to \$40, but in addition to those programs, we have a number of other programs that are cost shared: 75 percent by government and 25 percent by the cities. On major arteries, major highway networks we become involved and provide sharing grants. Things within your community such as lights, street improvements, sidewalks, things like that are to be done by the cities, whichever city that is, on the basis of their grants, which is \$25 per capita. We have also provided to the city of Calgary a grant of \$750,000 for the purchase of 51 new buses. In Edmonton – and I think I'll speak to that too because it's important – they have within their funds this year a carryover in their own budget of \$10 million of last year's grant. I just provided them a cheque here recently for \$15 million. They have \$25 million for street improvements within the city of Edmonton. They have purchased some 59 buses with a grant of \$885,000.

Mr. Chairman, in respect to: will these grants be reduced in the future? That's something that I cannot say yes or no to today, but for this budget, which ends on April 1, 1994, the grant will remain \$25 per capita. They've got the funds now; that'll continue. In respect to the future, I would remind all members that we were given a mandate by the people of the province of Alberta to eliminate the deficit and reduce our debt. I'm committed to reducing my budget, whether it's next year or within two years, by another 20 percent. So, yes, if we do that – and we have to do it – then I would expect that some programs will be reduced. Some will be reduced by 20 percent, some by 10, some by 30, some by zero. We'll have to see that our priorities are placed in the most important places, and we'll work from there.

So to the Member for Calgary-Cross, I hope I've covered the answer. If not, I would welcome a supplementary. To say today that the budget for '94-95 will be reduced, I would suggest it would be yes, but whether this specific grant will be reduced, I'd have to sit down and see where we can move our priorities around to make sure we get, as the saying goes, the best bang for the buck.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
Edmonton-Manning.

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I extend my congratulations to you on your election as Deputy Speaker.

Like 48 other members I am new in this Assembly. I have difficulty with the motion before the Assembly, because I am being asked to vote on an interim supply budget in the amount of \$8.91 billion of taxpayers' money based on six pages of paper that were distributed the other day in the House. Mr. Chairman, I was elected, as were all members of this House, with the commitment to change the way government operates. Consequently, I rise to speak against the motion of interim supply, not to stifle government operations but rather to ensure that taxpayers' money is accounted for.

I put these specific questions to the minister responsible. The government tells us in one of the six pages that they need to spend \$1.2 billion in operating expenses to run the Department of Family and Social Services until the month of December, yet they do not tell us where the money is going. How much, for example, is going to income support, child welfare, day care, services to persons with disabilities? In May the department's estimated total budget was \$1.6 billion. I would like to ask the minister if this is still the estimated budget. If so, where does this leave the balance for the final four months of the fiscal year if he needs to spend \$1.2 billion of the budget just to get to the month of December? As well, perhaps the minister can explain to us where this leaves the \$52 million cut from the department this month. Has this been accounted for in this interim figure? Cutting expenditures by aiming the budget sights on the easiest targets, those that are the disadvantaged and the powerless, is in my opinion a desperate and a directionless approach to governing. It is a practice that does a disservice to our province and to our citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A ministerial response on the questions from Edmonton-Manning. The Minister of Family and Social Services.

MR. CARDINAL: The hon. member mentioned the operating budget of \$1.2 billion. I'd just like to advise the member that the overall government objective is to limit the interim supply funding requirements for approximately eight months. In our particular case, because of the way our system is set up, we require slightly more than that. There are a couple of reasons for that, and I should have maybe clarified that to you earlier. The reason for that, for an example, is that for people under the supports for independence and people under AISH, the payments occur one month in advance. That is why we need more dollars earlier rather than later. The other thing, of course, is that the SFI caseload was a lot higher at the beginning of the year than what it is now. The original caseload, I believe, was over 91,000 cases. We had brought that down by 8,000 at the end of July, and at the end of August that was brought down an additional 2,000. Therefore, the money that we need the first eight months is greater than we would need the last four months, and that would cover the area.

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

The other question you asked: I'll get my staff to review *Hansard* and we'll get you that answer in writing.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Cypress-Medicine Hat.

12:00

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, like the hon. gentleman across the way, am also concerned by what I see happening. I see the Liberals asking for more time to discuss the interim Bill. I see the Liberals complaining that we don't take it seriously enough, that we don't do it in detail, and yet I see their benches virtually empty, including one of these in the front row. I see our benches full, showing our sincerity in attempting to get to the bottom of these issues.

My question is for the Minister of Education and has to do with dual tracking and dual count in the system. As you well know, I was very concerned about dual counting and the effect it would have on school board budgets. I am wondering if you could comment on how the schools are handling dual counting, and are you receiving any considerable savings from the dual count?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Chairman, the two-count system, as it is known, was implemented by my predecessor, but I have been following through on that particular initiative. I think by way of background we should keep in mind that there were two important statements or two important directions involved when the two-count system was brought in. First of all and most importantly, it was designed to heighten awareness about a concern within our educational system, which is that of the school dropout rate. It was also to provide an incentive, albeit a kind of negative incentive, to school boards to really look at their programs and their approach to retaining students in school. That was one of the purposes.

The second purpose statement that was made was that if there were any savings – and it would be our preference that as many students as possible would remain in school. But if there was a savings to the education budget through the implementation of the two-count system, in that savings you would take a certain amount of money, not all of it certainly, but a certain amount of money that was, quote, saved and use it for innovations and initiatives with respect to improving the delivery of education in the province.

Now, with respect to this particular year, we have not finalized all of our statistics, but we are certainly aware that several school boards across the province have undertaken some significant initiatives to address their dropout rate. Preliminary indications would be that the dropout rate in Alberta schools is less than it was the year previous. Now, we do have to do further analysis to see if that can be in any way attributed to the two-count system, but I think the important thing is that it's gone down a bit. Overall, we are going to be looking at the, quote, savings in money. We know that there were some savings to the budget with the implementation of the two-count system, perhaps in the neighbourhood of \$4 million or \$5 million, but I would like to finalize the statistics before saying that that's definitive.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Minister.  
The hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman. You've caught me off guard; I thought my colleague was going before me. I would like at this time to congratulate you on your election and also to acknowledge to the hon. member who is addressing the behaviour of this Assembly that my comments last night were certainly for both sides of the House. I take note of his comments.

With regards to the document that is before us, I as an elected person certainly did not want to give credence to a four-page

document that is not based on a budget that has been approved by this Legislative Assembly, but at this time I am certainly prepared to ask some questions on behalf of not only my constituents but also Albertans.

I would like to put my question to the Minister of Health, the Attorney General, and social services. The question is: within this document, how closely have these three departments worked in regards to the delivery of mental health services?

I would ask the hon. Minister of Health and also social services: what portion of the health care budget is going towards community mental health? Are there any funds within this document that would be going to community volunteer-based housing projects or community-based mental health support systems? Likewise I would want to know: within the health care capital budget, where are these expenditures going to be made? Also, are there going to be further cuts to our mental health delivery system, acute care system?

Specifically to the justice system and the correctional system: with regards to adolescent and pediatric mental health services, what support systems that are in place now have their funding guaranteed?

I'd like now to move to public works and transportation. With regards to public works, what portion of their budget, if any, is going to health; in other words, hospital capital projects or reconstruction?

To the minister of transport: I'd like to know if there are any funds within this budget that will be forthcoming to the county of Strathcona and the city of Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I could go on and on. It's not . . .

MR. DINNING: You usually do.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Yes, I've joined the club with you, hon. Provincial Treasurer. I notice you're not short on words. But seeing that you challenged me last night to come up with questions on a document that I don't give any credence to, I could stand here for two hours asking you questions on something that has no legislative base to it until we approve it. That's the point I'm trying to get across to you. A basic principle I've been taught all my life is that if a document doesn't have official status, you don't ask questions on it, because the minute you ask questions, you give credence to it.

I await answer to my questions.

12:10

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, I'll cover as many of the items as I could jot down when the hon. member was going, and as has been my practice in the past and will continue to be in the future, anything that I miss, you will get a written response from me.

I would just note to you that, one, we do not have a budget presented to this Legislature. It will be presented next Wednesday. The number of areas that you noted I am sure you do not want denied funding in the interim. That is really what we're talking about here today: interim supply for a system that is in place, that continues to be in place. Particularly in the areas you have mentioned it is very critical that it remain in place: mental health. Those were the areas you discussed mainly.

We have worked with the communities, and I noted your comments last night that the project out of Alberta Hospital Ponoka was asked for, demanded by the community. Well, it was asked for, and it was worked out and co-ordinated with the community. Frankly, that's where I believe that information should come from, Mr. Chairman, from the community. I will not apologize for this department responding to community needs.

Indeed, we allocate the major part of our mental health programs to community-based services. Suicide prevention services: we wouldn't want to stop those while we're waiting for our budget. Our public awareness programs that I think are important: education and training, and bereavement counseling, another very important area. We have diagnostic assessment to clients, consultation with physicians, health care facilities, and of course two community agencies.

The very strong support in mental health is to the community agencies. As I indicated earlier, we have held some 13 or 14 meetings across the province, not just in the major concentrated areas but out in the other communities where indeed there are mental health issues and problems and different strategies needed to respond to them, and we've received some very good input on how we deliver mental health services.

Hon. member, remember that we're in a changing world. The way we do things is changing; our needs are changing. We cannot be static in health. We cannot say, "This is the right way, and we'll just keep doing it that way." We are in a constant method of change, and I hope that you will support us by working with us very constructively and bringing your expertise and information to assist in that change. I mentioned before that I look forward to constructive criticism, and I do. I have always, as hon. members on your side will attest, listened to and responded to any of the questions, comments, or advice that I have received from members. I intend to continue to do that.

So I've tried to outline to you that the majority of the mental health spending is in community-based services. Something I should share with the hon. member perhaps is the overview of the Health department that was presented to the standing policy committee on community services. If you were unable to be there, that report is available. It gives you a very good cross section of what services the department delivers, and certainly we look for feedback from all members and the public on that.

The majority of the dollars go to community support services that I've outlined. There are a significant number of dollars that go into our extended care area as well because, as you know, we have some fairly significant needs in those areas. That's the mental health side of it. To give you the exact dollars that have been expended to this point in those areas I suppose could be done, but we will be introducing a budget next week.

Co-ordination of mental health services. Certainly we are working with the Minister of Justice and minister of social services to ensure that we are expending these precious dollars in the best way. We've got a number of initiatives of co-ordination between departments. One I would mention that I'm sure you'd be interested in is the co-ordination of services for children of high needs. That is being done with the departments of Justice, Advanced Education and Career Development, and Family and Social Services. It is a ministerial initiative, where the four ministers are working together to ensure that we are co-ordinating and not overlapping or duplicating what we're doing but, more importantly, that we are not missing some vulnerable or needy people.

So I will keep my comments that direct, and I will review *Hansard* and write any further answers.

#### Point of Order

#### Member's Apology

MR. KIRKLAND: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. Apparently, in my absence the hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities suggested that he thought I owed him an apology for a supplementary question I asked on Wednesday pertaining to the release of a report. I think that as the hon. minister indicated,

with his 22 years of experience he knew that was an extremely timely question with about 30 minutes to prepare. So we've used the resources, certainly, that were available to us as far as that was concerned. If I brought inadequate knowledge to the debate at that particular point – and we're not able to determine whether that task force in its entirety was released when the information I was told was simply the recommendations – then in fact I offer an apology for not bringing that particular knowledge. As the minister himself will admit, when the question was put, he was not aware whether the task force was or was not released in its full entirety. So as I offer that apology to Mr. Trynchy for the lack of knowledge I brought to it, I note that he in fact did not know himself.

#### Debate Continued

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister of public works.

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm particularly pleased to hear the questions from the Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan. I'm also particularly pleased with the change of text and the change of attitude from last night, whereby it appeared that most of the Liberal caucus was trying to shut down all payments to anybody in the province for the next three months. That did disturb me somewhat, because this creates areas for not only my department but the Department of Health and the department of social services and a variety of other ones whereby there would be confusion and there'd be a lot of people not being paid, including the children who are on social assistance, et cetera.

Just a comment. You did ask about the capital expenditures in the department of public works. Certainly we have only asked for enough money to carry out the projects that are in process right now. It's very difficult to stop a construction project in the middle because again, as I said last night, you create a whole bunch of other problems if you try and stop them in the middle. We try and have enough money in the interim supply to complete whatever phase they may be at in a construction project. So that's basically where we're at. It's a proportionate share. Again, I can't give you the exact dollars today, because it changes from day to day as we finance these projects that are going on out there, not only in hospitals but in a multitude of provincial buildings that we have to do repairs on and also in your caucus renovations that you need to have in the annex. We wouldn't want to shut that down either.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Egmont.

MR. HERARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, wish to add my congratulations as to your election as Deputy Chairman of Committees. I'd also like to offer my congratulations to the hon. Member for Highwood as to his election as Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Chairman, I'm new to this process, and I must admit that I'm quite confused by what I see coming from the other side. I thought this was going to be fairly straightforward. I thought that the government needs to pay its bills; therefore, it came to this committee for interim supply. Everyone had the information since May 5, 1993. There would be questions and answers, and we'd get on with it. Unfortunately, that's not what's happening. I must admit that I'm not an economist. I'm not even a former vice-president of a failed trust company, but I would like to try and make this process very simple for the members across the way by using an example. When my young son found out that I would be away all this week and would not be available on the first of the month for his allowance, he came to me for interim supply. Now,



he understands how much there is in the budget – he knows how much there was – but he came to me for interim supply. I hope that example perhaps might help some of the members from the other side.

My question to the Provincial Treasurer: are we being asked to approve any additional funds in this Committee of Supply? Are we being asked for one red cent more than what's been in this budget since before the election, since May 5, 1993?

12:20

MR. DINNING: Mr. Chairman, I have both a short answer and a long answer. [interjections] You want the shorter one? The answer is no.

Just to add to that, the budget plan that we spelled out on May 6 and brought forward adjustments to on August 19 does not ask for more money than was asked for on May 6. So what the hon. member has raised is a very, very good point. We're seeking interim supply in large measure on the budget that was presented on May 6 and which will be reintroduced, as Albertans told us to do, on September 8.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The hon. . . .

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, you slipped by really quickly there. The Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan asked a question.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: And to social services as well.

MR. TRYNCHY: Oh, there are two of us that didn't respond. I would like to take the message of your House leader in having the answer very brief. I was asked if there are going to be some dollars for your constituency. The answer: yes, there will be some dollars for your constituency.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the hon. Minister of Family and Social Services like to . . .

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had planned on getting up. I tried to stand up three times, but I wasn't recognized. Other people are faster than me.

The Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan mentioned some mental health issues in relation to my department, although the Minister of Health covered most of the issues in her statements. Whatever I don't cover today, I'll ask my department officials to review *Hansard* and provide the answers in writing. I'd just like to advise the hon. member, because she mentioned the problem of co-ordination, that I too work very closely. We know there is a problem in co-ordination for delivery of services to children, and we've made some major moves, in fact, between the Department of Education, the department of justice, the Department of Health, and my department and have initiated, I believe, five pilot projects across the province. We are committing the financial resources and the staffing also to make sure we start looking at better ways of co-ordinating services to children.

The other agreement we just signed that could work towards that direction is under Brighter Futures. We've recently signed an agreement with the federal government health and welfare which will provide, I believe, \$17.4 million to Alberta in the next four years in relation to services to children between zero and six years old. There again we will be co-ordinating that not only with the federal government and the community but also our department people.

In addition to that, under my department we presently have the unique family and community support services program, FCSS, which deals with a lot of local family issues including mental health. I believe this is the only province in Canada that has an FCSS program. It's unique. Ninety-four percent of the Alberta population or over 300 communities are served by these preventative programs. Just to indicate how serious we are in serving the high-needs area of our population in Alberta, we have also approved 28 new communities that can join FCSS this year at their choice. In fact, the municipalities were made aware of this, I believe, back in June. In addition to that, 80 percent of on-reserve Indian bands participate in FCSS, and they are funded 100 percent, of course, by the federal government. Our present budget with FCSS this year is \$36.6 million, and that's a 300 percent increase since 1981-82. So I would hope that we are going in the right direction.

There is no quick answer. We all know that, but we need to work together, and we'll listen very closely to the people opposite to make sure we pick up some ideas on how we may do this. I still challenge them on that three-year welfare strategy I asked them to develop last January, I believe, to help me improve my design.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

DR. MASSEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join my colleagues in the House in congratulating you on your election.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak against the motion. I have several questions, yet I find myself at a considerable disadvantage. I'll come back to that later.

With respect to the Department of Advanced Education and Career Development, my questions are: is the increase in the minister's committees part of the so-called roundtable consultations? If that's the case, who is being paid for what?

The second question, Mr. Chairman: is the increase in the financial assistance to students part of the plan to lure students deeper into debt?

My third question is: does the decrease in capital spending mean that the dangerously deteriorating student housing on the University of Alberta campus will remain that way?

My fourth question, Mr. Chairman, is: do the increases in the budget mean that there will be enough resources so that the institutions can discontinue the wartime-like rationing of student spaces in this province?

A fifth question: where in the document is the decrease in support for research and development accounted for?

The sixth question: why, when institutions are seeking more funds from the private sector, have the dollars under the endowment and matching grants program been discontinued?

As I indicated at the beginning, Mr. Chairman, I'm at a considerable disadvantage, as are the rest of my colleagues. How can we make a decision? What is the status of these figures? Will they again appear in the budget next week? Who among us would dare to sanction, in the case of advanced education, close to \$2 billion worth of expenditures based on nine pages of scanty information and again pretend to face their electors?

Mr. Chairman, last evening we were lectured in a condescending and paternalistic manner by the government. We were told to believe that the use of special warrants and interim supply was really quite the normal process for the government to proceed with. Does that mean that each year hence the government

intends to spend two-thirds of potential allocations before coming before this Legislature for approval?

Having served as a local school trustee, I'm astounded at this approach to budgeting. Many school boards by simply shifting their planning time lines have extricated themselves from the mess that this government finds itself in. In a fiscally responsible manner these school boards now complete all of their budgeting deliberations before one penny is spent.

The government has much to say about budgets when it comes to others. The virtues of careful budgeting are extolled to those on social assistance; they are regularly lectured as to how their poor budgeting is the root of their problems. Hospital boards are told that they must learn to budget more efficiently and are slapped with financial penalties if they fail. School boards are always required to submit carefully documented capital budgets for government scrutiny before any action is taken. Contrast that behaviour, Mr. Chairman, with what the members of this Assembly are being asked to do today. How can this government with any credibility at all speak to others on matters of budget and planning when they have spent two-thirds of their allocations with no budget?

Thank you.

12:30

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. member.

I think the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development, and then we'll ask the Provincial Treasurer. He had a question or two.

MR. ADY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was writing down the questions as quickly as I could, and I have to say that I was not able to catch the full intent of all of them. I'll be glad to respond to them at a later date for those that I couldn't catch. I'll take the questions from *Hansard* and give the hon. member a written response.

As to the increase in the expense of the committee, yes, in fact we will have some increased expenditure under the subheading of committee expense, and a great deal of that will be centred around the consultation process that as a matter of fact I launched today. The money will be spent on a consultant that will be involved and also on a moderator, depending on the amount that we find necessary to expend to provide those services.

The second question had to do with the increase in the student fees. For the last number of years students have been petitioning the government that their living allowance was less than adequate, and in this year there was an increase allowed under the Students Finance Board, a \$350-a-year increase in student allowance. Yes, in fact that will allow the students to increase their debt load, but that was not a condition that the students put on their request for an increase in living allowance. They merely were saying that they couldn't borrow enough money from the Students Finance Board to see them through in a given year because the living allowance component was too small. So we have addressed the concern that was put to us by the students. Having met with the two student bodies – the two being from the colleges and institutes and also those from the university – in the last week or 10 days, they seem to be extremely pleased with the change in this living allowance. There was no concern put forward that their debt load was of a concern to them. Rather, they just felt they needed to have access to adequate funding so that they could take advantage of the education opportunities they chose.

University of Alberta housing. The member should be aware that the housing project that he's referring to I believe is a responsibility of the administration of the University of Alberta in

conjunction with the board of governors. It's their responsibility to set a direction for that and to deal with whatever problems they have with that housing complex. To date I believe they're still working to come up with some solution for the problems they're encountering with that housing project.

On the point of matching grants. The member questions the matching grants, and I presume that refers to the endowment fund that was set up to give matching grants for capital construction for universities in the province. That was discontinued. It was there for a purpose, and it served a very good purpose for the time that it was there and allowed the universities and the colleges, when it was available for each of them, to get into the mode of accessing private capital to build capital projects on the campuses. They're well on their way with that. The government did match a considerable number of projects for both the colleges and the universities over the years but feels that they're well into the understanding of how to access public funds to do that. In view of the fiscal circumstances that the government finds itself, we found it necessary to discontinue the matching grant program under the endowment program.

As I said earlier, the member was too quick in his speech, faster than my pen was, and I'll be happy to respond to the other questions that he has in writing next week.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Lethbridge-West.

MR. DUNFORD: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to extend my congratulations to you on your election as the Deputy Chairman of Committees and also to extend congratulations to the Member for Highwood on his election as Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees.

I'm a little surprised that I've risen in my place to speak today. Although I have some questions, I do have a bit of a preamble, and I would not want it to be considered as a maiden speech. I think a maiden speech should be made in an atmosphere of a highly positive framework that is coming within the confines of this House. I was very optimistic as a new member when I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that they would conduct themselves in a businesslike manner. Last night, at 10 o'clock, I have to admit to all assembled that I was very disillusioned. I did not see the conduct in the House, particularly from the members opposite, being conducted in a businesslike manner at all, or certainly no business that I had ever been involved with. On my way home I decided that no, I was being a little bit negative. Perhaps I was a little tired, and perhaps the fault was mine and I should be more positive. So I looked for ways in which to be positive this morning, and I found a couple.

The first one was the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore, who was able to use the procedures within this House, which I hopefully will become familiar with, to send congratulations to K.D. Lang. Now, I didn't happen to see that particular program last night and the making of that award to K.D., but had I been able to see that and had I maybe even been in the company of the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore, I would have asked to have been able to flip a coin with him to see who could have made that motion for congratulations.

Now, his motivation would have been a little different than mine. He was congratulating K.D. Lang. The congratulations that I would have offered were more toward the songwriter. Now, members will be aware that most artists have a number of songwriters that are available to them, probably similar to speech writers for the government members. I suspect, although I don't know and would ask for any help from people across the other

side, that the songwriter may in fact have been K.D., but more than likely it was the president of the Lethbridge-West Liberal constituency who probably had written the words for *Constant Craving*, because that has been their manner since I have been in politics, for perhaps 20 years, in that constituency. Of course, it is my avowed purpose to keep that person constantly craving.

I have four questions. The first question that I have is to the Minister of Environmental Protection, and it deals with the item under the capital projects division of the Alberta heritage savings trust fund. It concerns the water management systems improvement, and I would like to hear him comment in that particular area. Before he answers, I would just like to add my remarks in that particular area. As a member for Lethbridge-West, although I am not a rural member – I am considered an urban member – we of course have not forgotten in Lethbridge-West that we are very, very dependent upon our rural community. So I would want to take this opportunity, I think, to thank all of the members from Edmonton, all of the citizens from Edmonton, for finally allowing us to have our Oldman dam. It took a long, long time in order for us to get it. We had drought. This year the thanks and congratulations that I offer for allowing us to get into water management are the fact that now we can control flooding, although we don't have to concern ourselves particularly about drought this particular year.

12:40

The second question was to deal with the Minister of Energy in the renewable energy research area, but it also pointed out the opportunity to once again congratulate the opposition for something positive that happened today. That was the strategy of the Opposition House Leader. The Opposition House Leader has been able to have the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East out of the House when two questions were raised. One was by the hon. Member for Fort McMurray, who raised EEMA. Again, in representing people of southern Alberta, EEMA is a word that just starts our teeth to grind, and I'm grateful that my colleague from Lethbridge-East, whom I admire and respect, was not here and would have had to face the consequences, possibly, of getting involved in that debate. The other one was the fact that NovAtel was raised by Calgary-North West, and again my colleague from Lethbridge-East is perhaps the only member of this House that benefits day in and day out from NovAtel, the major plant being situated in his constituency in Lethbridge-East.

#### Point of Order Relevance

MRS. HEWES: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The point of order, hon. member?

MRS. HEWES: The citation, Mr. Chairman, is *Beauchesne* 459, Relevance and Repetition. I'd ask the Chair to call the member to order. I think all members are questioning what relevance his comments regarding the question from the Member for Fort McMurray have to the supply debate that's before us at present.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. member. We have been very flexible this last couple of days. Certainly although I can agree with you, with one minute left to go, we are about to stay on process. Thank you.

Hon. Member for Lethbridge-West.

#### Debate Continued

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, EEMA comes up in terms of renewable energy, but I'll address the

question, then, to the Minister of Energy in relationship to the wind research project that is down in Pincher Creek, if we could have a status on that.

The other two questions that I have, and I'll try to be quick, Mr. Chairman, are to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. He has made the announcement regarding the CTAP funding, and I would like his assurance that the Team Tourism program will continue in effect.

The last question is to the Treasurer. It's regarding the formation of the three-year budgets. What assurance do we have that field people have been involved in the development and presentation of those three-year budgets?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. members, I hesitate to interrupt, but pursuant to Government Motion 3 passed by the Assembly on Wednesday, September 1, 1993, and pursuant to Standing Order 59(2), I must now put the following question.

Those members in favour of each of the resolutions not yet voted upon relating to the interim supply estimates for the general revenue fund, the capital fund, and the Alberta heritage savings trust fund for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1994, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Carried.

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

12:50

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

For the motion:

Ady	Fritz	McFarland
Amery	Gordon	Paszkowski
Black	Haley	Pham
Burgener	Havelock	Renner
Calahasen	Herard	Severtson
Cardinal	Hierath	Smith
Coutts	Hlady	Sohal
Day	Jacques	Stelmach
Dinning	Jonson	Tannas
Doerksen	Kowalski	Taylor, L.
Dunford	Laing	Thurber
Evans	Lund	Trynchy
Fischer	Magnus	West
Forsyth	Mar	Woloshyn
Friedel	McClellan	

Against the motion:

Abdurahman	Dickson	Percy
Bracko	Hewes	Sapers
Bruseker	Kirkland	Sekulic
Carlson	Langevin	Van Binsbergen
Chadi	Leibovici	White
Collingwood	Massey	Wickman
Dalla-Longa	Mitchell	Zwozdesky

Totals:	For – 44	Against – 21
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MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the committee rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

MR. CLEGG: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions and reports as follows.

All resolutions relating to the interim supply estimates of the general revenue fund; the capital fund; and the Alberta heritage savings trust fund, capital projects division, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1994.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a list of those resolutions voted upon by the Committee of Supply pursuant to Standing Orders.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur in the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed? It is so ordered.

Might we have unanimous consent to revert to the Introduction of Bills?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

**Bill 2**  
**Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1993**

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 2, Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1993. This being a money

Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of the Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

[Leave granted; Bill 2 read a first time]

1:00

**Bill 3**  
**Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund)**  
**Interim Supply Act, 1993**

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 3, Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund) Interim Supply Act, 1993. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of the Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

[Leave granted; Bill 3 read a first time]

**Bill 4**  
**Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings**  
**Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division)**  
**Interim Supply Act, 1993**

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 4, Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) Interim Supply Act, 1993. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of the Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

[Leave granted; Bill 4 read a first time]

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've had a very interesting first week in this fall Assembly. I think we've made a great deal of progress.

[At 1:01 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]