

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Monday, May 1st, 1972

[The House met at 2:30 pm.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair.]

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petitions of the City of Calgary for an Act to terminate certain agreements between the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the City of Calgary, and Orville B. Burkinshaw for an Act respecting Great Way Merchandising Ltd. and The Securities Act.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, I have a rare and distinct honour today to be able to introduce to this Assembly one of Alberta's most distinguished citizens. Mr. Speaker, this gentleman has given outstanding service to the North American broadcast industry and today is the 50th anniversary of such outstanding service. He long ago proclaimed his belief in the future of Canada and the electronic media through his pioneering efforts in broadcasting. He is known affectionately as the Dean of Canadian broadcasters. In addition, many educational, cultural and humanitarian institutions and organizations are indebted to his selfless service and wise counsel. He is recognized throughout North America as a leader in his field. I wish to express the best wishes and congratulations of the people and government of Alberta to Dr. George Richard Agar Rice and ask him to rise and accept the acknowledgement of this entire Assembly.

MR. STRCM:

Mr. Speaker, if I may be permitted to add a few words to the words just given by the hon. minister, it is certainly a real honour for us to have Dr. Rice with us this afternoon in the Legislative Assembly. After having spent 50 years in the broadcasting service, I am sure that it goes without saying that he has seen some tremendous changes take place. It also goes without saying that he can take a great deal of personal satisfaction, having been in the business as long as he has, for the changes that have been made. We are very happy to join with the government in honouring Dr. Rice this afternoon, and to extend to him congratulations and best wishes in the years that lie ahead.

MP. BATHUK:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Legislative Assembly, 22 Grade 1X students from the St. Martins School in Vegreville, accompanied by their teacher Mr. Yuskow, and Mrs. Sakaluk and Mr. Landry. Mr. Landry at present is the District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler of the

40-2

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks from District 10B. I would ask that the teacher and the students and Mr. Landry and Mrs. Sakaluk rise and be recognized.

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly some 46 students from the Rocky Mountain House Junior-Senior High School. They are sitting in the members' gallery with their teacher, Miss Stanley, and I would ask them to stand and be recognized.

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to introduce to you and through you a group of Grade XII students from the Hughenden High School in the Wainwright constituency. Their leader is Mr. Craig Benfield and they are seated in the members' gallery. They are here to view the operation of this Legislature and these students will be the men and women of tomorrow. I'd ask that they rise and be recognized.

MR. ZANDER:

Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted today to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly 40 students from the Warburg Senior High School, accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Fry and Mrs. Outridge, and their guests, Mr. Speaker, 20 boys from the Cole Cardinal Roy School and 20 girls from the Ccle Secondary Marguerite School, accompanied by four teachers, Mrs. Perte IaClair, Mr. Guy Lessard, Miss Lina LeClair and Mr. Claude Gerbeau. They are seated in the public gallery and the 40 boys and girls are from the Province of Quebec. Would they please rise and be recognized by this Assembly.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Federal-Provincial Housing Loans

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Has the Alberta government replied to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation's letter of April 11th, regarding federal and provincial matching loans up to \$2,000 each to help low-income families buy adequate housing?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I think it might be better served in answering this question if our Minister of Municipal Affairs handled it.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, just to add to that, there are a number of items dealing with the legislation emanating from that federal department, beyond what the hon. member has referred to, and these are going to be the matter of personal discussions in Edmonton within the next few days.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs advise if there will be any plans to debate these various points in the Legislature?

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-3

MR. FUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I can't answer that question. The matters that have been put before us by the federal minister are of a confidential nature and I would say that it's unlikely they would be debated at this session.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs advise as to whether or not he would be prepared to table the decisions of the government when they do make that decision in a few days?

MR. RUSSELL:

Well, there should be no misunderstanding that there's a decision pending with respect to this government, Mr. Speaker. The matters under discussion were initiated by the federal government. We intend to involve the municipal levels of government in Alberta in these discussions, but beyond that, there's nothing more I could add at this time.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. When would the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs expect to have made a decision and notify the federal government of the Alberta position on these points?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, the federal government is attempting to obtain reaction and provincial attitudes toward a number of matters, and the decision will be made by the federal government, and announced by the appropriate federal minister.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If the points are going to be debated and discussed with municipal governments, should there not be an opportunity for the opposition to have an input into the decision?

MR. RUSSELL:

Not at all, Mr. Speaker. I think the hon. member has the wrong impression of what we are talking about. The federal ministry has proposed a number of programs -- and I can only say that much at this time -- in which they are requesting, on a confidential basis, the reaction of the provincial governments throughout the country. They have suggested that it might be wise to obtain the viewpoints of municipal governments as well, and we propose to do that. It was specifically requested that the matters be kept confidential at this time, and we are attempting to honour that request.

MR. WILSON:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I know what I am talking about, but perhaps the hon. minister doesn't know what I am referring to. Perhaps I should ask another supplementary question.

MR. COCKSON:

Mr. Speaker, he has had a dozen supplementaries.

MR. SPEAKER:

Apparently they haven't covered the subject. Would the hon. member complete stating his point of order.

40-4

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. WILSON:

My point of order was, the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs stated that perhaps I didn't know what he was talking about. All I am saying, sir, is that I know what I am talking about, and perhaps I should ask a supplementary question of the hon. minister to clear the air.

To the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, has the provincial government made a decision on Mr. Basford's proposed amendments to The National Housing Act to provide loans up to 40 years at 7 per cent interest?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I can only emphasize again the hon. federal minister has specifically asked that the items which officials of his department are coming out here to discuss be kept confidential at this time, and that we, as a provincial government, might wish to have a municipal input into the discussions. In line with the specific request to keep these matters confidential, I think any information that is released should come from the federal ministry. I intend to abide by the request contained in the letter. Beyond that I can say no more. I think that the hon. member would serve Alberta well if he stopped guessing as to what these discussions were about until they have taken place.

SOME HCN. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. WILSON:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am not guessing. I have specific points that are public knowledge, common public knowledge. I was wondering if I could get an answer from the hon. minister on these specific points, so as to know what the government position is, and if they don't have that position yet -- when we might expect to know what their position is?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is on a fishing trip. He is using the wrong bait, and he has been told all he is going to get to know today.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order . . .

MR. SPEAKER:

May I suggest to the hon. member that perhaps we could improve communication between the hon. member and the hon. minister if a question were drafted for the Order Paper.

SOME HCN. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, may I ask one last supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs?

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-5

MR. SPEAKER:

On the same topic? -- It would have to be, to be a supplementary. I would suggest that it be put on the Order Paper. The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Post-Secondary Education Financing

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs while we are talking about fishing trips. At what stage are negotiations between the Province of Alberta and Ottawa concerning The Fiscal Arrangements Act and that portion of it which deals with the cost of post-secondary education?

MR. GETTY:

We have had a considerable number of meetings, Mr. Speaker, regarding the post-secondary education financing. The Fiscal Arrangements Act has been handled, almost exclusively, by the hon. Provincial Treasurer. I am not sure if there are any changes. You know the policy which we have expressed, that we would like to have this type of cost-sharing program where the responsibility is completely under provincial jurisdiction, because education is clearly constitutionally a provincial matter. We would like to establish ground rules which will allow us, therefore, to obtain the funds to finance this program, and not have it come under any federal-provincial cost-sharing program.

MR. CLARK:

Some more bait, Mr. Speaker. Is the Province of Alberta close to getting an agreement with the federal government on this particular matter as it affects post-secondary education?

MR. GETTY:

Well, I would say we are closer.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, with due respect, if he doesn't get it finalized right away you are going to miss the fish, because the agreement runs out in a very short period of time. Could I ask the hon. minister, has there been an extension of the agreement which runs out in a matter of months, so that we in Alberta don't lose out on the funds as far as post-secondary education is concerned?

MR. GETTY:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, there has been an extension.

MR. CLARK:

How long?

MR. GETTY:

Two years, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, is the extension in keeping with the government's stated policy of attempting to get out of cost-shared programs?

40-6

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. GETTY:

No, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately it is an extension which we trust will allow us to arrange an agreement which will, in fact, provide for that in the future.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, has the Province of Alberta agreed to a limit of Alberta's expenditures --

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is conducting a cross-examination. I wonder if this might be the last --

MR. CLARK:

We can wait for the estimates.

Crude Oil Import Quotas

MR. NCTIY:

I would like to direct this question either to the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals or the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. It is reported that President Nixon plans to increase the import quotas for foreign crude oil, but that any increase for Canadian crude oil will be marginal. Now my question to either one of the ministers is, has this government as yet made representation on this matter to the federal authorities?

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to answer that. I have answered that in the House a number of times. We have been continually meeting with the federal government concerning free access to US markets. I think I can advise the House that the latest developments are that we propose to have some energy consultation next month at a convenient time for the federal and provincial governments, and again we will stress free access to US markets at those meetings.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake followed by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Agricultural Service Centre

MR. PARTON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address this question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. What is the government's commitment to the Agricultural Service Centre as proposed by Ottawa?

DR. HCFNER:

The provincial government's commitment is nothing at this time.

MR. PARTON:

Supplementary then, what is your position on the proposal?

DR. HCFNER:

When the provincial government arrives at a decision on this matter, Mr. Speaker, we will announce it in the House.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-7

Ultrasonics for Plant Growing

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, may I address a question to the hon. Deputy Premier. Is the government encouraging our farmers to put a device on the tractors to make more noise?

DR. HCFNER:

I am sure that it isn't, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR:

In way of explanation, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. minister is aware of the experiment that took place in -- this will take just a very few words -- a Carolina lab in which, by producing more noise, all the way from a screech to a noise coming from a jet, that they are able to make turnips grow 100% faster?

DR. HCRNER:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is talking about the use of ultrasonics, particularly in regard to the growth of plants. This is an interesting development in agriculture, but I can't really see at the moment any practical application.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, does the hon. minister not realize that we might be able to make weeds grow that much faster and avoid using sprays and insecticides, etc., and then plough them under?

DR. HCRNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, perhaps that is why the plant has grown so much over the weekend.

MR. TAYLOR:

Perhaps it is.

Supplementary, to the hon. Minister of the Environment. What does he think about all this noise?

MR. YURKO:

Well, I agree with the hon. Deputy Premier. The plant has grown.

Non-Permanent Staff Salaries

DR. PAFROSKI:

I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Public Works. Why is the wage staff, so called non-permanent staff, repeatedly laid off over the past number of years, in large numbers, repeatedly and apparently seasonally, despite the fact that many of them have been, in fact, associated with the Department of Public Works for five, ten or more years?

DR. EACKUS:

Mr. Speaker, this is a very interesting question and one that does give me quite a bit of concern. The situation is, of course, that in the Department of Public Works we have permanent staff on salaries and quite a number of wage employees. The wage employees do collect a higher rate of pay than the permanent staff for the same

40-8

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

job because of the lack of security that there is in their job. But because they are wage employees they can be laid off at any time that work is not available for them. The whole problem that this causes -- in that a number of people who have worked for the department off and on for a number of years are being laid off as a result of work not being available -- has caused me considerable concern and it is something that I'm taking a very careful look at to review the whole program in the department.

Moon Rock Inspection

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. Minister of Advanced Education I will direct this question to the hon. Minister of Education. They are opening the moon rock boxes today and it is quite disappointing that we are not present. But I wonder are there any Albertans present? Have any Alberta scientists helped in the research on the moon rocks, and have past findings been made available to our university?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I don't have detailed information about that at the moment. I wonder, perhaps, if the hon. Minister of the Environment might have some information with his knowledge as to -- [Laughter] I'm just giving him a countdown now so that he can think about that. But I don't know whether we have anyone there at the actual moon rock opening.

MR. SORENSON:

A supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation. Is it true that you will be making an announcement soon that a moon rock from a previous mission will be on display at our Provincial Museum and Archives this summer?

MR. SCHMID:

Part of the moon rock was on display, I understand, a year ago January. One of the highest number of visitors the museum ever experienced visited the display that Sunday. I understand there were over 9,000 visitors. We hopefully will have a similar sample again some day in the near future.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development which arises out of my concern that the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission may be hamstrung by the governmental procedures and controls in the difficult areas of their responsibilities. My question -- is this commission, Mr. Minister, regarded as being autonomous by this government?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the commission under its legislation has a degree of autonomy, but it, of course, would be like other commissions in that it would be expected to act within the range of government policy from time to time.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-9

MR. GHITTER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. May this commission then move outside civil service procedures and job classifications to hire and fire within its budget?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the commission has some latitude in regard to hiring and firing in the sense that it may, because of its work, have classifications that don't exist as such in the civil service. I may be permitted to observe that it would be rather unlikely that many branches of the civil service would have to have, say, an alcoholism counsellor readily available, at least in large supply. However, when it comes to other classifications that do exist within the civil service -- and I am thinking of clerical and executive functions -- that would be the same in the commission as to the degree of responsibility as in the civil service. And we would expect the commission not to enter into competition with the civil service in regard to things like salaries and fringe benefits.

MR. GHITTER:

A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the commission then be receiving in the near future, an indication from the government as to the long-range expectations which this government has for the commission?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that within the near future -- I would think by mid-summer -- it will be possible to appoint a full-time chairman to the commission. This would give a degree of leadership that they have lacked in the past. The acting chairman has brought a number of matters to my attention in regard to the sort of concerns that were raised in the earlier questions by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, and these matters are under consideration at the present time.

Village Lake Louise

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Premier. During last week's visit of the Prime Minister of Canada, the Prime Minister stated that one of the major factors of whether the federal government would allow the Lake Louise project to go ahead would be a decision by the Alberta government whether they favoured the plan or not. I wonder if the hon. Premier is in the position today to announce just when we might expect a decision from the government, in order that we can pass it on to the federal government.

MR. LOUGHREED:

No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not. I said, I think, the last time this subject was raised in the House that it would be some weeks before we were in a position to advise the House of our decision on the matter. I noted the remark made by the Prime Minister when he was here in Edmonton during his visit at the Jubilee Auditorium with the high school students. Certainly, we were aware of that, but we also, of course, have the assurance that no decision will be made by the federal government on the matter until they have heard the views of this administration.

40-10

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

New Northern Highway

MR. DIXON:

Supplementary question to the hon. Premier regarding the statement of the Prime Minister on the proposed new highway to the Northwest Territories. I was wondering if it is the provincial government's intention to immediately get together with the federal government and have the Mackenzie Highway -- the portion that is within Alberta -- brought up to a better standard than it is, in order that it can fulfill a greater role towards the new road.

MR. LOUCHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I presume the hon. members were alert to the documents tabled by the hon. Minister of Highways on Friday last. They indicated, of course, the fact that the day the Prime Minister announced in a speech in eastern Canada about the highway, I wrote to him and expressed the interest of this administration and said that our hon. Minister of Highways, Mr. Copithorne, would be in touch with their Minister of Transport, Mr. Jamieson. Mr. Copithorne tabled on Friday a letter which he had written and an acknowledgement to that letter, and it would be intended, and I think anticipated, that Mr. Jamieson and Mr. Copithorne would be getting together, hopefully to discuss the planning of it in relationship to many questions, including of course, the item that has been raised by the hon. member.

MR. DIXON:

One last supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, regarding the same project in the northern area. I was wondering if this highway that is planned and the maps that they have shown -- the preliminary maps at least -- to the provincial government, does this fit into the energy corridor that we all favour regarding pipelines and oil lines? Would it be a similar route that would fit in with Alberta's plans?

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I might answer that in this way. I noticed the map in the paper today, and I was tracing it with the one that we have on the proposed energy corridor. I can see very similar areas where the route would follow the energy corridor that we are talking about. I have not had the exact map compared with the one we have, and I propose doing that with the hon. Minister of Highways. As soon as we have made our comparison we would be glad to advise the hon. member just exactly where the routes overlap.

Calgary-Edmonton Rapid Transit

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the hon. Minister of Industry. In view of what you said the other day, is the government considering some type of rapid transit between Calgary and Edmonton? For example, go-trains like those operated in Ontario by the Ontario government?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, it was just a suggestion. We had no input as a provincial government from the two respective urban areas of Calgary and Edmonton. It was a suggestion to the two mayors that they get together and develop a plan, and through the co-ordination of the urban areas and the provincial government and the federal government, we would then sit down and set up our priorities. But there wasn't anything definite.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-11

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, I wonder if the hon. minister, in conjunction with the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, might make very strong representations to the CPR regarding the possibility of a go-train between Calgary and Edmonton to give free enterprise the first opportunity of doing this?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I think that is an excellent suggestion and we will take it under consideration.

MR. TAYLOR:

One other supplementary. Again, in view of what the hon. Minister of Industry said the other day, would rapid transit in Calgary and Edmonton be held up in any way pending this larger project that you mentioned on Friday?

MR. PEACOCK:

No, Mr. Speaker, I don't think it will be.

University Examinations

DP. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the hon. Minister of Education, in the absence of the hon. Minister of Advanced Education. I would like to know if you, sir, know how extensive the use of 'canned term papers' is over at the university, or if you are aware that this is becoming a problem at the universities? I mean, you know as well as I do that they have been used, but it is becoming a business that -- With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, several states of the Union have made legislation to say that you cannot use these in universities. I would like to know if you can inform the House on this matter.

MR. HYNIMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I have read recently about this operation which has, in fact, become a business in the United States, and I have heard that they were looking north to Canada. I don't know at the moment of any direct representations made by any of the higher educational institutions to the hon. minister, Mr. Foster, but undoubtedly it may be that one of these institutions would be in touch with us, and we would then look into the desirability of legislation if possible in that area.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary North Hill, followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Highway 2, Calgary

MR. PARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, a question for the hon. Minister of Highways. Is there any progress over resolving the alignment of Highway 2, otherwise known as Blackfoot Trail, in Calgary, south of the Trans-Canada Highway at least as far as Memorial Drive? There have been fears over possible loss of Inglewood Golf Course.

40-12

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. COFFITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, there is more study going into the possible re-routing or changing of the alignments. There are more alignments being looked at at this moment.

MR. FARRAN:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the province's high investment between Airdrie and the Trans-Canada Highway, which is largely nullified until the road continues south, have you considered setting a deadline to the city on resolution of these various alignments?

MR. COFFITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, we are trying to get the study work done as soon as we can, and hopefully get the project underway some time this year.

Non-Canadian Speech Pathologists

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. By way of explanation, it is my understanding that in the Speech Pathology Department of the Glenrose Hospital, only three of the 24 professional people are Canadians. I wonder if the hon. minister could explain why this is?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I don't have any ready explanation for that. I think that probably the shortage of that particular type of training is the reason. I don't think there would be any other. But along with that, the rapid expansion of that particular facility would have, if there was a shortage, caused an influx of people who were not trained in Canada. It probably also relates to training facilities for that particular specialty right across the country. But I don't mind looking into the matter further. It is clearly of interest when something like that is apparent.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question to the hon. minister. I am wondering whether he could advise the House if one of the reasons is that speech pathologists must be accredited by the American Speech and Hearing Association?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I will find that information.

Water and Sewage Systems

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Industry. During a radio broadcast this morning I heard the hon. minister talk about extension of water and sewer, as far as industries are concerned, outside of the major cities and I wondered if he could enlarge to the House what he meant by that program. Is it a new program?

MR. PEACOCK:

No, Mr. Speaker, I was referring to the fact that in order to have an equal opportunity in rural Alberta, two of the services that

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-13

we have to have, so that it is equal for industry in rural areas vis-a-vis the urban areas, are water and sewage. That was my statement.

MR. DIXON:

Just one supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Do you mean most of the towns and villages have water and sewage in Alberta? Would this be an extension of a separate system, or maybe enlarging the present system in some of the smaller towns to take care of the industry?

MR. PEACOCK:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, what I am referring to is a situation like what happened in Olds, and situations such as we referred to in this House previously like Claresholm, where there are water problems. I think it behooves us as a government to make sure in our programs of industry that we will have an available source of water and sewage system in these rural areas, so industry could move there.

MR. DIXON:

One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. How is this going to be financed? Would it be separate to the Municipal Financing Corporation -- is it a separate fund?

MR. PEACOCK:

I think it won't be separate exactly, but there might be occasions where it would be, and it is in these areas where there are LDC's or particular Local Development Corporations that are getting involved, that they will have to make special applications, in instances where they find a lack of water or a lack of adequate sewage.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would this program be applicable to hamlets in improvement districts?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, we didn't expand it that far. We were talking in terms of areas that had generated their own programs of development and where they wanted assistance in developing these facilities.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question. Where do communities having water problems -- who should they apply to? To your office?

MR. PEACOCK:

I think they should apply to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, and then a copy to our office so that we are in tune with what the problem is.

MR. SPEAKER:

Is this a supplementary? The hon. Member for Wainwright.

Livestock Advertising on Highways

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Highways. What changes has the minister made in the use of advertising along our numbered highways, specifically with

40-14

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

reference to a producer of livestock wishing to direct or give direction to his operation?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, we have allowed producers to put up signs -- 30 inches by 60 inches long -- on their own property. This has been a change that I think many of the livestock people have enjoyed.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Will he consider giving permission to a farmer to put his own sign on his neighbour's land? And I am referring here to a farmer who may live back from the highway one mile, two miles, three miles, or so on, and certainly give him the same advantage that the one who lives adjacent to the highway has?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Well we are trying to consider a policy that will be uniform in this regard, Mr. Speaker. I was waiting until the session was out so that I could travel around the province and see what the demand was in this regard, and so that we would have a uniform signing policy that would be compatible to the use of advertising of agricultural products.

MR. RUSTE:

Just a supplementary then. I take it then that the minister is giving this serious consideration so that he doesn't discriminate against those who do not happen to be adjacent to a highway?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think it is a question of discrimination at all. I think it is just a matter of having signs on the highway that are compatible to the people that are living in the area and to the beauty of the country.

Medicare Coverage Outside Canada

MR. BUCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question to the hon. Minister without Portfolio Responsible for Medicare. Does an Albertan, 65 years or over, if hospitalized or for medical treatment, have full coverage under the Alberta Health Care Insurance scheme outside of the province, particularly in the United States?

MISS HUNLEY:

Yes, they do if they are temporary visitors, if they are absent on a vacation. If they go down specifically to seek treatment, then it has to be treatment that is not available in Alberta before arrangements are made for this.

MR. BUCKWELL:

A supplementary question. If the total bill was \$500 in the United States and the Alberta Health scheme only pays \$300, do they have to pay the \$200 or does the health scheme pay the full \$500?

MISS HUNLEY:

It's paid on the basis of the fee for service on Alberta rates. There is a difference.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-15

MR. EUCKWELL:

A further supplementary. They could, then, be charged the difference between our coverage and what was charged in the United States?

MISS HUNLEY:

In the case of emergencies there are extenuating circumstances. If there is a problem -- is there a specific problem with somebody or are you just seeking information?

MR. EUCKWELL:

Yes, there is.

MISS HUNLEY:

If there is, I'd like to look into it for you.

DR. BUCK:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, along the same line. In the instance where, say, a specialist service is not available in Canada, but is referred by a specialist here to a specialist in the United States, is there any extended coverage, or is it just the Canadian rate and the Alberta cost of hospitalization?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, there was a change made -- I believe it was during the last session -- where there was a special fee set up that must be obtained and cleared and there must be very extenuating circumstances, but there is such an allotment.

DR. BUCK:

What coverage would that be, hon. Minister?

MISS HUNLEY:

To the best of my knowledge, it's based on any medical treatment required outside the country that's not available in the country, and it's only on very extenuating circumstances where it's not available here -- some specialized treatment.

Non-Permanent Salaries (cont'd)

DR. PAPROSKI:

Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Public Works regarding the previous item, the wage staff of the Department of Public Works. I got the message that you were going to review this particular area. May I have some assurance, Mr. Minister, that in fact, it's not going to be just a review, but with the intention of having a policy to make it less unpredictable and less insecure for these people?

DR. EACKUS:

Mr. Speaker, this is what we are going to look into. There are quite a number of different factors involved in this. Some workers would rather be on wages, even though it is insecure, because they get a higher wage. If you put everybody on permanent staff so that they have job security, then the cost of your operation is going to go up considerably because they won't all be employed all the time. Therefore, what we have to look at are several possibilities, one of reducing the staff in the Department of Public Works and going

40-16

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

more to the private sector, even for routine maintenance jobs, or the possibility of having a basic fairly permanent staff in the Department of Public Works. But the whole thing does require very careful consideration.

Marketing Promotion

MR. PUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Earlier in this session the minister announced the amounts of assistance to several producer groups to aid in promoting marketing. Is he in the position now to give us any indication of what other ones will be receiving assistance in this field?

DR. HCRNER:

Any producer group that shows some initiative, Mr. Speaker, will get the full assistance of the department in developing for marketing, and I say that not facetiously, but in a general way. The producer groups that were not represented in the list that I announced a couple of weeks ago, either got assistance prior to that time or haven't come forward with a program to develop that assistance.

Highway Signs

MR. NCTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Highways, related to the whole question of highway signs. Has the government established any policy in view of the fact that a federal election is just around the corner? Has the government established any policy with respect to individuals along major highways putting up political signs on their property?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, in this regard the policy has been that the signs have to be instructional. I don't know whether some of the instructions that would come from political signs would be very good for the people generally, or not. But anything that distracts people's attention unnecessarily is considered not useful in signs.

MR. YURKO:

I might suggest to the hon. member that certain types of advertising might be classified as litter under The Litter Control Act.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Further, Mr. Speaker, some advertising is more educational than others.

MR. NCTLEY:

Notwithstanding, which is the litter and which is the education? Has the hon. minister given any thoughts about the implications vis-a-vis The Human Rights Act, the right of individual property holders to put up signs displaying either educational information of a political nature or litter information, depending on how one views the sign?

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-17

MR. COEITHORNE:

Now that the hon. member has brought this to my attention, we will certainly have a discussion on it, and we will have a policy by the time the election gets around.

Timber Berths

MR. FUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. Is the hon. minister giving consideration to the reduction in size of any timber berths, or the cancellation of any existing ones?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, it is possible that among the very large number of timber berths that we have, we may be in the process of cancelling some for some particular reason. If you have a specific instance in mind I would be very happy to follow it up.

MR. FUSTE:

Supplementary to the hon. minister. He mentioned some particular reason -- can you think of any particular ones that they may use in the cancellation?

DR. WARRACK:

Yes indeed, Mr. Speaker such as the failure to properly clean up the operation that is the aftermath of a timber operation, and the possibility of this leading to a fire hazard. Today, as a matter of fact, officially starts fire season. So that would be an immediate reason that would come to mind.

MR. FUSTE:

Supplementary to the hon. minister. Would there be any thought, because of the size of them, to cancel them out, or a portion of them?

DR. WARRACK:

I am quite sure the answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is no.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

MR. HYNCMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply for consideration of the estimates.

[The motion was agreed to without dissent.]

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair.]

* * * * *

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair.]

Department of Health and Social Development

Appropriation 2505 Research and Planning

40-18

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. R. SPEAKER:

May I ask a question, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

There are two questions I would like to ask with regard to the planning component in the department.

(1) What is the stage of development of the planning component in the department?

(2) What projects is the planning component dealing with, and what is the priority of those projects for the coming fiscal year?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, as the House would know, the approach to planning that the government wants to use is planning and program development as related to government policy, rather than the overall, highly theoretical type of planning which has been criticized by the present government in some other areas, such as the Human Resources Research Council and some of the other ones in that area.

I feel that we have quite deliberately beefed up this component in order to plan for particular program areas for government. We are overhauling, I think it is a good word -- reviewing in any event -- programs such as the whole public assistance area at the present time, along with the various details, the things that make up the very large public assistance budget there is. We are reviewing areas -- these are in-House reviews where outside consultants haven't specifically been brought in -- we are reviewing the relationship with municipalities generally, and specifically in relation to preventive social service programs. We are working very assiduously in the area of the revenue side, particularly in the sense of the federal cost-sharing programs and that sort of thing, which I referred to briefly the other night. These are some of the areas where planning and research are going on at the present time, and they are related to the government's overall policy. These are our directions and that is where the planning is being done.

I think, since my hon. friend was minister, the number of people involved has been increased. There has been an attempt to recruit actively from what was, I would suppose several years ago, a neglected area, and which became a section of the department within the last year or so, and began its recruiting I think, at that time. Now although not merged with the office of the Chief Deputy Minister, it is closely liaised with the office of the Chief Deputy Minister in order that research programs that are carried out would be most directly related to priorities.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Just a comment, Mr. Chairman. One of the reasons we felt a planning unit was necessary in the department was to give the minister more time to work on new policy areas, rather than work on policy and building the policy and implementing it, and if you would care to comment on that, I would appreciate it. My other question, though, is with regard to the corrections planning: (1) Could you give us -- I don't think you mentioned that in your list of priorities -- what is the state of planning in that area? (2) Has Mr. McGrath consented to work part-time, full-time? (3) Is someone else going to be responsible for carrying on full-time planning in that area?

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-19

MR. CRAWFORD:

As the hon. member may know, the area of adult corrections, which I think was considered a pending transfer to health and social development last year, was not proceeded with and was left with the Attorney General's department.

As far as correctional programs for juveniles are concerned, I acknowledge the importance of this area, but haven't treated it as one where planning is a priority. There are several programs. I think the one at the Youth Development Centre would probably have to be called innovative right now. It is no doubt the result of previous planning which is contemporary, and I think we have to go through an evaluation stage with that particular program before heading into much more program planning. Therefore, I don't mind recording that since the question relates to where this rates in the priorities, I would put quite a number of other items ahead of it, including the items that I referred to originally.

Appropriation 2505 total agreed to \$ 279,550

Appropriation 2506 Public Communications

MR. FENOIT:

I would like to ask the hon. minister if he would delineate a little bit more in detail the intentions of this Public Communications section of the department?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, the overall role of health education in the past, I think, has been adopted from the traditional sense of health education and that is primarily the publication of information,

And I note from my notes on this that this may be one of the things that interests the hon. member, a very substantial increase of over 60%. This is partly a result of the fact there was a cost-sharing program, or at least a federal input if not a specific cost-sharing program, in past years where some of the income was from the federal government, and this has now been taken over completely by the province. The provision in this vote is for the purchase and distribution of educational materials entirely by the province. It would be one of those departments that, I would say, has not come first under my scrutiny for re-organization although I have made some conclusions to the effect that, because of the traditional pattern it had always operated in, it could likely be operated more effectively in the future. I think there must be ways of educational involvement by the department that could be more directed toward results achieved through effective education of the public. It's a small branch by comparison with most of the others. For that reason I have pretty well deferred until, say my second year, any real new directions for this particular division.

MR. FENOIT:

Is this public information for all of the Department of Health, for instance, like the information that goes out from the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission as well? Or is this just something other than that?

MR. CRAWFORD:

This is the department itself and does not include the three commissions.

Appropriation 2506 total agreed to \$ 132,290

Agreed to without debate:

40-20

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

Appropriation 2525 Edmonton Diagnostic Centre \$ 629,210

Appropriation 2526 Youth Development Centres

MR. P. SPEAKER:

In light of your earlier comments, is it the intention then of the government to transfer youth development centres to the Attorney General's Department, or transfer the responsibilities for juvenile offenders back to that department?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, the present distribution is what will be kept in the foreseeable future, and that is that male offenders under 16 and female offenders under 18 are still juveniles in Alberta, and these would be the ones that are referred to in the youth development centre. Persons over that age group, being adults, are handled by the Attorney General.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

The programs that are presently initiated in the youth development centres will continue, and is it at the end of this fiscal year that you will do an assessment as to whether the programs will continue or not?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Yes I might say that I think this is a program that has attracted a lot of attention in two ways; one way is that a lot of people, including members of the public, have the established view that this is a very expensive institution really for any purpose. When you look at about \$12,000 to \$14,000 a year per resident it becomes something that attracts attention as to what is being achieved there. It has attracted attention in the sense of its high cost. I know members of the Legislature have mentioned this to me as well as some members of the public.

However, it has attracted attention in another area, and that is the depth of its programs and the complete range of programs that are offered there. I think, also, the dedication of the relatively new staff that's there. By 'new', I mean they were pulled together -- many of them may be experienced -- but pulled together particularly for that institution. In that sense, as far as the evaluation is concerned, I felt that my first impression -- I haven't had long enough to let it mature -- that my first impression that the cost was unwarranted might bear some re-examination and, therefore, the bringing forward of another full fiscal year will I think give the opportunity for evaluation by the end of this year.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

One other question. Since the government feels the Magrath Report should take a low priority, does this mean that some of the concepts that are in the Magrath Report are not supported by the government?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I'm going to admit that, although I'm a lawyer, I have not myself studied the Magrath Report. I know that it's been a well established report in its field for two or more years, but as to government policy in respect to it, I'm not in a position to answer in general terms.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-21

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, in light of that answer, will we in the House and will the people of the province know during this coming fiscal year what steps you will take in order to continue the implementation of that report?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I think, if I understand the Magrath Report correctly, it relates to corrections as a whole, and the item that I have been relating to here is relating to young people. I think the Attorney General would still have to be the one to answer in general terms for implementation of the Magrath Report. If the programs that are in process at the youth development centre at the present time in some way reflect the recommendations of the Magrath Report, then all I could say is that those are then the programs that are being evaluated. But to take the report and say, sort of clause by clause, that it should or should not be implemented is something that I am unable to answer at the present time.

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Chairman, if I may ask the hon. minister, I have had numerous requests through representation that perhaps consideration should be given that the age should be made uniform for adulthood for the young people, particularly in the youth development centre. That is, both boys and girls should be 18 or 17 or whatever. Could you express what your view is on this?

MR. CRAWFORD:

My feeling is, Mr. Chairman, that it should be 18 across-the-board, but no steps are immediately pending to bring that about. That, I think, answers the question in my own view, and there are many reasons for that.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

I wonder if I could ask the hon. Attorney General to comment on the answers of the hon. minister, and to advise the House whether his department will proceed with fulfilling the commitments of the Magrath Report?

MR. LEITCH:

Well, Mr. Chairman, again I can't answer that on a clause by clause basis but as I said earlier, we are going to do a complete review of the correctional institutions and the rehabilitative programs as soon as the House recesses. There are a great number of the Magrath Report recommendations that were, in fact, implemented by the time the report came out, and a number have been implemented since then. But without doing some work on it, I can't go through them and tell you which ones have been, and which ones are in the process of being implemented, and which ones we're going to take another look at in the summer.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, if the Attorney General would just itemize some of the ones they have implemented since coming into office, then I think I can take it from there.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Chairman, to do that I'd like to get the report from my office. I have a file on it which I just looked at the other day, and we went through each recommendation. I think there is something like -- they run close to a hundred I think.

40-22

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Chairman, could I ask the Attorney General to provide a report on this, or present some type of a summary report to the Legislature.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Chairman, I can give the hon. member a breakdown of all the recommendations, and a resume of what's been done with them. How quickly do you...

MR. P. SPEAKER:

All I'd be interested in is just a point form summary of the ones that have been implemented by the present government since September 10th.

MR. LEITCH:

What's the time element?

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Let's say by the end of this month.

MR. LEITCH:

I'll do that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Minister, regarding the answer you gave to the question of the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood, wasn't the bill you introduced the other day something that is coming toward the position where you can give assistance to a boy over 16 through provisions for needy children? Maybe I missed the purport of it, but wasn't the bill introduced just a few days ago?

MR. CRAWFORD:

On this particular item as it relates to the setting of the age for a juvenile, nothing has come forward.

MR. FARRAN:

I mean a bill to provide for assistance to children over the ceiling age of 16?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Are you thinking of the amendments to The Child Welfare Act? I would have to say that's in the hands of the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway at the present time, and I don't know if that specific detail is in it or not.

DR. PAFFOSKI:

If I may speak on that. As I understand it, it's up to 21 because of some cost-sharing with the federal government. A child is defined as somebody 21 and under.

MR. FARRAN:

Maybe I didn't follow the wording of it. What is the intent of that bill? Isn't it to come some way towards this position of your not being able to assist a male child over the age of 16?

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-23

MR. CRAWFORD:

Well, Mr. Chairman, I think on this particular vote, we perhaps shouldn't get into The Child Welfare Act amendment. That would be my observation, but I also say to the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill that I certainly would be interested in reading the bill with that comment in mind, and arriving at an opinion as to whether or not it is helpful in that way.

MR. FARRAN:

Well, Mr. Minister, you did mention that some of the public had reservations about the cost factor of the cottage home approach. Is this what you were referring to?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I meant that the per-resident cost of the youth development centre in Edmonton had been made the subject of some comment by members of the public and by members of the Legislature. It is a rather high cost.

MR. FARRAN:

Yes, well maybe I could just say a few words on that public point of view and it's a qualified point of view. My experience only stems from having been a chairman of the Lacombe Home for many years, which was a home for needy children until it was phased out as a result of changes in government policy.

I don't think anybody in the child care field disagrees with a basic premise that if you can fit a child into a foster home, so much the better, that there is a much better chance for rehabilitation. And even if a child fails to become adjusted after a series of foster home experiences, it's probably still better to put the child in a cottage type home with a housekeeper, than in one of the old fashioned institutions. But then they do recognize that to run a large number of cottage type homes, is very expensive in terms of there not being a central heating supply, all the obvious cost advantages that come with a large building as opposed to a dispersed establishment. The big argument in the years gone by was that the government very abruptly switched to the foster home cum cottage home type concept, and allowed the backstoppers, the larger institutions, to run down, whereas there was a thought that it would be better to keep those large institutions as a harbour for emotionally disturbed children, or those who were damaged by a series of unsatisfactory foster home experiences.

Sometimes a child just won't fit into a foster home, sometimes the foster parents tend to look on them as unpaid chore boys and so on, and they just don't settle down. I have come across numbers of children who have been in as many as seven or eight different foster homes, which must be a bad experience in the light of their total emotionally disturbed state. Is there any thought that some of these empty establishments, which are extremely well built and constitute investments of thousands of dollars by private agencies, could be put to any good use? I'm thinking, in particular, of the Lacombe Home in Calgary which is probably worth more than three million dollars but which could be bought probably for about 3/4 of a million, or one million dollars. It has one very old building that was built by Father Lacombe, but it has a very new building that was once used for the training of young novitiate sisters. It also has a modern school, modern kitchens, and that sort of thing, attached, and it has been completely empty for about four years.

MR. CRAWFORD:

My approach to this whole area is to discover what the beginning point is to begin a program, and to know what the objectives of the

40-24

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

program are, and how it can be implemented, and what the cost of the thing is going to be, and what the hoped for results might be. Not to relate the decision primarily to an institutional base. This is just by way of preliminary response to this point. Therefore, having achieved that much, and having then the need for a place to carry out the program, my mind is completely open if the site available in any particular case is suitable to the program without the construction of something new. Indeed that would be preferable as we have found in one or two instances already, and I suggest that the best example of that is the conversion of the old Misericordia Hospital for certain other department uses.

However, as far as the Lacombe Home is concerned, last fall I did ask two officials to inspect it and examine it, and appraise it for possible use by the department. I was a little bit surprised that they came back with the view that on balance, we shouldn't attempt it -- it was going to require expensive restoration. It is true, what is there is substantial and well built, but to adapt it suitably, I think would have been more than would have been economical for us. So, in that particular case, it wasn't to be used.

As a whole though, once the program is arrived at, I am certainly open to using facilities which can be converted to the use of the program rather than building new ones if possible.

Appropriation 2526 total agreed to \$1,489,970

Appropriation 2527 Youth Group Homes

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a word or two in connection with foster homes. It seems that this is the proper place. I was wondering if the report from Judge Catonio and his committee has yet been received?

The other point I would like to deal with specifically is the practice that appears to have grown up, where foster parents want to adopt one child, but they are not permitted to do so unless the rest of the children are removed from the home. I think any blanket policy dealing with boys and girls is bad. The primary object in dealing with boys and girls, whether they are foster children or otherwise, has to be based on doing the best for that particular boy and girl in view of his or her particular situation and emotional condition etc.

I have seen cases where a youngster had a good chance of becoming emotionally disturbed because he was being removed from a home, not because the foster parents wanted him to be removed, but simply because the foster parents had adopted a little baby or a child and hadn't adopted the balance. I know the arguments that are advanced by some of the social workers, but in actual practice, I don't go along with those arguments, because in many cases, the children who are in the foster home are quite prepared to accept the child as the real child of those parents without it having any ill effect at all. When a boy or girl who has been with the same foster parents for a number of years is removed, possibly a year or two before they reach maturity or legal maturity, it has a very bad effect on those particular youngsters. I would hope that the hon. minister would review this policy, and I'm hoping Judge Catonio's report will deal specifically with this particular item.

My own view is that the policy should be based on the good of the child, not on any blanket policy that has been worked out by social workers. I simply mention this because I think it's a very, very important item, and I've had experiences in three different homes with it this last year, and in each case, it is my view, and I

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-25

think the view of anybody who knew the situation, that the children should not have been removed from that home simply because the foster parents had legally adopted one child.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I think the point raised is an interesting one, and I have no hesitation in agreeing to the review as requested, of that particular policy. I think the hon. member has covered both sides of the issue so that it's not necessary for me to comment on the reasons for it. I'm agreeable to the review.

The other question in regard to Judge Catonio's report -- we've received no date yet from Judge Catonio as to when he expects to have it in. I understand that we're looking at early summer.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

With regard to youth development centres, or centres for juvenile offenders, will construction of facilities for this program take place in Lethbridge and Grande Prairie?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I think I have that information here, Mr. Chairman. Reference was made to the Lethbridge assessment centre?

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Yes.

MR. CRAWFORD:

That one is not going to be proceeded with this year, but the one proposed for Grande Prairie is expected to be proceeded with this year.

Appropriation 2527 total agreed to \$ 187,500

Appropriation 2528 Youth Receiving Centres

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, is there any particular reason why this particular program is conducted only in these centres?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Lethbridge, Blairmore and Brooks? I can't quite figure out the two smaller communities there myself, to be quite frank about it. I know that the receiving centres are not required in most of the larger cities because other facilities are available there and can be used. That would explain Lethbridge, for example. It's a large enough city with problems of that type that it should have its own receiving centre. I don't have an answer in regard to Blairmore and Brooks, although it does not say in that appropriation that the centres exist there. It says it is for those areas. If there is more detail that the hon. member would like, I would be glad to undertake to obtain it.

Appropriation 2528 total agreed to \$ 105,160

Agreed to without debate:

Appropriation 2529 Infant Medical Assessment Centre \$ 340,940
Appropriation 2530 Regional Offices 7,021,460

40-26

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

Appropriation 2516 Public Assistance - Categorical Pensions

MR. TAYLOR:

Could you give the reason for the change in numbering here? We are back to No. 2516.

MR. CRAWFORD:

I have just observed that this afternoon myself. The pages were inserted in the wrong order.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I didn't dare ask, I just continued.

Appropriation 2516 total agreed to \$2,537,000

Agreed to without debate:

Appropriation 2520 Homes and Institutions Administration \$ 158,470
Appropriation 2521 Alberta Geriatric Centres 3,692,500

Appropriation 2522 Single Men's Hostels

MR. NOTIEY:

There are a couple of questions on this particular appropriation. I wonder if the hon. minister could explain why we have a reduction of 17.4%. Secondly, what the government's position is -- whether they have given any assessment to the RFP experiment in Calgary -- whether they think it is successful or not? And whether or not they feel there is a place for the private sector in social development policies. My view on this is fairly well known. I don't think there is, but I would like to hear what the government's position is with respect to profit making portion of the private sector.

I should perhaps clarify what I said. There is a role for the private sector as long as it is not profit making, but I don't think we should have profit making concerns directly involved in social development programs. I would like the hon. minister's view as to what the government's position is on this matter. Also, the specific reasons for the 17.4% reduction in this appropriation.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, the 17.4% reduction is related to the presumed curtailment in the volume and cost of the services, based on the past year's operation. The 1972-73 estimates are the closest that the department -- based on their experience in the last year, which involved the adventure in Calgary into private enterprise -- basing the estimates at the time these were made on what was thought would be actually spent. This includes that adventure, and what it was thought the cost could be reduced by if that operation were carried on in the same way as the balance of the service.

This is the projected decrease. I must say that it looks like a more substantial decrease than I would have thought if I had been just asked about it, without knowing that the figure is, in fact, based on projections which are arrived at to the best ability of the department. Experience will show whether or not they actually reduced that much. I might say that it doesn't imply that the treatment of single transient men for example, would be shabby in any way. It is meant to be regularized in a way that will provide adequate room and board and the full requirements within reasonable limits, of those men.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-27

Now, on the other question, I don't foresee any further Persona-care adventure at the present time. I don't foresee one at all, as a matter of fact. I reviewed that contract last fall, quite early on in my responsibilities as minister, and although some of the goals, when ideally stated, would appear to be desirable, it seems to me that the experience up to that point, -- and it was, I believe, about ten months, between nine and ten months of the year at that time since it had come into effect -- gave I suppose, some unusual advantages to the operators. I am now referring to the specific agreement rather than to the concept as a whole. Not enormously enriching advantages, but just arrangements in the agreement. If I remember my reading of it, things like advanced payments, things like termination arbitration, and whatnot, seemed to me to have been so generous that it wasn't an appropriate sort of arrangement for a government to have with the private entrepreneur, where the field that they were operating in was not traditionally one in which private enterprise is involved. I don't say that I have examples to call to mind at the moment, but my mind is certainly open to areas in government as a whole where the tradition is in private enterprise to see work contracted out, and I think that is often done. But this one seems to me to be a sort of an unfortunately crashing example of something that wasn't appropriate, and wouldn't work, so in this area I foresee no new attempt.

MR. NCTLEY:

Mr. Minister, just further to the RFP experiment, is there any assessment that the department has made that would be available to people who are interested, or is this considered interdepartmental information, and consequently not information which would be disclosed. I am just curious about this because there was a great deal of publicity given to this experiment, and also the possibility of a similar plan in Edmonton, and it aroused widespread interest among a number of groups concerned about social development policies. I wondered if this information would be available as to the government's assessment of the Calgary experiment.

MR. CRAWFORD:

That information exists in the form of a -- I don't know if it is several -- but of a couple or more reports from staff that were done either for me or for the Deputy Minister, and I think what I would like to say on it is, rather than do what is the agreeable thing, I am sure, and just say that I will make them available, is to give consideration to that. I consider the issue one that doesn't have any great current significance, and if the disclosure of what was there was only for the purpose of appearing to downgrade the efforts that were made during the year by the organization in question, that to me would not serve any important purpose. So I will be glad to take the matter under consideration and see about providing the reports I referred to.

MR. R. SPIAKER:

Mr. Minister, is the level of service at the Calgary hostel at the present time equal or better than the service provided by Persona-care during their term of office?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I think we're dealing in two areas when we talk about the level of service. The actual physical components of room and board the department maintains, are done better than was done before, and the physical requirements of the men are looked after at least equal -- we'll put it that way -- in comparison with the record of Persona-care.

40-28

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

As to the other services, I think the controversy there relates to the fact that Persona-care deliberately built up quite a counselling service, in particular employment counselling, and individual counselling on problems. I think they had some group counselling type of programs in regard to both alcoholism and employment opportunities. Whether or not right on the site the same or better counselling services are being maintained is something that I do not know for a fact at the moment. I know that the intention was at the time that the counselling service -- this was as of November when the operation changed back to the hands of the government -- the intention was to assess the individuals who were in the employ of Persona-Care in the counselling roles and see whether or not they should be retained. I don't know whether or not they were -- that's the one difficulty I had in responding -- the intent along with it at the time was that counselling services should at any event be available and that the department had them in at least two offices in Calgary, and that there was a good argument to be made for the fact that there was no need to create another class of counsellors in that particular facility.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Judge O'Byrne recommended that for the hostels and a number of other groups that are concerned about these people, that a classification system be established; and that rehabilitation and placement of these people into employment be carried out. Do you support that program at the present time? Number two, is your intention, as I have perceived from your answer, only to provide for these men food and shelter, and what happens to them after that doesn't matter?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I meant to indicate that the most important thing was the providing of the short term physical support that these men require. In regard to leaving it at that and providing them with no other service, I don't think that could be said to be the policy because of what I had said earlier, that the department in both the north and south Calgary regional offices has qualified workers available to work with these men as well as with anyone else in the community. The real question was whether or not the facility should build up its own other area of counselling.

Now with reference to the recommendations of Judge O'Byrne that you asked about, I would have to say that I don't think that the question of classification and rehabilitation into work, in respect to transient men, is any more important than it is in respect to other people who are on some form of assistance. My concern is that when the government has to commit resources to, say the area of rehabilitation through to finding employment, that they locate the most likely members of the community to commit their prior resources to and that very often these are heads of households located for a period of years throughout the province. However generous it might be on the part of the taxpayers of Alberta to attempt to perform a like service also for transient men, many of whom are not from Alberta in the first place, is where this area of question arises, and where I have little difficulty in saying I think the priority belongs in the employment opportunities program that relates to employables who are, hopefully, heads of families in the province.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

In light of what the hon. minister has said, -- Number one -- has the department placed a number of these men? If so, is the rate equal or better than the rate of placement by Persona-care? Number two, on a cost-benefit basis or cost-effectiveness basis, was the cost of the program in the prior year, when it was under the

May 1st 1972

ALBPRTA HANSARD

40-29

government, more expensive per-man per-day than it was during the last year on a per-man per-day basis?

MR. CFAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, on the cost-benefit, I suppose it depends on whose statistics you take. It seems to me that the complaint registered by the department officials in regard to the Persona-care operation was that a very large number of people had been attracted to the facility because of what I might refer to as the life style there. It was a good thing to be able to come to Calgary and not have to leave too soon, although the benefit was supposed to be mainly for transients. The Persona-care people, although their cost per-man per-day, if I'm correct, was slightly less, the overall cost was a great deal more. They went so far, I am told, as to double-deck all the beds in the place and were running quite a successful hotel. It was being fully paid for, of course, by all of the people that the hon. ladies and gentlemen in the House represent, who were taxed for the purpose of this extravagant operation, the cost of which rose to the neighbourhood of slightly over half a million dollars for the year in the Persona-care operation; up from the neighbourhood, as I recall it, of \$300,000 in the previous year.

It was that figure that attracted my attention. If it means that to get the figure more in line with past experience -- and the Edmonton experience by the way -- if, to get it more in line, meant that some people might not find it quite so pleasant to go there, that it might occasionally happen that someone would be asked to leave and that sort of thing, after abusing the period that a transient is usually looked after then I don't think that's a bad development at all. I think that I would like to relate it back to the overall question of priorities and say that, as sorry as one may feel for a transient man, from wherever he may have come, and who perhaps has a long history of alcoholism -- when I went to visit the one in Calgary there was a gentleman (if I can use that expression) asleep on the lawn in front of the building at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon and a bottle, empty, sufficiently at hand so that I wasn't led to the conclusion that he was there because he was sunbathing in November.

I'm not criticizing all of the men who come there just because of incidents like this, but every member of this House knows that that's a very typical case of the type of person who ends up there, and that the hostel in Calgary isn't the first one that he's been in, in all likelihood, and that when he leaves there he will probably go to another one. As I say, how sorry one may feel is quite another matter from the extent to which, in my view, the taxpayers of Alberta should be called upon to give support. I hope that doesn't sound too harsh.

As to placements, I'll have to seek that information and bring it to the hon. gentlemen. The question, specifically, was whether or not the placements compared favourably, I believe, in the department's experience in the placing of guests into employment, as was the case during the time Persona-care had it. I don't know the answer to that question and I'll be glad to seek the information, and presuming it's available, to provide it.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Well, Mr. Chairman, a couple of comments. First of all, number one, I certainly didn't intend to get into any area of making reflections upon the type of people in these institutions, as the hon. minister has just done in some of his comments. I don't think the thing we should be talking about here in the Legislature, is the type of person that we're serving, with certain insinuations that these men haven't capabilities to do certain things. I think we have a responsibility as a public, or as legislators, to make sure that

40-30

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

certain basic needs of some type of people are met. I think this is what we attempt to do in the hostels that were established for these men.

Secondly, I take exception to the hon. minister where he is trying to insinuate to the Assembly that certain types of mis-expenditure or mis-handling was done by Persona-care. I don't mind the hon. minister, if he wants to say it directly, to say it, but to insinuate it by certain comments certainly isn't appreciated very much by myself.

I think one of the things the hon. minister has tried to indicate was, here was a large establishment into which transient men could come and go and have quite a free-wheeling type of reception. If we examine the statistics correctly, we can well recognize that the hostel here in Edmonton had certain increases in the number of people that were in that particular institution, and used the services of the institution, and during the past year we had some very significant increases in unemployment. But even in saying those things, I think that to assess this very fairly, there are two things to talk about with the hon. minister. I had to make those comments first of all, just to react to what was said by him.

There are two things that I would like to discuss with him on a higher level, or plane, and as positive as possible, without getting into any type of insinuations. First of all, I think the two questions we should look at here are as follows. Number one, the concept of the actual contract that was established with this innovation project and, secondly, the concept of the type of assessment that was done on the project.

I felt that in initiating this project as minister, that there was a lot of benefit in looking at using the techniques of "request for proposal". Benefits in that you could hear from many sectors of the community that don't get a chance to voice their ideas or their opinions as to how they would like to operate a certain responsibility in the community. In this situation it happened to be a social responsibility, and as the hon. minister well mentioned, that traditionally the free enterprise approach, or this type of concept, is usually used in other areas in tendering buildings, or looking at projects that can have a more definable set of terms of reference. I felt that certainly, as the minister at that time, that it was time we broke loose from some of those traditional bonds and had a look at something different. And certainly I was willing to make some assumption and try and see if this approach would work.

I'd have to say that within government I certainly recognized that the people you hire, good as they may be, certainly haven't all of the answers, or the best answer at all times, to our social problems. I felt we could help through this technique, and particularly where you could ask people at the community levels to come in so they could have a look at their own problem, submit a proposal, and give it a try.

And I would like to discuss in light of that, this "request for proposal" concept. Does the government feel that utilizing the private sector in the social programs is out and should be forgotten at this time? That's number one, and number two; why wasn't a more adequate and more in-depth type of assessment done of this particular proposal?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I have noted what the hon. member had asked about earlier here, but because I was having a simultaneous conversation at my left ear as I was listening to him with my right ear, I wonder if he would just restate those last two points again?

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-31

MR. R. SPEAKER:

The number one item that I would like to examine with the hon. minister is the question with regard to the "request for proposals". Does he -- and that means the government -- support the concept of "request for proposal" for social contracts at this time? The subquestion would be, will there be other innovative projects in the social area trying this concept? The second question then, will there be an adequate assessment? I don't feel adequate steps have been taken by yourself to this point to assess new approaches to programs with social contracts.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I don't think there is any doubt when the hon. member points out that this type of program was innovative, that that is so; that it was a break from traditional concepts is certainly true. In the sense of being willing to break from traditional concepts in the area of social services, or indeed in all areas, I think that progress in general requires all of us, I am sure all hon. members feel the same way, to take the steps which they feel will get the best results in any situation, whether it begins as an experiment and we learn from that and go one way or the other afterwards, or maybe confirm, through an experiment, past experience. Breaks from tradition are quite welcome and something that I hope to see quite a lot of in the years of this government's service to the people. I think that we will stand up pretty well in that connection.

The social contracts though, the specific question, I think the short answer is no. I don't foresee, in the area of social services, that this type of contract will be used. I think that in many areas of government, of course, a "request for proposal" has long been used. Every tender, in effect, is a request for a proposal, and I know that when the hon. member speaks of request for proposal, he is relating it in particular to the area of social services, so I won't go into what other areas there may be for this type of request for industry to get into a certain area of government. But in respect to social services, I would say no.

As to the type of assessment . . .

MR. R. SPEAKER:

May I ask a specific question? What the minister is saying then, that the "request for proposal" for social contracts will not be used in establishing contracts with non-profit groups and profit groups in the community?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I think a distinction could be made in time, in regard to non-profit groups. My thoughts were directed to this specific one as a type of undertaking. As all of the members know, that particular one was a private corporation which was established, of course, for the purpose, presumably, of operating at a profit if they possibly could. So I hope that clarifies that. I am a little bit leary of going into social services by contract, but I wouldn't rule out non-profit associations entirely at this point.

I might add that my own exposure to this particular round included the proposals presented at a public meeting here in Edmonton, when several non-profit organizations did make presentations in regard to the one in Edmonton, including organizations such as the Salvation Army. So I wouldn't want to say that the time wouldn't come when the purchase of the service of a non-profit organization such as that wouldn't be ruled out, because I don't want to rule that type of thing out from future possibilities.

40-32

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. R. SPEAKER:

I'd like to complete this Mr. Chairman. Just to understand your policy, then, would you say that your approach to the expansion or meeting of social needs will be a direct expansion of the departmental organization?

MR. CRAWFORD:

The short answer is yes, and the only qualification I want to make is the same one I made a moment ago, and that is that in the non-profit area, it could well be that we would move into purchasing services by contract from a non-profit organization, but the additional step of tendering for it, which is the essence of the request for proposal, may or may not be an ingredient. The way the request for proposal was done, with the setting out of certain guidelines and asking for feed-back on it, and then assessing the best overall proposal, it may be that if that procedure was followed, a contract with a non-profit organization could result. But I think it more likely that the government would actually have a program in a certain area and would contract with a non-profit organization -- presumably a well established one -- for that type of service, in order that the service wouldn't be expanded solely as a result of the growth of government establishment, as your question asked.

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister, in view of the reduction of 18 salaried positions in this vote, is there any change contemplated for Youngstown in the next year?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Any change in what over the next year?

MR. FRENCH:

Any change in the operation of Youngstown Home?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Youngstown Home?

MR. FRENCH:

Yes.

MR. CRAWFORD:

I believe not -- not in the next year.

MR. FRENCH:

Do you contemplate a change in the following year, then?

MR. CRAWFORD:

We're not talking about the following year at the present time.

MR. FRENCH:

Probably I should give the House a little background on Youngstown Home, so that the people in the Legislature will be aware of the wonderful service that's being performed in Youngstown Home.

I would like to go back to -- this will only take a very few minutes, Mr. Chairman -- 1918 or 1919 when the federal government was winning a war with agriculture. At that particular time a number of agricultural schools were built in the province, including Youngstown. The building at Youngstown is basically the same design

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-33

as the agricultural schools at Vermilion, at Olds, and other places in the province. For the ones who have not seen Youngstown Home, you'll know the type of building it is. Over the years this particular building has stood very well, and during the depression years, in the special areas, the special areas used Youngstown Home as a sort of relief centre.

At that particular time it was the responsibility of the municipalities to provide for their residents if they required assistance, which was called welfare at that time. Following that we had a number of senior citizens' homes built in the province as well as other institutions or homes for people, with the result that, I would say eight or nine years ago, the number of residents or guests in Youngstown Home decreased to a very small number. At that particular time they were only looking after the residents of the special areas.

So the decision was made that here is a building worth at least \$1 million to replace. If you were to accept that figure to replace the agricultural building at Vermilion or at Olds, or if you could replace them for something in the neighbourhood of \$1 million, then you could say the value of this building would be \$1 million.

Here we have a building that is in good shape structurally, and is providing an excellent service to 50 or 51 residents -- at least that was the figure at Christmastime. These people have been brought in from all over the province; they are doing an excellent job. As you possibly know, many of these people have an alcoholic problem. In Youngstown there is only one hotel, so it is quite easy to solve some of the alcoholic problems when you have only one hotel, because when somebody gets in there and is in there for one or two, the bartender can say, "move along" and these sort of things, and we are able to control it.

To the best of my knowledge, there has been no problem with a single resident in Youngstown since the department took it over a number of years ago. I believe there was one chap who had a bit of a problem, and he was moved to another institution. Basically, most of these guests come in from other places where they had been a problem. We are able to look after them in Youngstown. There is lots of fresh air, good environment, they are away from some of the larger centres, they are doing an excellent job. And before any decision is ever made to change Youngstown Home, I trust the hon. minister will remember some of the comments I have made here this afternoon.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased that the hon. minister did make the distinction between private organizations and private profit-making organizations. It is a very important distinction to be made. While I don't agree with the role of farming out social development programs to profit-making organizations, I think that on the other hand there is a role for non-profit making private organizations in innovative social development programs.

The one thing -- and perhaps following up on my original question to you -- the reason I would like to see some sort of assessment done on this Calgary effort is relating to the counselling service. It seems to me, if I recollect your answer, that there was an increase of approximately \$200,000, part of it due to some frills you mention, but no doubt part of it was due to the counselling service that the firm provided.

I am wondering to what extent there is any assessment of the success of that counselling service -- whether they were successful in placing people. While I don't think it should be farmed out to profit making concerns, it occurs to me that there might be some strong arguments for bringing in organizations of the people

themselves. I am thinking of groups like Humans On Welfare, who can work perhaps more closely with the people, rather than professional social workers. There is a problem, when you bring in some of the best government people there are, nevertheless there is a gulf there that is difficult for them to bridge. Sometimes people who have gone through the experience themselves -- I am thinking of one person in particular, who, in my judgment has done quite an excellent job in this field, who has gone through the mill himself, has rehabilitated himself, and who, I would judge, is in a better position to give sensible counselling than perhaps a professional social worker who might have half a dozen degrees, but who just isn't sensitive in the same way to the problems.

That is one of the reasons why I think it might be worthwhile if we had some kind of overall assessment of the counselling success or failure of the Calgary effort.

MP. KING:

As someone who is on the board of a non-profit institution, I say this, for the benefit of the hon. member for Calgary McCall, so he doesn't feel constrained to ask questions about it later. I am on the board of Bissell Centre which presently administers a contract on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Development, relative to the operation of the single men's hostel. I'll resign if you want me to.

I've been involved in this for some time, and there are a couple of brief points I would like to make. The first one is that I very much appreciate the fact that the hon. minister is apparently not enamoured of the "request for proposal" concept, because I think it has some very real problems that have been demonstrated here over the past couple of years, and in the United States, with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The second point that I wanted to make is that in the last three or four years, apparently, the attempt of the Department of Health and Social Development to co-operate with private non-profit or profit agencies has been very much limited by the inability to develop any kind of an evaluative process or evaluative criteria. I can remember having meetings with the hon. member opposite, Mr. R. Speaker, when he was minister of the department, and I know how much this was a problem in terms of the Pineview Home for unwed mothers, for example, where a private non-profit agency had been for some number of years giving a good service to the province in a particular field. But a point was reached when it became necessary to ask, in terms of the number of people that were being served, and in terms of the expense of the service that was being provided to them, whether or not this was better done by a private non-profit agency in this case, or, if the cost was going to have to be absorbed anyway, it could better be done by the Department of Health and Social Development within the mainstream of their organization. He and I were on different sides of the fence in that particular case. If he occupies the same position as he did then, so do I now, so we are still on opposite sides of the fence.

But most important I think, is the fact that in the last 2 1/2 years since we had those discussions, there doesn't appear to have been any development, either in the department, or I might say in private agencies, like any of the Community Fund agencies, for developing a process whereby it could be judged whether or not an agency at some future date is providing the service it was originally contracted to provide; whether or not that service is still necessary for the constituency; and whether or not the cost, which is almost surely going to escalate, is still related in a real way to the priority that need has in the community as a whole. And both of these things, I think have been very closely related to the operation of the single men's hostel and the desire to put it out with an RFP

May 1st 1972

ALBPRTA HANSARD

40-35

either to a non-profit or a profit agency, and I think that this problem has been a focal point in both Edmonton and Calgary.

One thing that really interests me -- you may have answered this question before I came in, if so, I apologize -- are there any plans under way, either immediately or for the intermediate future, for breaking down the single men's hostel into smaller units; that is abandoning the present location, where everybody is served out of the one facility, and setting up smaller homes or smaller centres of accommodation to handle fewer men in one area.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, the answer to that last question is, there are no such present plans.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, the second part of my question to the minister was with regard to evaluation. The problem I was having earlier was not to broaden the thing to total evaluation of social program. I certainly agree with the minister, one of the concerns to me was spending money not only within the department, but also in contracting with agencies. It was very difficult to assess actually whether these agencies were meeting some objectives or not. Within the department incremental increases of so many dollars occurred, and the same programs carried on.

This was one of the basic reasons that I wanted to try the request for proposal for social contract as a pilot project, and made that recommendation to Cabinet. What we attempted to do, and you have already indicated this, Mr. Minister, that in the beginning you attempted to establish some objectives, objectives which were as definable as possible, that would be reached within the period, with regard to that contract, which was one year.

Now this was attempted, certain things did happen, and I think my concern was that that pilot project was not completed in its most meaningful manner, when you didn't complete, as a minister, a meaningful evaluation. I felt that was the point at which we could tell whether this approach was really meaningful or not. I would have to say myself that certainly I had doubts, and I indicated that to a number of meetings and groups that I talked to. But whether those doubts were there or not was not really that significant. It was whether there was something we could learn from this new approach. I wasn't a drummer at the time, particularly for profit making groups, or non-profit making groups, or whoever they may be. It was to try and come to grips with this whole expanding cost, this increase in cost we are facing every year. Incremental increases without really being able to define what we were doing and what objectives we had in mind. I thought possibly this might be one way to come to grips with some portion of it.

I would have to say with regard to the hostel itself, I'm not so sure that that was a good area to select in the first place. I indicated a little earlier that I was concerned because you were making some reflection upon the men. I felt in even using this project that the type of clientele that was going to use the pilot project could overshadow the real thing that we're trying to get at. I think it did in this particular project. Some other things did too, certainly some of the people and personnel that carried out the project had some reflection on your decision. Maybe that was unfortunate or otherwise.

But those are some of the things. I would appreciate very much, that the hon. minister, for his own concern and for our concern, may carry out a more formal assessment of the merits or possibilities that were in that approach -- there were some. One of the things

that came to my attention was the input of people that would have never, ever come near that type of a facility otherwise. Persons from the uptown section of Calgary -- business men, Chamber of Commerce -- persons that really had no human concern, just none at all. They were able to come down there. They took part in some of the rehabilitation programs that went on. Business people, the people that were in Persona-care I'm sure would never even have gotten involved in a program like that unless this opportunity became available.

I think these are aspects that we should look at, and look at on a very objective basis. I think you'll find as a minister, as your experience goes along, that certain costs in the social area -- and if your policy is as stated a little earlier -- where you feel that expanding the department is the answer to it, you'll find that expansion grows very rapidly and becomes almost uncontrollable. The only thing is that within public service there's a certain shelter that is there, and a certain shelter that often isn't easy to get at. So I urge the minister to have a look at that, and maybe reassess it, even at this point in time, so that maybe some capability, or new approach, or something different, can come about. As I observe what's going to happen in the next few years, the amount of work that government does with people certainly isn't going to decrease, but it's going to increase, and any steps we initiate now I think are very, very significant.

MR. KING:

Just a couple of quick comments following on that. I agree with the hon. Member for Little Bow about a real problem having been created in attempting to use the operation of the single men's hostel as the experiment to judge the RFP concept. I think in the original submission that was made by M & M Systems Research, one of their very strong recommendations was that in experimenting with the RFP concept, you should do it in areas of social concern that involve a few human problems as possible, initially, in order not to get it too complicated. I think they suggested housing as one. The single men's hostel is the other end of the spectrum from their recommendation.

The second thing that I would like to say, as one who drafted a proposal for the operation of the single men's hostel here, is that with respect to the RFP it was very explicit about the physical conditions which it wanted delivered to the men in the hostel. It was very explicit about the costs it was willing to pay for this delivery. But when it came to social programs, when it came to anything which was devoted to changing the social environment, it was both very ambiguous and very niggardly in the amount of money it was willing to allow to a proposal for the development of social programs in the RFP for the single men's hostel. And I think that was one of the areas where the difference between the application of an RFP to a social program, and an engineering or physical sciences program, was most clear. The complete inability to set out or to categorize the kinds of social changes that you wanted to see take place in that situation, and how much you were willing to pay in order to have it take place.

The third point that I would like to make very quickly is that the RFP concept doesn't take any account of the changes that may take place in society as a whole, in terms of the priorities that they have for programs. And this is one of the reasons why, in contrast to the RFP, I would like to see some kind of an evaluation developed whereby private agencies could run programs so that there would be built into the running of these programs some kind of a determination about how much society wanted this program to continue. A home for single girls run by a church would be an example, whereby an indirect determination of how much society wanted that home to be or to

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-37

function would be indicated by the amount of money that the church or the non-profit society might put into the operation of the homes.

One thing you might consider would be some kind of matching grants or prorated grants. But when you have an RFP where the government, for a contract, will pay out 100% of the cost, including the escalation in years to come, there's no opportunity for determining, at staged intervals, whether or not society still considers the task involved in that contract to be important in terms of what the government is doing. This, I think, was another one of the failures of the RFP concept as opposed to what the Roman Catholic Church was trying to do with Fineview or any other examples.

MR. P. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, one final question on this section. A number of various private agencies initiate programs. Would it be the intention of the hon. minister, when these programs get into financial difficulty or reach a certain point where they wish to expand across the province or on a broader basis, would it be the policy of the department to take these programs into the department and integrate them into their on-going programs?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I can answer that in one word, Mr. Chairman. I'd say no.

MR. TAYLOR:

I want to make just one or two comments. I am a little bit alarmed -- unless I've missed some of the comments -- about putting a dollar sign on human beings. Because whether a person becomes an inebriate, or a drunkard, or a drug fiend, they're still human beings. I think we make a mistake if we put a dollar sign on their head as being less value than somebody else who didn't happen to become an inebriate or a drug fiend. My experience with single men's hostels is that many of these men are victims of our economic system, and perhaps you and I, perhaps any hon. member of this House, might find himself in the same condition at some time in the future if we are subjected to the same economic conditions as many of these people. And I feel that when we try to put a dollar sign on them we make a very, very grave mistake. That's why I am not a strong supporter of the request for proposals in this type of legislation. I have no objection as an experiment, as a pilot project, but I think that where you're trying to save money at the expense -- or make profit -- at the expense of human beings that it becomes diametrically wrong as far as I am concerned.

I like the approach of the non-profit organizations. I don't think you can find greater dedication anywhere than you find in the Grace Hospitals operated by the Salvation Army, the senior citizens' homes operated by the Salvation Army, and in the hospitals operated by the Catholic nuns. This is complete dedication -- not for money, but for service -- and I think the public service should try to emulate that particular type of dedication to the greatest possible degree.

One other point I find nauseating in connection with this type of vote -- single men's hostels -- is where some people want to deal with them in a blanket form. Each one is an individual, and I think rehabilitation -- what can be done to help this man reach the potential that he himself would like to have reached had he not gone through these harrowing experiences -- is the objective. I think the main objective in this type of program that should be drummed into the welfare workers, is to rehabilitate these people. Treat them like human beings and rehabilitate them to the greatest possible degree. If there are those who are taking advantage of the system and simply through laziness, don't want to work, then they should be

40-38

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

treated with an iron hand. But those who have gone through harrowing experiences that have brought them to that particular state in life, I think there should be understanding and help given to them at our single men's hostels, as well as meals and a bed.

Appropriation 2522 total agreed to \$1,393,510

Appropriation 2523 Single Women's Hostels

MP. CHAMBERS:

Mr. Chairman, I have a question here. I notice that this item is roughly 5% of the preceding item, and I wondered if that ratio reflects the years gone by. In other words, has it always been in this ratio, or if, in fact, the appropriation or the estimate does really reflect the demand today for single women's hostels?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I think it reflects the demand. For various reasons I suppose, there has not been the requirement for society to provide as many facilities in any way for transient women as there has been for transient men, and as far as the situation in Edmonton is concerned for example, which I have had more opportunity to review than in the balance of the province, it seems to me that this area is well served. And I say that with the caution that I think must always be used when one says 'well-served'. It relates to the sort of remarks the hon. Member for Drumheller was making in regard to the need for compassion and understanding not be entirely the result of their own failings but can be a combination of circumstances. I'm not suggesting that the arrangements that are made for single transient women are luxurious in any way, but it appears that no real hardship is being suffered by those who are using the facilities, and there is no shortage of them.

MRS. CHICAK:

I was just wondering, I would like to ask the hon. minister, if there, in fact, hasn't really been a demand, or is it that it hasn't been recognized? It seems to me that when you look at the problems that exist in court, and the number of women who are in jail, then I certainly think they need assistance and direction. To me it doesn't suggest that there should be such a vast difference in the demand or the need, and I'm wondering is it that recognition hasn't come about, and the problem hasn't really been looked into, or is it that the women just don't need the services?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Well, I maintain, Mr. Chairman, that the need is being filled. There are institutions, I don't know if they should be called institutions -- facilities -- which are available, using again the City of Edmonton as an example, where I know the policy of those facilities is that no person is ever turned away. And all I could say to my good friend from Edmonton Norwood is that if some ladies occasionally find themselves in jail, then they probably have every reason appropriate to their case for being there. This may be a new move in the area of women's liberation, that jails will not in the future be solely the habitat of us men.

MR. KING:

I feel that I have to pursue this for just a moment because I agree with the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood. I think, first of all, that I should say I appreciate the recognition that the government has given to the position of women just recently.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-39

I know, for a fact, that a single women's hostel in Edmonton was operating on a hand-to-mouth existence until last fall or this spring, and that their existence has been regularized because of an agreement they have come to with the Department of Health and Social Development. I think that is to our credit. I think at the same time, though, that there are a number of reasons why it is very likely that the number of transient women in Edmonton or Calgary, or any other major centre, is going to increase, probably pretty significantly in the next couple of years, and that is something we should consider down the road.

Secondly, while the operation of the single women's overnight shelter in Edmonton has been regularized, they are still providing far less in the way of service to the women who go there, than is provided to the men who go to the overnight shelter or to the single men's hostel.

The final point is, of course, that while there are a number of private agencies that provide services to men who are transients -- the Salvation Army and Bissell Centre are two examples -- there are no institutions which have a long history of having provided this service to women. There are small ones that are springing up providing service to a limited number of people, but they are not providing as much service as has been available to men in the past. I think, in the future, these are all things that we should keep in mind in terms of doubling this appropriation next year.

Appropriation 2523 total agreed to \$ 69,790

Agreed to without debate:

Appropriation 2524 Maternity Homes \$ 95,680

Appropriation 2510 Social Development Services Administration 174,450

Appropriation 2511 Public Assistance Administration 351,510

Appropriation 2512 Public Assistance - Basic Assistance

MR. LEF:

I just want to ask one question about one of the difficulties that very often arises with those people who try to make a transition from social development onto the work force. I am thinking of those people now that undertake some type of post-secondary or pre-post-secondary education.

Under the present system, a number of people, if they are on social allowance, can go into, for instance, Alberta vocational centres and can take a course without being cut off their allowance. In other words, they probably have two choices; they can remain on the social allowance, or they can go under an allowance through vocational education under the Department of Advanced Education. A good example of this, once again, was the Priority Employment Program this year, where people were expected to stay on social assistance while they were taking the course. However, this was an exceptional case and I am just wondering if your department has any plans for, say, those people who want to go onto a longer course, such as a university degree? At the present time, in order to go to university or take a two-year course, they are cut off allowance completely. It appears to me that this is rather a negative treatment of persons who want to get off this allowance, and in all probability, if this weren't given to them while they were going to school, they would stay on the allowance anyway. I am just wondering if your department is looking into more long-term continuation of assistance for more long-term training programs?

40-4C

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. CRAWFORD:

The short answer is that as a result of one brief that I received in the last couple of months, that area is under study. It opens up a rather difficult matter, of course. The objective of having someone better himself in order that he will be off public assistance is one that should be universally supported. But whether or not the public will want, in general terms, to support university education, I think is questionable. Therefore, any guidelines for that sort of thing is something that any program would have to delineate very carefully. There is a system of loans available for university, and it would indeed mean that a person would have to support himself through university in order to receive the education. Graduating directly from public assistance to the university, where both are operated at the expense of the public, to me is a difficult matter to recommend to the public as a whole.

MR. ZANDER:

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make a comment on the public assistance that is given to people. I do believe that in some cases -- I know in the past -- where public assistance has been asked for from the local authority, they were turned down because they had more assets than some of the people who were not on social assistance, and then they reapplied to the department in Edmonton and consequently got assistance from the department, although they had jobs available to go to.

The only thing I wanted to say at this time, Mr. Chairman, is that I think we have to come down to a lower level of administration. In the area that I represent, which is something like 90 to 150 miles away from the City of Edmonton, the administration is made from the local North Edmonton centre. In most cases, and I have to say that I've sat there many times in the office listening to the social worker making his recommendations and asking questions of the social assistance recipient, and I overheard the conversation quite often, and the inspection was done by telephone.

I think we have to return some of the responsibility of looking after the social welfare to the local level. They should be screened at the local level, rather than being looked after from out of the City of Edmonton. I think we'll have to go in that direction. Because in my opinion, at least, from the many years that I've been on council, I've felt that in at least 50% of the cases, social assistance was granted in the Edmonton office, where it was not granted in the local office at the local level. We have many people that know the circumstances of people, whereas the social worker that works out of the City of Edmonton is not able, is not capable, to know. We know in our area that most of the time the people could well get along without social assistance, but they're simply given social assistance. I can give you one example. There was a farmer that had a full line of machinery, he had five head of cattle, he had his bins full of grain; he had hay of all kinds and description. We refused to give him social assistance or temporary assistance on the basis that he could at least get a job. We offered him a job on the county level, and he refused to go because it was 13 miles removed from his home and we would not pay mileage. Consequently, the man went into the City of Edmonton, and the first thing we knew, we had him on social assistance.

I believe that if we restore some of this responsibility to the local level of government, rather than take it away and administer it from the larger centres, say, Calgary, Edmonton, Wetaskiwin, Camrose, I think we're going to get a better chance to screen the applicants, and we're going to cut the costs of public assistance, because certainly in this year it's increasing by 9.5%. I believe if we restore this responsibility back to the people who know the people, rather than just have it handed out by a social worker from the City of Edmonton, I think this is the only way that we'll cut down the costs.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-41

I hope that this Assembly will certainly look forward to this being restored to the local people for screening because I'm sure that we could cut down at least 50% of those people receiving social assistance, and give them jobs on the local level, rather than feeding them from the public purse.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. FENOIT:

I have to agree with what the hon. member just said with regard to that, but I have two other questions, and I'll ask them one at a time. With regard to the burial expenses, since burial is the most expensive way of disposing of the remains of a body, are other methods honoured when they are requested by the relatives, or before the deceased passed away?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I can think of one other method of disposing of a body, other than burial, and that's cremation. When the hon. member said 'other methods', it concerns me.

MR. BENOIT:

I was thinking of donating the body.

MR. CRAWFORD:

I see. Yes, I hadn't thought of that. Well surely, if a body is donated to the university or something like that, then that's what would be done. But where the preference is expressed for cremation, I simply don't know the answer as to how that is arrived at. I don't mind getting that information for you -- if the request was made would it be honoured. My thought is that it would be.

MR. BENOIT:

Another question that I have, Mr. Chairman, has to do with vouchers. What has this government's policy been with regard to vouchers? Will you continue the use of vouchers in some cases, or is it your intention to do away with them altogether?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, the intention is to all but do away with them over a phased period. When I say 'all but do away with them' I mean that the government would want to keep its options open, I think, in unusual cases to still use vouchers. But as a practical matter for the average recipient, we expect that vouchers will be out of use within a reasonable time. By that I mean that a project -- [Interjection] . . . don't know what the hon. member just said. I heard the interjection but didn't catch the exact words -- I suppose he is playing again upon 'now', when I say 'within a reasonable time'. In any event, a pilot project on one regional office should be possible within a year, to give back necessary data to make the change in more offices in the following year, and so on, until it is done, I hope, in two to three years.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, I would like an answer. Is the hon. minister or the government intending to bring in amendments to The Financial Administration Act so that this is possible across government?

40-42

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, that has been made the subject of an opinion by the Legislative Counsel. The answer is that in the event that change in legislation is necessary in that particular act, amendments would be brought in.

MR. P. SPEAKER:

Did the hon. minister find that this is one of the barriers to overcome in implementing this policy?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I found it was certainly discussed.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to direct a question to the hon. minister, regarding the vouchers and some of the problems that have arisen. Take, for example, a welfare recipient, whose rent is being paid by voucher. Then the department takes the recipient off vouchers and puts him on cash. What has happened in a number of cases is the welfare recipient has not paid the rent to the owner of the property. It has sometimes been 90 days or three months before the owner can take any action. The Welfare Department says, "take them to court". There is no way you are going to waste your time taking someone to court, I wouldn't think, when they haven't any money to pay it with in the first place. I suggest, as a courtesy, that when they do take these people off the voucher system, there should be some way of notifying the landlord that it is going to be up to him to collect the money, as the recipient of social welfare is going to be placed on cash.

I have a case in my mind which I learned about this weekend, a person has been trying to collect her rent for four months. The department has notified the landlady -- and she is a widow, by the way, relying on this money -- that she would have to sue the recipient. There is no way the Welfare Department is going to reimburse her. Yet, this person is still on welfare, and has now moved into another location. So, it shows you the difficulty it puts the person in, if there is no notification that the person is going to be taken off vouchers.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I know that some discussion has been had with my officials and the association representing landlords in Edmonton, to facilitate, if possible, a form of assignment for example, for payment of rents in the future. Nothing has been finalized in that respect, so I can't say that that protection would come into play where the protection of the voucher has been lost, only that it is a possible way of doing it.

The other point, I suppose, is the suggestion made that some notification be given where the change is taking place. That should certainly be considered. It seems to me that when you are changing the payer in effect, which is what you would be doing once you go from the voucher to the cash system, that landlords might be entitled to know.

MR. P. SPEAKER:

A question to the hon. Deputy Premier. In light of the decision of the government to go into a cash payment at the regional office, and setting a new policy level, is it the intention of the Deputy Premier or someone in the government to bring in amendments to The Financial Administration Act this session to make that policy feasible?

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-43

MR. HCFNER:

I think that the hon. minister has answered that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR:

I wonder if the hon. minister could tell us if there is a standard rate for burial? Is it the same for everybody, or does it vary?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, pardon me for what maybe seems to be an unseemly reaction to such a deadly serious issue, but I have to chuckle when the hon. member mentions the question of burial costs. It is done by contract, and the department has a contract with the Undertakers' Association, and the answer is that they are all done at the same price. I acknowledge that there is no mirth in the situation. But my memory of it that caused some momentary amusement was that I thought the price was too high, and found the contract had already been negotiated by the time I saw it, so it was one that I would have liked to fight over a little at the time, but wasn't able to.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, on that, is there a lot of bidding on these when they are tendered?

MR. CRAWFORD:

A "tender" question perhaps, but the answer is that since the contract is between the Association of Undertakers and the government, the members of that association throughout the province, work for the fee schedule.

I might just add on this same point, another burning issue. I have received a note with regard to cremation. The deputy minister has advised me that to the best of his knowledge no one has requested it, and so that would be the situation at the present time. Let me say further, that if the contract does not exclude that possibility, and I don't recall the detail of it at the moment, I would be happy to assure the hon. Member for Highwood, as a matter of policy, that we would try to have it understood with the association that if that preference was expressed it would be honoured.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the same question of the hon. Provincial Treasurer, because I think this is a very significant point at this time. When the government or a department or a minister, makes a policy that you are going to eliminate, or add to, or change something, then the enabling legislation must be there. I think I know, as well as the Deputy Premier and other members of the Cabinet well know, that in order for a department or an arm of government to disburse any funds at the regional level at the present time under the present auditing arrangement, that it takes an amendment to The Financial Administration Act. So I think my question is very valid at this time, and I would like to direct it to the Provincial Treasurer because it is his responsibility. Is there going to be an amendment during this session to bring that new policy into effect? Or are we just having one arm saying one thing and another arm another?

MR. MINIELY:

I think I will just add a little bit to that. First of all, the policy with respect to the direct payments was worked out in consultation with the Treasury Department, and, of course, as well

40-44

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

with the Provincial Auditor. Basically, as you know, The Financial Administration Act states that all the revenue and expenditures of the government are under the control of the Provincial Treasurer. But the pre-audit system is one in which the Provincial Auditor really determines the extent of the vouchers, and he receives proper satisfaction before the expenditure is laid out. Now within the confines of the present Financial Administration Act, the Provincial Auditor and the Treasury Department have approved the Department of Health and Social Development taking this on a pilot project basis. I believe you are going to start off with one office and just move from there. It does not at the present time require a change or an amendment to The Financial Administration Act in order to move in this direction on the pilot project.

It does require that the Provincial Auditor, as well as the Treasury Department, is satisfied with the particular procedures that will be utilized in the regional office with respect to the expenditures. We, in fact, are going to be monitoring the pilot projects as they go in various stages. The only amendments to The Financial Administration Act which we intend bringing in, are ones related to the salary of the Provincial Auditor which has been up for review for approximately two years, and as well, we are hoping that we might have unanimous endorsement from both sides of the House to allow the MLA's to be paid something under The Legislative Assembly Act after this sitting is over, before the next sitting. But this does not require at the present time a change in the act.

MR. P. SPEAKER:

Just a point for clarification, Mr. Chairman. However, in order to fully implement this program of cash at regional office, in the final stages then an amendment will have to be made. Is that correct? I well understand that a pilot project can be carried out under the present act. However, for full implementation, because of that pre-audit system, it would require some type of an amendment. Is that correct?

MR. MINIFLY:

Well, actually I think -- as I say again -- under the present Financial Administration Act this might have been the intent. But if we go into the act, technically it depends on whether your examination is done at the regional level or the central level. So the fact of decentralization of payments in itself does not necessarily eliminate a pre-audit situation, as long as the auditor is satisfied that, at the regional level, he can have someone in there who is, in effect, testing on a certain basis for certain times of the year, when they are in fact paid out.

So the implementation of the full scheme -- and I will say in reviewing The Financial Administration Act that we will be looking at possibly an amendment to allow more decentralization of payments in this area, because we do believe that if we can decentralize and have payments in regional offices, that it's in accord with government policy to decentralize. Of course, at the same time we have to be satisfied that the financial control which is desired from the point of view of the Provincial Auditor and the Treasury Department, is satisfied. In that case, as long as the Provincial Auditor is satisfied that he is able to examine sufficient justification for expenditures under the present terms of The Financial Administration Act, well then we would not amend same. But I would say again, to develop a wide policy on this will be one of the things we will be considering in terms of the present Financial Administration Act and whether or not it would be desirable to amend it to allow a much fuller development of the policy.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-45

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the hon. minister if he realizes the tight corner that he has backed the landlords of Alberta into with dropping the voucher system? They've only got two alternatives, not to accept people on social assistance or to sue your department for back rent. Since these people are the wards of your department, do they have the right to sue you?

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to follow-up a supplementary question --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I wonder if the hon. minister would reply to Mr. Stromberg on that?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, firstly, the landlord doesn't have any right to sue the department for non-payment of rent. When the tenant is a recipient of welfare the only thing that could happen which would be unpleasant in any way, and the example raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican is a good example of it, is where an irresponsible recipient of public assistance abuses some person who is hurt as a result of non-payment of the rent. But thinking of landlords as a whole, they're in that position with their other tenants too. The government doesn't, and I think need not, take any special responsibility for the protection of landlords just because of the fact that some of the people they choose to rent to may be receiving support from the government.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, on that particular point. When a person is on welfare and rents a home from the owner of that home, and does it on the understanding that the Department of Welfare is going to pay his rent, I think there is a responsibility on the department and on the government. I don't think the government can simply walk out by saying the man is renting the house. Surely the department isn't going to let people rent any type of place they like -- otherwise why wouldn't they all be living in \$300 per month apartments? The department has something to say about it and the department, I think, has a responsibility and I would like to hear further comments on this.

Secondly, I would like to say in connection with cash versus vouchers, I think this has to be approached pretty carefully. And I say that with the idea that the thought might be inciting the social workers, many of whom lose all practical contact with life entirely. Because where a man picks up the cash and goes out and drinks it up and the children and the wife are left without food for the next two weeks -- I think it's fine to give them the chance to see if they're responsible. But one slip should be enough, and after that the welfare of those kids and the wife is, to me, more important than giving the husband enough so he can go down to the liquor vendors -- even if the money does come back to the government in an indirect route. I think this cash has to be watched very carefully. If it's being used properly by people on welfare then I'm all for it, because it does help them to get better bargains and so on, and it helps them to have greater dignity, etc. If it's used improperly by any one member then I think we have a responsibility to consider the others in that particular contract. We shouldn't have any hesitation at all in going back to vouchers if it's going to protect the rights of the children and the wife. Or maybe in some cases the children and the husband where the wife happens to be the domineering person -- I

40-46

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

understand there are such people although I don't know too much about it personally.

The one other point I would like to make while I'm standing, so I don't have to get up too often, is the matter of burial. I'm very concerned about the amount being paid on welfare cases. I've seen some pretty crude -- if you'll excuse the colloquial expression -- 'boxes' used in burying some people who had no relatives and apparently no close friends. They're human beings too. I hope the contract that the hon. minister mentioned specified the type of casket that's going to be used. I'm not a believer in expensive funerals. I think caskets now are getting so that many people just couldn't afford to die if it came to having any choice in the matter -- and the people on welfare should, I think, have a nice casket but nothing elaborate. And it should be something that anyone can look at and say, "well, there is some dignity in this," because they are being buried for the last time, too, the same as a rich person is being buried once and for all. So I hope that there is some type of casket specified in this contract. Perhaps the hon. minister could inform us?

MR. CHAIRMAN

Mr. Zander and then Mr. Henderson.

MR. SANDER:

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to illustrate to you how easy it is to get social allowance. About a month and a half ago while the Legislature was in session I had a phone call from a business firm in the oilfield industry. They were requiring about 34 men for about four or five months work. We had about 48 on welfare but I could not get the names of those people on welfare. I believe that at least 70% of them were able bodied because I got about eight phone calls after I had phoned the regional office in Edmonton as I wanted to get the names so I could get these people back to work. I know the phone wires were pretty hot on some of the phone calls I received, although I did not get the names of these people that were on social allowance.

Put a little bit of humor to this. Just about two weeks ago I came home from a session in the city here, and we had an application for welfare. It was a person's name and was addressed to me. It was on a clothing store, and I may tell you this, it was the Hudson's Bay store in the City of Edmonton. And we have not found out to this day who that person was. He was supposed to be at my place, and I've never known a man alive that was living at my place or at any time lived at my place. This voucher was for clothing at the Hudson's Bay store. I had to turn this over to the clergy to try and locate the person who was entitled to the welfare. I think it's ridiculous, when we consider that we're handing it out from the City of Edmonton centre. I think it should be restored to local government and be decentralized. Let the local people do it, they know the people who are living in their area.

I can't see us spending, on this one item alone, \$70 million, an increase every year. I'm sure if we make an effort to provide jobs for these people, that we will succeed; we should not start handing welfare out as we have in the past.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a couple of comments and then ask the hon. minister and Provincial Treasurer a question regarding the matter of voucher payments.

Firstly, Mr. Chairman, I'd certainly like to endorse the comments from the hon. Member for Drayton Valley. As long as I've

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-47

been a member of this House, I've been placing this argument within our own caucus and in the Legislature as well. I think the government should hopefully appreciate the fact that there is a difference between the administrative problems of welfare in Edmonton and Calgary and in the rural area. I can't see in the city, probably Edmonton and Calgary, are so large anyhow, and rather impersonal from a welfare standpoint, that it matters if the programs are administered provincially or by the cities. But I would venture to state that outside of Calgary and Edmonton it does make quite a difference...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Turn your mike around -- we can't hear you!

MR. FENNDRSON:

It's something that should really be seriously examined and is one of the factors we had in mind when we introduced the new act last year with a view of trying to move some of these programs in the direction of the local level. As I've listened to the discussion over the years and in this House again this year, I can't help but think that this may be a subject that would be very timely for a committee of this Legislature to examine. I find that regardless of the political stripe of members of the Legislature and the locally elected authorities, that there is a wide divergence of viewpoints between elected officials, in general, and administrative officials on the question of welfare payments. A lot of people, an increasing number of people, are convinced that the subject is getting out of hand.

I'd like to suggest to the hon. minister that he might take it under advisement as to another year setting up a Legislative Committee to thoroughly examine the ground rules under which the system functions. I don't suggest that the abuses are probably that large a percentage of the total welfare problem, but very clearly we all know that the abuses that do take place give the whole system a complete black eye. And of course, like so many of these problems, it's only the abuses we ever hear about publicly. But I can't help but think it would be a subject that could be very appropriately examined by a committee of this Legislature in the next year or two.

I'd like to also ask the hon. minister as to what are the implications of the elimination of the voucher system and the responsibility of his department in those cases where the welfare worker goes around and actually lines up or finds the accommodation for the welfare recipient. Because this is done in many cases. We have a number of welfare families out in the community I live in that were really placed out there, the locations were found by welfare people, either from within the provincial level, or within the city organizations. Very clearly when a welfare worker goes around and makes the arrangements for rental for a particular family, it's going to be extremely difficult to convincingly argue that the Department of Welfare doesn't have any responsibility to see that the bills are paid. And very clearly a lot of this does happen. So I don't know to what extent the hon. minister has considered this implication, but I suggest it's one that has to be examined.

I'd also like to ask the Provincial Treasurer, while I'm on my feet, a question on the amendments to the Financial Administrative Procedures Act. I am wondering, if while they are examining the question of the pilot projects for elimination of vouchers at the local level, as to whether they are also going to examine the practicality and desirability of granting more latitude for the Department of Public Works, for example, relative to their task in maintaining some of the far flung institutions that the Department of Health operates within the province. Very clearly, I ran into, in my brief period as minister, some very ridiculous circumstances where

because of the financial administrative procedures it was literally impossible to get things done, like putting partitions between toilets down in the home at Raymond. The committee would go around -- it was appointed by the minister every year -- and report on this -- the partitions should be installed. It was just a constant merry-go-round between Public Works trying to get the contract lined up. It went through the chain of command up to Edmonton. They would get a contractor lined up, but before he ever got around to doing it, the contractor was broke, so they started over again. It took three years for the thing to go around completely three times, but they never did get them put in. Maybe they have them put in now.

One could quote many other instances where there are provincial institutions distributed around the province, where there are a lot of ridiculous things happening because of the bureaucratic system under which many of the programs are administered. I would just like to put in a plug. I don't say the present minister would necessarily agree with it, but I suggest very strongly that if they are going to examine some of these areas, that some of these problems should be looked into at the same time. Centralized purchasing and the centralization of minor decisions made by the Public Works Department, centralized at Edmonton, does produce a lot of ridiculous circumstances that I don't think any taxpayer in his right mind would argue is a very effective way of administering some of these services. I don't know about other departments, but certainly in the health department where they have these far flung facilities all across the province and directly under the administration of the province, there is, I think, a crying need for examination of the ground rules. We will wait for the Minister's answer next day.

MR. MINIELY:

I want to give you just a brief answer and then we can wrap up, Mr. Chairman. Firstly, with respect to the particular elimination of the voucher system in welfare and the payment of the cheques, the thing that I would like to emphasize on that, and I think the hon. Member for Little Bow, why you were thinking there may be an amendment to The Financial Administration Act is perhaps that you are not aware of the way we are approaching this. In fact, the evidence that is coming in at the present time under the voucher system to allow for the payment of the voucher is, in fact, no better than what will be the evidence that we are requiring under decentralization under the pilot project. Because the way we are going to approach it is largely to have nil account payment balances in the regional offices and the banks will handle them, and they will come in with dual signatures on them. In fact, the evidence that is being provided under the voucher system now, is no better than what we would be getting under the direct cheque system. So for that reason, in effect, the pre-audit still is satisfactory from the Provincial Auditor's point of view. As I emphasized earlier, he has approved us launching the pilot project.

With respect to the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin's question, I would like to emphasize, as I indicated earlier, certainly this is something we are going to examine. This decision, with respect to decentralization, has been a separate decision. Wherever we can decentralize and still retain financial control, this is what we want to ensure, that we have adequate financial control. We would pursue this and, of course, as you know, in some areas it is easier to control on a decentralized basis than others. We will be looking at these things and at the present time our decision has been isolated to the decentralization of the welfare system.

MR. HYNDMAN:

I move that the committee rise and report progress and beg leave to sit again.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-49

[The motion was carried without debate]

[Mr. Diachuk left the Chair at 5:30 p.m.]

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[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair]

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain estimates, reports progress, and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the report and the request for leave to sit again, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of information regarding tonight's business of the House. Firstly at 8:00 we'll do Government Motion No. 1, the resolution states a Bill for an Act being The Alberta Art Foundation Act, and then during the entire evening we'll consider Government Bills for Second Reading on pages 1, 2, 3, and 4, beginning with the following ones on page 3: The first bill for second reading No. 58, The Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs Act; secondly, Bill No. 60, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; thirdly, Bill No. 63, The Department of Highways and Transport Amendment Act, and then we'll return to page 1 and move down in numerical order, beginning with Bill No. 5.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House stands adjourned until 8:00 this evening.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair at 5:33 p.m.]

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[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair at 8:00 p.m.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the Assembly resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider Resolution No. 1 on the Order Paper. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor having been informed of the subject matter of the motion recommends the same for the consideration of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion of the hon. House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair.]

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair.]

MP. CHAIRMAN:

The committee will now come to order for the consideration of the following resolution, proposed by the hon. minister Mr. Schmid:

Be it resolved that it is expedient to introduce a bill for an act being The Alberta Art Foundation Act.

All agreed?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Chairman, I move that the resolution be reported.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

It has been moved by the hon. minister. Is it agreed that we report?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I move the Committee rise and report the Resolution and ask leave to sit again.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Is it agreed that we report and beg leave to sit again?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[Mr. Diachuk left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration the resolution for a bill for an act being The Alberta Art Foundation Act and begs leave to sit again.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the resolution be read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion of the hon. House Leader that the resolution be now read a second time, do you all agree?

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-51

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 74. The Alberta Art Foundation Act

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, Bill No. 74 of the first session of the 17th Alberta Legislature. This bill is The Alberta Art Foundation Act. It provides means whereby art, created by Alberta artists can be acquired, displayed for public benefit and preserved as a resource of the people of this province. In the process, the acquisition of such art will materially benefit Alberta artists as well as the people of Alberta in general. The bill makes provision for private individuals to donate monies, legacies, objects of art, and so on to the provincial collection.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 74 was introduced and read a first time.]

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS
(Second Reading)

Bill No. 58.
The Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs Act

MR. GEITY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to move second reading of Bill No. 58, The Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs Act, seconded by the hon. Minister of Education.

We have discussed the functions of the department in the House previously, Mr. Speaker, so I don't intend to take a great deal of time now other than to reiterate that this bill will create the legislative framework for the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and provide that the department will be responsible for the overall co-ordination of the policies, programs and activities of the Government of Alberta and other governments beyond the provincial borders.

MR. STRICH:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a comment or two in regard to this bill. I am a little concerned about any move that will increase the size of government, because I think it's generally accepted that government is growing and it is easier for it to grow than to hold it at a given size. One of the reasons, I say, is because it seems to me that in the work of an intergovernmental department, it will be dealing with many of those things that more properly fall under the function of a head of government dealing with another head of government. I'm sure that a great deal of the negotiation, as far as it relates to policy, must have its final approval from the heads of government. For a long time I think it has been recognized that there is a great deal of negotiation that has gone on between departments that led up to agreements and I feel confident that this needs to be co-ordinated, but again I suggest that it is more important that the president or the chairman of the Executive Council be made aware of the various negotiations that are taking place and the agreements that will be drawn up, so that there will be an assurance that the agreements are made according to the policy of government.

During the time that we were in office we also discovered that the federal government, on a number of occasions, was drawing up agreements with other governments of which we were not aware. I believe it's very necessary that this information be made available

to all provinces, but again I have to say that it is unnecessary to set up a department simply for the purpose of gathering this kind of information.

As far as the co-ordination between the various departments is concerned, this can be established without establishing a full-fledged department. I'm rather concerned that even though a department is set up, that we will not be assured, nor can we get assurances that the negotiation will, in fact, be handled by that department on behalf of the government. As a matter of fact, I think that it is very clear from the questions that have been raised and answers that have been given, that a great deal of the negotiation between departments is still continuing. I believe that it is necessary to receive assurances that this negotiation is carried on between departments according to government policy. I can see the need for having an agency or some group that would be responsible for providing the chairman or the president of the Executive Council with all of this information, so that a determination might be made as to whether or not it is, in fact, according to policy.

I realize that the government have made up their minds that they are going ahead with it, but I simply wanted to express these concerns at this point in time.

MR. NCTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this bill for, I suspect, somewhat different reasons than the members across the way. At the outset, it seems to me that despite the government's efforts to withdraw from some of the cost-shared programs there's really very little prospect in the years ahead that they will be too successful in this respect. I suspect the cost-shared programs will be with us for some time. That being the case, it's my submission that it's important to have a department of the provincial government which stays on top of all these programs so that we can take full advantage of them.

I might just say here that I am sure I am a minority of one in respect to cost-shared programs. I have maintained for a long time that cost-shared programs are desirable. I think if we are going to tackle any of the regional disparities that exist in this country, we require federal participation in programs relating to health, social services and what have you. Certainly, in view of the fact that we do have these cost-shared programs, and because we are going to have them for some years in the future, it is essential, it seems to me, that we have a department in our government which, as I mentioned, stays on top of it.

Secondly, I believe we are going to be entering in the years ahead a time when it will be necessary for both the provincial and federal levels of government to work much more closely together than in the past. We hear a lot about planning these days. And there is no real doubt that we are moving towards a greater degree of economic planning than ever before, regardless of where we sit in the ideological spectrum. I think there is a growing awareness that there has to be a certain amount of planning. Again, if planning in a federal state is to mean anything at all -- if fiscal planning is to have any relevance, any value, there has to be a provincial input. I frankly think it is going to be necessary in the years ahead for other provinces to have ministers of federal and intergovernmental affairs as well, because I just can't visualize the planning process being effective at the federal level at all unless you have departments which tie in in the way this department will.

I also would suggest that perhaps again, from a slightly different vantage point than the present government, that we have to work towards the fulfilling of services in this country from the vantage point of co-operative federalism. I believe the government

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-53

would be making a fairly serious mistake if it sees this department in an adversary sense. That is, we are going to tell Ottawa where we stand on this, that and the other thing, and we are going to show them where to get off. Frankly, I don't think this is the right approach to take. It seems to me that on the multitude of very complex issues that require federal and provincial co-operation, it is essential that this ministry recognize the very nature of our federal state, and the necessity of working on a co-operative basis with our federal government.

One final observation -- and this, Mr. Speaker, is perhaps more in the form of a question than anything else. I don't raise it in any frivolous sense, I assume the government has examined it, and I would be interested in the hon. minister's final summation for his comments on it -- the reference here to foreign states.

Several people have brought to my attention the question, does this reference make the department *intra vires*, that is, do we have the authority as a province to use this kind of language in our legislation? Or would this more properly come under Section No. 91 of the ENA Act where the residual powers rest with the federal government? I'm not sure -- I don't pretend to be a constitutional expert, and I'm sure that in setting up the department, the government has at least given some consideration to whether or not this is *intra vires*. I assume it is, but I would certainly like the hon. minister's comments on it, because if we are dealing with the general principle at this time, we want to make sure that we are, in fact, dealing with legislation that won't be thrown out by the courts.

In general summary, Mr. Speaker, I believe a department of this type is necessary. I am going to state that I will probably disagree more often than not with the various statements that the minister in charge of this department makes. But that is not the point at this time. If we are going to have a meaningful, workable confederation, we must recognize that there should be co-operation and close consultation, and to the extent that this department offers a step in the right direction, I certainly support the bill in principle.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on the bill too. Generally I oppose the bill. I could support a bill of this nature if the Premier of the Province was the minister. but I see little sense, really, in setting up a new department with a new staff to do something that each minister can do and for which the co-ordination can be carried out under the present set up of the Premier. I frankly find it difficult to understand the appointment of a whole staff when most of the work is going to be involving other ministers, rather than departments, because all agreements coming through any department come to the head of that department.

The first reason for opposing the bill is the cost of it. As the hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition mentioned it's another example of the growth of government and the growth of government unnecessarily, because my second point is that it's duplication.

The bill provides for the minister of the department to do certain things and then also provides for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. So, from here on out, based on the regulations which we haven't seen, it would appear that there will be two people dealing with almost every agreement -- at least two, perhaps three when you consider the Premier of the Province.

If it's an agreement with the Department of Transport in Ottawa, obviously the Minister of Highways will be better informed on those matters than any other minister. It's his work and it's his job. He

will have to convey to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs all of the points that are readily available in his own department and then the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs will have to become conversant with it, and if there's a meeting in Ottawa, there will be two ministers going instead of one.

Most governments have the minister bring these items to the Lieutenant Governor in Council, where they are approved or otherwise, and I suppose that would still have to be done. So it's additional footwork, additional time taken from the Minister of the department itself, then taking the time of the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and then again reviewing the whole matter before the entire cabinet.

So it's really a duplication, and I think you could say the same thing from every department. If it's a matter of freight rates, the Minister of Industry and Commerce would be better informed than most other ministers. There will be times in freight rates for instance, when the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Highways will probably be equally well informed as the Minister of Industry and Commerce. But again, it may be necessary for the Minister of Industry now to clear it with several ministers but must be approved by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and carrying it to cabinet - so again, the duplication, it's costly and it's duplication.

There are two other reasons why I'm not enthusiastic about the bill. I think the hon. minister of the bill could be using his abilities to much greater advantage in running a department rather than in carrying out the duties imposed on him in this particular act.

The third reason why I oppose the bill is that the powers are too wide. The powers go beyond that of the one department; they go beyond that of his own department, but even require the approval of the hon. minister over and above that of the Lieutenant Governor. As a matter of fact, it points out that where present acts state the Lieutenant Governor must approve, now in spite of what it says in those acts, it's the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs who must approve. Now I don't know if this is going to replace the Lieutenant Governor in Council in regard to approvals for intergovernmental agreements, but it could. I presume that it won't; I presume it will still have to be cleared by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, with the Cabinet of the province. But it does give wide-reaching powers to the hon. minister in which even the Lieutenant Governor in Council could be bypassed if a minister decided to do so. I don't think a minister would do it but the power is there to do it, notwithstanding anything in that act.

The other point is one that I fear very much as something that is not good in this country and which is developing slowly in many provinces, where provinces are taking onto themselves the power to deal with foreign countries. We objected to this very strongly when the Quebec government started to set up their own relationships with France, and I think properly so. I think we are part of a nation, and surely if we're dealing with a foreign country -- I've no objection to provinces being involved -- but certainly it should be done through the appropriate minister in the Canadian government. Powers like that should be reserved for the central government. This doesn't prevent negotiations or discussions, but we're talking about agreements and types of agreements between Alberta and foreign countries. So for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I think the bill is unnecessary unless the minister himself was the Premier of the Province. I think then it would have a good chance of working and avoiding much duplication, so I must by conscience oppose the second reading of the bill.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-55

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, standing in my place and making a few comments with regard to the bill, let me say at the outset that I am less enthusiastic about the establishment of a Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. I think Mr. Taylor touched on a number of points. Perhaps there are three other comments that I would like to make.

First of all, I hope the hon. minister in his concluding comments would make some reference to the kind of liaison or at least the kind of communication he has had with the Province of Quebec, because over the past number of years I think it would fair to say that the Province of Quebec has gone further in this area of establishing a Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, or whatever term they use, than has any other province in Canada. And if my information is correct -- and I stand to be corrected -- at this time the government of the Province of Quebec is moving away from this. In fact, they have folded up their Department of Intergovernmental Affairs and they are now having each of the various departments -- as I understand it -- through the Premier's office co-ordinate the necessary material as far as that province is concerned. That falls in very closely with the point made by Mr. Taylor, the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, on the question of cost-shared programs and the attitude that the government, through the hon. Minister of Federal Intergovernmental Affairs is taking, it becomes very obvious that in addition to having people in the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, in the area of cost-shared programs the Treasurer's Department must have the expertise that will look after the interests of the province. It seems to me that this lends itself, in a department such as this, to another overlapping of government services and certainly this isn't what we need. I think the points that the hon. Member for Drumheller made, about this kind of co-ordination being handled in the Premier's office, seems like a reasonable one and a sensible approach.

The third comment that I would make, Mr. Speaker; I suppose when we talk about intergovernmental affairs we could refer to that department as the IGA department. I think that likely to date we can't refer to the minister as the successful IGA manager. Perhaps, with the look he has on his face, the best way we can refer to the hon. minister is the friendly IGA manager as far as Alberta is concerned. And I would suggest to the manager that, if he hasn't already, got in rather close communication with the Province of Quebec. From the correspondence that I've had from that particular area they are, as I have indicated certainly less enthusiastic about the route that the Province of Alberta seems to be taking because they've been -- if you'll pardon the expression -- down that garden path before.

So for these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I am, to say the least, less than enthusiastic about the future of the friendly IGA manager.

MR. BENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I want to make just a very brief comment on this particular bill. While I can accept the desirability of certainly a degree of co-ordination in provincial dealings with the federal government, I have to suggest, on the other hand, that I think the bill was very hastily drafted. It says very little. Basically it gives the hon. Premier the authority to set up a minister with an impressive sounding name and essentially leaves the definition of his responsibilities to regulations as yet undefined by the Premier. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, at best the responsibilities as described in the act -- at best, I say, it could rate -- is a Minister Without Portfolio and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it would probably be in the better interests of the people of Alberta and less embarrassing to the present government if they were actually to withdraw the bill and

draft it up in a more comprehensive manner so that we have some understanding as to exactly what the purpose of the legislation is. Because I suggest, Mr. Speaker, again, the bill which simply allows for the appointment of a minister and leaves the definition, basically, of his authorities and responsibilities to Order in Council, along with the authority to over-ride other legislation relating to other ministers and other departments, is poor legislation. I suggest it's fraught with a number of perils so far as execution of agreements with the federal government, which are of considerable significance to the people of the province of Alberta.

I therefore quite sincerely suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it would be highly desirable for the government to hold the bill at this time rather than proceeding with it any further.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a remark or two on this particular act. First of all, I would like to agree with my leader where he states that there is a certain amount of duplication in the act. It certainly indicates a greater growth of government. Also we're not too sure of the results at this time.

I think I would suggest to the hon. Premier that one of the things he should look at, possibly rather than a Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, is a restructuring of the Cabinet so that there are certain possible senior ministers in the government and there are other ministers looking after some -- you can't really call them secondary functions -- but other functions. But I'd see this group of senior ministers acting in the policy area where their concentration would be on developing new policy; developing new directions; and at the same time co-ordinating with all of Cabinet. In sense he'd have some persons to support him in the role as Premier. I feel that one of the basic points of the act is to try and bring about co-ordination through one minister. And I must certainly say to the hon. Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs that I'm sure that is a most difficult task and not an easy task at all and there are a lot of problems. I think possibly with a feed-in system like that that there are some merits to it.

I'd like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that what the name of this act should have been is A Kingmaker Act rather than an act as it's called. Because I think it's an act that's set out for a glamorous position.

What does it really mean? Well, it means a trip to Ottawa. You know, you ride along; the Minister of Mines and Minerals he goes along; the minister over here goes along -- and most likely sits in first class and enjoys the meals -- goes along with the Minister of Highways or the Deputy Premier and has a fine time. But really he doesn't know what his responsibility is. Here's the poor Minister of Mines and Minerals with a big load on his shoulders, worrying all the way down there, and what does the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs do? He just sits down in a jolly, nice position, doesn't worry; he says, "Look, fella, when we get down there I'll do a little talking and when the questions get tough you answer them and I'll keep smiling and look after things." And I'm sure that's what happens. Now, as I said, Mr. Speaker, it makes a king in a glamorous position and that's really what happens. Well, that's the first point -- a nice trip to Ottawa.

Well let's look at the other one, when we get down there. Since the beginning of the session I've been asking the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, or the acting Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs what really happens down there? Well you know, he's got the most beautiful answer I've ever heard. It says a lot, and it's only one word. He says, "well, just negotiate, you know". I think, boy, you know if we could just put

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-57

music to that and play it all the way to Ottawa possibly we could get some results. But up to this point we haven't got those results and we're a little concerned as people here in Alberta.

Then the other point about this being a 'kingmaker act'. I think this is even just a little more significant, Mr. Speaker, in that I think it's just a good possible department where we have a good leadership training course.

I started to suggest at the beginning of this session that maybe the Deputy Premier should have a position such as this. Now he has been benevolent, and maybe he didn't have anything to say about it. The Premier said, well possibly this is one of the men of the Conservative party. You take that mantle at this time because possibly down the road I may need somebody who has some good leadership ability, who has co-ordinated the functions of government and really understands the functions of government. So in that light, the act is a kingmaker act and training a man is most important.

But what I'd suggest to the Premier, if we do pass this act, that possibly we should give more of the fellows a chance. You know, if Ottawa starts to call and things start to happen, then possibly this position shouldn't be too permanent with any one minister. Maybe a year from now the acting Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs should go to another position for a little experience and the Deputy Premier should take that job. And I think, with that in mind, there could be some good training and people ready to step in just in case something happens -- you don't know, they do happen at times.

I'd just like to say, Mr. Speaker, that some of those arguments maybe don't really pertain to the best interests of the people of Alberta but they do pertain to the best interests of the Conservative Party. And in light of that I have a few doubts as to whether the act has a lot of benefits to this Legislature and the people of Alberta. Thank you.

DP. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I believe it is my duty and my responsibility, when funds are going to be misused as they are when we create a department such as this, that I think men of all conscience should certainly stand up and take a position on this, because I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I think that when we have the new Premier surrounded with his entourage and we have created the additional position of Deputy Premier, this position and this minister is certainly redundant.

I would also like to include the fact that the hon. Minister without Portfolio, should either be paid a full minister's salary, or else if the job is not important enough for him to be paid a full minister's salary, it should be given to the minister without any responsibility, and I mean the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. As far as we can tell from this side of the House, that is really a nothing department, because we have not been able to get any answers about what it serves; it has not done anything for the people of this province. So to me this is just another example of the Conservative government trying to really cut out the fat.

Now that is really some way of cutting out the fat. When you create a ministry, first of all you increase the number of Cabinet ministers from 17 to 22 - now, that's really cutting out the fat. But when you create a department where you pay a minister \$22,500 and he is a little dubious as to what he has to do, now that is not my idea of cutting out the fat. But I would like to say that he is a fine fellow, as was said by my friend from Little Bow. He is a fine

40-58

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

fellow and I think maybe if they call this department, Ministry Responsible for Public Relations, now I would go along with that. I really sincerely would, because if they want to have a paid public relations officer and call him that, well that's fine, so at least we would know what he is.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Aw come off it!

DR. BUCK:

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I think the hon. Premier should not have been too hasty when he created this department, because all the decisions that have to come through his government, from his government, from his backbenchers, his frontbenchers, must go through his office and the Executive Council, so I feel this is a redundancy and I certainly say that I will be voting against it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, it is just great -- [laughter] -- it is just great to really be wanted.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

MR. HENDERSON:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. He must have misread what we said.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. GETTY:

With some of the frustrations that you experience in dealing with the federal government and then hearing all the perils and the problems and the dangers that this portfolio has, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the previous administration didn't create the department because they couldn't get anybody silly enough to take it -- [laughter and interjections] However, I appreciate the comments from the various members, Mr. Speaker, about the size of government and the concerns about spending public money unless it is absolutely necessary. We believe it is necessary in creating a department like this, and, for whatever the assurance is worth I think I can say to the House that it is our determination to keep the department from getting too large in the future. We do not intend that this department will be carrying out programs. I think the key words when I described the department were the co-ordination of the activities of government departments with other governments. We feel that it is necessary and that while individual ministers, yes, do know more about agreements and more about programs that may be negotiated with Ottawa or other governments, nevertheless, they don't know what their fellow minister is doing. In many cases these agreements do lap over or have an impact on other agreements and it is very necessary in our mind that somebody have the responsibility for the total co-ordination and the overall monitoring of this type of agreement with other governments.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-59

I tried to make some notes to answer any questions that various members had. There was one question that the hon. Member for Drumheller mentioned about the restrictions on a provincial government in dealing with foreign countries. I certainly agree with him. The reference in the act to dealing with foreign countries is in the area when it is necessary for our government to move, travel, establish offices in other countries, it is necessary to deal with them to some extent and this provides a co-ordinating feature in that regard. It is not our intention, it has not been our intention to enter into any agreements with other countries which, in fact, would be infringing on federal jurisdiction.

One of the members talked briefly about Quebec having been down this path before and, therefore, perhaps had learned something and were thinking of getting out of it. From the information I have been able to establish it is a fact that Quebec is happy with their department. They have had a great deal of growth in that department. It is currently somewhere in excess of 200 members and so, they do a lot more than just co-ordinate the negotiations and activities of other governments with their government. They actually have created the capability within their Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs Department -- the capability of monitoring and actually assessing the actions of the other departments. It is not our intention to do that although it is certainly something that would be easy to fall into in order to be as aware as possible of what a department is doing. It is simple to hire an expert and have him start to monitor whichever responsibility he is concerned with and pretty soon you have a mini-duplication of all departments of the government. Again, we do not intend to do that and we resist that possibility as much as possible. Quebec is not changing its department. They have shifted responsibilities among ministers to a certain extent, but they maintain their department.

It's also well to note the Province of Ontario, just now of course they have that system, as the hon. Member for Little Bow mentioned, where you have certain levels of cabinet ministers. They have created a certain level of cabinet minister, super ministers or something. One of their's is now the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, so there is a recognition on Ontario's part that there's a real need in this area. The new government in Newfoundland has created a minister who is responsible for intergovernmental affairs.

One of the things I've noticed at federal-provincial meetings is that if the various ministers representing their departments are getting together and they have responsibilities in their departments, I think it's only natural that they'll do whatever is necessary to get that program initiated in the best way possible within their province. That's their responsibility and we've discussed this in the House before. It's a simple matter for them to enter into an agreement with Ottawa or another province which will allow them to fulfill those responsibilities. I think more and more governments are recognizing that it's necessary to have ministers meeting who are not primarily concerned with programs, and who are not going to be fighting to get so much money for this program or that program, but rather to be down there looking at intergovernment co-operation on an overall Canada-wide basis. And I think as more and more attention is paid to the fact that we need this co-operation in Canada, we will see more and more provincial governments going to the creation of some official elected member of the Executive Council who will be responsible for these types of responsibilities, as I have.

I think I've covered all of the points I wanted to, Mr. Speaker. I realize that in creating the department we don't have all the answers. Imperfect as it may be, it's a step, though, in a direction we think it's necessary to move. I ask all members to support this bill.

[Bill No. 58 was read a second time]

40-60

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

Bill No. 60: The Highway Traffic Amendment Act, 1972

MR. COFITHOFNE:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. minister Mr. Yurko, that Bill No. 60 be now read a second time. This bill has a number of housekeeping rules and changes. Some of them, I suppose, could be classified as new directions in policy.

One of them would be a change in the requirements for driver's licence qualifications among senior citizens. Those having good driving records need only pass a medical examination to qualify for a driver's licence. Another part of this bill would be the local option of a local community setting their own speed limits. Another section would be the requirement of bicycles to have lights and reflectors. As well as a minimum on insurance, these are some of the major changes in the act.

The reason for this is, in a new type of legislation the lack of communication, particularly in rural areas, is felt and rural people -- between the high cost of the subscriptions to major newspapers in the province and requiring to get the newspapers through the mail -- quite often are not as well informed as to what is happening in the changes in legislation. It was felt that probably one of the groups of people most affected would be our native people, who are not exposed in many ways to local papers such as municipal newspapers, from which they could get the information. With such a severe penalty for this, we would find a great number of them ending up in jail. For the first year at least we will leave it to the judge's discretion. Most of the amendments are of a housekeeping nature.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say one or two words on the principle of the bill; for the most part, I support the principles involved in this bill, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act 1972.

There are just two principles with which I would like to deal. The first one is, uniformity of the rules of the road. Several years ago our legislation permitted municipalities to set the rates of speed in their own areas at whatever they chose. As a result, we had greatly varying speed limits and other rules of the road that became very confusing to the general public. The cabinet received a submission from the Alberta Motor Association pointing this out and requesting that something be done to establish some type of uniformity. So we set up a committee in the Department of Highways and Transport to which we added a member of the AMA and the City of Edmonton. This committee carried out studies and recommended that we have some uniformity by placing stricter than ordinary rules in The Highway Traffic Act. This was taken to the Urban convention and there, unanimously, the convention supported this uniformity of rules, which meant that some had to give up privileges that they had then enjoyed, such as setting speed limits below 30 miles per hour.

The way the recommendation came in is that any municipality should have the right to establish speed limits from 30 miles per hour upwards, but that 30 miles per hour was quite a reasonable speed in any urban area, and that if there is reason to establish it below 30 miles per hour, then it should be done only after sound argument was presented to the Minister of the Department of Highways and Transport.

This idea was carried by the municipalities who felt that it was in the interest, in order to get some type of uniformity and do away with the confusion that was then existing. Since that time the effect has been to get very uniform laws throughout the province in regard to rules of the road, and it has even gone beyond the

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-61

province, and we now have quite uniform rules of the road right across the whole of Canada.

Occasionally there were some misgivings about the reduction of the speed limit below 30 miles per hour. The policy I generally followed when it was my responsibility, was that if the city or town council wanted it below that, there must be a pretty sound reason for doing so. And when it came to my office that was approved. However, there are very few cases actually in the entire province.

The case that had occurred in Calgary just at the time of the change-over of government had not come to my office. One of the departmental people had replied setting out that the policy was not to establish rules below thirty miles per hour, but as far as I was concerned I thought the new minister did the right thing in establishing that, because the City Council of Calgary wanted to do so.

When a whole council is convinced a speed limit of less than thirty is required in a park area, or a school area, or residential area, then I think the council should have the responsibility to do so. Consequently, I'm not really adverse to the principle contained in the act but I think it has to be watched, otherwise we may well get back to the place where we have so much confusion over rules of the road, including speed limits, that people never know actually what the speed limit is until they see the sign.

The other principle with which I would like to deal, is the matter of minimum and maximum fines. I think this is a policy that has to be thought out very carefully, in this particular act.

The present act calls for minimum fines because it was felt that the court should not levy very low fines for something that the people of Alberta had legislated, and had ordained that all should follow the rule. The rule is that every vehicle should be covered with public liability and property damage and the accident benefits. Now, if the reason for setting the minimum fines was that, generally speaking, the minimum fine was equal to or greater than the amount of the premium of the policy, so that it didn't pay to cheat.

That's really what you're doing, when you drive your motor vehicle without PL and PD, when the law says you must have PL and PD, you are actually cheating and not being fair to the other people in the province who may dislike as much as you do, the idea of paying the premium for that insurance. The amount of the minimum fine was therefore not simply guessed at or taken out of a hat but was set pretty definitely so that it would be equal to or greater, than the majority of the premiums of PL and PD in the province. There may be some higher, but certainly it covered by far the majority of the premiums.

Consequently we thought people would reason thus, if we are caught, we will have to pay an amount equal to the premium of the policy, so why take a chance? We might just as well spend that money and get our policy and then drive legally. And I think that a very large number of people will reason that way.

What their reasoning will be if they consider that they may only be fined \$1 or \$5 or \$10 or \$25 for a first offence for breaking the law, may well induce some people to drive without PL and PD. If the hon. minister has received the type of mail that I've received -- he would certainly see it in the file from scores of people who have a violent dislike for insurance companies and a violent dislike for being told by anybody that they have to take out PL and PD -- then I think there's a very strong possibility of this taking place.

I think it's a mistake to remove the minimum fines. Generally speaking, I support maximum fines -- I say generally speaking. It

does give the court a wide scope. It gives the court a chance to impose a penalty that most fits the particular crime or offence. But where the offence is so serious that it's affecting other people, and may well affect the lives and the property of others, then I think it's not wrong to tell the court that you must charge, you must upon finding a person guilty, charge a minimum fine, not less than.

The maximum, I have no objections to the maximum, certainly it's a good scope. But I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the legislation would be strengthened greatly if the hon. minister and the government would consider leaving in the minimums, and then establishing the new maximums, if they felt the court was going to be fairer through having a minimum and maximum for first, second or subsequent offences. I'm going to leave it at that at this time. I hope the government will reconsider this matter of minimum fines when it comes to PL and PD insurance.

I just want to cite one other example. A number of years ago we had a very large number of truckers in this province who broke the law because they would be fined only a very small sum. Consequently truckers reasoned that; "We'll take a chance on carrying overloads, even though it does do damage to the highway and the roads; we'll take a chance because the fine is only going to be a very small amount, nothing compared to what we will make if we're not caught, or even if we are caught it will pay the fine and still give us a good profit." So we came up with the idea at that time that we would take the profit out of cheating and make the fine commensurate with the overload that would be carried. The person who carries a much heavier overload pays a much heavier fine. And that policy has had the effect of reducing the overloads in this province to something less than 1%.

It shows how legislation can be effective when you take the profit out of cheating. I think our legislation should not encourage those who may cheat. It should be in the interests of those who are law abiding and fair to those who are law abiding, particularly in a case where the driving without PL and PD insurance may well have very serious effects on the life and limbs and property of others. So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the government reconsider this particular item and I would hope bring up an amendment to it in the Committee of the Whole.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on the minimum and maximum penalties, in particular to deal with some of the arguments advanced by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

With respect, I think his theory about punishment falls on several grounds.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I think the object of any punishment is to prevent a certain kind of conduct. And in this particular case the conduct we want to prevent is driving a car or other motor vehicle without the appropriate amount of liability insurance. But the question is -- how confident can we be that having a minimum penalty will prevent that occurring? Mr. Speaker, I am very much concerned, particularly during the first year of the operation of a new compulsory scheme, that the mere fact of a high minimum penalty is not going to ensure compliance with the law, and yet may in a great number of cases work most unfairly and create a real hardship.

For example, there isn't the slightest doubt in my mind that there will be a significant number of people within the Province of Alberta, despite the advertising program that we've carried out, who simply won't know about the law. At that point you can make the minimum \$1.00 or \$1,000, it isn't going to get one additional person from that group insured.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-63

Now there's another area in which people will wind up being uninsured. That's the case where through some accident you don't get insured. We have in the Province of Alberta several hundred thousand insurance policies. Now there isn't the slightest doubt that with that number of insurance policies somebody by accident is going to wind up uninsured. I think there are a great number of people who simply leave it to their agent to look after the renewal. Somewhere in Alberta, every once in a while something goes wrong and the proper insurance isn't acquired. Incidentally, the legislation as it now stands provides for a \$250 minimum fine for an individual and a \$1,000 minimum fine for a company.

Now, again, we have within the province a substantial number of small companies -- they're not big sophisticated operations that have an insurance man, or a controller, or someone else who is looking after this kind of thing. Some of them are quite small operations, and undoubtedly within Alberta you're going to have this kind of case where officer A of the company thinks officer B has looked after the insurance and vice versa, and you wind up without the vehicle being insured and that's a \$1,000 minimum fine. In the case of individuals, for those who don't have the \$250, they impose a jail sentence.

These things can happen without the slightest fault or intentional wrong-doing on the part of any of those people. To suggest, by increasing the minimum, you're going to remove that element, Mr. Speaker, proceeds on a wholly false presumption. It doesn't matter what the minimum is, you can't get insurance in those cases. Either the people don't know about it or they forget about it and through some accident they aren't insured.

A second important aspect of punishment, Mr. Speaker, I think is this. The people who are being punished must feel that they're being fairly dealt with. If you run into this kind of case and I'm now referring to the facts of a case I've heard of recently, where a boy with a motor scooter -- doesn't intend to operate it. He intends to sell it, doesn't bother to get a licence and therefore doesn't get any insurance either. He is taking it to the shop to be repaired in order to get it ready for sale. He's picked up because he doesn't have a licence and he doesn't have insurance. He now faces a minimum \$250 fine. Let's assume he knew about the requirement for insurance and he's made this one trip to the shop and back intentionally, planning to breach the law, so he's fined a minimum \$250 and in default of that, goes to jail.

Now how do you explain to that person that his conduct, as far as society is concerned, is as serious as the person who gets impaired and drives on the highway while impaired? Because that's about the going fine for impairment.

MR. TAYLOR:

What if he kills somebody along the way?

MR. LEITCH:

Well, let me add this -- I'm glad the hon. Member for Drumheller interjected because he talked about the danger to life and limb.

Mr. Speaker, there is no danger to life and limb from driving without insurance. That isn't the danger. The fact that you're on the highway without insurance doesn't increase the danger to anyone. The result of the lack of insurance is that if you are involved in an accident, you may not have the financial resources to pay for the damage you have caused, and that's a very serious thing and something that should be dealt with by punishment. But to suggest that the fact that you're uninsured increases the danger to life and limb is obviously wholly erroneous.

And how do you say to the person who has breached the law in the fashion I have just described, that his conduct is as dangerous to society, and should be punished in the same way, as the person who goes on the highway impaired and does create a real additional hazard to the life and limb of other people? How do you say to that person that his conduct is more serious than stealing for a first offence?

On a first offence it is not at all uncommon for someone to be punished by a relatively small fine. How do you say to the man who really forgot getting his insurance that he should be punished more heavily than the person who has just stolen? How do you explain to someone who says; "I relied on my friend, Bill, to get the insurance. When I bought the car I was sure he was going to do it."? How do you say to him that that conduct is more serious than people who are impaired, steal, and so on? And I can think of all kinds of offences where the minimum fine for a first offence doesn't come anywhere near \$250.

Mr. Speaker, the whole object of the minimum fine, as I followed the argument of the hon. Member for Drumheller was this, he didn't trust the courts to impose an adequate fine. Now, Mr. Speaker, the judiciary have been dealing with this kind of thing for a long, long time, and there are some cases where the Legislature may feel that they've not been imposing as severe a penalty as Legislature wishes to impose, in which case minimum fines might be very much in order, for example hunting out of season, serious hunting crimes, things of that nature. But by and large, for all of the other criminal conduct, the matter is left to the courts, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, for a very good reason, because they can distinguish between the innocent breach, if you like, of this kind of legislation -- where the imposition of a penalty really wasn't going to prevent the kind of conduct you were trying to prevent -- and the conscious breach, or the knowing or willful breach, where a severe penalty will prevent the kind of conduct you want to prevent.

To suggest that somehow the minimum fine should be equal to the insurance premium because in that case people are going to buy the insurance rather than be tempted to pay the fine, and to compare this with the case of the overlord seems to me, Mr. Speaker, to miss some very fundamental differences. First of all, it's not cheaper to pay the fine and not buy the insurance, simply because if you are caught and convicted which is the only time that argument applies, you must not only pay the fine but also buy the insurance. Because if you're caught once, you're not going to take the chance of being on the road again. You're marked, having been picked up once without insurance.

MR. TAYLOR:

So the fine would be stiffer the second time? Why do we provide for second offences?

MR. LEITCH:

So the fine will be stiffer -- that's very proper if someone deliberately flaunts the law intentionally -- that's very proper to impose severe second and third offences. But we're talking about the case with minimum penalties, for what may in many cases, and I'm sure will in many cases, turn out to be breaches by people without any real intention to breach the law.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I'd simply like to say that from my point of view it seems to me that the judiciary can very easily -- if you have no minimum -- distinguish between the case where there has been an innocent breach of the law where perhaps a relatively small fine would be sufficient, and a deliberate breach of the law where a more substantial fine would be warranted. Incidentally, the Legislature by imposing a high maximum fine, has indicated to the judiciary how seriously they treat the offence and has given them

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-65

some indication that if there is a deliberate breach of the law, there should be a substantial fine.

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I'm sure the hon. Attorney General couldn't have sat down and talked with the hon. Member for Edmonton Gold Bar.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He did!

DR. BUCK:

He did? Well then the hon. Member for Edmonton Gold Bar certainly must have given him some bad advice because I think this defeats the entire purpose of trying to make everybody in Alberta have automobile insurance, especially the PL and PD.

If we're going to pursue his arguments that there may be an innocent victim, I would say respectfully to the hon. Attorney General that you should also revise the act on impaired driving, because I can give you an example of the man who got drunk only once in 20 years, who had 20 years of accident-free driving. I think we should modify that act if we're going to build in all these little innocent things that are going to happen to people.

Now this man was drunk only once in 20 years, he had a perfect driving record with a commercial bus company, so let's give him a restricted licence again -- if we're going to modify all these things and give everybody a fair break -- if he's gone down the wayward path just once. Because I would venture to say that when these people come before a judge they are all going to be innocent; they will all say that "John forgot to buy my insurance. I'm sure I sent John down there with a cheque and he didn't get it for me." And this is going to be the argument right down the line. Also the same thing with the man who says, "I was just a little bit drunk". You know, there is a little discretion. Just how drunk is a little bit drunk? Sure, some fellows can drive pretty capably when they are about .15, or think they can, whereas the other fellow is maybe .06. He may be more of a menace than the fellow who is really drunk.

What we were trying to do in this committee when we were looking at automobile insurance was try and get those 5, 10 or 15% of the people insured. We're not even sure what that figure was; it was some place in there. We felt by doing it this way that we would encourage them, because when you lock at a minimum fine, say, of \$250 and a young man who has had a bad driving record, or a bad driver, and his insurance is \$650, he says: "the odds are three to one in my favour, I'll take a chance." He says "if I get caught, it might cost me \$250, and if I give the judge a good song and dance story it might be only \$250. The odds are in my favour so I won't take insurance out."

So I think with this, what we've done is we've emasculated the entire concept of trying to make insurance in Alberta compulsory. And I think that the responsible people are the ones that are going to suffer because the irresponsible ones will not suffer when we do this.

I know there will be innocent circumstances and I certainly appreciate what you are trying to do in that, hon. minister. But even though we say there is no ignorance of the law, this will happen. There will be instances as you cited. I know this will happen and I appreciate what you are trying to do. But I feel we are defeating the purpose of the legislation that is brought in here after two years of study. I am sure the hon. Member for Edmonton

40-66

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

Gold Ear is ready to jump up, so he will have something to say. For what it is worth, I think that it has been a retrogressive step instead of a progressive step.

MP. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View actually had the floor a moment ago and was edged out.

MR. LUTWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact it is a problem that isn't easy to solve, but I would just like to take issue with the hon. minister on two minor points. One is on second offence. A lot of his reasoning would simply not stand up because you can't very well plead ignorance after you have known. You can't say it was inadvertence or that you didn't know.

But I am concerned about the fact that in the event someone should get off before a provincial judge and state that it was inadvertence or oversight or he didn't know, and perhaps get off with a light fine. That decision then becomes the stock-in-trade of every person who comes before a judge, because you can't very well check beyond the man's excuse. He says it was inadvertence and I'm sorry we overlooked it. We will fix this up immediately and get off with a \$25 fine. That same kind of defense will prevail before other courts because there is no minimum fine.

I feel that, perhaps, a reasonable minimum fine -- it doesn't have to be drastic and severe as the hon. minister has indicated that you are penalized and sometimes so severely -- but to make sure that you can't get off too lightly. I know the tendency is, when you put on a minimum fine, that the magistrates want to just give that minimum fine because that is what the law provides, and it doesn't give them too much trouble to impose a minimum fine. For those two reasons, I believe that we should reconsider and see what happens. I think we should err on the safe side in this case because the whole legislation is based on having everyone insured. If you are going to make it light for those who are not, then perhaps we are, as the hon. Member for Clover Bar said, we might be defeating the very purpose of the legislation.

MR. KCZIAK:

Mr. Speaker, in the discussions pertaining to the amendments contained in Bill No. 60 -- particularly as they pertain to changes in the fines -- we should not forget that Section 253 does not provide in its terms for lack of knowledge or recognition or understanding of guilt on the part of the defendant that he has committed an offence.

The section does not read, for instance, a person who knowingly fails to maintain his vehicle as an insured motor vehicle is guilty of an offence. It specifically eliminates the word 'knowingly' so that we don't have, what is known in law, as the mens rea, the guilty mind. You can have, in this particular circumstance, as the Attorney General has pointed out, an offence committed without any guilty mind whatsoever, an offence committed through inadvertence. It is for this reason that, perhaps, the fines should be lowered so that the magistrate, the provincial judge, when looking at the circumstances can take this into account and if he feels that the circumstances were such that there was no guilty mind, an appropriate fine could then be levied.

Now, if we wish to maintain a minimum sentence -- a minimum fine -- then perhaps the approach should be to provide for the word 'knowingly' in the offence. Where that provision is in the offence, then a minimum fine of the nature presently provided by the act would

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-67

be in order. But where you eliminate the mens rea, where you eliminate the guilty mind, I don't think it is correct that we impose a fine that is probably out of the ordinary when compared to the offence. The hon. Member for Port Saskatchewan --

AN HON. MEMBER:

Clover Bar!

MR. KOZIAK:

-- Clover Bar (thank you!) compared the situation to that of the impaired driver, who, for 20 years had a perfect driving record and on one occasion found himself impaired, found himself guilty of an offence, found himself charged and found himself fined.

Now the error in that comparison is in that the individual, when he came behind the wheel of his motor vehicle, must have known, at least, that he had had some alcoholic beverages to drink. He couldn't possibly stand up and say that: "I didn't commit the offence because I didn't know I was drunk, or I didn't know that I had something to drink." There may be that particular level where the person says: "Well, perhaps the alcoholic beverages that I consumed did not affect my ability to drive." He may make that value judgment and his judgment may be wrong, but he cannot say; "I did not have an alcoholic beverage to drink." Whereas, in this particular case we can have situations where people do not know that their insurance has expired; they do not know that perhaps some step had gone wrong in re-insuring. This is why we have to be careful that when we eliminate this mens rea in an offence, that we do not impose an inordinately high penalty for a breach of that particular section.

The only other comment I have on debate on second reading of this bill, Mr. Minister, is in connection with Section 209(1) and I'm in full agreement with the inclusion of this provision in the act. There is no reason in the world why a person should suffer the punishment in connection with an offence which is subsequently overruled by a higher court. Where a person is convicted of an offence and subsequently appeals that conviction to a higher court, the suspension should not begin to run until such time as the sentence itself begins to run, and that is at the time that the appellate division, or whatever it may be - whether it be in the district court or in the appellate division of the Supreme Court of Alberta - rules that the conviction is correct and that the punishment is correct. I'm in full agreement with the inclusion of this section in the act and in the bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on this matter, mainly because I was on the committee that investigated various aspects of this problem. First of all, I would like to say that the committee looked at a number of different methods for monitoring who was insured and who wasn't insured, and if my memory doesn't fail me, there wasn't that much credence given to a high fine. Much more discussion was associated with establishing computer methods for determining who cancelled his insurance policies and who, in fact, didn't have insurance and so forth.

I would like to say that the hon. Attorney General did, in fact, check this matter out with me and I certainly agree and concur with his action for a number of reasons. In legislation which involves or which is pertinent to a very large number of people and affects people personally - very many of the people within a population - then there is need for a phase-in period before one can get too rough with enforcing this type of legislation. The reason there is need for a phase-in period is because the insurance industry has grown up with all sorts of rules and regulations which people are not really

40-68

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

aware of. I would just like to cite one, for example, which I am very much familiar with, and that is that some insurance companies give a two-week grace period for renewal of policies. In other words, people recognize that their policy is due on a certain date and they know that they have automatically two weeks to renew that policy within which it isn't cancellable. It may say so on your fine print, and it may not say so on your fine print, but nevertheless, that company has a policy that suggests that there is a two-week grace period.

I would also like to suggest that some insurance companies have no grace period at all. The day that insurance terminates it's finished. And as a matter of fact, they charge you a premium for renewing that policy. Even though it's one day late, you pay to the insurance company something like \$24 for renewing the policy, instead of just renewing the premium. You have to take out a new policy and the penalty can be pretty high with an insurance company, something like \$24 on \$110.

Until some of these kinks are ironed out in this whole area of compulsory insurance -- and I suggest that this is going to take some years -- and even though I agree with both viewpoints at this point in time, until we go through this phasing-in period I think all we'd end up doing would be punishing far more innocent people than we would be punishing guilty people. And I, therefore, concur 100% with the action of the hon. Attorney General in the initial stages of this legislation, to give to the courts and to the judge some latitude in determining innocence versus guilt. Or, as I say again, because of the many quirks, many rules and regulations -- and I want to indicate again that the insurance company that doesn't give you any grace period doesn't tell you that either in its renewal notice. It doesn't say there is no grace period at all.

So I suggest, in order that we don't punish a lot of innocent people, I think the hon. Attorney General's action in this regard is certainly sound for a undetermined period of time. However, I am sure he will be examining this again in the years to come.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. COFFITHORNE:

In closing the debate there have been many good points brought out. I think probably the strongest objection is the objection to having no minimal insurance penalty. In a closing remark I could say this, that my learned friends on the bench have proven many, many times to use very good judgment in the handling of these particular cases. They deal in many accident claims; they deal in many claims of many types. They will know the seriousness, and if there is cheating on the part of the people who are brought before them I am sure they will mete a penalty that will be satisfactory to the crime.

[The motion was carried, and Bill No. 60 was read a second time]

Bill No. 63.

The Department of Highway and Transport Amendment Act

MR. COFFITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to move the second reading of Bill No. 63, The Department of Highways and Transport Amendment Act, recorded by the hon. Minister, Mr. Yurko.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-69

This is an act with three small sections in it, one dealing with the ability to transmit property from one department to another. The other one is for our investigation section to be able to investigate accidents and, at the same time, take a person's car into custody and give him one in exchange while we are investigating the accident. I ask every member in the House to support this.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make one or two comments. I support the amendment in principle that extends or increases the amount of stock advanced for the purchase of land in any one year. I think \$200,000 has proven to be too small a sum, and I think \$1 million is much more realistic for the stock advance, and I think it will enable the Department of Highways to carry out the principles of that stock advance act much better than previously; \$200,000 was satisfactory to start with, but certainly isn't adequate today.

In connection with the second point, investigating accidents and analysing accidents, I again support the principle. I think if we are really going to find out the reasons why accidents happen we have to have this type of legislation. While the legislation may inconvenience people considerably, I think if we can find the real reason for accidents that it is going to be well worthwhile. I think the amendment is good in that respect.

In Committee of the Whole, I think there are one or two changes that I would like to see. For instance, I think it's imposing too great a penalty on a person to say that a car may be taken for twenty-one days. I would suggest to the hon. minister that he consider putting "up to twenty-one days" because it seems to me that in most cases there's no reason to keep the car tied up for twenty-one days unless it's absolutely essential because a car is pretty necessary to most people today, it's not a vehicle of pleasure; generally it's a vehicle of business. But other than that, I would hope that the investigation of specific highway accidents would reveal the real causes for a great number of these accidents. Today I think we have to take with a grain of salt, the reasons as given on police reports in many cases, as the real reason for the accident. The person that's reporting to the police, many times is not going to convict himself, and I think we need an expert team of people who will look into the underlying reasons, perhaps going back for hours or a day, or perhaps a week to find out what was really the underlying cause of the accident that occurred. We have scores of single vehicle accidents that are difficult to understand; and again I think we have to carry out some analysis of the driver, what he was doing not only when he was driving the vehicle, but what he was doing hours before, maybe a day before, and sometimes maybe days before, to really get down to the root causes of accidents. Mr. Speaker, if we can find out the root causes, then we'll have a very excellent chance of working out solutions.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, there's just one principle in the bill that I am a little concerned about and I'm sure the minister has taken it into consideration, and that is with regard to the stopping of moving vehicles to conduct a survey, especially by people who may not be in uniform. Today in 1972, there are a lot of people that are very apprehensive about stopping their car for anyone unless it's clearly marked and well marked. I ran into a situation last year personally, where a survey was being carried out by non-uniformed people, and any stranger in our province who didn't realize that surveys were carried out, I think would hesitate as to whether they would stop. I'm just wondering whether we may carry out any of these surveys unless we really look into this situation and be sure that we're authorizing it properly, and it is done by people who are preferably in uniform and well designated. This is one of these principles that I'm a bit

40-70

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

concerned about, in particular with the fast moving traffic and the heavy traffic that we are contending with here in our particular province.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

MR. CECILHOPNE:

Mr. Speaker, the points brought forth are well taken. I think though of the argument against a car being taken for twenty-one days; if the car is damaged badly enough, certainly the act provides compensation in a way that the owner of the car is able to have another car and it certainly doesn't bring any hardship upon him. Actually the car would be tied up anyway, and probably we would give him a lot longer time to make arrangements to get it fixed the moment it was released. Certainly I agree wholeheartedly with the hon. member for Drumheller that the Stock Advance Fund isn't adequate, and it reminds me a little of the story of the boy that was asking his father for some money to attend a fair. The father handed him a handful of change. He said; "Dad, how about some of that folding stuff, this doesn't go very far." It's very much the same in the Stock Advance Fund.

With regard to the point of the uniformed people checking autos, certainly highway patrols and highway inspectors would be able to check cars for various purposes and I don't think that the hon. member for Calgary-Egmont would have to worry about this issue particularly.

[The motion was carried, and Bill No. 63 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 5

The Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Amendment Act, 1972

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, there are just one or two points, and some of them have been touched on in previous debates so it won't be necessary to go into them very thoroughly. But I felt the principle of this bill is good. I think the principle of a "no fault" insurance should be advertised a lot more, I should say the Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Amendment, as far as the unsatisfied judgment fund is concerned. There seems to be a lot of misapprehension around now on the principle that all cars are going to be insured and this fund isn't necessary. I noticed that even some of the editorial writers have this in mind and I think it's a wrong thing to allow to go by.

I think that the government, and the department in particular, should step up a publicity campaign on what these funds are used for. They have been called upon in recent years -- as a matter of fact this year we'll be spending \$800,000 more than has been taken in by the fund. In the previous debate we mentioned the principle of insurance and the fines and I think that we will probably see an increase of hit and run accidents as far as this fund is concerned. The average fellow, if he thinks he has hit a car and done \$75 damage and if he is one of these people who is driving around uninsured, he's not likely to stop. He's more liable to proceed, unless he's apprehended by someone.

I feel that we should look into the situation, particularly when we have this compulsory aspect of paying a dollar, because a lot of people still think that they are covered and it's not necessary for them to take out insurance although we've got extra, excellent publicity on the actual compulsory insurance feature. We haven't had the publicity that is necessary to let the people know that we still

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-71

have to have the motor vehicle accident claims fund to take care of a lot of people, as the hon. Attorney General mentioned earlier tonight. The car can be fully insured, but if he doesn't stop it doesn't do the victim any good. We certainly need this fund. We could also help this fund, I think, by helping to improve the no fault insurance where the no fault is paid by the actual insurance company of the policy holder, rather than worrying about collecting it from the other side. That's really true no fault insurance. Let the other two insurance companies fight over it after.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to get on my feet to say that I feel the principle of this is good, but we could do a better publicity job in letting the public know in Alberta that the fact that we have compulsory insurance is not taking care of the situations that they feel are going to be taken care of, that were taken care of previously under the unsatisfied judgment fund. We're still going to need this fund and I still think that if we go forward with the necessary publicity to show that it is needed and is a vital service to our people that own cars and operate cars. We will be doing a better job, and I support this bill.

MR. HARLE:

May I close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HARLE:

Mr. Speaker, I'd merely like to remind all hon. members in the Assembly that all of the speakers who spoke in connection with this bill favoured the principle of it.

[The motion was carried, and Bill No. 5 was read for the second time.]

Bill No. 17 The Bee Act

MR. APPLBY:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Member for Stettler, second reading of Bill No. 17, The Bee Act.

Mr. Speaker, on the day, many, many weeks ago, when I first was scheduled to move second reading of this bill and I entered the House that day and opened the drawer to my desk I found a little note which said, "Prank: This is to assist you in the second reading of the act." And it was signed by an hon. member of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, whose name will remain anonymous. Attached to this note, Mr. Speaker, was a very beautiful flower -- fresh and fragrant and fascinating.

Then, some weeks later, Mr. Speaker, when I again attempted to move second reading of this bill, and I looked on the flower it had faded somewhat and withered slightly. And tonight, Mr. Speaker, when I make my third attempt and I look at the flower I see that its colour has really faded and its leaves and its petals are dry and withered, and it has lost all of its appeal, actually. I think perhaps we could make a good comparison between the flower and some of the everlasting exercises in elocution that we get exposed to in this Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

40-72

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. APPIEBY:

On the matter of Bill No. 17, Mr. Speaker, beekeeping has, in recent years, developed into a very profitable and a very thriving industry in Alberta. This has not always been the case. It has been very frustrating at times, and I know that some of the hon. members on both sides of the House who, like myself, have been involved in beekeeping at times, will appreciate, that this has been a frustrating enterprise. It has its ups and downs, but it's really refreshing and encouraging to see that in these days of spiralling costs and disastrous prices we have, in the field of agriculture, at least one segment that is prospering at the present time, and I think this is very encouraging.

There are a number of reasons why the beekeeping industry is flourishing in Alberta at the present time. One of these is that -- in Canada too for that matter -- Canada produced 50 million pounds of honey last year and 41% of that was produced in Alberta -- and one of the reasons that the industry is in such excellent circumstances is because the production in the United States was down considerably last year, from about 240 million pounds to 193 million. But the main reason for the flourishing state of the industry is the fact that the export market has really developed in the last year. Japan, for instance, that previously took about a quarter million pounds of honey, took 10 million pounds last year. And the price for honey which three years ago was ten cents a pound, today is about thirty cents a pound. In fact there's none available anywhere in Alberta to be sold at the present time.

I was talking to some beekeepers last Saturday and they were only wishing they had saved their honey to sell at the present time rather than sell it last fall when it was first produced.

I think it's rather apparent that because of this developing market and also the increase in the domestic market, due to the promotion schemes that the Alberta Beekeepers' Association is encouraging and also that this government is encouraging, that the industry will remain in a healthy state. And I think for that reason it is highly important that we encourage the industry in all ways possible. Because of that, this bill is quite important.

There are several objectives of this Bee Act. I think possibly the first one we would have to mention is that it hasn't been amended for 12 years -- it used to be The Bee Diseases Act of course -- and so naturally there are a great many things that have to be changed.

Another thing is to emphasize the position of the apiary culture fieldman and his position is changing, or we hope it is changing and will be changing as a result of this act, more from the previous idea of enforcing the act and enforcing the law, to extension services, encouraging and consulting with the beekeepers and assisting them in all ways possible.

Another objective of the act is to eliminate the compulsory features of the previous act with respect to the destruction of diseased beekeeping equipment.

These are some of the objectives, Mr. Speaker, and I feel the act is certainly worthy of support and I would ask all the hon. members to support it tonight.

MR. FOCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words to congratulate the hon. member for rewriting The Bee Diseases Act. As he pointed out the foul brood, the disease in the bees, is very disastrous to the bee industry or the honey industry. There are possibly sections that I would like to deal with when the act comes up in Committee, but I'm

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-73

concerned that last year there were only 50% of the apiaries inspected and less than 30% of the colonies were inspected, but what I am concerned with is that we're going to have to add quite an additional staff to our fieldmen, and whether this comes out of the Department of Agriculture, or whether it'll come out of the bee keepers themselves -- I don't know if the beekeepers at the present time pay anything for this service. I doubt whether they do.

The only one I'm concerned about is, it doesn't say you have to be an apiarist to keep one hive of bees, and if you don't register even one hive, according to the act you could be fined up to \$500 or 90 days in jail. I don't know how this goes down with the Bill of Rights, but I think as far as the act, it will probably need to be amended, and some of the things that were -- there is not very much taken out of the Bee Diseases Act -- and some of the regulations, I think that were in the Bee Diseases Act, or went along with the Bee Diseases Act, are put into The Bee Act. From what I can gather from the apiarists that I have spoken to, there seems to be no objection to it.

MR. D. MILLER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my feeling or the feeling of my constituents with respect to The Bee Act. There is little or no objection. We're just wondering if it will penalize the individual who has a small colony of his own. Fe that as it may, the beekeepers in my area came up with this one suggestion that they would like included: "That no beekeeper throughout Alberta shall set up any apiary location closer than two miles from any other bee keepers location." They feel, after due consideration among those that were approached, that this would be the only inclusion that they would like. I would suggest that you take it under consideration and if in agreement, bring in an amendment to the bill.

MR. APPLEBY:

Mr. Speaker may I close the debate?

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. member close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. APPLEBY:

Just two comments. I appreciate the views of the hon. members opposite. I've had a number of representations regarding what people suggest might be minor changes in the act, and I'm sure that these will be discussed in the committee stage.

Another comment that I would like to make is the fact that the inspection, I think, has to be more general than it has been in the past, especially now because the export demand for the honey is an important factor here. However I do believe these will all come up in the committee stage, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask for the support of the act tonight.

[Bill No. 17 was read for the second time]

40-74

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

Bill No. 18: The Provincial General Hospitals Amendment Act, 1972

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Highways that Bill No. 18, The Provincial General Hospitals Amendment Act, 1972 be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know how I go about impressing the House with the importance of this second reading when what is before us would indicate that we are adding one letter to the word. We're making 'Hospital' read 'Hospitals' in effect. The situation is that there are two provincial general hospitals in the province at the present time. Members may appreciate having their recollection refreshed on this point although this explanation was given at the time of introduction. They are the Glenrose in Edmonton and the Foothills in Calgary. What this act would do is allow the province to establish provincial general hospitals, more than one in number, in each of those cities. The present intention I trust is known, to proceed at an early date with the acquisition of a second hospital in Calgary which will be a provincial general hospital, and for that reason the second reading should proceed at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I will just say one or two very brief words on this particular bill. Certainly it is a pleasure to support the legislation. I would just like to place on the records the fact that, of course, some years ago when the Glenrose was conceived in Edmonton by Dr. J. Duncan Ross, it was intended at that time that eventually a second multiple handicapped hospital would probably be established in Calgary. When we started a year ago, to negotiate with the Calgary Children's Hospital for the possible conversion of that facility, at least as a nucleus for a multiple handicapped hospital in Calgary as well, we realized at that time that the act had this bottleneck in it, that it limited the number of provincial hospitals that could be established, because of the way it was written.

So, certainly, with pleasure, Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place and say we are very pleased to see the new government has continued with the plans that were initiated some time ago, albeit very quietly, to start the development of a second multiple handicapped hospital in Alberta in the City of Calgary.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is no further debate?

[Bill No. 17 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 21 The Farm Home Improvements Amendment Act, 1972

DR. HCFNEF:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to move second reading of Bill No. 21, seconded by the hon. Minister of Highways. This is a short bill which, in fact, changes the rate of interest which the banks may charge on home improvement loans under this act. Up until this time very few loans have been made under the act, even though it has been under statute for some time. The reason for that is that the previous bill, of course, limited the banks to charging the prime rate and -- the banks weren't very helpful in making loans at the prime rate, so we are changing it to be on a similar basis to the other guaranteed rates in regard to livestock and other areas in which there is a 1% flexibility clause in there, so they can charge up to 1% over prime. Hopefully, this will allow the banks to make the loans in the rural areas for home improvements.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-75

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I think there is a better way of dealing with this than the way the bill does it. I question whether encouraging banks to increase their interest rate even by 1%, is in the interest of farmers. It may well be that the banks aren't making the loans at the present rate, but I wonder how far we go in increasing interest rates, and how we figure this is in the interest of the retention of the family farm is a little difficult to understand. I think the government would have been far better advised to have changed the act, increasing the 50% guarantee probably to 100% guarantee, leaving the interest rate the way it is. This would be a greater incentive for the banks to loan the money, and certainly it would be a greater incentive to the farmer to borrow the money for his home improvement if he had a greater guarantee with the provisions of the act setting out the safety of the guarantee. I frankly can't see why it wasn't done in this way. I don't think it is out of the way at all. We provide 100% guarantees for many aspects of farming and the home is a very important part of any farm -- a very important part. I think we would have been better advised to increase the guarantee from 50% to 100% rather than giving the banks legal authority to increase the interest rate.

MR. BUCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, just to say a few words on this bill. As the hon. minister has indicated, this is an act that hasn't been as popular probably as they thought it was going to be. It is also a bill which, to the city members or the other members, is a bill probably that is given to the farmers but is not given to any other group -- the Farm Home Improvement Act.

Possibly the last place on the farm that has been improved is the farm home itself. I don't agree with the hon. Member for Drumheller in this respect that 50% is a pretty good incentive as the guarantee from the province, because you can spend quite a little bit on a farm home and if you can't pay the loan, how are you going to get the money back? This is one of the problems. With farm machinery, they can take his tractor away, or with land you can put a caveat against it, but if it's a farm home no one likes to go into a home and say, "Well, you shouldn't have spent the money."

One of the sad parts of farming is -- and I imagine it's happened in most rural areas -- is where a farmer has raised his family, maybe in several converted granaries, and something a little better in some cases, and when the children are grown and have left home, the farmer and his wife decide: "Well, we're going to have that house that we never had before." So they go and build themselves a new home and then probably last about five years, and then sell the farm, or one of them dies and that's the end of it. I think the farm homes throughout the province today are comparable to many of those of any urban dweller, and there are many farmers who could have a better home, but this is home to them -- this is the way they have lived.

Mr. Speaker, you won't mind me telling this story. Gray Campbell, when he was a member of the RCMP -- now of course, he's a publisher and author -- was sent down around Manyberries years ago because an old couple there had gotten a cheque on Burns & Co., for six figures and they hadn't cashed it. He was sent down as a member of the RCMP to find out if anything had happened to them. During the wee end of the day after running across the prairie sheep trails, at the bottom of a coulee, he saw a little light. And here was a most primitive old home with a coal oil lamp in the window, and like most farms, the coal was stored in the back porch. He was asked in by the old gentleman and the old lady, and he had supper. He asked them about this cheque, had they gotten it? And the old fellow said "yes, we've got it." And he said, "Why didn't you cash it?" And the old fellow said, "Well, is it good? It's still good, isn't it?" "Yes, but they'd like you to cash it. Why didn't you cash it?" "Well, we

really didn't need anything." There they were. They didn't have a car. They didn't have hydro. They had an outside toilet. This is the way they wanted to live, and yet according to the sociologists or the welfare workers or whatever we have today, this absolutely drives them up the wall. I think as far as farm home improvement is concerned, it's up to the farmer.

One of the major problems that I think most of us find in rural areas is that the farm home actually doesn't bring in very much new money to the farm. It's nice to have a new home, but if you're going to spend money on a home that should have been spent on other capital works that would have increased their cash flow or the value of their farm, perhaps they could have had both. They could have had a viable farm and a home. I know in my own case -- of course, this was 50 or 60 years ago -- the place where I lived, the people mortgaged the farm to build the house and lost the farm, and we were living in the house. So it doesn't always pay to spend too much money on the farm home if you can't afford it. But I do think this act is going to go a long way, and particularly in our economy the farmers could use this and could take good advantage of it.

[Bill No. 21 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 23, The Companies Amendment Act, 1972.

MR. JAMISON:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Member for Stony Plain, the second reading of Bill No. 23, being The Companies Amendment Act, 1972. Bill No. 23, Mr. Speaker, amends the following sections of The Companies Act: Section 70 is amended for the purpose of notifying the public within 30 days when the company's capital position has been altered.

Section No. 93, Mr. Speaker, is amended for the purpose of filing only the final prospectus. This regulation will apply to all extra provincial companies which are registered in Alberta. Mr. Speaker, Section No. 93 previously required the filing of all prospectuses including the preliminary draft.

Section No. 97 is amended to bring in the filing of the company's mortgage within 60 days of execution, rather than 60 days from date of creation.

Section No. 146, Mr. Speaker, deals with the filing of company returns, and the amendment proposes that filing of the returns be done within 30 days of the company's anniversary date. What this means, Mr. Speaker, is that the filing of returns will be spread through 12 months, instead of all within 30 days of December 31st. This section will come into force by proclamation when the branch is able to handle it.

Section No. 160, Mr. Speaker, as amended would require the filing of a copy of the report to the inspector or auditor, mentioned in Subsection 10 of Section No. 160 as amended, that the registrar of companies as at the present . . .

MR. LUDWIG:

With all due respect to the hon. member introducing the bill, he is really dealing with specific sections, and that should be done in committee. He is really taking the time of the House unnecessarily because he is dealing with specific sections, which is really not allowed on second reading. He must deal with the principle of the whole thing, not merely peel off the sections.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-77

MR. SPEAKER:

I am sure the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View will recognize that when a bill contains a large number of housekeeping amendments it is difficult to say that there is any principle involved, unless you deal with the principle of each one of the amendments. If the hon. member does that, perhaps that would be acceptable to the House.

MR. JAMISON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Section No. 182, Mr. Speaker, the exemption of the registration of the Hudson's Bay Company is removed, as that company is now a Canadian company under The Canada Corporations Act.

Section No. 188, the present act requires the striking off of the company by registered mail. This will remove the registered mail provision and be done by regular mail, thus a saving of approximately \$1,200.

Mr. Speaker, Sections No. 177, 189, 271 are of a housekeeping nature.

Section No. 286 is to give authority to the Companies Branch to turn down copy that is not legible.

[Bill No. 23 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 26
The Beverage Container Amendment Act, 1972

MR. ASHION:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the hon. Member for Camrose, second reading of Bill No. 26, being The Beverage Container Amendment Act, 1972.

At the outset I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the previous administration for having taken the initiative in bringing The Beverage Container Act into existence last spring. I would also like to congratulate the hon. Minister of the Environment for having taken the necessary steps last fall to give meaning to the act, so that it could be made effective at the beginning of this year.

Soft drink containers are not the whole litter problem; they are only part of the problem. But this act, and the amendment that we are speaking to tonight do make an attack on the problem. The use of convenience packaging in North America has been accelerating at a very high rate, and this is applied to soft drinks and so on. It is interesting that some of the statistics that appear to be coming out from the beginning of the year indicate that there may be a trend which indicates that the convenience packaging, such as throw-away soft drink cans and bottles will be on the decrease. Perhaps I should hesitate in saying that because the next thing I know there may be picketing by the can manufacturers.

The amending act that we are talking about tonight contains two major principles and two minor ones. The first major provision is, of course, the extension of the provision of the act to include liquor, wine, imported beers in cans, and so on.

Now it is important that we pass this act to extend the provisions of the act to include these new items. Not only to further reduce the litter problem in the province, but to maintain the credibility of this Legislature in the eyes of the public. In other words, it's the old saying of 'put your money where your mouth is'. In other words I have received some comment from the public that here the legislature has said to private industry that your

containers are going to be refundable, and yet you are operating a large business involving containers through the Alberta Liquor Control Board and you are not solving your own liquor bottle problem.

The act itself will probably increase employment in some respects in the province, although this is not the prime objective of the act. The collection, the depot system, the recycling and so on, will have an effect on the unemployment problem and probably will be a boon to such people as the Boy Scouts.

Now the second major provision of this amending act, is that it will make the depot system of refunding bottles much more effective. I'm sure that many, perhaps all, of the hon. members of this House have received complaints from their constituents that when they wish to make returns of various containers, that they have had to go from place to place and sometimes travel many, many miles and take many hours to dispose of their containers, so the act proposes to set up a universal depot system, whereby the public, when they are returning their empty containers of any type except domestic beers, will be able to make one stop and make one return at that one place.

There is a further minor amendment which deals with the problem of vending machines, and it does provide that the owners and renters of vending machines will have some responsibility to provide for the return of the containers that are dispensed from their machines. A further amendment will extend the right to pass regulations principally to make the depot system more effective.

Now I have found that the public reaction to these proposed amendments, since it was read first, and since it has been publicized for the last few months have been overwhelmingly in favour, and I would ask the hon. members to give that their consideration.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to just mention one point that I hope we can pursue in greater detail in Committee of the Whole. I agree with the extension of The Beverage Container Act to include wine bottles and beer bottles and so on, or liquor bottles, if it wasn't previously included, and I can see no reason why the depots that gather the beer bottles shouldn't also be required to take in the soft drink bottles. They have the set-up there, and frankly I see little reason to duplicate these facilities.

There is one point I would like to bring to the attention of the hon. member who is sponsoring the bill, and that is that when the charges are being worked out for the depots, those who drink soft drinks should not be charged a greater amount for depots than those who drink beer. This is an increased cost on the consumers of soft drinks and it appears to me that there may well be a greater amount charged for the depots for soft drinks than is intended, and is presently being charged for the collection of beer bottles. I can't see any reason for that, and I hope that we can deal with that in some detail when we get to the Committee of the Whole.

MR. EUCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on this bill. One of the problems I think we face in collecting bottles. Take for example you have a standard beer bottle. It doesn't make any difference which brewery it comes from within the province, and some even without the province; they are all in the same type of bottle, so for a bottle collecting agency or depot it doesn't make much difference if you have X-number of dozen bottles that could go to any brewery.

I have often wondered why -- it may not be within the jurisdiction of the legislature -- but if we had a standard soft

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-79

drink bottle this would solve a tremendous lot of the problems of the particular manufacturers in the collecting. Again, where you put your label on, the bottle would have to be of greater strength than the beer bottle. But this would save a tremendous amount of money in these depots where you didn't have to sort all these bottles according to the different brand names. I think it's something maybe the government might explore.

If we're going to go into this bottle depot we may as well make it as easy as we can. I don't think you're going to get wine in the different types of bottles, or whiskey. I can't see if we're talking about a glass industry that it shouldn't also help the glass industry within the province. It's the soft drink franchises outside of our own country, particularly from the United States, that might cause some trouble, but I think if enough pressure is put to bear we could probably make this thing work.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I just have a few very minor comments to make. I would like to suggest that we have certainly thought about the standard soft drink bottle, but we feel that this is a matter that should in fact be resolved by the industry rather than through legislation. I'm suggesting that the legislation is going to give a nudge in this direction and will create incentives in doing that very thing.

I would also like to suggest that by including liquor and wine bottles in this legislation that there will be an attempt as years go by, to promote more bottling of spirits in Alberta, instead of importing all spirits in ready packaged bottles, to, in fact, import it in large containers and do some of the bottling within Alberta rather than outside the country, importing the material in fancy bottles. I would also like to suggest that to my knowledge nowhere in our legislation are we suggesting or implying or, in fact, embarking on a program where the recycle of pop bottles will cost any more than the recycle of beer bottles.

[Bill No. 26 was read a second time]

Bill No. 28 The Apprenticeship Amendment Act, 1972

MR. PURDY:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Member for Edmonton Ottewell that The Apprenticeship Amendment Act, 1972, be read a second time.

During the past few years following a number of applications for certification received by the Board of Industrial Relations, it became apparent that the right of the apprentices to collective bargaining under The Alberta Labour Act was restricted by the provisions of Section 21 of The Apprenticeship Act. To remove this conflict, and to assure that the apprentices are entitled to the same basic rights as other employees, it is necessary to amend The Apprenticeship Act. With these amendments an apprentice will have the right to join a trade union and the bargaining agent can negotiate on his behalf with his employer for the terms and conditions of employment. The negotiations will be subject to any specified wages and working conditions for apprentices generally, as may be prescribed by regulations established under The Apprenticeship Act.

40-80

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. PUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, has this bill been distributed? Several of us haven't got it on this side.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there any other hon. members who have not received copies of this bill?

[Several members raised their hands.]

MR. SPEAKER:

Under the circumstances, does someone wish to move that second reading be held? Do we want to agree to that, or what is the wish of the House?

MR. HYNDMAN:

I would like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if the mover would adjourn the debate we could move on to the next one, No. 31, and in the interim find out whether other copies are printed of Bill No. 28.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. Member for Stony Plain adjourn the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, we wish to hold Bill No. 29, The Department of Manpower and Labour Act tonight. I believe notice was given to the hon. House Leader opposite in that regard.

Bill No. 31 The Department of The Environment Act, 1972

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, there are several principles involved. The first principle is that it permits the minister to purchase land for watershed conservation and environmental purposes.

The second principle directs the minister to prepare a long-range plan for development regarding the environment.

The third principle directs the minister to carry out cost benefits analysis regarding resource development.

Basically there are also some housekeeping provisions to make the bill more workable as it is a major bill introduced last year, and I feel quite certain that as the years go by there will be a number of housekeeping amendments to make the administrative aspects of the bill more palatable to modern-day running of government.

[Bill No. 31 was read for the second time.]

Bill No. 32: The Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Amendment Act, 1972

MR. LEE:

The amendments in this particular act basically allow for more flexibility than is now present in the 1970 act. The most significant one of these is that it allows for the appointment of a full-time chairman to the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-81

Since the act was initiated in 1970 the commission has experienced a great deal of difficulty in performing the mandate as was stated in this act. One of the difficulties that was nailed down in this area was that of leadership. So this amendment aims straight at that difficulty.

Since 1970, also, there has been an emerging emphasis and a concern with drugs. Originally the act was sort of aimed at the difficulties of alcoholism, and the Henwood Institution, for instance, was established for the treatment of alcoholism. Most of the counselling and educative activities that were established also aimed at this problem of alcoholism. Now in 1972, with a more dual concern for drugs and alcohol, changes were needed in this particular act in order to perform the mandate.

In order to sustain this new developing emphasis in the problems of alcohol and drug abuse both, the budgetary appropriation has been increased for the 1972-1973 fiscal year by 29.2%. This goes up to 1.55 million. So in order to further facilitate the advances that have taken place in the last two years and to fully perform the mandate as performed in Bill No. 32, and this act, I urge support for the motion to accept second reading.

[Leave being granted Bill No. 32 was read for the second time.]

Bill No. 35

The Northern Development Council Amendment Act, 1972

MR. ALAIR:

Mr. Speaker, the principle of this amendment as it relates to the act is directed toward the creation of a much better balanced membership on the Northern Alberta Development Council. The past number of years have seen considerable annual increases in population in the northern areas and this, coupled with increasing economic activity in Northern Alberta, makes it imperative that the people of the North be afforded the opportunity to generate an input with respect to the affairs of that part of the province.

The additional membership, Mr. Speaker, would make available the opportunity for a native member on the Council, along with a re-definition of representation from the Peace country, the Lesser Slave Lake area, northeastern and northwestern Alberta. This amendment would offer an improved balance and equitable distribution of membership within the Northern Alberta Development Council. It is hoped that the addition of the two members to the Council will further provide the Council with increased expertise, more enthusiasm, and a broader scope of knowledge necessary in assisting and ensuring success of the Northern Alberta Development Council.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise to support this bill. I want to first of all say that I think the increase in the size of the Council is an excellent idea and as the hon. minister has pointed out, it will permit a much better balance on the Council, and I certainly think that the suggestion that at least one member from the native communities in Northern Alberta be on the Council is excellent. Perhaps we should go even further than that.

The second point I would like to make on this bill, since we're discussing the principle of it, is that while I favour the increase in the Council, I'd just like to go on record at this time, Mr. Speaker, in saying that I submit that we have to go much further than the present approach in developing Northern Alberta. It's my view that we should have a full-fledged ministry of Northern Affairs. The very considerable part of our future in this province is going to be in Northern Alberta. I personally feel that there must be a greater

40-E2

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

emphasis placed on that future, and for this reason I believe that we do need a full scale department of Northern Affairs.

But to the extent, Mr. Speaker, that Bill No. 35 does make the Council more representative, certainly to that extent I think it warrants the support of all the hon. members today.

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to support the move to expand the bill, but I would also like to give the hon. minister a little advice on maybe going one more to include both segments of the Native and Metis society. There are two definitely distinct jurisdictions here and I would appreciate the hon. minister going one more and including both Metis and Native representation on the Council.

[Bill No. 35 was read for the second time.]

Bill No. 36

An Act respecting the Minister of Telephones and Utilities

MR. WERRY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to move second reading of Bill No. 36 seconded by the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation.

This bill will officially change the name of the office of Minister of Telephones to the Minister of Telephones and Utilities, and amend the statutory provisions enumerated in the bill. This change of name will make one minister of the Executive Council responsible for the supervision of all the essential services of the utilities which affect the daily lives of all Albertans in Alberta, Mr. Speaker.

[Bill No. 36 was read for the second time.]

Bill No. 37 The Hospital Services Commission
Amendment Act, 1972

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of the Environment, that Bill No. 37, The Hospital Services Commission Amendment Act, 1972 be now read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, there are two amendments proposed in this bill. The first one provides for the increase in the number of at large members of the Hospital Services Commission from four to six. It is foreseen that in increasing the number of part-time commissioners, it might be useful for a member of the Legislative Assembly -- one or more members of the Legislative Assembly -- to serve on the commission. This is related to the deep concern that the Legislature and its members have for this particular area of government expenditure, it being, I believe, the largest single item of expenditure in the budget. Because of the desire to have the possibility of a member of the Legislature sitting on the commission, it is further provided that in the event that takes place, the consequential amendment follows that the member does not thereby disqualify himself from holding office.

The other amendment, Mr. Speaker, is one which clarifies the general direction that it is expected by the government that the commission will follow. Section 12 of the act provides two basic directions that the commission is to interest itself in pursuing, ensuring the development of a balanced system in brief, and to conduct a review of financial needs.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-83

The third important role given to the commission is to recommend, in effect, programs that have, as their aim, a reduction of the escalation of costs within the system. That, of course, relates to the overall operation of the hospital system and reflects the concern that the government has in regard to the escalation of hospital costs over the last few years.

MR. PENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, in rising to offer a few comments on second reading of this particular bill, I must point out that while I can support the second principle that the minister enunciated, since it is in keeping with the general philosophy under which the commission was established initially, I certainly find myself looking with considerable concern at the first principle in the bill. That is the question of appointing MIA's to this particular commission. I probably should say, Mr. Speaker, not just to this particular commission, but the principle involved and concern over where this principle might lead. Certainly, in reading the amendment, I don't necessarily assume that the appointment will only be members of the government party, since it refers to members of the Legislature, it could apply to any member of this Assembly who is not one of the 48 cabinet ministers in the government.

Mr. Speaker, it does raise, as I say, some very serious concerns as to where this principle is going to lead. In the first case the way the bill is drafted, so far as the principle is concerned, there is nothing whatever to preclude the possibility that all of the part-time members on the commission would be MLA's. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that while this is possible I don't know what the intention is, but it is possible under the act -- I have to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if that should, by chance, be the intention, I would think it would be far better to simply disband the commission and be done with it. Because one could only conclude that the government does not have confidence in the commissioner to carry out the responsibilities that have been assigned to it within the policy framework as delineated by the government.

It raises very definitely the question, are MLA's being put onto this particular body to act as watchdogs to see that this particular administrative group are carrying out the wishes of the government? I have no quarrel with the question of the commission's responsibility to carry out its functions within the policy delineations as laid down by the government. I also sanction any move on the part of the government where the commission declined to follow the policies as laid down by the government. There can be no doubt as to who should have the final word on the subject, and the commission in its entirety, or partly, should be removed, because there's no question in my mind that the commission must accept the policy directions of the government.

I, for one, certainly did not subscribe, at the time we introduced the legislation, to the view that this was to be an autonomous commission. I remember the hon. Member for Barrhead, the 'now' Deputy Premier, bringing this question up, and an amendment was put in the bill last year to make this plain, that it was not the intent that the commission should be policy making. So, if the purpose of having MLA's on the commission is not to act as a watchdog to see that the commission is performing its functions, I am led to wonder what the purpose is for placing MLA's on the commission.

I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the 'now' government, being somewhat enamoured with the precedents that the Conservative party of Ontario has established in a number of areas, is about to embark upon a similar road to what that government in Ontario has followed. In examining the principle, while members may support it, I think we should know very clearly where we are going. I took the trouble of finding out in the Province of Ontario how far this policy had been

40-84

ALBERTA FANSARD

May 1st 1972

pursued and I find, for example, that they have an MLA in Ontario appointed to the Niagara Parks Commission who receives a remuneration of \$5,000 a year. I find that in the Province of Ontario they have an MLA who sits on the Ontario Liquor Control Board - at least that's what I presume the initials meant - who receives a remuneration of \$7,000 a year.

AN HON. MEMBER:

How many drinks?

MR. HENDERSON:

I must confess, Mr. Speaker, that I would have, indeed, a lot of reservations about the desirability of putting an MLA on the Alberta Liquor Control Board.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You're giving them ideas.

MR. HENDERSON:

I find, Mr. Speaker, that in the Province of Ontario they also have the vice-chairman of their Hydro Commission as a member of their Legislature, who receives a sum of \$10,000 a year. There is a body known as the Ontario Education Communications Authority, for which a Legislature member in a consultative capacity receives a remuneration of \$60 a day for the work that he does whenever the authority sits. They have another MLA who serves as a member of the Niagara Parks Commission who receives a payment of \$30 per day for days on which he serves on the commission. We find that the commissioner of the Ontario Hospitals Commission is an MLA and receives an indemnity of \$6,000 a year.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, as that touches upon the principle of this bill and the particular commission, I could go along far more readily with seeing an MLA becoming the senior commissioner within the Hospitals Commission than having an MLA simply serving as the watchdog. But if it's because of the doubt in the minister's mind to manage the large department that he has, we've already gone on record on this side of the House in suggesting that we would certainly go along with recommendations from the government to appoint associate ministers to this particular department. In my view, this is far preferable to the action which is being taken in this bill.

They have another MLA in Ontario who serves as chairman of the St. Lawrence Parks Commission for which he receives \$5,000 a year. They have another one who is chairman of the Ontario Water Resources Commission, who receives a remuneration of \$15,000 a year. They have another member of the St. Lawrence Parks Commission who receives \$60 per day for each day he serves on the commission. So in all of this, Mr. Speaker, in realizing this government has a tendency to follow the political thrusts of the Ontario government, one can only wonder where this principle is thrusting and in what direction it is moving.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It's pretty obvious.

MR. HENDERSON:

If it's an effort to increase the remuneration to some of the members of this Assembly, regardless of which side of the House they serve on, I question the motivation that would lead to the amendments as contained in this bill. I think, when examining some of the other pitfalls that one could lead into with this precedent, one should take a look at the boards that are now in existence in this province,

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-95

and while the 'now' government has criticized the past administration for establishing boards, I find that they are not too concerned with that any longer and are setting up new commissions fast and furious themselves.

And again, once I look at the principle as to where this is leading, it is worth looking at some of the boards that exist in Alberta, with a view of getting some indication from the government as to what they are going to do with some of these boards. Some of them may be completely innocuous; in fact, the member should probably donate his time if he did get on it. There is one here, the Agriculture Relief Adjustment Board. I don't know what that does, but it is on the statutes. I could see that is the one the government would probably put an opposition member on because I doubt if it ever sits anyhow.

Then we come to one, the Alberta Commercial Corporation. This is a board made up, I believe, of civil servants who make recommendations to the minister regarding the application of the Alberta Commercial Services Act. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it probably wouldn't be appropriate to have an MLA on that board.

Another board is the Alberta Rural Credit Corporation Board. I don't pretend to know what it does. Then we have the Alberta Crop Insurance Corporation. What the implications would be of putting an MLA on that, again I don't know. But I would like to hear what the views of the government are, as to where this principle is going.

Then we come down to the Hail Insurance Board, the Alberta Telephone Commission -- now maybe the hon. Minister of Telephones and Utilities is busy; he needs a watchdog on that. Then we have the Alberta Industrial Corporation, and I question whether we need an MLA on that one. Here is one I don't think an MLA should be involved in -- the Municipal Financing Corporation, where decisions are made as to who shall receive allocation of provincial financial funds for municipal purposes.

The next one -- not being a supporter of the racing fraternity, horse racing, that is -- the Alberta Racing Commission -- I can think of a few MLA's on both side of this House who might like to serve on that one. But again, I am not too convinced they should be there.

There is one, the Resources Railway Corporation, that is a favourite subject for the gentleman opposite; the Bow River Development Manager. Then we have the Board of Examiners, the Coal Miner's Regulations. We have the Disabled Persons Board, we have the Farm Purchase Board. We have the Health Unit Board, the Alberta Liquor Control Board. We have the Alberta Power Commission -- I think it has now been superseded under the new Energy Act. We have the District Highways Board. Here is a matter of interest, Mr. Speaker, because I recall that the opposition was going to introduce a bill to set up a Highways Board, now they seem to have forgotten about it.

MR. DICKIE:

I wonder if the hon. member would tell us what year is the report he is reading from.

MR. HENDERSON:

I'm going back some years, Mr. Speaker. It is the report of the special committee on boards and tribunals to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta on which the hon. minister who just asked the question served. I simply used it because it was the quickest tabulation of some of the boards that exist in the Province of Alberta.

40-86

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MP. DICKIE:

I don't suggest it is in any way complete, Mr. Speaker. Out of courtesy to the hon. members, surely you could tell us if he has brought it up to date for us before he continues reading.

MP. HENDERSON:

I am quite confident the hon. gentleman opposite would point out any inaccuracies and what-not in my presentation, Mr. Speaker. If the hon. minister asking the questions wants to correct the record as to whether the statement is out of date, he is at liberty to do so. I would welcome his contribution and find out where his policies are, where his principle lies in this particular new thrust that this government is embarking on.

A District Highways Board -- I would question an MLA being on that board, Special Areas Board, St. Mary and Milk River Development Manager. Then there is the Supplementary Allowances Board for the Department of Welfare. We have a Board of Administrators for The Teachers' Retirement Fund Act. Here comes the next one -- the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission -- that is a new one on the list, for the benefit of the hon. minister. Maybe we should have some MLA's on that one. Mind you, from my experience with it, I can't think of a poorer board to get too closely associated with, from the problems they have to deal with. We have the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission. That might be a good board to put some MLA's on, I don't know. Then, we have another one here, which I don't think an MLA should get near -- the Alberta Opportunity Fund Board, which is under legislation introduced in this House this year.

And there are undoubtedly other boards. While we may view some of the suggestions with a bit of levity as far as the propriety of an MLA serving on various boards I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that in the absence of a pretty clear statement of policy from the administration as to where they are going with this particular principle, and how far they are going to carry it, it would be incumbent on the former members of this assembly to seriously examine the principle contained in this legislation.

I said at the outset when examining it, Mr. Speaker, to consider the proposal on its merits. I can foresee in the odd place where putting an MLA on a government board or agency may not be particularly objectionable. But as I dug deeper into the question, I concluded that I couldn't, with a clear conscience, support this part of the bill or the principle contained in it, in the absence of a very clear, definitive statement from the Premier of the Province of Alberta as to how political he is going to get when it comes to having members of this legislature involved in boards and agencies which were established by this legislature under such terms and conditions where actions such as this were not contemplated. I suggest that such a statement should be produced in detail so that we have a very clear understanding of exactly what the administration has in mind as to how political it intends to become with many of these government agencies.

MP. SPEAKER:

I don't wish to usurp the functions of the leader of the government caucus. The hon. member for Calgary Buffalo.

MR. GHITTER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, aside from the fact that I've already received two submissions from MLA's who would like to serve on the Alberta Liquor Control Board if that ever came about, I must suggest that I am rather surprised with the paranoia exhibited by the member on the other side, from the point of view of his deep, deep concern.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-87

MR. FENDERSON:

What does paranoia mean?

MR. GHITTER:

I'm really not too surprised that the hon. member doesn't know the word; maybe I could change it in briefer form and I'll send you over a dictionary definition of the word parancia. What it basically means is that there seems to be a deep fear on the other side that the MLA's would become involved, from the point of view of understanding the government process and offering a contribution and a liaison between the many, many boards that we have had, that have been expressed so boastfully by the hon. member, who has great pride in all of these boards which have been set up. May I suggest to the hon. member that the thought of having a liaison from the MLA to the cabinet minister and to the executive council, who can in fact, keep an eye on what is happening in these many boards and tribunals, would indeed be a very useful procedure that I would applaud and encourage, should it occur.

I would suggest that the fear of the hon. member on the other side of seeing MLA's involved doesn't surprise me, as possibly he would much prefer to see the MLA's isolated under these many light bulbs, from the point of view of their lack of understanding, or their desire, possibly, to find out a little bit more as to what is occurring in various departments. What better service could an MLA provide than to sit on a board or commission and provide his particular knowledge, hopefully, and expertise, to liaison with the government. In my experience I have also found that the members who are on these boards and tribunals would welcome the involvement of an MLA. It has been expressed to me by many members who have been on various boards and tribunals that sometimes they would in turn feel somewhat remote from what happens in this room, as we might feel remote from them, Mr. Speaker. And I would suggest that what we can do to bring them more into the government process is to create this very liaison that is being suggested in this one bill.

I would applaud the Premier if he would come forward with the policy that you are asking for, hon. member, and I would suggest that MLA's become more involved and that MLA's could serve on these tribunals. I would suggest that you be less concerned over isolating the MLA's from the work of government, and you too should come forward and applaud the fact that MLA's should serve on these boards and commissions.

MR. KING:

Mr. Speaker, the debate this evening reminds me of a story that was told to me by a friend, who was raised in Manitoba near the border of North Dakota. He tells that at the age of 14, or thereabouts, he went down to North Dakota to visit, and was astounded that in the United States a number of individuals, whom in Canada we have a great respect for, ran for office, including judges. And this was a great surprise to him that they actually had to go out and get elected in order to be a judge. He says he came back and about two years later there was a federal election, and after it was over he realized that in Canada it's the people who can't get elected who become judges. I thought that his story would probably be analogous to the situation the hon. member opposite would like to see pertain in Alberta. That is, that the people who in the past have frequently served on boards -- the Alberta Advisory Board comes to mind as one example -- are the people who cannot be elected to the Legislature.

I think the hon. members opposite, throughout this session, have displayed -- [interjections] -- paranoia, yes. The definition is on its way. In addition to parancia I think that they have displayed a

40-88

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

disturbing lack of knowledge about the origins of the parliamentary system and about why some of the things which members do, are done, and about the need for change. It seems clear to me that in an age when the different levels of government spend -- [Interjections]. I don't think there's any hope in the world that I can compete with the entertaining ignorance of -- [Interjections]

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, he's absolutely right; he might as well sit down and -- [Interjections]

MR. KING:

Mr. Speaker, in an age when different levels of government spend 33% of the gross national product in Canada, as compared with approximately 8% that was spent 50 years ago, or more significant, 2% that was spent when many of the traditions of parliament were being formulated and established, it seems clear to me that it's not sufficient that we should attempt to carry on into the future the same relationships of the members of the Legislative Assembly with their government as were sufficient for the efficient conduct of business a 100, or 50, or 200 years ago. Many of things which we do today are grounded in a situation when the population of the country was much smaller; when the density of constituencies was much less; when the responsibility of the government to the people was much less; and when each member of an Assembly was much more able, without any strain on his social relationships, to understand what the government was doing for the people and how they were doing it. Now clearly the situation has changed. And clearly if this institution, and similar institutions across the country hope to remain relevant to the life style of the country today -- or indeed any other industrialized society -- there have got to be new ways found of informing legislators about the affect of their programs, about the possible alternatives and about the most efficient way of delivering these programs and these services to the people. Now it's all well and good to say that one alternative is not going to work, or that one alternative is going to take advantage of the situation of certain legislators; or that one alternative is open to abuse by people who want to abuse it. But having said that, I think that there's a clear responsibility to propose other alternatives which are workable, which will achieve the ends that we want to achieve, and which will not be open to the abuse that the hon. members opposite are so concerned about.

The thing which has distressed me in this debate this evening -- the thing that has distressed me for the last seven or eight weeks, and I just can't remember how long I've been in here -- is that aside from having condemned any innovation which has been presented out of hand, the hon. members opposite have made no attempt whatsoever to provide other alternatives for bringing this Legislature to grips with the problems which we have got to face up to if we want to remain relevant. I would hope that aside from of the hon. members who have already spoken and who have made what contribution they can, that there might be something said on the other side, if it is not favourable about what is being done, and this type of legislation would suggest a constructive and a feasible and a workable alternative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, just briefly, I believe when hon. members in this House stand up and criticize a certain measure for whatever reasons they wish to put forth to support their debate, I believe it's a matter of what principles you subscribe to. To some hon. members this is alright; let's load up all sorts of commissions with MLAs -- that's the thing to do; to some other people this is not quite as acceptable -- it's repugnant. I think it's an hon. member's

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-29

responsibility here to stand up and state that he objects to it without having to be insulted by some hon. member who has nothing better to offer in debate. I think that this is the beginning of what the Conservatives have a tendency to do, but want to make it legal. It's -- [Interjection] -- The hon. member did not get up on a point of order -- [Interjection] -- He hasn't stated that.

MR. SPEAKER:

*The hon. Member for Calgary McKnight has alleged that he's up on a point of order, and if he would please specify the rule of the House or the custom that is being infringed perhaps we can deal with the point of order.

MR. GHTIER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the point of the alleged insults that were launched by this side of the House. I merely bring to the attention of the hon. member that as the word wasn't understood by the party to whom it was directed it could not be regarded as insulting to that party.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is not only impudent but he has been unparliamentary and as somebody has stated before, what better treatment can you expect from a greenhorn?

Now, I was stating that whether you object to this advancement of MLA's being on committees or not is a matter of what principle you subscribe to. As I stated before, the hon. members think it's alright. I think the Conservative Party has a propensity for patronage, and they got caught -- it's their history -- it's Canadian history. They got caught in a little bit of dipping into the cookie jar and got rapped for it soundly -- now they're going to make it legal. I've never heard a better argument than from the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight and the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands, for legalized patronage. It was an impassioned plea that we want this, we're the MLA's, we're now ministers anyway, they can appoint us to anything. And I'm sure if we give these people four years that they'll find a board for everybody -- they'll find an MLA for every board. So what right have we got to stand up and oppose this thing. Of course, the fact that we didn't do this in the past and appoint MLA's to these boards is an indication that perhaps we're not quite as sophisticated -- it's a new thrust -- it's a new group -- it's a more slick kind of approach to politics, Mr. Speaker. We weren't quite as bright as these boys are --

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. LUDWIG:

This is a new -- you look at the front line -- they're more sophisticated, it's the slick approach and perhaps they will get away with it, but it's encumbant on us on this side to stand up and tell them we think the principle is wrong; it's as I stated --

AN. HON. MEMBER:

Give us back the cookie jar.

MR. LUDWIG:

You'll get a lot of support from that other side for this but it's legalized patronage in my opinion and I intend to oppose it.

40-90

ALBERTA EANSARD

May 1st 1972

MP. KING:

Mr. Speaker, recalling our conversation of this afternoon, I draw your attention to page 131 of Beauchesne:

"Pourinot gives the following examples of unparliamentary phrases:

. . .that he has acted basely and from base motives."

I think to say that a member made an impassioned plea for legalized patronage is clearly an unparliamentary phrase and an unparliamentary imputation. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member withdraw the remark.

MP. HENDERSON:

Speaking to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the gentleman who has just spoken, his political education is incomplete. I was sure he had a better tutor than that in the form of the Deputy Premier but, obviously, the Deputy Premier has wasted some of his time. He couldn't be further from reality on that particular matter.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a word or two in connection with the principle of the bill. When one of the hon. members opposite suggests that they are coming to grips with the problems of this generation and this country by appointing MLA's to boards I have difficulty following that type of reasoning.

AN. HON. MEMBER:

I'll bet!

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I also have difficulty following the suggestion that by giving an MLA a second job, that this is going to solve any particular problem. MLA's don't have any greater understanding than hundreds of other people who do not have other jobs. We have no particular brilliance because we happen to be elected to the Legislature. As a matter of fact some of us were elected to the Legislature solely because of the brilliance of someone else, and I think we have to be cognizant of that. In every political party the leader of that party has much to do with the election of many members, and we have to admit that -- whether we like it or not -- whether it's federal or provincial. And to think that we suddenly become wonderful people with wonderful understanding beyond that of others, with wisdom equal to Solomon, simply because we're elected to the Legislature, is a myth and if the hon. members think that is true, they had better be elected for a few years to find how untrue it really is.

But the point that I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is that simply by being elected to the Legislature and appointing people who happen to be members of the Legislature doesn't in any way say that the Board is going to be a better administrative body than appointing somebody from the outside who would spend full-time at that particular job.

Now secondly, Mr. Speaker, we were elected as members of the Legislature -- the legislative arm of government. Now we find a tendency to try and make the legislative arm part of the administrative arm. The Legislature has control or should have control through their government, the government should be responsible to the Legislature, so the Legislature should have control of these various boards. But here we are going to put members of the Legislature onto the administrative arm of a board, so that we become our own bosses to a degree. And to whom is that --

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-91

carried to the nth degree -- to whom are we responsible? And it would simply start chaos in government.

The next thing, we're elected to the Legislature for a salary, for an indemnity -- we knew what the indemnity was when we ran for office, or we should have known what the indemnity was when we ran for office. And we weren't elected by the people on the premise that we were going to start moonlighting, that we were going to take on other jobs, administrative jobs on boards. And there is a distinct difference between a judge in the United States who runs for office and is elected as a judge. He's comparable to an MLA who runs for office and is elected as an MLA, but if that judge then became a member of a hospital board and several other boards which he had to judge, it would be completely wrong. And so it's wrong too for this body to have members on boards where we pass the legislation that deals with them, where we pass the money that pays them. It's bad enough and we get enough criticism from the general public that we set our own salaries in legislatures and in parliament. And I think that the thinking of the people gradually is changing so that perhaps we will have to, at election time, set out a schedule of salaries so that the people can then decide whether or not they want to elect a man at that salary or at an increased salary. There are better ways of doing it than we are doing today, and I don't find any serious grappling with that problem.

We're trying to avoid that problem apparently and appoint MLA's into the administrative arm of government which is completely wrong -- and I say it's completely wrong. And, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't accept a job on a board. If I wanted to be a member of a board I'd resign my seat and apply for the job, and I think any other hon. member should do the same thing. Because otherwise we are mixing the legislative arm with the administrative arm, and I think that is a serious part of this particular type of amendment. There are many ways of coming to grips with problems.

This Legislature has the responsibility of coming to grips with problems and setting out legislation, setting out regulations that will help the civil service to meet those problems, and the government has a responsibility to set out its policy so that the civil service can carry it out, so that the committee boards can carry it out. But it's not necessary for the government to appoint MLA's to a board in order to carry out the government's responsibility, the government's directions, and the government's wishes, or the government's thrusts.

Any board that doesn't carry out the thinking of the government can be fired and they should be fired. There is no reason why they should be setting the policy. The government is there to govern, but the government isn't there to start putting MLA's and supporters of its own party who have been elected to do one job in the administrative arm in order to do another job. Mr. Speaker, if this is carried out, it is simply a lust for greed where we. . . [laughter and interjections]. . . it is. That is what it will be. You can laugh if you like, but that is how it will be looked upon by the people outside. Today we admonish people because they take on two jobs outside, when they are struggling to make both ends meet. Here we are MLA's, some of us already have two jobs. Now we want to get into the administrative arm of the government -- get a third job. This is completely wrong, it is fundamentally wrong, and it is morally wrong.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Pairview was on his feet.

40-92

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

MR. NCTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I am afraid I can't summon quite the eloquent passion of the hon. Member for Drumheller. I do want to say that I agree with his points and also the points raised by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc. It seems to me that there is an important distinction here between the legislative function on one hand and the administrative role on the other, and that there is a danger in confusing the two.

I would like to follow up on a point raised by the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands, and that is the role of a member of the Legislature. He points out that 30 or 40 years ago -- I forget the figure -- that 8% of the gross national product was spent in one way or another by public bodies, and now it is 33%, and as a consequence, the role of a member should change. I certainly agree with that. I think that the times have changed and we have to reassess the roles of both the federal members of parliament and also members of this Legislature. We are no longer talking about a government, Mr. Speaker, that spends \$30 million a year, we are talking about a province where the budget is well over a billion dollars. There is clearly no doubt that this does demand a somewhat different responsibility on the part of members of the Legislature. Surely the right approach is not to stick certain members of the Legislature on boards, or tribunals, or commissions. Surely the proper approach is to expand the role of all the hon. members of this Legislature, and perhaps we should be sitting for seven or eight or nine months of the year. Perhaps the government of Alberta has got large enough, the commissions -- there are enough of them -- to adequately assess whether they are doing a good job or not. Perhaps we are just not spending sufficient time. Perhaps indeed it has almost come to the point where we need full-time members of the Legislature. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that such a course would be a much more prudent one to follow than undertaking a rather dangerous precedent of appointing some members to boards and tribunals. I think, as the hon. Member for Drumheller has so ably pointed out, such a course is fraught with many, many dangers and it confuses the role of the Legislature on one hand with that of the administration of public policies on the other. So for those reasons, I find that I cannot support Bill No. 28 in principle.

MR. FAFFAN:

Mr. Chairman, I don't want to get into the argument about jobs for the boys, because the record is well enough established over the years that the party on the other side of the House used to indulge in this in every possible way. Commissions and boards packed with party hacks, buildings being rented, cabinet ministers retiring with millions, I don't want to go into the details of that.

What I would like to point out is that this Hospital Services Commission handles a very large portion of the province's budget. All together the Department of Health and Social Development handles some 36% of the provincial budget. Even if you take off the social assistance portion, a very large amount is handled by this Hospital Services Commission. This commission is not only concerned with administration, with policy applications for the entire hospital network through the province. We have not had an opportunity of going in any detail into their budget, but we would presume that after the hon. minister has passed on this budget of \$222 million, plus another \$1,233,000 for administration, complete trust is placed in the hands of the Alberta Hospital Services Commission. I would have thought if ever there was a case for an MLA or an elected member to remain in contact with an autonomous body, it's with this one.

The principle that elected members should have some responsibility for the disbursement of funds, apart from thumbing over these broad figures that we do once or twice a week, I think is well enough established in other levels of government. Certainly, local government believes in occasionally putting an elected member

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-93

on a board that spends the public money. They take the view that there should be some connection with the elected body if they're going to maintain contact with the people; that it's wrong to delegate entirely to all these autonomous boards and tribunals of appointed people, even if the appointed people may be favourites of the government in power at that time. But I still think it's wrong. I believe that MIA's should accept just as much responsibility as they expect aldermen and councillors to accept. They should be there on the firing lines, it's not enough to slough off the responsibility onto an appointed member. They should be there to take the criticism when the criticism's coming, because they are the contact with the people. The basic principle of democracy is supposed to be government of the people by the people. How do you govern the people if you always delegate, always give it to some autonomous board, always push the responsibility off so that you have a great sort of shield between you and the public? This is no way to do it. I don't believe it's the right way. People complain that they don't have enough contact with government, that government is too remote. Well, the way to get closer contact is to appoint a few elected members -- perhaps some from both sides of the House -- to some of these autonomous boards that have far too many powers for appointed people.

MR. CLARK:

Just following along the comments the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill made, if in fact, this is the recent thinking of the government, then it seems to me the question can be pretty reasonably asked the Premier, why in fact, have the commissions? Why not replace the commissions and have members of the Legislature take the position of chairman of the commission and then, in fact, they can report to the Legislature that way?

I tried to follow the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill in his comments and at the same time keep in mind what the government has done as far as the Alberta Government Telephones Commission is concerned. Back in September of this year, the Premier felt the route to go there was to appoint a minister to be responsible for the operation of Alberta Government Telephones, and then to add the responsibilities of utilities. Now, if this is the direction the government is going to go, that's the government's decision, but let's do it in a number of areas. Let's follow that procedure as far as the Universities' Commission is concerned and as far as the Colleges' Commission is concerned, and the Health Care Insurance. Let's make the hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House the chairman of the Health Care Commission. I suppose you could do it with the Energy Board. If that's the direction you're going to go, then go that direction, but for the life of me, I can't follow the government's thinking - with all due respect - in this area. One hon. member talked about the greater liaison they had between the boards and the minister and cabinet. Well, if that's what you need then you can follow the route that the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands mentioned. You can follow the route the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill suggested -- put MIA's on as the chairmen, if that's the route you're going to take.

Then we talk about a new role for the MIA's. I can recall some of the contributions made on other occasions in this House by members of the front bench; and members of the backbenches too, talked in terms of long-term planning and doing things on a systematic, well thought-out approach, and here, to our amazement, we find a rather piecemeal approach. We're not having a policy as far as all boards are concerned, or all commissions are concerned, but we're going to zero in on this area, and we're going to have an MIA on the Hospitals Commission. This seems to say that the government has some real basic concerns about the Hospitals Commission, and doesn't have that much confidence in the Hospitals Commission. That is the only reason I can think of for putting an MIA on the Hospitals Commission at this time, when you are not doing it in other areas. You are not putting

40-94

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

him or as chairman; you have made a minister responsible for Alberta Government Telephones; you have him follow that precedent, but for some reason which I will be doggoned if I can understand, at this time you are going off in a completely different direction, and you are putting an MLA on the Hospitals Commission -- I guess because you want to peer over the Hospital Commission's shoulder. I really can't understand the operation; you'd almost think someone had said, "Doggone it, I want to be on the Hospitals Commission." I think the points made by the hon. Member for Drumheller, about the legislative and the administrative arm of government -- there is no pussyfooting around -- you can't go one way or the other.

I think the hon. Premier, either at this occasion or at some time in the future, has got to make a very definitive statement as to what the government's policy is in this area. You either follow the precedent you have established as far as Alberta Government Telephones is concerned, and follow along with the point the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill makes, or pull this portion out of the act that is before us now. It is not fish nor fowl, the way it is now.

MR. P. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on this act. First of all I would like to support what my colleagues, the hon. Member for Drumheller, and the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc have said on it. I think the first very important thing that we would like established by the hon. Premier is certainly a policy statement with regard to items such as this, will there be MLAs on all of the boards? Is this particular act a precedent for other acts that are similar -- commissions, or boards, or like agencies? I think that is the first very important thing that we are concerned about and would like to know about, because if it is, we certainly want to indicate as much concern as we can at this time, that we feel the precedent is not a good one and certainly one that we just couldn't support.

Personally, I have some very deep, strong feelings against it. The strongest argument against a move such as this is the one where we are mixing the legislative and the operational arm together. In an organization such as government it certainly doesn't allow for the best decision-making type of process. I would find it very difficult if I were an MLA sitting on such a board as the Hospitals Commission, where I would recommend or feel that a certain point of view is right, it may not be political, and it may be political -- it could be either -- but recommending that to the minister -- the minister knows we are on the same team, working together -- is going to make it very difficult to be as objective as possible -- which the minister must be, in the final analysis in making a recommendation to his colleagues and Cabinet, and finalizing the decision on that particular matter.

I think in the establishment of the Hospitals Commission we felt it was necessary for government (a) to take the responsibility to establish policy and, (b) for a body such as the commission to fulfil and implement that particular policy. In light of that, there is a conflict between the role of an MLA as a policy maker, and in his role of trying to implement that policy. I see that as a dangerous precedent.

I certainly feel that the element of patronage could seep into a system such as this. It may not have to, but it could along the line. One of the things I would like to indicate to persons who sit on the other side of the House, who haven't been in the House before; when you establish legislation in this House, or any precedents, they are precedents that last for many, many years.

I think one of the bills that was on the Order Paper that we have dealt with is an example. The Sterilization Act -- back

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-95

somewhere in the early 1920's -- that act was introduced into the House. The principle followed through for a number of years up to this period of time. There are others, such actions that have taken place a number of years ago, that have set the same kind of precedents. Some you can turn back and terminate, and there are others that you can't.

I think at this point in time, the decision you are making on this act is certainly a crossroads at which you are making a very important decision.

I would like to talk about that and maybe we can refer my remarks to the backbenchers on the other side or the members that are not cabinet ministers. I think that in viewing this type of a decision, you must carefully analyze whether this decision is for the best for the people of Alberta, the best type of decision that will be responsible, and set aside any type of innate or inner personal vested interest you may have.

As I was observing, some of you from this side, sometimes our expressions say more than our words do. I noted on two or three of the items, such as the Liquor Control Board, and one or two others, it certainly lit everybody's eyes up, and to me what it said is that there was some indication that "I wouldn't mind being on that board." My personal vested interest would be fulfilled." [Interjections] I think that maybe the reasoning there doesn't follow as well as it should. But I think at this time that the most reasonable position should be taken -- not look at only your vested interest, but look at what the implications of that amendment are at this time and the effect it has on a long-term basis. Once a policy such as this is implemented, I think it's going to be very difficult to terminate it at a later date.

MR. STPCM:

Mr. Speaker, I must confess that I am just a little disappointed that the hon. Premier hasn't seen fit to rise in his place and give a clarifying statement. I listened very carefully to the remarks of the members. I tried to listen very closely when my hon. colleague, the Member from Wetaskiwin-Leduc, was speaking. And what he was saying, as I listened to him, was that if this is the route that the government intends to take, let us hear it now and he asked the Premier if he would not be prepared to give a clear statement of intent as to what the government intends to do with future commissions, with future boards. I will certainly be most interested in hearing a clarifying statement from the Premier as to the government's intent.

Now I have tried, as clearly as possible, to analyze the reasons for this amendment and, Mr. Speaker, I would have to say that I am having some difficulty in satisfying myself as to the reasons for going forward with the amendment at this time.

I would like to say this too, that it seems to me if we place an MLA on a board or on a commission, that we then place the members of the commission in a very difficult spot, because the only assumption that they can make is that this person has some direction from the government as to the direction they ought to take. I suggest that the direction they should be taking is one of administering the policy that is determined by the elected representatives. If they get outside of that, or in any way try to form policy, then I am sure that the government has ways and means of dealing with it.

But really, Mr. Premier, in appealing to you, all we're interested in at this point in time is knowing whether or not this is a direction that you intend to take with other boards, with other commissions, or are you simply locking upon this one as something that requires an extra special way of dealing with it for some

40-96

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

particular purpose? I would certainly hope that we could have some clarifying statement.

MR. HINMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I want to get a little word in this. I think I would like to review for you that in the original governments under democracy, there were not commissions or boards. Commissions and boards grew up when certain phases of government had definite political implications. I could use the Liquor Board or the Workmen's Compensation Board as examples. It was found that if the government maintained these as branches of government, that they were always being pushed by the MLA's and by the political backers to make the decisions which were difficult to make -- to help this fellow, not to help that fellow, to stretch the law a little bit here, or stretch the act a little bit there. It was in consequence of this attitude to take away from government these decisions which should not be political, that these commissions were first established.

Perhaps it was good. We established the Liquor Control Board and in my years in government I think we let them run the liquor business of the province. If we didn't like what they were doing, we reviewed it and we changed the act and then we let them run it. If that was the purpose -- and I submit that it was -- if it was a matter of transferring to an independent board the management of those affairs in which we didn't want politics to enter, if that was the case, then I submit it is wrong to begin placing MLA's on these commissions and boards. If I were to go back to my own feeling it would be that perhaps we were wrong in the first place to begin this commission system. That perhaps all of these functions could be done by branches of government. If we were not wrong, if truly we want the higher education, or we want the universities under a commission, we pass laws and then we avoid responsibility by saying to the people 'the commission decided under legislation and that is final,' if we're going to do that then I suggest that we're very wrong to begin putting MLA's on commissions and put back in the very political implications that the commission system was designed to avoid. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, having been asked to respond to a general statement on this I think that I should react to the request that's been made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Frankly, I think from the remarks made by two or three of the hon. members opposite that it's obvious that regardless of what I might say they have already made up their mind to oppose the thought that's expressed here. Certainly the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View was foremost in that sort of immediate, automatic reaction.

I do think that there is a very important point here ...

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. A remark was made concerning me and I'm entitled to rise on a point of order and respond to that remark. Is the hon. Premier suggesting that there's no pre-set decision on that side? He's setting me up as an example as if I made up my mind to a debate. I think that is an insult from the hon. Premier. I've been watching their operation. It's clear cut example of obedience training over there. I've never seen a better case of it, and he has the gall to say; "Well we've made up our minds."

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA FANSARD

40-97

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, this is not a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Is the hon. member alleging this to be a point of order or a point of privilege?

MR. LUDWIG:

A point of privilege then, Mr. Speaker. I've said what I wanted to say.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, in just saying a few words in closing the debate I want to thank all hon. members for their contributions, of course. I wanted to comment upon the fact that a few years ago I remember reading an article in a magazine that said one of the members of the then Social Credit caucus was accomplished on the violin. As I sat here this evening and listened to the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc fiddle, while the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View burned, my only reflection was that compared with the trumpet sounds of the hon. Member for Drumheller, they couldn't compare, and the concert was only just beginning. However there were some sour notes throughout the course of it and I thought that I would react very briefly at this hour, to them.

First of all, as the minister responsible for the commission in question, I want to make it entirely clear that no lack of trust of the commission is implied in what is proposed in the subsection under consideration. That statement was made by one of the hon. gentlemen opposite and put forward as a possible reason for this amendment and I deny it.

There are only three other points I want to make. The hon. gentleman opposite also said that we thought we required a watchdog on that particular commission. But I think that this overlooks the prime motivating force of this type of proposal. It is quite the contrary, quite the reverse, of what we believe a member of the Legislature may have to contribute to the people of Alberta through that commission. And we expect that if a member of the Legislature is named to that commission which would be part of the authority given by this subsection, that that member would be there for the purpose of making a contribution to the people of Alberta, and looking after their affairs in the business of that commission.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think quite a few hon. members present are in a position to know that the example, for what it's worth and I think it's worth something, is that this is commonly done in municipal governments, including those of the large cities. Many members present have served, say, on a library board appointed pursuant to a provincial statute while they were aldermen, and as far as I know received no remuneration for it, serving side by side with members of the community who also have the interests of that board at heart. Then other examples, like the regional planning commissions where aldermen may serve, one or two of them, along with other members of the public. In those cases they may be remunerated for what they do, but if they are, it's on exactly the same basis as the other members of that commission. And both types of organization work quite well. Both the type of organization where the elected member is on -- and compensated in some way -- works satisfactorily; as does the one -- which I'm sure are more numerous -- where the elected representative serves, and is not compensated in any way.

This brings me to the final and important point in regard to the provisions of the actual proposed amendment, and it is simply this, all it provides -- after providing that the number of members at large might be six instead of four -- is that if an MLA serves, then

40-98

ALBERTA HANSARD

May 1st 1972

he's not disqualified from sitting purely by reason of receiving payment for travelling and living expenses. And this amendment relates only to the receipt of travelling and living expenses, therefore, it relates only to placing any member of this Assembly who might serve on the commission in the same position as the other people who would be serving on it at the same time with him. It would simply mean that he would not be a second-class citizen when it came to travelling about the province if his duties required him to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I think with that clarification no member of the Assembly should still be harboring or reserving within himself the doubts that have been expressed and related to really quite another matter and that is the possibility that -- I think the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc began by saying we were creating a Niagara Peninsula Board or something in the process of this simple amendment.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion that Bill No. 37, The Hospital Services Commission Amendment Act, 1972, be read a second time, would all those in favour please say 'aye' and all those opposed please say 'no'. The motion is carried.

[Several members rose requesting a recorded vote. The House subsequently divided as follows:

For the motion - Messrs.

Adair	Farran	Lougheed
Appley	Ghitter	McCrimmon
Ashton	Hansen	Miller, J.
Eckus	Harle	Pajroski
Etiuk	Hohol	Purdy
Chambers	Horner	Schmid
Chichak, Mrs.	Hunley, Miss	Tepolnisky
Cockson	Hyndman	Trynchy
Copithorne	Jawison	Warrack
Crawford	King	Werry
Dickie	Koziak	Young
Dixon	Lee	Yurko
Toan	Leitch	Zander

Against the motion - Messrs.

Anderson	Henderson	Sorenson
Earton	Ho Iem	Speaker, R.
Eckwell	Ludwig	Strom
Clark	Mandeville	Taylor
Cooper	Miller, D.	Wilson
Drain	Notley	Wyse
French	Ruste	

Totals: Ayes - 39 Nces - 20]

MR. SPEAKER:

I declare the motion carried.

[Bill No. 37 was read for the second time.]

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the House now stand adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock.

May 1st 1972

ALBERTA HANSARD

40-99

MR. SPEAKER:

It has been moved by the hon. Premier that the House stand adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. Do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock.

[The House rose at 11:42 pm.]

