

[Chairman: Mr. Schumacher]

[9 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. First of all, I'd like to welcome all members of the Private Bills Committee to our first meeting of the Second Session of this 21st Legislature, and to hope that everybody had a productive and enjoyable time since our last meeting.

Our agenda seems to be a little more full than it was at the first session. So far, as you will have heard yesterday, I presented 22 petitions for private Bills. I think there's probably a little more variety in our Bills this session, and I think it should be a fairly interesting time.

The purpose of this meeting is to have Mr. Clegg sort of outline the nature of the Bills and for us to come up with a priority list as to how the committee feels they should be dealt with, bearing in mind the respective complexities of the legislation. So I think we may as well start, and I'll ask Mr. Clegg to begin that process by describing in general what we have before us. Mr. Clegg.

MR. M. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before that, I think maybe -- I'm sorry to interrupt. Maybe we should introduce the new gentleman we have at the table, because we may be seeing more of him in the future, I understand.

MR. M. CLEGG: Yes, Mr. Chairman, with your permission I'd like to introduce to the committee Mr. Michael Ritter, a lawyer who is going to be standing in for me while I'm away. As you will know, I have to go to England on rather urgent family business for about three weeks. Mr. Ritter is going to be here and will act as counsel for this committee and will fulfill various of my other functions while I'm away. His experience includes nearly five years in committee service in the House of Lords in England, so he has got some very valuable service, very valuable experience which will be at your service. [interjection] Well, all committees operate in a different way, but the principles are always the same. So he will be attending your future meetings while I'm away, and I shall be back after the Easter recess.

Mr. Chairman, the Bills we have -- there are 22, and we anticipate at least one more will be coming with a request for an extension of the deadline of *Standing Orders*. So we do have the fullest agenda for many years. I'll just go through them with brief comments on each one and suggest the kind of degree of complexity, whether it's extremely simple, whether it's medium, or whether it's a Bill which has to be recognized as being difficult and/or controversial. None of the Bills we have this year is particularly complicated. One or two of them are extremely controversial in their effect.

Starting with the first one, which is the First Canadian Insurance Corporation, it is a fairly straightforward Bill following the model Bill laid out pursuant to the Insurance Act. It's for the incorporation of an insurance company. The Act requires that any insurance company be incorporated by private Act, and that is why they are coming before us. I am suggesting that that is one of medium complexity. The committee may well wish to ask questions of the incorporators about how they're going to function and what they're going to do. Committee members will recall that following our incorporation the company has to meet the requirements of the Act and pass the administrative hurdles which are placed before them before they can get into

business. We feel that it might be given a B category as far as complexity is concerned.

The second one is the Alpine Club of Canada Amendment Act, 1987. That is an extremely simple Bill. The Alpine Club of Canada is incorporated by private Act, and in its original Act for some reason there was a limit placed on the value of the land it might be permitted to hold. That limit was \$25,000. Inflation has taken its present modest landholdings way beyond that in value, and there seems to be no particular reason why there should be a limit placed on the value of land it can hold. It seems to be well able to manage its own affairs, and what they're coming to the committee for is to remove that limit. I think it is of the simplest category of Bill that comes before us.

AN HON. MEMBER: That would be an A.

MR. M. CLEGG: That would be an A, yes. That's the only thing that Bill does.

Pr. 3 is An Act to Incorporate the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate (Polish) of Alberta. This is an incorporation of an order of Sisters. I'm not familiar with background, whether it is part of an order which exists elsewhere in Canada. I'm not sure whether we have that on file, but we do have some information on their background. They have a fairly standard Bill which incorporates their order in the normal standard way and states their objectives in a standard and traditional manner of service in providing educational and religious support. That, I would suggest, is a B. It's not the most simple, but it's not controversial, and there are no complexities either.

Pr. 4 is the King's College Amendment Act. The King's College was incorporated by private Act a few years back. Their objectives include the power to establish educational programs, but the section limits the fields of education they can offer. They want to be free to offer education in different fields as they feel are appropriate, and they can come and ask the committee to remove the limitation essentially by adding words like "such other fields" as the board may from time to time feel appropriate. It will not change their degree-granting status in any way as with many other colleges, but they will only have a degree-granting status with respect to divinity. Under the Universities Act only universities grant degrees except those which are given a private Act of power to grant divinity degrees, and that will not change. So I think it can be regarded as a B or may be even an A, but committee members may well wish to ask some questions about their educational programs. We might suggest it's a B.

The fifth Bill is the United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited. UFA by its private Act is constrained to function only within Alberta. I have not been advised of the specific reasons, but there are some of the services they wish to carry out and some of the activities they wish to carry out which would take them outside the province, although their major function of course is to serve the farmers of Alberta. They will be coming to the committee and explaining why they wish to have some extraterritorial function which would require them, of course, to register in other provinces. That I've ascribed a B to. I would expect that they would come to us with an explanation of what they propose to do outside the province. It's not an unusual request and it's not an unusual power.

The sixth Bill is the Alberta Wheat Pool Amendment Act. Whenever the Alberta Wheat Pool comes forward there are always some farmers who wish to make objection, and we sometimes find that their objections to something are quite different

from the scope of the Bill. But in this case they merely wish to have the power to purchase reserves from farmers who have terminal illnesses, which would not seem to be a controversial proposal. We do have a notice of objection to the Bill and we expect that we may be hearing an objector, but for that reason only, at present we would suggest it would have a C complexity. The proposals themselves wouldn't seem to be complex or controversial.

The seventh Bill is the Calgary Beautification Foundation Amendment Act. [interjection] Maybe the Calgary members will have something to say about that, Mr. Chairman.

They haven't yet finished their advertising. They wish to make some fairly noncontroversial changes to the way in which their foundation is managed and to the constitution. There are a number of changes but none of them of very great significance or controversy. We suggest a B for that.

The eighth and ninth Bills are from the city of Edmonton for amendments to the Economic Development Authority Act and the Convention and Tourism Authority Act. They're very simple Bills proposing changes in the constitution of the authority, reflecting certain changes that have taken place in Edmonton and in some of the organizations which presently provide members of the authority. I think that members of the committee will find them noncontroversial, and I think that if there are important activities committee members may wish to ask questions about the operations of the authorities. So we have a tendency to put them down as a B.

The 10th Bill is the Calgary Hebrew School Amendment Act from the city of Calgary. That is the simplest Bill we have. It merely changes the title of the school to the Jewish Academy and the title of the Act to the Jewish Academy Act.

The 11th Bill is a petition brought by Scott Hammel which would provide that, notwithstanding the Legal Profession Act, if he serves articles with a justice of the Federal Court of Appeal, those articles may be counted towards his articles prior to admission. The Law Society has no objection; they think it's a good idea. It just happens that the Federal Court of Appeal is not one of the courts mentioned where an articling student may serve his articles. I think if there was more time and if the government was in a mood to open up the Legal Profession Act this session, it might even have been an amendment to the public Act. But this is to provide an exception to permit him to do this. It would seem there's no controversy over this, and this could be dealt with as an A or a B.

The 12th Bill is the German-Canadian Cultural Association (Edmonton) Act, which incorporates the association and grants it tax exemption for certain lands it owns in the city of Edmonton on the basis of cultural and recreational functions it provides for its membership. In the view of the history and controversy surrounding tax exemptions for cultural groups, I think the committee will wish to ask a lot of questions to determine how the functions of this organization compare with other organizations who have been granted exemptions. I think we should give it a C, to recognize the controversial nature of the application and the need for careful comparison between this association and others who have been accepted and others who have been turned down.

The 13th one, which has not yet finished its advertising, is a petition from the Central Western Railway Corporation to amend its Bill. Committee members will recall that they came for an incorporation a couple of years ago and are now operating a branch line which has been turned over to them by CN. They have a provision in their Act which requires them to carry \$25

million in accident insurance, which is proving to be extremely expensive. They are asking for this to be reduced to \$10 million or such lesser sum as the Minister of Transportation and Utilities may prescribe. The petitioners hope that they will have lined up government support for this and that they can demonstrate \$10 million is an adequate kind of risk, taking into account the type of freight they are hauling on that line.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you say that would be a B?

MR. M. CLEGG: I think it would have to be a B, Mr. Chairman, yes.

The 14th is the Acts Leadership Training Centre Act, which incorporates the centre and provides for its constitution. The centre provides various types of training and leadership, which will be explained to the committee by the petitioners. Being a new incorporation, its powers are fairly standard, and I think it should be dealt with as a B, Mr. Chairman.

The next four Bills -- 15, 16, 17, and 18 -- are all from Calgary suburban residential development areas which have homeowners' associations. They are from Lake Bonavista, Parkland, Lake Bonaventure, and Midnapore Lake. These are novel kinds of development where, in addition to the homes and lots provided, there are lands set aside for recreational and social enjoyment by the residents but which are owned by the residents' association rather than being city parkland. They have presented petitions requesting that those lands, the central lands -- where essentially they are arguing that they are providing their own parks, whereas in other cities parks are set aside by a reservation for public use -- should be exempt from taxes. The city of Calgary has passed a resolution supporting these applications, and on that ground one has to regard them as being relatively noncontroversial. The city of Calgary has obviously taken the position that the way in which these lands are held and the purposes for which they are held justify a lesser tax treatment. Because of this novel type of development, which may have become more extensive, the committee will certainly wish to ask questions, I would imagine, of petitioners. One solicitor is handling all the petitions. I'm suggesting it should be grouped as a B type of Act of medium intensity.

The 19th Bill is the Calgary Assessment of Annexed Lands Act, 1987. This is a Bill which has to be regarded as highly controversial and emanates from lands annexed and orders made at the time of the annexation and undertakings that certain lands would be assessed on an agricultural basis. Over the years the city has developed into these lands after the assessment and they have been developed for commercial purposes. Subsequent to that, Local Authorities Board orders were passed providing for normal assessment which were somewhat amended but then confirmed by the orders of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. It appears that there are grounds for appeal of these orders, and it is possible that appeals could be launched or an appeal or several appeals could be launched which would completely overthrow the Local Authorities Board orders and the orders in council and restore the assessment of these lands to the original agreement which said they would be agricultural. If this were to happen, it would result in an enormous loss of tax base for the city of Calgary -- many millions of dollars, the figures which will be put before you by the city when they come.

They are requesting the very unusual step of having these Local Authorities Board orders and the orders in council placed beyond the jurisdiction of a court of appeal. At present there are grounds for appeal under the public law, and the city is saying

that because of the history of this and because of the enormous amount of money they would lose, and for other reasons which they will argue to the committee, these matters should be placed beyond appeal and the jurisdiction of the court should be legislated away. Committee members will appreciate that this is, on the one side, a very serious financial matter for the city of Calgary; on the other side, it's a very serious matter relating to the administration of justice and the maintenance of the rule of law in the province.

That should be given a D category, which is a category we have not assigned before -- in other words, I think it's more controversial and more difficult than any Bill this committee has looked at in the last 10 years. I think the difficulties in it will only begin to unwind as we proceed with the hearing of the petition and the argument on various sides. Who will be joined before the committee is not yet certain, but I think we will have to reserve more than one day for it and we should perhaps leave it for a little while and deal with it in May.

The 20th Bill is the Institute of Canadian Indian Arts Act, which is an incorporation of the institute in a standard way, fairly identifiable and visible objectives and a noncontroversial way of dealing with matters. Because it is a new incorporation only, I would suggest we deal with it as a B.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Chairman, is it acceptable to ask a question here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. JONSON: I read through this Act, and although I think the general concept is very good, there is a provision in there to grant degrees. Is that within the usual parameters of a private Bill?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, this is something which we will be advising the petitioners -- that it is rather unusual. It is also very unusual to grant degrees in any field other than divinity. I have been waiting to hear from the petitioners as to whether they have any prior understanding with the Minister of Advanced Education about the unusual nature of their institute and the degree-granting power they're asking for. I had hoped to have that matter settled before this meeting today, but I haven't yet got it settled. It's possible that they may agree to some amendment to the Bill to reduce that power prior to our dealing with it. On the other hand, they may come to us maybe arguing for what they have asked for in their first draft and we may have to deal with this matter by an amendment, depending on the position that the committee takes and the advice that the committee receives from the Minister of Advanced Education. I should have made that clear in my comments. Because it was a late application, we haven't really finished the examination process to find out exactly what they're after on that one. And I'm glad the no vote was the intention of the committee, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GIBEAULT: I'm just noticing that we're having trouble hearing Mr. Clegg in the back here, and it seems to me that when he lifts papers in front of the speaker it's inhibiting his comment.

MR. M. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll bear that in mind. With our new sound system, we learn those tricks day by day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bill Pr. 21.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, the William Roper Hull Home Amendment Act is an amendment to the original Act of incorporation which defines the way in which the funds of the home are to be used. They wish to provide wider and less limited use of their funds. They wish to provide for a new name for their Act which reflects a new function. It could be dealt with as an A or a B perhaps, because they are making some changes in the way in which they're going to function, which is more than a minor. Perhaps it should be dealt with as a B.

The final Bill is the Rhea-Lee Williamson Adoption Act. This is one of the Bills we receive occasionally for the adoption of an adult. The public law does not provide for the adoption of adults, and this is why this Bill is necessary. In previous applications most of the adoptions have either been because the child, now an adult, has been fostered by the adoptive parents for many years or has been fostered in common with one of its siblings and the siblings have already been adopted, being under the age of 18. I believe in this case that Rhea-Lee is not in a sibling situation, and we will be receiving evidence from the petitioners about the background. But we have been advised and the petition reveals that the adoption request is by her stepfather. So it seems to be a fairly straightforward case where the mother has remarried and the stepfather wishes to become the legal father of the child who is now an adult. That should be regarded as a B, Mr. Chairman, I think, or possibly a C, but on that divide.

MR. WRIGHT: Do we run these past the child welfare division or whatever division it is of Social Services that deals with adoptions, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wright, I have taken it upon myself this year to ensure that I send copies of these Bills to respective departments, and I have Social Services marked down for this one. It will be going over there today for their comments, and I'll undertake to report what they advise.

MR. M. CLEGG: Essentially, Mr. Chairman, the director of child welfare would only be able to comment that it's beyond his jurisdiction to act in this case. Whether he has any desire to comment on the other factors of the desirability of the adoption, I don't know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll try to get some departmental feedback, Mr. Wright.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, as a result of all that, there are a number of these Bills which are noncontroversial and straightforward, and in order to allow the evidence respecting the more complicated ones to be amassed over a period of time, the committee might wish to deal with the simpler ones first.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that's a good suggestion. Mr. Musgreave, do you have a comment?

MR. MUSGREAVE: I just have one concern. Mr. Clegg mentioned that particular Bill, the Calgary one, would be done in May. I'd like to suggest it be started late April. Time seems to slip away in the spring, and this is a very serious Bill that matters as far as Calgary is concerned. So that's the only suggestion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As soon after Easter as possible you would like to see it started?

Now, in my review, we have two or three A's; I think three that I can see. Would it be the committee's desire to deal with those first? I guess I should ask Mr. Clegg when he thinks the earliest time is that we could deal with that. Next Wednesday?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, you could certainly deal with some Bills next Wednesday. The other matter which has to be determined possibly also at that meeting is the committee's recommendations regarding applications we have to waive deadlines. There are two or three Bills which will be coming in late, and they could not be received unless the committee recommends the deadline be extended, having heard the circumstances.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does that apply to those two from the city of Edmonton? They've changed their . . .

MR. M. CLEGG: My apologies, Mr. Chairman. The city of Edmonton changed so many of the details in their Bill that I had to advise them that I considered their new Bill was outside the scope of the advertising. So we have had to ask them to readvertise the Bill they're coming to us with, or may come to us with. They haven't made a final decision. It's beyond the scope of the advertising. If they do decide to come with those very significant changes in the way in which the authorities will be constituted in the future, they will have to readvertise. They may come back and say that they're going to stick with the old Bill, with the changes they're advertising, in which case they will not be seeking an extension. But if they do want to incorporate the new ideas the council is looking at at the moment, they will have to readvertise, and they won't be finished with their advertising till the end of April.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those then should be moved down on our agenda.

MR. M. CLEGG: Yes, Mr. Chairman. But for example, Mr. Chairman, Bills Pr. 2, possibly Pr. 4, Pr. 10, and Pr. 11 could certainly be dealt with at a very early stage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Mirosch, do you think your people would . . . Of course, I guess we have to make a decision here whether we want to hear evidence on some of these A's before I ask that question. Because it might be unnecessary to have them appear.

MR. WRIGHT: For instance, Mr. Chairman, the Alpine Club one -- I'm afraid I don't have the numbers -- and Mr. Hammel's relief wouldn't seem to need evidence. We could sort of wave them through, in my opinion.

MRS. MIROSH: Regarding the Hebrew School, all it is actually is just joining two schools together, and I really don't know why they would have to appear for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's just a name change, really.

MRS. MIROSH: It's just a name change and amalgamating two schools together, and it's very expensive to have people come here if they don't need to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I guess I'll ask whether any committee member feels they should be required to journey to Edmonton from Calgary. Well, we'll treat that as an A for sure then.

MRS. MIROSH: Except for Bill Pr. 19, but we're going to discuss that further.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, yes, but just at this stage I'd like to see what we could put on our agenda for next Wednesday. As I understand it, we will do Bills Pr. 2, Pr. 10, Pr. 11. Did someone say anything about Bill Pr. 4, King's College?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, I mentioned that Bill Pr. 4 might well be regarded as a very simple Bill. I think that they should appear and explain what their education programs are if the committee members wish that, because they are going to expand their education bases. They are based in Edmonton, but I think it might be a fairly quick Bill for the committee's consideration.

Mr. Chairman, while I have the floor, I might mention that although Bill Pr. 11, the Scott Hammel Legal Articles Act, is a very simple one, he is presently in Edmonton, I believe, and I feel that he might rather like to appear before the committee, merely to explain his situation. I think it would be a great honour for a young articling student to have that experience.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would that be all right with you, Mr. Wright?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

MRS. MIROSH: And then win on top of it. That's really an honour.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, he may find himself in the position of asking that last question he shouldn't have asked by coming. In any event, we'll leave it that Pr. 2 and Pr. 10 will be proceeded with without witnesses. Dr. West.

DR. WEST: On Pr. 2 there's just one area of concern that I might have and it's because I may not be informed on this, but there was a limit put on the value of land regardless of what it was. I have a question: why? And therefore to increase it to \$50,000 or \$75,000 -- what advantage is that if they did have a cap on it, and for what reason? I don't understand.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm advised, Dr. West, that this group was incorporated by private Bill over 50 years ago -- about 1912, according to Mr. Wright -- a long, long time ago, and I guess maybe at that time that was the practice. But I think that practice has fallen into disuse lately, and of course the inflation since 1912 -- \$25,000 is probably worth \$250,000 now. The point was: why have a ceiling at all? I mean, what's the problem with this club? Is it the membership or is it society that wanted the cap?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, we have -- it's so long back that the research on this is difficult. The society themselves may in fact have evidence as to what the reason was in those days, 70 years ago. The society itself now requests relief from that limit. Virtually every society which has been incorporated for the last 10 or 20 years, that I've seen any Bills on, has no

limit at all, and it hasn't been felt necessary to place any limits in the last 20 years on land ownership, just to leave them to manage their own affairs. I think that is what they're saying: put us in the same position as all the other clubs and societies and organizations are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. West, would that be satisfactory? You don't require them to come to . . .

DR. WEST: If the parameters are that way now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So in review we will deal with Pr. 2 and Pr. 10 without any witnesses, we'll deal with Pr. 11 with witness if he so desires, and we will ask representation from the King's College for next Wednesday. Is there any other Bill that any member feels we could deal with at that time? Mr. Brassard.

MR. BRASSARD: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, that I was absent when you discussed Pr. 5, but do you feel that representation needs to be made on Pr. 5?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I guess at the time it was felt that perhaps it would be necessary, but would you like to suggest that it's not necessary?

MR. BRASSARD: It seems like a very straightforward Bill. It's an extension of what they are doing already, and I just wondered what the question was and . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would certainly have no objection to it. I understand it's because the Peace River area of B.C. is certainly contiguous to Alberta. It's natural for them to do business in British Columbia and it's probably the same thing on the other side of the line at Lloydminster and other border points. It would just enable them to really exercise the normal course of business legally. That was my understanding of the intention. Mr. Clegg.

MR. G. CLEGG: The reason we should hold it is because there would be some members that felt maybe they'd be taking some of their money into other provinces and investing it, and maybe they had to have some concerns. I personally haven't got any, and I think maybe just let it hold for a while and maybe somebody would have concerns. Because it is personally for farmers of Alberta. I mean, that's the prime reason for it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; maybe I should have checked this myself, Mr. Clegg. Did they, in their application, sort of explain the situation? Maybe we should ask them to provide a written brief at this stage that might save them a trip, that we could circulate. Do you have any further information, Mr. Brassard?

MR. BRASSARD: Not really, Mr. Chairman. It seemed like a very straightforward request at the time -- and I'm only looking to save them a trip, as you say -- but I'm sure that they'd be happy to represent their . . .

DR. WEST: I think I would reiterate what Glen says. It has a quality to it where you're owning land. They can do business there now, you know. People can come back and forth. It's the ownership of property they're talking about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't think so. I think it's doing business. Because a company that's incorporated here cannot legally do business outside the province without registering in that province where they're doing business, and if they're not allowed to do business outside then they're not going to get registration ability in Saskatchewan or British Columbia, and contracts they make outside of the province are not enforceable under the present legislation.

DR. WEST: This is under the co-operative Act, not the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Created by private Bill, as I understand it, and they do not have the right to do business outside of the province. Therefore, any business they are now doing outside of the province, if someone didn't pay them for the goods supplied, they wouldn't be able to start an action in British Columbia or Saskatchewan to collect that money.

MR. BRASSARD: That's exactly my interpretation of the Bill, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All they're asking for is the right to do business outside the province, and if they decide to do that business, then they would have the power to register and be a legal entity in Saskatchewan or British Columbia.

DR. WEST: I would like to talk to them.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, they did not file with us any statement of purpose. We can, of course, ask them for a presentation, but I don't know their exact reasons. I certainly agree with your analysis of what they probably need.

There are other problems. In addition, if they are in fact trading outside the province at the moment, they might have trouble with insurance, which is a serious matter. Their private Act at the moment says that they can do their various things and exercise their powers within Alberta, and therefore anything which they attempt to do outside Alberta is beyond their power. Those are the words they want removed but, with the specific activities, have not been put on record.

MR. BRASSARD: I just feel that there are concerns. I think we should have representation, Mr. Chairman. That's all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So that won't be dealt with next Wednesday. Does any member have any suggestions for another Bill that might be dealt with next Wednesday?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, one other agenda item, before you were to consider adding another Bill, is that there are a number of applications for the extension of the deadline for *Standing Orders*, which is an agenda item which is not always simple to deal with.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, maybe we'll just leave it as it is. We have enough for Wednesday. Mr. Wright.

MR. WRIGHT: Is the Calgary beautification amendment Bill a complicated one in any way?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, it's not a very short Bill because they are making a number of changes to their constitution, their method of functioning, and their powers. The changes

they are making, their proposals, are not unconventional, but it's far from being a one-line Bill. It's going to run into a number of pages.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Looking at it, they don't seem to have completed their advertising either. So we'd have to, I guess, deal with that . . .

MR. WRIGHT: In any event, if it's a lengthy Bill it's not appropriate for next Wednesday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The typing is about six pages long.

MR. G. CLEGG: Well, I have a kind of question for several of these Bills. Maybe I'm mixed up, but I don't see why we need all these Bills for this exemption of tax. If I'm right, I believe under the municipal Act the local jurisdictions have that right to exempt that land. Now, I might be wrong, but I don't think I am. You know, it's really a question of whether they're needed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll ask Mr. Clegg to see if he's got any background on this.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, the powers under the Municipal Government Act, the Municipal Tax Act, and the Municipal Tax Exemption Act are limited in that the various authorities there, the Local Authorities Board and the minister and the Public Utilities Board, I think, in one case, can grant exemptions for certain purposes and within certain limits. But I believe the reason we have these exemptions before us is that these exemptions are not available through those routes or that the organizations have made applications and have been turned down.

I'm not certain what has happened with respect to the German-Canadian Association. It's possible that their exemption could come under the Municipal Tax Exemption Act. It may have been made, and it may have been turned down.

The ones from Calgary, the four of them -- I believe that the circumstances there take them beyond the statutory availability of exemption. I think they would have to come to us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And we haven't heard from the city of Calgary as to their position in regard to them.

MR. M. CLEGG: Yes, Mr. Chairman. In that case, the city of Calgary does not object to those four Bills. We have not had the same communication with respect to the German-Canadian Association. There was certainly no consent from the city of Edmonton on that one, and I would anticipate opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But regarding the four Bills from Calgary, the city of Calgary approves of them.

MR. M. CLEGG: Has approved them, Mr. Chairman, and has agreed to the need for legislation to deal with it because of the unusual nature of the lands and the purposes for which they're held.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Clegg.

MR. G. CLEGG: Well, thanks. You know, we saw this last year. We saw two or three of these Bills, and now we're seeing five or six of them. I can see next year seeing 10 or 12 of them. Maybe we'd better, somewhere along the line, be looking at

some regulation change in the municipal Act or something, because I can see this snowballing. I have in the back of my mind that this is happening. Maybe it isn't, but that is my real concern.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do think it's a case where we're going to have to hear from the sponsors. And of course I guess this could be treated as one Bill. They're identical for four different community associations in one part of the city of Calgary, the southeast corner, I guess. So it's not going to -- I suppose they're not going to take any more time than one Bill, these four, when we do come to it.

Mr. Younie.

MR. YOUNIE: Yes. On his point though, if we see a very similar kind of Bill that is typically not opposed by municipalities, would it be within the scope of this committee to recommend to the appropriate minister that they consult with municipalities and consider regulation changes so that we don't see the same kind of Bill coming over and over again because the regulations could be modified to give the municipalities the power to look after the matter?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe this committee has the power to make recommendations in any report it wishes to make to the Legislature. Am I incorrect? Our recommendations are not binding, but it would just be in the form of a recommendation.

MR. M. CLEGG: Strictly speaking, Mr. Chairman, the committee agenda is limited to the Bills which are placed before it. However, if the committee wishes to add to a recommendation on a Bill, a recommendation that the government consider amendments to the public law, I believe that would in fact be a recommendation which emanated from a study of that Bill. So as we have Bills before us on these topics, I think it would be possible to add a recommendation on that topic at the time that the Bill is recommended to the House, one way or the other.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will also be sending copies of this Bill to the Minister of Municipal Affairs for his comments as to how he feels. I might say in the letter of transmittal that certain members of the committee have wondered and would like to know what government policy is that might prevent the necessity of these types of petitions, if you'd like.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, just to add to what I said before, generally speaking the committee does not have the power to look into issues and make recommendations to the Assembly unless the Assembly has instructed it or unless those recommendations emanate strictly from a Bill which is before it. Like many other committees of the Assembly, it has a specific agenda like, for example, the Public Accounts Committee. It does not have a mandate to look into issues which haven't been referred to it, but as I said before, I believe a recommendation of a general nature, which came out of consideration of one or more Bills, could be made.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I suppose, particularly if the committee decided to recommend that the Bills not be proceeded with, they could attach the reason for . . .

MR. M. CLEGG: Indeed, yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions or comments or suggestions? Mr. Wright.

MR. WRIGHT: I take it on these Bills which affect a particular local authority, the members here whose constituencies are within that authority will make a pretty good canvass of their fellow representatives to see what the attitude is. I expect that goes without saying, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, maybe not. But maybe it is a good suggestion, Mr. Wright, that it would be helpful to all of us if the sponsor could maybe let us have a note as to the merits of the Bill he is sponsoring.

Well, if there is no further business, there is no use extending our meeting. We will leave it on the basis we will meet again

next Wednesday. What hour? Will 8:30 a.m. be satisfactory?

MRS. MacKENZIE: It has to be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has to be. I'm told it has to be because of Public Accounts. That being the case, I'll ask for an adjournment motion to that date. Mr. Musgreave.

All those in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried.

[The committee adjourned at 9:49 a.m.]

