

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Monday, February 13, 1995**

3:00 p.m.

Date: 95/02/13

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise, please.

[The Clerk read the Royal Proclamation dated January 18, 1995, summoning the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to convene on this date]

CLERK: Please be seated.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order, order! Mr. Speaker.

[The Speaker, accompanied by the officers of the Assembly, entered the Chamber and took the Chair as a fanfare of trumpets sounded]

head: **Prayers**

THE SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Dear God, author of all wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, we ask Thy guidance in order that truth and justice may prevail in all our judgments.

Amen.

Would the hon. members and ladies and gentlemen please be seated.

Entrance of the Lieutenant Governor

[The Premier, the Clerk, and the Sergeant-at-Arms left the Chamber to attend the Lieutenant Governor]

[The Mace was draped]

[The Sergeant-at-Arms knocked on the main doors of the Chamber three times. The Associate Sergeant-at-Arms opened the door, and the Sergeant-at-Arms entered]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Ladies and gentlemen, all rise, please.

Mr. Speaker, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor awaits.

THE SPEAKER: Sergeant-at-Arms, admit His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

[A fanfare of trumpets sounded]

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Their Honours the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, Gordon Towers, and Mrs. Towers, their party, the Premier, and the Clerk entered the Chamber. His Honour took his place upon the throne]

head: **Speech from the Throne**

HIS HONOUR: Pray be seated.

Fellow Albertans, it is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you to the Third Session of the 23rd Alberta Legislature. It is an exciting and challenging time to be living in Alberta and in Canada. Albertans have embarked on a brave and ambitious path to change and further progress for our province. Our mandate is clear. Our agenda is ambitious. There is still a lot of hard work to be done.

In its first Speech from the Throne in August of 1993 my government set out its mandate for change, a mandate from the people of Alberta to balance the provincial budget, to create the climate for wealth and jobs, to improve and streamline government, and to continue to listen to Albertans. In the second throne speech in February of 1994 the government called on Albertans to build on our Alberta advantage and join in the journey to a secure and debt-free future.

Today we are entering the next phase of that journey. Albertans are close to balancing the provincial budget and looking ahead to paying down the provincial debt and reinvesting the benefits that they will have earned for putting their financial house in order. The government's four-year spending plan remains on track. A strong year for Alberta's energy industry contributed unanticipated revenues. This is welcome, but Albertans know that it is no reason to release the reins of restraint on government overspending.

But there is more to government than streamlining and cutting costs. Albertans are striving to provide better public services by shifting the focus from the institutions that deliver programs to the people who use them. The goal remains to give Albertans the best services possible and the most value for their tax dollars.

My government would like to thank the people of Alberta for their hard work and sacrifice in taking the difficult but necessary road to fundamental change. Albertans know that the difficulties we experience today are minimal compared to what could happen to our children and our grandchildren if we do not accept the challenge of change. We still have the opportunity to chart our own course rather than have external forces do it for us.

Already Albertans have reached a number of important milestones that have set the pace for their fellow Canadians to follow not only in working towards restoring fiscal balance but in changing government to reflect what people need, what they expect, and what they can afford. In furthering those efforts, my government has defined three fundamental areas of concern and has dedicated itself to focusing exclusively on these areas: people, prosperity, and preservation.

Reflecting these core concerns, the agenda for this session will be highly concentrated. There is much work to be done. The Order Paper will be based on three clear goals:

- to implement the government's business plans,
- to streamline and deregulate government, and
- to develop the climate for businesses to create wealth and jobs for Albertans.

My government's greatest concern is people. Good health is a gift we must treasure, and education is our hope for the future. Albertans want high-quality health care and education. Accordingly, efforts will key on new ways to provide those programs and services more effectively and efficiently.

In the area of health the government will emphasize regional decision-making, enhanced community services, the more effective use of health facilities, and measurable standards. It will establish an independent council to review its efforts to restructure our health system, and it will continue to uphold the principles of the Canada Health Act by ensuring that all Albertans have access to comprehensive services. This includes expanding the mandate of the Health Facilities Review Committee to monitor and investigate Albertans' concerns about the quality of health services and authorizing community nurse practitioners to provide primary health services.

The government will continue to restructure our system of education to maximize resources in the classroom, to allow for more involvement by parents and the community, to provide more

choice in learning opportunities, and to provide more accountability. This will include implementing recommendations resulting from the public discussions on roles and responsibilities in education. Adult education and training will focus more on accessibility, affordability, and responsiveness. This includes authorizing colleges and technical institutions to offer applied degree programs, combining formal instruction and work experience, and giving financial help to postsecondary students regardless of where they choose to study within the province.

The government will continue to move from a passive system of social services to an active one by emphasizing employment and training. It will restructure children's services to allow aboriginal and nonaboriginal communities to become more involved in the care of their own children. It will focus on early intervention and the consolidation of services at the local level.

My government's second core concern is prosperity. Our economy must continue to grow if we are to compete in the emerging global marketplace. Our private sector has responded with strong economic growth. Alberta businesses are capitalizing on opportunities here and abroad, having created 44,000 new jobs for Albertans last year and 80,000 new jobs since December of 1992.

The government will strive to create an environment to attract and maximize trade, tourism, and investment in our province. It will focus on creating the climate for jobs by working in partnership with the private sector and the Alberta Economic Development Authority, working to promote our Alberta advantage aggressively around the globe. The government will release an Americas strategy and a Mexico trade and tourism strategy to help local firms capitalize on opportunities under the North American free trade agreement.

The government will complete its ongoing review of every provincial regulation to revise or remove the ones that impede business unduly. It will work with the federal government in areas such as the promotion of international trade and commerce and the elimination of the overlap in federal and provincial regulations and services. It will strive to minimize tax impediments to business at all levels of government.

In agriculture the government will encourage further value-added processing and investment. It will work with industry and other governments to provide a whole farm safety net program for Alberta's producers and to enable Alberta's farmers to be more self-reliant and competitive with emphasis on the handling, transportation, and marketing of grain. The government will disburse the assets of the irrigation district rehabilitation endowment fund to Alberta's irrigation districts.

In energy the government will tie part of its funding to the levels of activity in the industry and reassess its royalty regimes and land use policies. It will introduce legislation to restructure Alberta's electricity industry, to help keep rates from rising, and to encourage greater competitiveness in the evolving North American market.

A growing area of public interest and revenue is lotteries, the proceeds of which fund numerous community events and facilities all over the province. After consulting with Albertans, the government will ensure that the administration of lottery funds is more accountable to the public.

Another important subject of public discussion is the future of our largest provincial asset, the Alberta heritage savings trust fund. Every Albertan will have the chance to learn more about the fund and to tell government what should be done with it.

Based on that advice, there will be a special debate in this Legislature, and a decision on the future of the fund will follow.

The government recognizes that Albertans are entitled to the free flow of information, which is essential in today's business world. It will complete the administrative work required to proclaim its freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation in force this fall.

My government's third core concern is preservation. Albertans place great value on keeping our neighbourhoods safe, our air and water clean, and our people involved in the life of their community. The government will continue to shift from delivering local services directly to helping to deliver them. This includes enacting a more streamlined and responsive system of land use planning, adopting a new framework to approve charitable fund-raising efforts, and establishing a self-regulating body for the real estate industry, to operate under government supervision.

After consulting Albertans on the management of our precious water resources, the government will introduce new legislation on that subject this fall.

The government will continue to provide a vigorous voice for Albertans on the evolving federal scene. It will work with its federal and provincial counterparts towards a stronger and better nation for all Canadians, and it will work closely with Albertans in responding to developments in Quebec.

Fellow Albertans, our province is well on the way to putting its financial house in order. The Provincial Treasurer will provide a detailed report on Alberta's finances in his Budget Address on February 21. The time has come to plan for the orderly repayment of past accumulated deficits and other liabilities that make up the provincial debt. The plan to pay down the provincial debt has two components.

The first part of the plan will be to enact legislation requiring the government to pay down the debt over a specified period. Unlike the four-year time frame under the Deficit Elimination Act this period will be over the long term. The pay-down of our provincial debt will be planned and orderly like a mortgage, and it will be spelled out in legislation.

The second part of the plan will involve recognizing Albertans for their hard work and sacrifice in restoring fiscal balance to our province. This will not be a program to simply spend public funds as they were spent in the past but a program to reinvest in the new Alberta. As with other important initiatives the government is consulting with Albertans on how to proceed with this reinvestment in our communities.

My government understands the principle that the customers, the people of Alberta, are always right. In pursuing its mandate for change, the government will continue to assess, reassess, and adjust the route it is taking to reach its destination mindful of the effects of change on the people it serves, such as Alberta's seniors.

As Albertans go about the business of restoring fiscal balance and changing government in Alberta, let us all keep working together to stand up for all of our people, the individual responsibility, self-reliance, and caring that continue to build this great province; to create prosperity for Albertans, encouraging free enterprise and improving our outstanding quality of life; to preserve our strong communities, our clean environment, and our tremendous pride in our province and leave an even better Alberta to our children and grandchildren.

Now I leave you to the business of this session confident that as elected representatives you will in every way fulfill your responsibilities to Albertans.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, I pray that the blessing of God may rest on your deliberations.

God bless Alberta.

God bless Canada.

God save the Queen.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise, please.

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Their Honours, their party, and the Premier left the Chamber as a fanfare of trumpets sounded]

THE SPEAKER: Please be seated, ladies and gentlemen.

[The Mace was uncovered]

[The Premier returned to the Chamber]

head: **Introduction of Bills**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

**Bill 1
Taxpayers' Protection Act**

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 1, the Taxpayers' Protection Act. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this Act demonstrates our conviction regarding a sales tax. As we have said many, many times, this administration will never introduce a general provincial sales tax in Alberta. This Act is meant to prevent any future governments from breaking that pledge without the consent of Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud of this Act not only because it reflects the will of Albertans but because it is the first piece of taxpayer protection legislation in Canada. It is yet another example of how this province is taking the lead and of how we are building on the Alberta advantage.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Leave granted; Bill 1 read a first time]

head: **Tablings**

THE SPEAKER: I have the honour to table a copy of the speech graciously given by His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

head: **Motions**

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to this Assembly be taken into consideration Tuesday.

[Motion carried]

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Votes and Proceedings of this Assembly be printed after first having been perused by Mr. Speaker and that he do appoint the printing thereof and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

[Motion carried]

THE SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the select standing committees for the present session of the Legislative Assembly be appointed for the following purposes:

1. Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act,
2. Law and Regulations,
3. Legislative Offices,
4. Private Bills,
5. Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing,
6. Public Accounts, and
7. Public Affairs.

[Motion carried]

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that unanimous consent be granted to waive Standing Order 49(1), providing for the establishment of a striking committee to prepare, recommend, and report a list of the members, chairmen, and deputy chairmen to comprise the Assembly's seven standing committees.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. So ordered.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that unanimous consent be granted to waive Standing Order 38(1)(a) in order to move the motion appointing the members, chairmen, and deputy chairmen to comprise the Assembly's seven standing committees.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, those in favour of this motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. So ordered.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following members be appointed to the Assembly's seven standing committees.

1. Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act Committee: Mr. Dunford, chairman; Mr. Doerksen, deputy chairman; Mr. Amery; Ms. Carlson; Mr. Chadi; Mr. Dalla-Longa; Mrs. Forsyth; Mrs. Fritz; Mr. Havelock; Mr. Hlady; Dr. Percy; Mr. Sapers; Mr. Sekulic; Mr. Stelmach; and Mr. Woloshyn.
2. Law and Regulations Committee: Mr. Havelock, chairman; Mr. Doerksen, deputy chairman; Mr. Amery; Mr. Beniuk; Mr. Brassard; Mrs. Burgener; Mr. Collingwood; Mr. Coutts; Mr. Decore; Mr. Dickson; Mr. Dunford; Mr. Germain; Mrs. Hewes; Mr. Jacques; Dr. Oberg; Mr. Renner; Mr. Severtson; Mr. Trynchy; Mr. White; Mr. Yankowsky; and Mr. Zariwny.
3. Legislative Offices Committee: Mr. Hierath, chairman; Mr. Brassard, deputy chairman; Mr. Bruseker; Mr. Dickson; Mr. Friedel; Mrs. Fritz; Mr. Kowalski; Dr. Massey; and Mr. Severtson.
4. Private Bills Committee: Mr. Renner, chairman; Mr. Amery, deputy chairman; Mrs. Abdurahman; Mr. Bracko; Mrs. Fritz; Mrs. Gordon; Ms. Haley; Ms. Hanson; Mr. Herard; Mr. Jacques; Mr. Kowalski; Mrs. Laing; Ms. Leibovici; Dr.

- Oberg; Mr. Pham; Mrs. Soetaert; Mr. Trynchy; Mr. Vasseur; Mr. Wickman; Mr. Yankowsky; and Mr. Zwozdesky.
5. Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing Committee: Mr. Coutts, chairman; Mr. Pham, deputy chairman; Mr. Clegg; Mr. Collingwood; Mr. Decore; Mr. Dickson; Mrs. Forsyth; Mr. Friedel; Mr. Germain; Mrs. Gordon; Mr. Havelock; Mr. Henry; Mr. Hlady; Mrs. Mirosh; Dr. Nicol; Dr. Oberg; Mr. Renner; Dr. L. Taylor; Mr. Van Binsbergen; Mr. Woloshyn; and Mr. Zariwny.
 6. Public Accounts Committee: Mrs. Abdurahman, chairman; Mr. Friedel, deputy chairman; Mr. Amery; Mrs. Burgener; Ms Calahasen; Mr. Chadi; Mr. Coutts; Ms Haley; Mr. Kirkland; Mr. Magnus; Mr. McFarland; Dr. Percy; Mr. Pham; Mr. Sekulic; Dr. L. Taylor; Mr. N. Taylor; and Mr. Yankowsky.
 7. Public Affairs Committee: Mrs. Gordon, chairman; Mrs. Forsyth, deputy chairman; and all members of the Assembly.

[Motion carried]

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that unanimous consent be granted to waive Standing Orders 49(1) and (3) as well as Standing Order 38(1)(a) in order to move the following motion

respecting membership to the Assembly's Special Standing Committee on Members' Services, that motion to be that the following members be appointed to the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services: Mr. Schumacher, chairman; Mr. Woloshyn, deputy chairman; Mr. Brassard; Mr. Bruseker; Mr. Doerksen; Ms Haley; Mr. Henry; Mr. Jacques; Mr. Stelmach; Mr. Van Binsbergen; and Mr. Wickman.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, all those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Those members opposed to the motion, please say no. So ordered.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, having received unanimous consent to move the motion, I will now move the motion.

[Motion carried]

[At 3:42 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.]