

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Tuesday, May 16th, 1972

(The House met at 2:30 pm.)

PRAYERS

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. ANDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the hon. members of this Assembly, 34 Grade IV students from the Galbraith School in Lethbridge. They are accompanied by their teacher Mrs. Toone and six parents. These children raised their own money for this trip by selling popcorn, collecting newspapers, and old egg cartons. While in Edmonton they made a visit to the Provincial Museum and Archives, the Alberta Game Farm and the AGT Building. They were billeted by students from the Forest Heights Elementary School here. On their way home, they will visit the Badlands of Drumheller. These students are seated in the public gallery and I would ask them to please rise and be recognized by the House.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and pleasure to introduce on behalf of the hon. Member for Whitecourt, the hon. member Mr. Trynchy, 20 Grade XII students from Evansburg High School, because they not only come from my friend's riding, but also from the heart of Alberta's Sunshine, central Alberta. They are situated in the members' gallery and they are accompanied by their principal Mr. John Keast. I wonder if they would rise and be recognized by the House.

DR. PAPROSKI:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the hon. members of this Assembly some 75 Grade V and Grade VI students from Prince Charles School located in my constituency. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Ron Trantor, Mr. Ed Friss, Mr. Oliver Sathe. I would like to congratulate them for taking an interest in the democratic process and ask them to rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the hon. members of this Assembly 48 adult students from Alberta Vocational Training Centre which is located in my constituency. Mr. Speaker, these students are on an educational upgrading program and I am sure that all members of this Assembly will congratulate them as they plan on carrying on into the technical schools in the Province of Alberta. They are accompanied by their instructor Mrs. Sandy Terriff. They are seated in the members' gallery and I would ask that they now stand and be recognized by this Assembly.

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FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I should like to file Return No. 102 requested on Thursday, May 11, 1972 by the hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Guaranteed Incomes

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. By way of explanation, in view of the commitment of Mr. Stanfield to a guaranteed annual income and in view of the fact that the Manitoba government has launched a pilot project to study the effectiveness of this concept, does this government plan to launch a similar pilot project?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member gave two basic premises in regard to his question, and the answer to both would be no.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. In view of the fact that one of the prime objectives of the Manitoba pilot project is to get more money into the hands of the working poor, what steps does your government propose to achieve that objective in Alberta?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, there are many things that can be done to get more money into the hands of the working poor, to which we think the policies of this government are going to contribute in the Province of Alberta, that probably won't exist elsewhere in this country after we've had the benefit of the capable administration of ministers like the hon. Minister of Industry, the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals, and the hon. Minister of Labour, over a period of time.

Mr. Speaker, I consider that the question has now been answered, but I do want to say to the hon. member that this is a matter, of course, of major and overall policy, and so far as I might be involved in deliberations in regard to redistribution, of income, from the point of view of the provincial government, it's not a matter that I'd be prepared to go into detail on without proper arriving at of a policy decision that one or other of the ministers would be dealing with as a policy matter from time to time.

MR. NOTLEY:

A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

On a point of order, there would have been no way in which the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview could have raised a point of order with regard to the hon. minister's answer, because of the way the question was framed. I would respectfully suggest to hon. members who wish to ask questions that perhaps they should reread annotations 171 to 176 in Beauchesne, because a preamble to a question -- and most of all an argumentative preamble -- puts the question out of order and obviously is an invitation to debate.

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MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the hon. Minister of Agriculture a question, and in order to do that I have to read a letter in order that they get the background.

MR. SPEAKER:

In those same references to Beauchesne, the hon. member will find that prefacing a question by reading an excerpt from a newspaper or something of that kind is also contrary to the orders and customs of the House.

Rapeseed Quotas

MR. DRAIN:

OK, Mr. Speaker. My question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture is, what is the stagnation that is developing in the delivery of rapeseed to the processing plants such as Lethbridge? What is the delay, and where is the hold up?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether the hon. member is referring to the problems of the quotas that have been posed by the Canadian Wheat Board in regard to deliveries of rapeseed to the crushing plant at Lethbridge. If he is, I can tell him that I've asked the Attorney General to intercede in regard to the prosecutions that the Canadian Wheat Board has initiated, on the grounds that in our view these deliveries are taking place within the Province of Alberta to a crushing plant within Alberta, and therefore there is some consideration that the quotas imposed by the Canadian Wheat Board are, in fact, unconstitutional. We intend to pursue that, because it has some implications with regard to the setting up of additional rapeseed crushing plants within the Province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Ottewell.

Farm Credit Corporation

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Is the minister aware of any foreclosures on mortgages by the Farm Credit Corporation, specifically in the south or east-central region of the province?

DR. HORNER:

I can't give the hon. member the exact incidents or the exact locations of the foreclosures by the Farm Credit Corporation, as has been raised in this Legislature before, and brought to my attention by numerous members on this side. I've had discussions with the director of the Farm Credit Corporation in regard to delays in these foreclosures. I've had discussions with the regional director here in Edmonton who directs the operations in Alberta, in regard to delays. We are having meetings later this week and early next week with all the financial institutions in Alberta in an attempt to apprise them of the situation, hopefully so that they will adjust their methods of collection and give our farmers an opportunity to have an additional year in which to meet these obligations.

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MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary to the hon. minister. Is the Government of Alberta going to make money available through the Treasury Branches to preserve family farms which are being foreclosed by the Farm Credit Corporation?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the Treasury Branches can make money available in that manner. What I would hope to be able to do, and what I have indicated in this House before, is that our counsellors are extension people who would sit down with these farmers who are in financial difficulties and try to work out some solution for them. That may take a number of routes, and I would hope that we would be able to get into that area almost immediately.

MR. NOTLEY:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The hon. minister has informed us that he has had discussions with the federal farm credit authorities asking that they delay proceedings. I am wondering if he can be a little more specific than that, and whether he can advise the House whether or not the federal farm credit authorities have agreed to delay proceedings?

DR. HORNER:

We haven't reached that stage in negotiation where they have agreed, Mr. Speaker. I have hope that the continuing negotiations that we are having with them and with the other financial institutions will reach that stage in which they will agree to delay until such time as the agricultural credit can be reorganized in the province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Edmonton Ottewell, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

Alberta Liquor Control Board

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Attorney General with respect to the Alberta Liquor Control Board. My question is, is the hon. minister giving consideration to creating a local option area for Sherwood Park which would enable the residents of Sherwood Park to determine whether or not they are going to have alcoholic beverages served?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, we are more than giving consideration to it. An Order in Council was passed today providing for a local option in that area.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. Given that the Alberta Liquor Control Board is going to raise the cost of wine and hard liquors, is this going to raise additional revenue for the provincial treasury?

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MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Liquor Control Board is actually under the authority of the hon. Attorney General, so I will pass this to him.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I assume the hon. member is referring to a news story about an increase in liquor prices. That news story isn't accurate. It indicated a general price increase -- that isn't what occurred at all. There is a price increase on some imported wines and scotches, I believe. It is a routine increase that occurs from time to time as a result of an increase in the cost of wine and liquor -- scotch in that particular case -- to the Liquor Control Board. In that particular case I believe it occurred as a result of a change in the currency rate, an increase in the manufacturer's price, and I think some increase in the cost of transportation. But those are routine increases that occur from time to time.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will this increase affect domestic wines?

MR. LEITCH:

No, that is only applicable to imported wines, and occurred for the reasons I have just given.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The general information is that the Alberta Liquor Control Board will be doing away with gallon jugs of wine. Is that information correct, and if so, does the Alberta treasury make more money by selling smaller quantities of wine than they do in the gallon jugs?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I would have to check into the details of the hon. member's question about doing away with gallon jugs of wine. As to the return on it, that is something I can't answer either, although the hon. Provincial Treasurer may be able to.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, supplementary. Is the deposit on beer bottles being increased from five cents to twelve cents per case?

MR. LEITCH:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View, followed by the hon. Member for Camrose.

Railway Construction Dispute

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. It has to deal with the dispute between the Burlington Northern Incorporated and the CPR over the Kootenay and Elk River Railway. Apparently the situation now is that the Supreme Court of Canada has given the 'green light' for the

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construction of the railway by an American corporation. Has the provincial government taken any stand on this issue or made any representation to Ottawa with regard to this problem which appears to be threatening a lot of employment in Canada?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of the case which the hon. member has referred to, and I would ask that he supply the information to me so that I can look into it and give a reply.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, I will, Mr. Speaker. It is a current issue of dispute in Canada, and I will advise the minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Camrose followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Ottewell.

Alberta Egg Marketing Board

MR. STRIMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. With your announcement of the \$75,000 purchase of Cal-Ed Poultry Farm's eggs by the Alberta Egg Marketing Board with the idea of guaranteeing every registered producer in Alberta a market outlet, when will grading stations be opened to serve those small producers and prevent their eggs from either being thrown away or fed to the hogs?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, in recent communication with the executive manager of the Egg Board, he informed me that they have already initiated steps to re-establish some first receiver stations at some points in Alberta. I might say to hon. members that are interested in the re-establishment of such a facility, that they should be in direct contact with Mr. Guichon, the secretary-manager of the Alberta Egg and Powl Marketing Board.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Edmonton Ottewell followed by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Ottewell Liquor Store

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, another question for the hon. the Attorney General, and it concerns the Ottewell Liquor Store at 71st Street and 98th Avenue. The minister will recall that it had been agreed because of the traffic hazard that it would be moved to the Capilano Shopping Centre. Now I understood that it was to be built early this spring. I have been by and there is not even a hole in the ground yet, and I was wondering what this government is going to do.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, that is right. The plans were to begin construction this spring. They ran into some difficulty with the planning and we now anticipate that construction will be started in the fall.

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MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Drumheller followed by the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury.

Foster Children Report

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the hon. the Minister of Social Development. Has the report on foster children yet been received from Judge Catonio?

MR. CRAWFORD:

No, Mr. Speaker, it has not. Indications are that it won't likely be in until after the Legislature rises. My estimate is the later part of June or July.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury followed by the hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation.

Project Recovery

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Health and Social Development and ask him if he is in a position to further indicate what type of assistance the province is going to be able to give to Project Recovery?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not in a position to indicate that, except I suppose, if the hon. member could tell me that he has, in fact, discussed the matter with Project Recovery. Their answer went out to them yesterday and I was going to wait a day or two before answering in order that I would know that they had received it before it was given publicity here.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is it not true that your office advised Project Recovery by telephone prior to the session yesterday that they would not receive any financial assistance?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to presume that because the hon. member asked the supplementary question that the people from Project Recovery have been in touch with him and have indicated that the response from my office was that a letter was going forward saying that no consideration is being given to the matter pending referral to the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission. That is the situation and I would expect the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission to make a direct response of their own too.

Point 3 Project

MR. CLARK:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Did the project known as Point 3, which Dr. Craig, I believe, heads up, did they receive approximately \$50,000 of assistance from the Department of Social Development?

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MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, if the question relates to the current fiscal year, rather than the last one, to the best of my information the answer would be no. I reiterate that it is most likely that applications of that type would have been made to the commission directly, even though from time to time the department is approached at the same time. But the decision in regard to it would normally be made by the commission. Now in regard to Point 3, I don't mind discussing that one with the commission, and if there is anything to report, reporting it to the hon. member.

MR. CLARK:

One last supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Then the minister is saying that the Department of Social Development for the fiscal year we are now in has not made a grant of approximately \$50,000 to the organization?

MR. CRAWFORD:

That is my present appreciation of the situation, Mr. Speaker, I think that if there was an item in the budget proposed for that -- if the searching nature of the questions of the hon. gentleman opposite were not such as to disclose it when my estimates went through I might have found it myself. That such a grant was proposed to be given to them this forthcoming year. I'll be quite happy, as I said, to discuss it with the commission and to check through my department to see if there is any proposal in regard to Point 3 for the year that we are now in.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forest. Has the minister received representation calling for the closing of commercial fishing in Pinehurst, Frenchman, Blackett, Touchwood, Kinnaird and Fork Lakes?

DR. WARRACK:

Not to my recollection, Mr. Speaker. If the hon. member would send me a note with the list on it I would be happy to check it out.

MR. SORENSON:

A supplementary question, has the hon. minister received representations calling for the possible closing of any of the lakes north of the Beaver River?

DR. WARRACK:

I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact I don't know where the Beaver River is, but there is a pretty good chance that we have.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I really haven't got a question.

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MR. SPEAKER:

I'm sorry, it's the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill. There was no flattery or insult intended either way.

MR. FARRAN:

With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, this mistake has happened more than once and I do hope that we'll take note of it and not let it happen again.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, with respect, if I don't mind the hon. member shouldn't either.

European Agricultural Market

MR. FARRAN:

It's not me that I'm worried about, it's the people of Calgary North Hill.

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister I understand that the first reconnaissance party has returned from a survey of market conditions for agriculture produce in Europe. Is their report encouraging?

DR. HORNER:

I only had a chance, Mr. Speaker, to have some preliminary discussions with one of the people that was involved in the trip to Europe. From that they tell me that they had a very good trip and that they are putting together a more complete report for me, but I haven't had an opportunity to discuss it with them very fully at all, as yet.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MINISTERIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board of Industrial Relations

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, in view of the importance of labour relations across this nation I believe it appropriate to mention an item having to do with the personnel of the Board of Industrial Relations in the Department of Manpower and Labour here in Alberta. One is to announce the retirement of Mr. Harry Boyce, a member of the Board of Industrial Relations for 20 years. Mr. Boyce has given extremely valuable service on the board. As you know, the board has difficult decisions to make, hearings to hold on the matter of differences between management and labour, hearings on registration of unions and of management and other important hearings. Mr. Boyce served without any regard for his own comfort or his own health at times when hearings went on for days in a row. He has given outstanding service to the matter of labour peace and labour relations here in Alberta, so I bring this to your attention, sir, and to that of the Assembly. His activities in the labour movement were extensive, including many positions in labour, particularly that of president of the Alberta Federation of Labour which provides some evidence of the kind of regard this gentleman was held by his colleagues.

So, sir, I wish to thank him on behalf of the Government of the Province of Alberta for the 20 years of service that he has given to us in the matter of labour relations.

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At the same time, Mr. Speaker, to you and to the Assembly, I should like to announce on behalf of the government his replacement. I'm very pleased and proud to announce that Mr. Roy Jamha, president of the Alberta Federation of Labour, will be appointed effective June 1, 1972, as a member of the Board of Industrial Relations to succeed Mr. Harry Boyce who is retiring after 20 years of service.

Mr. Jamha is a living legend it is fair to say, in his own time. A man extremely well known and well respected, not only in the field of labour but in the total community here in Edmonton, in Alberta, and across the nation. He brings to his work a vast experience in labour. He is the former president of the Edmonton Labour Council and was international representative for the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union for a great number of years. Since 1964 he has acted as a labour relations consultant and has been president of the Alberta Federation of Labour since 1966.

While one must maintain some restraint in accordance with the expectations of the House, Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that I'm very happy to make this announcement, because having known Mr. Jamha personally for many years, and having watched him work on boards of arbitration on which I had the pleasure to sit, I found him eminently fair. He brings to his work a certain kind of wisdom born of years of experience in the field of labour relations. And so, Mr. Speaker, I bring to you and the Assembly these two important announcements, that of Mr. Boyce retiring after 20 years of dedicated service and the very notable appointment to the board of Mr. Roy Jamha.

AGT Borrowing

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased today to make an announcement on a matter which I believe is of significant interest to the members of this Assembly and to the people of Alberta.

Alberta Government Telephones, for the first time, will utilize the funds of Alberta citizens on deposit with the Treasury Branches to help finance its capital expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Government Telephones will utilize the Treasury Branches by purchasing \$25 million of short-term debentures of Alberta Government Telephones. This will represent a substantial saving to Alberta Government Telephones and will also improve the return to the Treasury Branches on its investments. Normally, Mr. Speaker, Alberta Government Telephones would borrow in eastern Canada or in the United States at an interest rate of approximately 8 per cent. Under this new measure Alberta Government Telephones will borrow from the Treasury Branches, at an interest rate of 6 per cent, which will represent a saving to Alberta Government Telephones of \$500,000 over the next year.

The Alberta Treasury Branches normally invested their depositors' money in short-term deposits with chartered banks at an interest rate slightly in excess of 5 per cent in the past. This investment now in AGT debentures at 6 per cent should increase the Treasury Branches' interest earnings by approximately \$250,000 over the next year.

Employment Statistics

DR. HOHGL:

Mr. Speaker, I should like to report briefly on the labour force employment and unemployment circumstances for Alberta as of April, 1972.

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The number of unemployed in Alberta in April, 1972, increased by 3,000 from March, 1972, which resulted in the unemployment rate rising from 4.9 per cent to 5.2 per cent. However, this is a decrease of 0.2 per cent from the April, 1971, unemployment rate of 5.9 per cent.

The size of the labour force increased by 3.0 per cent from 657,000 in March, 1972, to 677,000 in April, 1972. This was an above-average increase for this time of the year and resulted from a sudden increase in both male and female participation rates. We experienced in Alberta the largest participation rate in Canada in the labour force.

The number employed in the labour force in April, 1972, reached 643,000, an increase of 18,000 or 2.8 per cent over March, 1972. The size of the unemployed labour force increased 6.4 per cent from April, 1971, to April, 1972.

Mr. Speaker, we got this information just before noon and I haven't had enough time to make a comprehensive and detailed study of these, but I shall do so, and if any member wishes more information, I'd be happy to provide it.

Some additional comments might be in order to try to explain what appears to be a break from the usual pattern of what has been happening in the unemployment rates since September, 1971. The survey was made in the week of April 22nd, and while the university students were writing examinations at that time they were already registered for employment. The big increase in the labour force traditionally is from April to May. This year we got it much earlier. Several reasons may account for this. One is that last year the students waited, in the main, until after they left university to register for labour. They found that that was, in most cases, too late. This year they are applying while still at university. That is one reason. The other is that our own programs had a gap. For example the STEP program wasn't continuous by intent -- to be discontinuous, if I can put it that way. There was some chance that had the employment situation stayed even we might not have gone into the STEP program. That was not the case. We had to move into another project-type enterprise and the gap in between, without question, added to the unemployment in some measure.

Also, sir, when the economy is on the upswing even though that may be gradual, as it is at the present time, it is very usual for an influx of registrants into the labour force who previously felt that there was no point in registering, and who having registered several times and not being able to obtain jobs, withdrew their names from the registrations. At the present time we are the third lowest in the unemployment rate behind Ontario and Manitoba. It is interesting to note, however, that for us, our labour force is nearly twice as large as that of Manitoba, and it is also important to note, Mr. Speaker, that the labour force dropped in Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec. So the same labour force could be shifting geographically. I will make further analysis of the data which I've presented to you this afternoon.

QUESTIONS

205. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question, which was answered by Mr. Miniely as indicated.

Question:

Are the expense accounts of the Task Forces (Caucus Committees), including those of the Chairman, subject to the approval only of the chairman of the respective committees? If not, who else is responsible for checking and approving same?

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Answer:

Task Force expenses paid out of 1971-72 appropriation 1902 required the approval of the Chairman. Expense accounts were checked by the Provincial Auditor prior to payment.

Task Force expense accounts which may be paid out of 1972-73 appropriations,

1. require the approval of the reporting Minister
2. will be checked by the Treasury Department
3. will be examined and approved by the Provincial Auditor.

MOTIONS FOR A RETURN

199. The following motion was proposed by Mr. Clark; seconded by Mr. Taylor.

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:

The total cost of all advertising by the Department of Advanced Education and other government agencies, for the Priority Training Program including

- (a) Radio, showing the amount to each station;
- (b) Television, showing the amount to each station;
- (c) Daily papers, showing the amount to each paper;
- (d) Weekly papers, showing the lump sum total; and
- (e) Other forms -- please specify.

[The motion was carried without debate or dissent.]

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, I move to table the Return 199 ordered by the hon. member.

204. Mr. Wilson proposed the following motion to the Assembly, seconded by Mr. Taylor.

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:

1. Are there any Alberta registered life insurance companies presently operating in Alberta with respect to which the Superintendent of Insurance suspects financial instability and if so, who are they?
2. Are there any Alberta registered trust companies presently operating in Alberta with respect to which the Director of Trust Companies suspects financial instability and if so, who are they?
3. What checks are made to assure that all Alberta registered life insurance companies and trust companies are financially solvent?
4. One facsimile of each annual financial statement filed with the provincial government by Rocky Mountain Life Insurance Company.
5. Copies of all correspondence between the Government of Alberta, or any of its departments, agencies or boards, and Rocky Mountain Life Insurance Company pertaining to its current financial and administrative problems.

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6. Copies of all correspondence between the Government of Alberta, or any of its departments, agencies or boards, and the federal government pertaining to Rocky Mountain Life Insurance Company's current financial and administrative problems.
 7. Did Rocky Mountain Life Insurance Company provide adequate re-insurance to protect all policy holders?
 8. Is the Attorney General or any of the officials of his department aware of any Alberta registered life insurance companies that have failed, causing policy holders to lose money or equity in policies, during the history of Alberta, and if so, what are the names of the companies?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. members would agree to that being held until Thursday. It is a very involved question, and also raises some issues which are causing me a good deal of concern, particularly the question of calling for a report on certain financial institutions which the Superintendent of Insurance or director of trust companies may be suspicious, and it seems to me that we need to give very serious thought to whether that kind of information should be made available. While I've given some thought to it, I haven't yet reached firm opinions, and I would like to have it stand over to Thursday, when we could perhaps have a further debate on it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Does the House agree to the hon. Attorney General's suggestion that Motion No. 204 stand over until Thursday?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

206. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
Seconded by Mr. Taylor.

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:

1. How many people in Alberta are working at the minimum wage?
2. How many of these are principal wage-earner in the household?
3. How much money was paid in penalties by employers who failed to pay their employees the minimum wage in 1971?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, the questions in the present form are impossible to deal with. They are interesting and intriguing, the kind of information I would like to have myself. I would like to invite the hon. member to meet with me privately and discuss the questions and see if we can agree on a form in which they might appear and which we might be able to deal with.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would be quite happy to discuss this both with the hon. minister and the organization that brought these questions to my attention. I think I will have to discuss it with them first, because they were the people who requested the information. But after I do that I would be quite happy to discuss it with the hon. minister and perhaps we can find an acceptable way of putting it.

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DR. HOHOL:

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I feel that maybe the motion should be withdrawn.

MR. SPEAKER:

Would the hon. member and the mover agree that the motion might be withdrawn?

MR. NOTLEY and MR. TAYLOR:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

And does the House agree that the motion may be withdrawn?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it was agreed by the House last week that we would be moving to government business in consideration of the estimates at this time. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I would move that you do now leave the Chair and the Assembly resolve itself into Committee of Supply for consideration of the estimates.

MR. SPEAKER:

This may be the sort of motion that requires unanimous consent so that it may be introduced without notice. Does the House agree that the hon. Government House Leader may introduce this motion at this time?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

Not having heard any dissent, I take it that there is unanimous consent. And now as to the motion itself, would all those in favour please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS:

Aye.

MR. SPEAKER:

And those opposed, please say no. The motion is carried.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair at 3:11 p.m.]

* * * * *

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair.]

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Department of Telephones and Utilities

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Committee of Supply will come to order. Department of Telephones, page 101.

Appropriation 3201 Minister's Office

MR. STRONACH:

Mr. Chairman, I know that the hon. Member for Calgary Millican had some questions to ask. I understand he is at another meeting, of the censorship committee, I think. Would there be a chance --?

MR. BYNDMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder, in that regard in order to assist the hon. member if we could then move to estimates on the Department of Manpower and Labour now and then we could come back and do Telephones and Utilities when he is back. He should be back this afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Very well, we will start Telephones and Utilities over again.

Department of Manpower and Labour

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Department of Manpower and Labour, page 41.

Agreed to without debate:

<u>Appropriation 1701</u>	Minister's Office	\$ 50,810
<u>Appropriation 1702</u>	General Administration	213,180
<u>Appropriation 1703</u>	Amusements Branch	77,495

Appropriation 1705 Board of Industrial Relations

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, when we rather quickly went through the estimates of the Department of Education, the hon. Minister of Education indicated that it might be more appropriate to ask the hon. Minister of Labour what the government's reaction is to the question of regional bargaining as far as school jurisdictions in the province. We can use that as a starting place I have one or two to follow.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, the position of the government on this matter is very similar to the position on other important issues, for example the foundation program. We may have some attitudes, and in fact, do, about many things that are as they are; but the attitude, we feel, has been to stay with the bargaining machinery, as we inherited it, and do everything we can to make it work as effectively as possible.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like the minister's comments. I'd be less than fair, in light of the minister's comments, to the people in my constituency, if I didn't express to the minister the very real disappointment the people in that area of the province had with the reluctance of the Minister of Labour to become involved in the Bow Valley regional dispute of last fall. I recall rather well the situation about a year ago, in this Legislature,...

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DR. HOHOL:

I'm sorry, I missed that.

MR. CLARK:

I recall rather well -- I'm not sure whether it's the microphone, my voice or your ears, but we'll both assume it's the microphone.

DR. HOHOL:

It's my ears.

MR. CLARK:

Could I say that I recall very well a situation a little over a year ago, when there was a strike in the City of Calgary, and at that time the Premier was asked by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Lougheed at that time, if he wouldn't have the Minister of Labour intercede and become involved in an attempt to settle the strike in Calgary.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He didn't do a thing.

MR. CLARK:

The strike was settled two or three days later --

DR. HOHOL:

Not by the minister.

MR. CLARK:

-- without the Minister of Labour, if you'll just let me finish.

DR. HOHOL:

Not by the minister, though.

MR. CLARK:

Right. Now, it seems to me that if it was important that the Minister of Labour, at least, be involved in attempting to bring some sort of settlement to this unfortunate work stoppage in Calgary a year ago, that the people in the Bow Valley area were not being too much out of place when the strike in that area got involved in the second and third week, and the Minister of Labour still would not become directly involved, and the Deputy Minister of Labour did not become directly involved in the strike either. Might I say then that the government's decision to prevent the County of Mountain View from making use of correspondence review lessons for Grade XII students, who were taking Grade XII courses on a semester basis, simply rubbed salt in the wounds of a number of people in that particular area.

I think the minister already knows of the disappointment of some of the school trustees and some of the teachers from that area over his reluctance, or whatever term one wants to use, to become involved and try and bring the parties together. There was very little, in actual dollars, keeping the groups apart. There were very strong feelings on both sides. I think all members who were involved know that well. But I re-emphasize the point that there is a great deal of disappointment that the minister himself, or the deputy minister, would not or did not or could not become personally involved in attempting to settle the matter in that particular area. It has the

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distinction of being the longest strike we've had in the province, in education, since 1942.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, I think the Assembly will believe me when I say that what I am going to say to the member will sound differently than I intend it. But I have to put it this way -- that he doesn't know what he is talking about.

AN HON. MEMBER.

Hear, hear!

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, why doesn't the minister tell us what he thinks he's talking about?

DR. HOHOL:

This is why I'm on my feet.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Continue please, Mr. Minister.

DR. HOHOL:

It was only toward the end of the dispute period that the questioner was in touch with me personally, though he was in touch with the public service senior officials of the Department of Education.

To say that I was personally uninvolved is to be unaware that I was excused from Cabinet meetings, from caucus meetings, that I worked personally around the clock seven days a week; that I met with the leadership of the Alberta School Trustees' Association, elected and appointed; that I met with the leadership of the Alberta Teachers' Association, elected and appointed; that I met with the chief negotiators from the several districts that were in dispute; non-visible, taking my time. The process of collective bargaining is well known to the hon. Member for Olds-Didshury. I recall the point he made in the Throne Speech debate, that the then Leader of the Opposition asked the then Minister of Labour whether he had interceded in the strike in Calgary. All questions, well intended and well put, are proper, and so was that. And so are the questions now being put.

I recall too, that the hon. member who asked this question about the Bow Valley strike spoke with some competence, sincerity, and nearly eloquence, about the matter of who is responsible for education. He used the term 'local autonomy' time and again. Yet when the area in discussion, and in the gentleman's constituency, was in a dispute, an incredibly serious matter that should get the leadership of the members of the Legislative Assembly, the matter of local autonomy was apparently not so important. What was important was to point to people in the local area, where the responsibilities are with the elected school board officials, to settle all matters -- those of curriculum, of hiring, of placement, of promotion, of firing whatever it be -- and including collective bargaining. The sanctity of an agreement thus reached by mutual endeavours of two parties is something well known to this Assembly.

Speaking of disappointment, I was very, very disappointed that this particular member and some others in that area did not, to the best of my knowledge, work with the local people to try to settle affairs in the local area, but instead publicly made statements about

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the government, about the Minister of Labour, about the Minister of Education. I am in no way apologizing or defending -- I say to you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Assembly, that labour disputes are extremely important, extremely sensitive. You have to work closely and quietly and deliberately.

I have the record of strikes for the history of Alberta. I could point to members, I could point to many things, but this is not a defence. I want to use this opportunity, since the hon. member asked the question, to remind ourselves of the grave responsibilities that we have to children and their parents when there is a dispute; and to try to work them out locally, because you can't have it both ways, Mr. Chairman. You can't get up on the floor of this House and talk about local autonomy and who is responsible for education, and at the same time tell the local people to wire, to telephone, to put the heat on the ministers.

I took telephone calls Sunday morning at 1:00, Saturday morning at 2:00 -- 24 hours around the clock. I have briefs with hundreds of names on them; I have files I can bring to the House of letters, telegrams from students, from parents. I worked on the matter of teacher-school board negotiations nearly to the exclusion of any other matter in government, by agreement and instruction of the hon. Premier of this province.

Then too, I am sure, in all earnestness, but without the information, surely people in a strike situation will be disappointed, parents are keenly disappointed. But I have to say this, that those in leadership positions must remind the parents, that the first people they have to be in touch with to solve the problem of a dispute are the locally elected school board members. I talked to several hundred parents in two strike-bound areas, on long distance. And I said this to them: "Have you talked to your local school board member?" And they would say to me, "He is out of reach." Or he would say that they gave up their autonomy locally, to the area, to the zone, and that they have no longer anything to say, which is not true. It is simply not true.

And so I want to set the record straight, that we went as long as we could to attempt to let the Bow Valley situation work itself out, and it is quite true that in terms of money, there wasn't much room between them at all. Had they divided the thing in half, neither side would have had anything to boast about or report back to its membership, in terms of what it won.

But I was very involved, as were the members of the Board of Industrial Relations. I was in Calgary for a whole weekend, and we went as far as we could go, and maybe just a bit more. And then the decisive action that the member asked for was taken. The matter of timing is extremely important, because if labour disputes can be settled in this province by turning quickly to the minister, who would invoke arbitration, we are in for some very serious problems, the kinds we have in the Maritimes, in Quebec and in British Columbia.

And so I appeal to you, Mr. Chairman, and the House, as the elected leadership at a very senior level, to really mean it when we talk about local autonomy, and to work with people in their local areas to see that it works, because I say to you, that my considered judgment is that local autonomy with respect to the educational enterprise is today very much at stake. And one reason it is at stake is because of the collective bargaining situation as it is. You talk about zone bargaining: let me say this, that while we accepted it, we inherited it, we will try and make it work. I have said this publicly through the media before, we are not retrenching, we are not backing off. That is the point at which it happens to be. Yet the way it began, should that be an issue? Should that be a question? I should like to say to you, Mr. Chairman, that it should

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have been an experiment, with one or two or three zones in one year, and set up well in advance before collective agreements expired; instead of enabling the legislation to permit the whole province to go into zones, in one year, at one time, without guidelines, without any kind of support, without any kind of leadership, without any kind of seminars or training or preparation, to make sure that the thing works.

What a fantastic change from negotiations at the very small local level, where everyone knows everybody, to a geographic area that takes in various units, towns, villages. Rural areas that have nothing in common. The agreements are as different as they could possibly be, and the teachers quite naturally wanted the best of each agreement. I'm not generalizing, but that is the way negotiations happen to be, for those of you who have experience with negotiations. And the school boards wanted to stay with the least of any agreement, and this was the challenge for the teachers and the school boards of the province. It was an impossible challenge, and I marvel, sir, that the labour unrest in the matter of the education enterprise, which was as bad as it was in the construction industry, was not a great deal worse in the circumstances in which they had to negotiate.

Think of this, Mr. Chairman, when The School Act says that the school boards shall manage the affairs of the school district, this is in The School Act. And at the same time, The School Act says that all working conditions in which a teacher works are open to negotiation.

How can these two things be put together at the same time, by the same government, and expect anything else but the disputes and the strife that we had in education since January 1, 1970? Surely if we are going to say that working conditions for teachers are negotiable, that some of those conditions should be set down in guidelines, that might permit the teachers and the school boards to get together in a frame of reference that has some meaning, and if it doesn't then you could make those judgments and appeal to the minister and say to him; "Sir, this doesn't work for these reasons."

But to declare an open season, to make it wide open, and to dump it on the teachers and the school boards of this province without prior notice and on a short term basis and in the middle of collective bargaining -- you know, sir, that some of the zones were not organized for negotiation until several months after an agreement expired.

Again, if you know anything about collective bargaining, the notice for exchange of briefs for negotiations ought in all fairness to occur before an agreement expires. Some of the zones were not set up for negotiations until four or five months after an agreement expired. What kind of attitude, what kind of atmosphere, are the teachers and the boards going to meet in, when they finally get together to negotiate?

So I say to you, sir, if you are going to change this system of collective bargaining it behooves the government and its leadership, particularly those ministers responsible, to take the time to test it out, to look back on the trail and see what happened, check off the mistakes, confirm the successes, and then permit more associations to be formed for the purposes of collective bargaining. Certainly that's the way to go. The business corporations, all the enterprises are going into larger, and larger units of negotiations. This is the way I read the trends, this is the way it's going to happen. But it has to happen with some circumspection, with some attention to what may happen, with a studied and scholarly look at what happens elsewhere in these kinds of circumstances, to anticipate some consequences and to be ready for them, and to make some room for some unanticipated consequences. This wasn't done.

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It wasn't done in this, as it wasn't done when the Foundation Program was dumped on us in the middle of our budget preparations. It wasn't done when the compulsory school attendance age was changed. It wasn't done when the Grade IX examinations were dropped on short notice upon the school principals and school boards of this province.

So in the matter of collective bargaining, as in some others, the barn never really got painted, the barn door simply got splattered.

MR. BATIUK:

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make a few comments. I would like to commend the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour on the actions that he took last fall. I, myself, as chairman of the Elk Island Region School Authorities Association negotiating for five boards, spent 23 days before we signed a collective agreement. We were one of the first in the province, after lengthy negotiations, that were able to do this. We too had felt that during the negotiations, had the Minister of Labour stepped in, something would have been taken away from us. I, myself, had tried a few times to get hold of the minister, but he was away. He was either in Bow Valley or he was in the North Central Regional Association. There were almost six or seven nonaverted strikes at that time. He was busy.

But I still think that he did the right thing in placing the authority where it should be, and until such a time as the school board or the teachers throw up their hands and refuse to continue negotiations, I think it is right that only then should the minister get involved.

I recall very well last September 8th, getting into a negotiating meeting at nine o'clock in the morning and sitting until the following morning at a quarter past seven, to sign the memorandum of agreement. But that was still where we used our autonomy and I think that we were able to settle it. Otherwise we might have thrown up our hands sooner, had more difficulty. I think that the minister couldn't have done any better by the actions that he took in Bow Valley. Because he saw at that time there was no other choice. But I still think that it's the school boards and the teachers that should first try and make an attempt at a settlement.

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Chairman, I rise for two reasons. I represent more people that were involved in the Bow Valley teachers' strike than anybody else does in this room. I have some things that won't take me long to say, but I have waited some while to say them.

The legislative and operational chaos out of which the Minister of Manpower and Labour, and also the Minister of Education, were forced to operate has been well delineated. And I might add, Mr. Chairman, next to those two honourable, hardworking and able gentlemen; I received more phone calls and more letters than anyone else in this Assembly respecting the Bow Valley teachers' strike. Some of those were from the constituency of the hon. member because, in the view of some of those contacting me, they did not feel they had a member acting responsibly.

The chaos out of which this entire operation had to come forward has been well delineated, but I think it's also necessary to point out that there were a lot of people, citizens at large, local government people for that matter, and the members of the Legislative Assembly, who did not act responsibly and contribute in a responsible way to the proper and fair settlement, quickly, of this particular dispute at hand. I hope I'm one of the people who did act

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responsibly, and I was faced with more of the problem than anyone else on a constituency basis.

I just want to say, personally, and I want to say that I'm saying this on behalf of the people in my constituency; that the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour showed the kind of professional coolness, ability, leadership and fortitude, that set him tall in the saddle with my people, and with me personally, in the way he handled that strike under very adverse circumstances.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member, Mr. Young, and then the hon. member, Mr. Taylor.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Chairman, I have a few observations on this particular matter. First of all, I think if we're going to review the strike situation or the collective bargaining situation as it applied and as we experienced it with school boards and teachers last year, we need to go back a bit further.

As far as I'm personally concerned, it had been evident for at least four years, that our legislation and the changes taking place in the educational system were such that the system for collective bargaining was breaking down. I recall in the late '60's, in one year, Mr. Chairman, when I was heavily engaged in collective bargaining; being put in the position where no agreements, or very few agreements, were reached at any place short of a conciliation board stage, or intervention by the assistant to the deputy minister at that time.

I, personally, was involved in preparing something in the order of 35 submissions for a conciliation board. Now, Mr. Chairman, it's absolutely impossible to have that many different kinds of disputes in this province between teachers and school boards, and have matters of real substance at issue. There just can't be 35 different groups with 35 different major issues of substance. What was happening was that these things were being churned out, and it was obvious at that time that the system was starting to break down.

It started to break down for a number of reasons: the changes which have taken place in school boards during the past decade of the '60's as they grew bigger; the changes that took place in the teacher organization -- you have an organization in which I don't know how many times its budget has expanded, but I understand now that its budget is in the area of \$2 million -- it had something like five or six people working full time on collective bargaining. The involvement of local teachers was changing. I'm not saying it wasn't there, but I'm saying that the form that it took was quite different, and the involvement at the provincial level was quite different, and this was obvious.

When we got ourselves into the position of regional bargaining it was obvious, too, that there were substantial differences at issue, not all of them to do with regional bargaining, by any stretch of the imagination. Some of them had to do with basic underlying changes which were taking place in education. I can refer to one which was not monetary at all and that was supposedly arising out of The School Act, and that's another debate.

Put the question of the authority of teachers to participate in decision making at the school board level, and what responsibilities do teachers have; what responsibilities do non-teachers have; what's the responsibility of the school board; how do you put all this together; what decisions should teachers make; what decisions should other people make. On decisions that should be made jointly, how

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should they be making it? This is a very, very complex issue. Unfortunately, it got involved at the same time as the regional bargaining came along. So I would suggest that there is a lot of background here that one should keep in mind.

The other area that I want to comment on is the role of the parties and the role of the minister and his department. I feel very strongly, that the only way collective bargaining can work, is if the two parties doing the bargaining want to make it work. That has to exist. It has to not only exist, it has to exist to such a degree that at times those persons, who may take quite differing opinions, have to be prepared to show some statesmanship and leadership, and be prepared to try to lead the parties that they represent to the most honourable, most satisfactory compromise that is available. And I'm afraid that, from my point of view, some of the precedents that have gradually been established in earlier years, had perhaps not forced some of the parties to realize that there had to be this kind of leadership.

With respect to the role of the department and to the minister, in my view it would be absolute total folly for the hon. minister, or for that matter, the deputy minister, to get into disputes directly at the bargaining table. There is lots of work to do behind the scenes, but at the bargaining table -- No. Once that started to happen, there would not be a single dispute in this province that wouldn't go to the level of the minister to resolve, and why not? Because in every dispute you have two parties, one who has a position which he thinks is strong. The other has a position which he thinks is strong. But one always figures -- you know -- that he has reached a limit and he stands to gain no more from bargaining locally, or bargaining between the two parties. Therefore if an option is open to throw the decision to somebody else, and he is guaranteed a floor position from which he can do no worse, he stands to gain by taking it that extra limit. And if that limit becomes a minister, that's where most of the disputes will go.

And I think that is absolutely wrong, which means, I suppose, that I disagree most heartily with the practice the recent Minister of Manpower and Labour for the federal government was engaging in, where he went traipsing into every dispute and soon, had he stayed on, he would have had to be in every dispute. I think there is a role for the minister, there is a role for the department, but it is not that particular role. The role is behind the scenes, making sure that the departmental officials are available, making sure they're doing their work; but not for the minister personally to get involved in every dispute.

I say again that some of these strikes were regrettable -- they are all regrettable -- and I'm sure that every party and every person affected, sincerely wished that they could have been resolved. I would like to remind some of the hon. members that there have been strikes in Alberta before last year, and strikes between teachers and school boards before last year. Also, that some of these had very little by way of money involved in them. But they were on other points of issue which are always more difficult to resolve than money.

Money is the kind of thing, which in my experience, in a strike situation, can usually be hammered out one way or the other because you're off work so long -- you know what you are going to lose. If your plants close down for so long, you know what you are going to lose. You can compromise. But when it becomes points of principle, the points -- basic questions of substance, which may set a pattern which you cannot foresee, then the issue gets really sticky and I'm afraid we had some of those last year -- we may still have some, I'm not sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I don't want to prolong this debate, but there are two or three things which I think should be said. In the first place I think the role of strikes has changed dramatically over the past few years. There was a time when a strike was called by the workmen, the workmen withdrew their labour, in order to hurt the employer and force the employer to give proper wages and proper working conditions.

Coming from a labouring family, many times I have seen in the coal mines this act carried out, where the employer was forced to give better working conditions to the workers. The strike is an important weapon of the labouring man.

In recent years we have seen a difference in the role of the strike, where the strike doesn't necessarily hurt the employer, but hurts the third, or innocent, parties, who have no control whatsoever over the strike, ending it or prolonging it. This was the case in this particular strike. The people who actually suffered weren't the school board, weren't the teachers who went on strike, it was actually the boys and the girls. Some, of course, will probably have a life-long effect of this, due to the fact that they were on a semester system and some left school because they couldn't continue, couldn't make their grade under that semester system. So it was the third party, or the innocent party, that was suffering from this particular strike.

That was why, at the end of the second week, I recommended to both hon. ministers that they use the weapon in The Labour Act. I also discussed this with the teachers in my riding, and with the people in my riding. The teachers didn't want it, the school board did want it; the people generally wanted it, because they wanted their boys and girls back at school. That was the prime objective.

I have to say, in fairness to both hon. ministers, that they saw me everytime I contacted them. They went out of their way to see me and discuss this matter. As I said to the hon. Minister of Labour about the middle of the strike, I felt that with his position and in view of the stand both sides were taking, that I felt he could probably have a great influence in ending the strike if he met around the table with both sides. The hon. minister said he would consider the suggestion.

I made this suggestion for this reason. Number one, as the hon. member, Mr. Young, mentioned a few minutes ago, the hon. Bryce Mackasey has been able to end some very serious strikes in this country, in this nation, because he was prepared to go and use the authority of his office to bring both sides together. In this particular strike, the teachers were very angry about certain items. They were angry because they said the board wouldn't listen to them. They already had gone several months without a contract.

Secondly, they were angry because of regional bargaining. They didn't want to pursue regional bargaining. The school board members, at times, walked out of meetings with the teachers, and they wanted regional bargaining. The people were caught in between. For weeks the two sides couldn't get together, or wouldn't get together, I had better say.

I did feel that if the hon. minister would call a meeting of the bargainers on both sides, that they both would have come, and I think with the ability of the minister, possibly the strike would have been ended. Nobody knows, maybe it wouldn't have. I think there was a good chance, with the minister's ability, to bring that strike to an end much faster. The hon. minister, having all of the information, decided not to do that.

Finally, as I say, I think the hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen and the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury and I recommended that we use this

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weapon, which wasn't an easy thing to do either, for the government, for the minister, or for us as members. But the thing it did do, it got the boys and girls back to school. I commended the government for using this. It was the end of the third week but I commended them for using it, and I do so today. I will stand and fall in my own constituency on the fact that I recommended this to the government. At my preessional meetings I made no bones about it. I told the people that I recommended it and I received no severe criticism, even in meetings with the teachers, by themselves and with the board. Of course, I wouldn't expect it from the board because they were wanting compulsory arbitration. The teachers, however, did not want compulsory arbitration. The teachers wanted to withdraw from the regional and get back into the local type of bargaining.

I think the main thing to do now is to try to ascertain some of the reasons for the strike, rather than to live in the past, and to try to avoid these things in the future. In order to do that, in order to have something definite to recommend to the government, one of the primary items I discussed with the people I have the honour to represent, at the preessional public meetings, was; did they want regional bargaining, or did they want to go back to the local bargaining between the local board and the local teachers?

I was somewhat amazed -- this was after the strike was all settled, and as a matter of fact, it was in the month of February, so that everybody had time to cool down a little -- but I found that in voting in the meetings, 65 per cent of the people in that entire constituency -- the people attending the preessional meetings -- wanted to continue regional bargaining. In spite of this they felt there was some advantage for the ratepayer and the taxpayer to have regional bargaining. Ten per cent of the people at the meeting wanted to go back to the local bargaining between the local board and the teachers directly under that local board. The balance had no opinion. They abstained at the meetings -- they abstain in the United Nations, so they can abstain if they chose -- and a percentage did, 25 per cent of them, in fact, actually abstained. But the large percentage wanting to retain regional bargaining, I have to say, came as quite a surprise to me, because I thought it would be just the other way around.

I then discussed this matter with the school board in the Wheatland County, and with the teachers' local of the Wheatland County. The school board was very anxious to continue regional bargaining. The teachers felt that regional bargaining was not being fair to the teachers and wanted to go back to the local bargaining, even after they found out that the majority of the people of the county did want to continue regional bargaining.

So I think there are some things that came out of it. Number one, I don't think it's right for a school board and teachers to go months without an agreement on the part of the teachers. I think this is wrong. It builds up instability, it builds up suspicions, it builds up a bad atmosphere and climate, in which bargaining can't take place to the best advantage. So I would hope that we would be able to do something that would ensure that never again do we get into that situation where months after the agreement expires, teachers have no contract, and don't know where they stand. I think the school board members agree, at this time, that was a fact.

Secondly, I think there is a place for regional bargaining. One of the things that did surprise me at the meetings was the percentage of those who wanted regional bargaining, but who wanted to go beyond regional bargaining to provincial bargaining. They felt that a teacher in Craigville, who is teaching Grade X should be paid the same amount as a teacher in Banff or Drumheller or East Coulee or Didsbury, who is teaching Grade X.

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This leads us to the big matter of provincial bargaining. I can't say that there was a large percentage of that 65 per cent who wanted to go into provincial bargaining, but I would guess possibly about a third of those who favoured regional bargaining, also favoured going right to provincial bargaining. Again, I found this just a little disturbing, because if we go to provincial bargaining, we bring all kinds of other factors in, and it becomes a province-wide thing. We have to remember too, that we're bargaining for more than just money. We're bargaining for working conditions and so on. I think that that is another point that comes out of the discussion, at least as far as my people were concerned, that regional bargaining was favoured, even though the teachers themselves are prepared to go along with it, but they don't like the particular regional bargaining.

I think the only other point that I have in mind right now that we can learn from, is that there are some features about bargaining, as it's being carried out under the present act, that need to be reviewed. There are items there that really prevent real collective bargaining. I want to discuss that -- at least one or two items -- when the bill comes before the House. But at the present time I think we have to acknowledge that the act did not work to very great advantage, because of the way the regional bargaining is set out in The Labour Act.

The only other thing I want to mention, is that some people in my riding felt that the teachers should be bargaining under The Labour Act, and that they should not be a profession. Others felt that they should be a profession and should not be under The Labour Act. I found that the percentage of thinking there was just about even.

In one particular meeting a businessman rose and said that he would want me to ask every meeting whether they favoured compulsory membership in the ATA. This is the second or third meeting I had, so I agreed to do that. I found that the people were very divided as to whether there should be compulsory membership in the ATA. Some felt that it was the teachers' business; others felt that if the teacher wanted to gain from the collective bargaining of others they should be prepared to belong; others felt there should be freedom of choice, that no teacher should be forced to belong to the ATA by law.

To make a long story short, the voting there was about 45 per cent to 55%, and it wavered from the particular district you happened to be in; if it is a strong labour union area such as the Drumheller valley, it generally wavered on compulsory membership. In the farming areas it went a little bit the other way, but it was fairly even, so I really have nothing to recommend in that regard.

In conclusion I want to say once again that in my view the important item in this whole consideration was to get the boys and girls back to school. I believe the compulsory item in The Labour Act was used properly by the government, and was used to good advantage, because the climate that had been developed between the two bargaining sides had reached a point where the youngsters would probably have stayed out at least until Christmas, and maybe afterwards. So I think that weapon was properly used, even though some union people do not so agree.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, there are four or five comments I would like to make. Let me say at the outset that I enjoyed the vigour which the hon. Minister of Labour showed once he got his coat off. I didn't really know he would become so vigorous so quickly. Might I say that in the course of the vigour there was quite a smoke screen.

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On the question of members' involvement in the particular situation down there, I think I should perhaps point out, if for the benefit of no one else other than the hon. minister, that in that particular area, the area I represent, the county in that area held a number of public meetings, of which I attended three. At the first meeting, the one in Didsbury, I was very frankly asked what would I think about the government becoming involved in binding arbitration? This was on the Monday, the first day of the strike. I said very directly -- and if any member wants to check he can check with the county -- I said I would not support binding arbitration at that particular time.

There were other meetings held across the district. I might just say for the benefit of the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests that I attended the meeting at Reed Ranch, to which I hope he won't object too much as it is in his riding and not mine -- might I say there was a division of opinion as to who was representing whom, and how well. We can follow that up perhaps later.

I should point out for the benefit of hon. members, that as the hon. Member for Drumheller indicated, two weeks later when the strike was getting involved in the third week I, along with the Member for Drumheller and the hon. Member for Hand Hills did ask the government to become involved in binding arbitration. This wasn't a particularly easy thing to do, given the fact that (1) I had been involved in the legislation itself, (2) that I had said at the meeting that I had referred to in Didsbury, that I would not favour the idea of binding arbitration. But it did seem to me the most important aspect in the long run was to get the youngsters back into school.

The second point I want to make is on the question of regional bargaining. I would caution the government, or anyone, to use last year as an example of the pros and cons of regional bargaining. There were problems and I concede them, with the new School Act. Also it became a matter of bargaining between the teachers and trustees and they really started from square one.

In the second round of bargaining, many, many of the bases for negotiation are now established, and I'm not saying that there won't be strikes next year or the following year, but last year and in the course of last year, there was very little base to start from. And some school boards were faced with in excess of 100 demands, from teachers in various areas across the province. On the other hand, some boards wanted to go back and really start from square one also, it wasn't a one-sided thing at all.

On the matter of the minister becoming involved, I rather raised that to chide the government on the suggestion that they made a year ago, and little did I know that the minister would respond so quickly to that particular comment. I think that I should say that Mr. Mackasey's name was mentioned a year ago in the House by the Premier of the time as an example as to what he had done, and how Mr. Reiersen might become that way involved in Calgary. The hon. Member Mr. Young, who perhaps has got more experience in this area, at least on the trustees' side than anybody else in the Assembly, has stated rather well, the hazards of the minister becoming involved on every occasion. Nevertheless, if any of the members want to go back and check out, you will find the record, or Hansard as it was at that time, indicated precisely what I said, that on the second or third day of the strike in Calgary, the question was raised.

On the matter of regional bargaining rights, I say to the minister, 'If you feel as strongly as you do about regional bargaining, then change it'. I had understood that there might be some changes in The School Act, with regard to this matter in The Labour Act, this session; or change it next session. I wouldn't want

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you to feel that you are stuck with this, obviously you know you're not. But if it is as bad as you say it is, change it.

I would remind the members, that when the matter of regional bargaining was before the Legislative Committee, when The School Act was being revamped, that I don't recall any member of the House opposing the move towards regional bargaining.

My concluding comment would simply be this, Mr. Chairman, that before we move too far in throwing the baby out with the bathwater on regional bargaining, I think there might well be some advantages in recognizing that in the first year of negotiation -- as difficult as they were from the regional bargaining standpoint -- that in fact we were starting from almost square one, or almost at zero in the fact that all working conditions, in terms of conditions of employment, were subject to negotiation. But just let me say, that as far as the strike is concerned in the Bow Valley area, many members may feel that they acted responsibly or not very responsibly. I have my feelings, with regard to the action of certain people, and obviously the minister does too. But let me make this very clear, that before I made any statements publicly about the government becoming involved in binding arbitration.

DR. HOHOL:

You didn't.

MR. CLARK:

Yes, I will show you the copy of the letter.

DR. HOHOL:

I'll bet you a hundred bucks.

MR. CLARK:

It may have gone to one of the ministers and I'll will get the copies, and I asked you to become involved in binding arbitration at the start of the third week. At the end of the week you did do that.

DR. HOHOL:

Oh yes.

MR. CCKSCN:

Just a quick comment, Mr. Chairman. I don't want to repeat what has already been said, but I was rather appalled Mr. Chairman, at the sort of position that the Member for Olds-Didsbury took with regards to the particular situation which happened in that area when he suggests that the Minister of Manpower and Labour should have got involved almost immediately, or close to immediately, with the situation occurring. It is disturbing to me to think that a former Minister of Education, with the experience that the Member from Olds-Didsbury has, should suggest such a thing at that stage --

MR. CLARK:

I was only repeating your suggestion.

MR. CCKSCN:

It is rather fortunate for the people of Alberta that he himself wasn't involved with the type of decisions that the Minister of Education on this side, and the Minister of Manpower, had to make at this point in time, if I may use the term.

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The Minister of Manpower and Labour had a very difficult situation to inherit. He was new in the department, he was exposed to an entirely new school act which, if I mayit, was an open-ended type of school act, in that it didn't spell out any type of working conditions involving school boards. I think this was a serious neglect of action on the part of the former government that they didn't clarify essentially what were negotiable and non-negotiable items in this school act. Therefore we were plunged into this sort of situation; these things became negotiable and I hope that the new government may be able to clarify some of these gray areas so that they don't become a point of controversy between boards and teachers.

I would like to commend the new minister in his emphasis on the importance of local government and the fact he stalled -- in effect deferred -- making a decision until all the possible alternatives had been explored. We are in an area of regional bargaining which is something new to the province. I think it is past its experimental stage. I think, of course, that there was a red herring thrown into the problems down in North Calgary in that the Alberta Teachers' Association was determined to break regional bargaining. In this they failed. That doesn't mean to say that regional bargaining is the answer to all the problems with regard to negotiations, but it does make the point that regional bargaining will work, and has worked. Unfortunately some areas were hurt by this process. Children were hurt, but I don't agree with the hon. Member for Drumheller when he suggested that they were perhaps permanently damaged, because I think that students are very able to adjust to situations. There may be arguments for, saying that they were permanently damaged in this area, but it might be attributable to some other things that were involved.

I think that the former Minister of Education, rather than running around the area beating his chest, could possibly have made a greater contribution if he had quietly consulted and given constructive criticism as to how the new government should have moved in this area.

Of course, Mr. Chairman, this problem has passed, I just wanted to re-affirm the wise actions on the part of our two ministers in particular who were involved. To make the charge that the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour was not involved is just not the fact. Because I was in communication with the new Minister of Manpower and Labour and he certainly was deeply and heavily involved in attempting to settle this dispute. I think it is important that these situations be weighed very coolly, that the minister give the wisest advice he can to both sides concerned, and defer as long as possible the sort of action which had to be taken in this case. Because if you get involved too early in a situation such as this you set a precedent which you can't back away from in future years. This is the sort of thing on which a responsible government doesn't want to set a precedent.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I don't intend to get into any discussion of the details of the unfortunate Bow Valley School dispute last fall. But there are several points of principle which do deserve some comment in this general discussion.

The first is to follow up something that the hon. Member for Jasper Place raised. I agree with him that it's a very serious mistake for a cabinet minister to meddle in the collective bargaining process. There are many, many dangers. And to the extent that the hon. minister was extremely cautious in this respect. I think he was wise and prudent. I know that there are times when the collective bargaining process seems to be grinding away all too slowly, but certainly the many, many problems that arise when you have government

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intervention, in my view, balance whatever short-term advantages are obtained by that intervention. The hon. minister, in this case, obviously worked quietly behind the scenes and that is wise and reasonable, but to get involved publicly in the sense that Mr. Mackasey has on a number of occasions at the federal level would, in my judgment, be an incorrect move and would be an example of what perhaps I can best describe as meddling with the process, and to me that is an incorrect principle, if we believe that collective bargaining is a desirable proposition and I accept that principle.

The second point I would like to make is to rise in my place and express some very serious misgivings about the whole concept of regional bargaining in this province. The hon. minister raised the point about local autonomy and I think it's a very valid point to raise, but it seems to me that one of the problems with regional bargaining is that, very subtly, local autonomy if it's not eroded is at least partially undercut. The ability of local school boards on one hand and the local ATA on the other is at least partly undercut by the presence of either the stronger ATA over-all organization or the regional bargaining committee of the school boards. The regional approach tends to reduce the local autonomy factor and make both the boards on one hand and the ATA locals on the other, somewhat less accountable than would otherwise be the case.

As the hon. minister knows, in the Peace River country there has not really been any enthusiastic response to regional bargaining. I had the privilege of attending the Peace River region meeting of school trustees in January, where some time was spent on discussing the pros and cons of regional bargaining. The caution that I expressed, it would be fair to say, the majority of the trustees at that meeting also expressed. They felt that on the local level there was generally a better relationship between the board on one hand and the teachers in that particular local, and that more often you could arrive at a more reasonable, rational solution of the differences outstanding. And for that reason I believe we have to take a pretty close, hard look at whether regional bargaining is the proper course. I frankly believe that the closer we can bring the process to the local level the better it is. And certainly the closer we can bring the process to the local level the more consistent it is with the concept of local autonomy.

Finally, just one point that has absolutely nothing to do with education in this province but does have something to do with the Board of Industrial Relations. As I usually spend most of my time criticizing the government in one way or another, I want to take the opportunity of congratulating the hon. minister on the announcement today that Mr. Roy Jamha is going to be added to the Board of Industrial Relations. I feel that this is a very wise appointment and one which will benefit us all because, as the hon. minister quite properly pointed out, no one in this province has a better grasp of collective bargaining than Mr. Jamha, with all the implications involved. If we're going to make that Board of Industrial Relations workable; if we're going to make it a board of industrial relations which the trade union movement itself in this province will respect, then the appointment of a man of Mr. Jamha's standing in the trade union movement is an excellent step in the right direction. I want to take this opportunity to publicly commend the government for taking it.

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Chairman, I was interested in the remarks of the hon. Member for Drumheller when he said the majority of the people in his area appeared to favour regional bargaining despite the experience of the Bow Valley dispute. This doesn't surprise me. Nor does it surprise me that as many as one-third would be in favour of provincial bargaining.

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I think you've got to look beyond the little battlefield of this particular localized dispute to the main reasons for the unrest in this field. And, of course, it must be the over-reliance on property tax or financing the many services required from the state at the local government level.

The trouble appeared first, I believe, in the rural areas because this is where the tax base is eroding the fastest. But the same problem does exist, although not quite so apparently within the large metropolitan areas like Calgary and Edmonton. It begins, not so much with the teachers, it begins with the fragmented civic unions who have their brush-off effect on such organizations as the ATA.

You see, when everything is financed by property tax, the people eventually reach breaking point. They know that they cannot go on financing wage increases of anywhere from 6 to 11 per cent year after year compounded. Certainly they cannot finance them when they get far in advance of the wages being paid for roughly equivalent jobs in the private sector. And this is where the discontent begins, and probably the reason for your saying that they favour strengthening of the local school boards by combining in regions, and why there is a fairly large body of thought that thinks in terms of provincial bargaining.

It is the reason, of course, why arbitrary ceilings on the wages of teachers in particular have been imposed on our adjoining provinces -- the ones on each side of us, in B.C. and Saskatchewan -- and Saskatchewan is the toughest of the lot because they have singled out teachers. In B.C. they have applied it to all public servants, including teachers. But it's because of the same base problem -- the over-reliance on property tax.

This particular spat round of which you saw just a little symptom in the Bow Valley dispute began with a compulsory arbitration award to the police by the Patterson Arbitration Tribunal. They gave an arbitrary award of 11 per cent, which immediately triggered off demands by civic unions, and eventually translates itself into demands by teachers. None of these things are considered by the labour movement in isolation.

Now strikes are a last resort. Obviously if we all believe in a free democratic way of life, collective bargaining must go on as long as possible, and we must all hope that we will reach solution by these free bargaining methods. If a strike is called, or a lock-out, if it comes from the employer side, people are going to be hurt -- both sides are hurt. That's why it has to be the last resort. The strikers are hurt and the employers are hurt. And, of course, the employers in the case of school boards and civic unions are the public.

But eventually, if there is a total breakdown of collective bargaining, then surely a superior authority should intervene at first in the closest, in the most indirect, and the most subtle manner in negotiating, and I believe this is where the hon. minister demonstrated that he was well aware of the delicate situation. He did work in a cool manner behind the scenes; he did everything possible to try to arrange for a voluntary settlement of this particular crisis. He didn't rush in like a bull in a china shop, but in the end when it was obvious that nothing could be achieved by hoping that the two sides would continue to negotiate fruitfully, he had the courage to use that emergency section in the Labour Act, and it was the first time in the history of Alberta that it had been used.

Now the trouble with the situation in Calgary, which was mentioned by the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, was that the minister of that day revealed his hand. He said quite publicly that he would never intervene, that he would not intervene. And this was a similar

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case with a pending electricians' strike on the municipal scene in Calgary. Having called his hand, having told everyone that he was not going to intervene, then the only recourse by the local authority is to surrender -- and the surrender itself may not be in the best interests of the public.

The smart thing, of course, was to leave it always in doubt as to whether the minister would intervene, until the last possible moment. And that's why I believe the hon. Bert Hohol did a magnificent job in this Bow Valley dispute. He didn't rush in; he kept his cool; he played it out as long as he possibly could -- and then in the end he showed that he had the courage to use the big weapon he had in the regulations. I think he should be commended, maybe given a medal -- a medal of Alberta, Order of Alberta.

MR. ZANDER:

Mr. Chairman, I would certainly be amiss if I did not support the hon. minister, because in my area this was the first strike in the north central area. I do believe that any unjust criticism of the minister would certainly be very, very wrong at this time. I believe at the very beginning of the negotiations between the teachers and the local school boards in my area, that I kept my fingers completely out of it. I informed them what their position was that negotiations were to proceed on a local level. And as long as they were on a local level and they could be resolved, this is where they should remain.

Secondly, of course, in meeting with the teachers and the school board separately, the prime object of the teachers was that the regional bargaining was a clause that they did not want to adhere to. Of course, the school boards in the other sense appeared to be looking at regional bargaining as their prime object of trying to break the teachers' hold on the school divisions. In the meeting separately with the teachers, it was agreed that they were not too far apart monetarily between themselves and the school board. But they wanted the one item out of it and they said: "Take us out of regional bargaining and we'll settle at any cost."

I will say this, that the hon. minister was in constant contact with me even at 12:00 and 1:00 in the morning -- may I take this opportunity here now to say I should certainly compliment his wife who passed the messages along to me, when he was not able to. I think his wife should be commended for the tremendous load that she carried during the strike in my area. Any unjust criticism of the minister's action is certainly not warranted at any time. I do believe that with the hon. Minister of Education and the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour, they worked successfully in my area to bring about a settlement without government intervention. This is the way it should be. I think you should leave the negotiations on a local level and when that fails, and it must go at a time when there is no other way, then the minister must intervene, as he did in the Olds area. I know that in speaking with the teachers later on that they were confident that even regional bargaining can work providing they start negotiations before the contracts have lapsed. This is the point. I think when we go a year or a year and a half, the teachers without a contract, I think they are entitled to know what they are working for. If negotiations would have started or if regional bargaining would have been mentioned two years ago, we would have never been in this jackpot that we were in last fall.

Secondly, if regional bargaining was supposed to become effective in the province, why was it not done on a regional basis -- say in the northern part of the province or in the central part of the province? Why throw regional bargaining into the whole province? Then, of course, the minister was just stepping into office, found himself wide open on both ends and I am sure that he didn't sleep for many, many nights because I tried to contact him at 2:00 in the

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morning and as you well know, Mr. Minister, you even called me at 2:30 in the morning. I think you should be complimented, and so should the hon. Minister of Education.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I don't wish to prolong the debate. As a matter of fact, I can't help but think that maybe we have belaboured this subject too long. It is history and I, quite frankly, don't find myself in the position to be able to judge intelligently whether the minister should have acted sooner or later. Obviously the whole dispute was over the question of when to act. I don't want to devote myself to that, but I think it should be straightened out on the records, insofar as the question of regional bargaining is concerned, the criticism that has been made of it.

Firstly, it is a voluntary operation. The question of local autonomy really, so far as we are concerned as a Legislature, basically does not become involved. It is enabling legislation, the power is there, if the local authority doesn't wish to participate, I understand they can opt out of it. They don't have to go into regional bargaining on it. That is my understanding of it. So when a local authority decides to go into regional bargaining, it of its own volition, opts in favour of sacrificing some element of local autonomy. There can be no question about the fact that it does sacrifice some local autonomy when it goes in. But it is a self-inflicted sacrifice. It is not forced upon them by the legislation. It is an act of their own will. It isn't something that the Legislature or the government has inflicted upon them. I think this sacrifice should pretty clearly be stated, because of the step that the regional bargaining unit represented. I think this is the relationship to the question of provincial guidelines, insofar as regional bargaining is concerned, I find it difficult to hear speeches in favour of local autonomy on one hand, and then hear members of the Assembly from either side of the House stand up and say that the province should turn around and present the boards with accomplished facts without telling the boards which items are negotiable and which aren't. This again, is something that the local authorities, either individually within a district or division, or within the regional unit, I think, should have the prerogatives of determining for themselves. So the question of trying to set provincial guidelines, once again has to be very critically examined so far as the question of local autonomy is concerned, because it very clearly would conflict with that. I, for one, wouldn't want to sit here in the Legislature and be a party to setting up bargaining guidelines throughout the province on an issue that may be entirely irrelevant in Lethbridge, but which is fairly significant in Grande Prairie -- I don't know.

So I think before we get carried away in condemning the procedure in the past, or rushing into changing it in the future, some of these things should be borne in mind, certainly so far as rushing into it. The School Trustees' Association went on record as wanting it favoured, and we gave them in this Legislature -- members on both sides of the House, as my colleague from Olds-Didsbury says, there was no strong dissension on either side of the House. So I don't think the argument as to whether the minister acted soon enough or late enough really should become a reflection on the question of the basic procedure of regional bargaining. The school trustees asked for it, we provided the enabling legislation, and they went into it. If they wanted to organize in advance, they didn't have to set up a regional bargaining unit last year. That was a decision that was made within the organization. Once again, I think this should be placed on the record so that there is no confusion over the fact that this Legislature -- and I say the Legislature, not the government, but the Legislature -- inflicted regional bargaining on the local school districts, because basically, we didn't.

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The other matter that was pointed out was that it was suggested that there is a relationship between labour strikes in the educational system and dependency on the property tax.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that before anyone jumps to this conclusion that they examine the record of labour difficulties in the school system in the province.

Strathcona County is one of the wealthiest counties in the Province of Alberta and traditionally it also has one of the poorer records in the field of labour bargaining. It isn't a question of them being a poor county, it's a question of being one of the wealthiest counties, and it's just common sense -- if I were a school teacher, I'd say, "Let's crack Strathcona first. They'll set the pace and everybody else will fall into line." So the question of property tax being a significant factor in causing labour disputes, so far as the source of revenue for the schools, I don't think basically would really stand up under scrutiny. I suppose one could cite instances where you could say it was a factor, but as far as being a basic problem in the question of regional bargaining, I don't think there is a valid relationship there, as a general observation.

On the basis of the exercise that we went through last year, as a government, in dealing with the civil service, where we put the powers to set up a mediation board in the act, I think it was quite apparent -- at least to me as an individual, and I won't say this was the case for the government -- but it seemed quite apparent early in the stage of negotiations that there was going to be a test of the use of this section. Last year it didn't matter too much what we did with it. I suspect that the same attitude applied to the regional bargaining, that as soon as a new tool came into existence, somebody said, "Let's try it." I think this sentiment undoubtedly existed within the school system in the same manner.

Mr. Chairman, I think that while the debate is very enlightening, it might be a major, or more of a significant step forward to get on with the debate of the estimates, but I'm sure the minister wants an opportunity to respond to some of these points.

MR. BATHUR:

Just one other comment I'd like to add. It seemed that during the debates today it was mentioned on a number of occasions that negotiation should be left locally. Many of the members may not be aware that this was done some years ago. The good days of negotiations were when I sat on one side of the table and George Topolnisky on the opposite side, as a teacher, and negotiations were carried through in a matter of a few hours, or sometimes two evenings. But a few years ago the past administration gave the Alberta Teachers' Association the authority that they are the sole bargainers with the school boards. I know that until a year ago when I signed the contract I signed it as the reeve of the county. Yet that contract was not valid unless Joe Berlando of the Alberta Teachers' Association signed it. Only a little over a year ago have the trustees been given this opportunity of regional bargaining which the Alberta Teachers' Association has had for a number of years.

I would also like to mention that one of the contentious issues was the conflict between The School Act and The Labour Act. One section of the act states that the school board shall announce the opening day of school. Yet another section in The Labour Act said 'all working conditions are negotiable'. This was one of the items that really started the ball rolling. And I think this is something we are experiencing of what has happened over the last number of years. I hope that during the next short term some of these sections of the act will be amended; that we will do away with a lot of these problems we have been faced with.

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MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Chairman, there are two points I would like to give my opinion on to the attention of the hon. minister in the House, for what it is worth, very briefly.

The first has to do with some comments which have been made about the bargaining going on beyond the end of the contract. That is to say, teachers were working for a long period of time without a contract. The same also happens in industry on occasion.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that under the legislation of this province there is legislation which mandates by statute that a contract must endure for a certain period of time. There is then an opening of the contract -- generally 60 days before the expiration of that contract -- in which it can be renegotiated. By mutual agreement between the parties the legislation has been in the past that they could open it more quickly if they wished.

I would like to emphasize that it is up to the parties, provided the provincial machinery for mediation is available at the time it is required. It is then up to the parties how fast that bargaining is going to move. Either one of the parties in normal circumstances can bring the provincial mediation or intervention machinery into operation if they so desire.

I would say with respect to the disputes that have been under discussion, it was the first time in my memory, in my experience, that I ever had to try to force a union to a bargaining table. So the fact that they worked without a contract was because they didn't want to go to the bargaining table to get a contract. I would suggest to you that there is no way that government can force the parties to agree to a contract before the old one expires, except by them saying that the old contract will remain in effect until the date the new one is signed, and there won't be any retro-activity. This might work, but if the government were to presume to say that it would not permit employees to work without a contract, it would have then to devise a system to force this situation to come about. There is only one way that that can be done, and that is binding arbitration. Again, I question whether we want to go into binding arbitration on that matter.

My second point relates to binding arbitration and the intervention of the minister that has been advocated. I am very, very leary of binding arbitration. I don't think it will work as a general rule. I think we have to have a system that provides for bilateral bargaining with as much help as can be provided for the two parties most directly concerned. Binding arbitration can be made to work and in fact, did work in the dispute under consideration. But only when the two parties came to realize that they had no way out but that, or face a long, long period without an agreement. They knew if that were to happen, the public sentiment was against them.

Any government will always find itself in the position of having to have support beyond the members of the Legislature or beyond the department. We have an example right now in an eastern province of the problems which can accrue. The government says, "This is the agreement", and the workers say, "It isn't", and who is going to resolve it? Eventually the public is going to have to make that decision. I say again, this is a real and a very major issue. From my personal point of view, with my experience and if I were the minister, I would recommend most heartily that he always keeps some elbow room and never show all of the rules of the game and make a total commitment to what he would do under such and such a circumstance to the two parties so that they are never sure what he is going to do. And then they are more inclined to try to resolve their own disputes themselves.

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MR. CHAIRMAN:

Total appropriation for 1705 -- Mr. Minister, I thought you had passed it up. Go ahead.

DR. FOHOL:

Thanks for the efforts. I could easily pass because the discussion has been most instructive and useful but that is mostly why I did want to get up and say, Mr. Chairman, that there is a great deal to learn about collective bargaining. The discussion here was free and open, well-placed and well-intended.

I have to say that collective bargaining is so serious because, as the hon. Member for Drumheller pointed out, third parties are now hurt. Long ago just one employer, usually one person, and several workers, would have a dispute and that is far as it went. It didn't really hurt anybody and had a point to prove -- it was a weapon. Now it is something altogether different, because it goes into what we call the general good of the province -- where third parties are severely hurt, then the discussion I hope was timely, and not wasted. Because as we look at the Maritimes, as we look at Quebec, as we look at British Columbia, this is grim. The people who say to me "Gee, don't worry, things are fine in Alberta in the matter of labour relations" simply don't know one simple fact of life: that if you feel that things are that good, and you stay with the status quo, it won't be that long before they are as bad as they are in British Columbia and the Maritimes and Quebec.

Let me comment most briefly because repetition has no virtue whatever. With respect to the comments by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc -- the matter of regional bargaining being permissive. This is true but there is a real onus on governments, and please let me back up and say that I take no position on zone or regional bargaining. I can't experience that kind of luxury. It is the system, and that is the way we do collective bargaining now so I take no sides on it. My job is to see that it works. But when a government moves in a new direction like this, surely the government can't escape its responsibilities of preparation for regional bargaining or for any kind of bargaining that is new and that hasn't been done before, and they are asking people to go into a new experience with no preparation. This becomes extremely important because local autonomy is sliced up a good deal when you go into regional bargaining. As the hon. member said, you pay for what you get. Regional bargaining uses up part of the local autonomy. So, because it does, and because you have to look at the final end of what it can be, then some preparation is necessary.

I found it interesting that the hon. Member for Drumheller, doing his homework, found that there was a surprising proportion of people who are prepared to bargain at the provincial level. Let me say this to the Assembly -- that this government and this party doesn't want bargaining at the provincial level. It could be that at some point it may have no choice, and let me not be too gloomy. But let me forecast the meaning of bargaining at the provincial level.

Let's look at Quebec where the teachers are civil servants and call teachers by any name, as soon as you are into provincial bargaining that is what you really have. When the nurses and other people who here are in a free enterprise system in a different relationship to government, become the civil service, what you have in fact, in the Province of Quebec now, is not collective bargaining, but a challenge to the very existence of the Government of Quebec. That is the final and ultimate conclusion and role of collective bargaining untutored, unschooled, and without guidelines.

Guidelines are not intended to ham-string anyone, but to place the perimeters for a new and beginning enterprise. The old school

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act and the new one, is the old business of the pendulum. The School Act which was, was so restrictive that it assumed outdoor facilities for rural schools -- it just took that for granted -- but stipulated how many yards that building had to be away from the school. That's how restrictive the old school act was.

Then the new one, wide open, no guidelines, no room for the responsibility and the accountability under The British North American Act for the Province of Alberta, or any province, to indicate its leadership, except to say the board shall govern and the teacher shall negotiate on anything that happens to be a working condition. This is simply not good enough.

Let me say also in response to the hon. Member for Wetaskawin-Leduc, that while property tax directly may not be a factor in negotiations, the availability of finance to a school board is absolutely a factor in negotiations.

Let me commend the hon. Member for Drumheller. I didn't agree with all his points of view, but certainly I agree with the attitude and the atmosphere that he expressed. Certainly collective bargaining, especially with the matter of teachers and school boards, is not a political thing. It's one that is of equal concern to both sides of the House and I found his comments constructive and useable. It's not that regional bargaining itself is good or bad, it's what you do with it, how you prepare for it. But I do agree that you give up a certain slice of local autonomy -- and this has to be put to the people when this is made permissive in legislation -- that one outcome of your choice will be that you will give up some of your local autonomy. I say that it is a responsibility of government to inform the people of the possible consequences, and the possible process and the sure capacity of this approach to exclude direct communication contact to the voter with the person whom he elected immediately to attend to the matters of education in his community.

Now the comments of the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury I dealt with some couple of hours ago. I would only say that his second round did not at all come to grips with the comments that I made with respect to preparation of communities for regional bargaining, for timing them one or two at a time, instead of having the whole province open to it at one time, without the seminars, without the guidelines, without the preparations; and while what the hon. Member for Jasper Place says is true about agreements, it's not so much that I'm concerned that there is no contract, or no new contract, past the expiration of the old one. My concern is that negotiations begin before the agreement expires, and that has to be incredibly important. When the regional bargaining began this was not the case. Many regions began way after the expiration of the agreement.

Very briefly, Mr. Chairman, what are we doing about some of these things? As someone said, let's look to the future. My department, the Deputy Minister, the chairman of the Board of Industrial Relations and his staff, and I personally, have held conferences with the ATA and the ASTA, elected and appointed, several times, many times since the conclusion of the last agreement, which happened to be Bow Valley.

By the way let me say that this particular set of negotiators turned down, or did not ask for voluntary arbitration, as did North Central West. We're holding conferences with both associations, continuously, to look back and see what happened in each region, and to profit from it, to accentuate the positive and to drop off the things that get in the way.

We're well moving up negotiations so that they begin long before the contract expires. And at the moment the South-Eastern Association is negotiating at least three months before its agreement is up. While we can't require them, by law, to do this, I have no

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hesitation in saying that the Board of Industrial Relations will work closely with the associations across the province to the end that they begin their negotiations well in advance.

We are reviewing the structure of regions. These, of course, are voluntary: but, again, looking at the whole of the province we can give some useable and useful information to the regions, because two or three of them are completely difficult for themselves to manage the negotiations.

We hope to move, Mr. Chairman, into what I would call non-prejudicial mediation. So that we have some of our staff members moving about the province, not just in education but also other enterprises, to watch for the smoke and the little bits of fire and to come back to government and say, "Look, it looks like there will be problems there." Then we can send some of our senior staff and talk to management and talk to the employees, or labour, and see if, in a non-prejudicial outside-of-The-Labour-Act kind of approach, we can try and work things out before the crisis situation; because the way the act is now written, by the time we, by law, can enter into the dispute the chances of working it out are pretty remote because the emotional, the human considerations, that are so much a part of negotiations, have gone to the breaking point. And so we're encouraging the regions, both the teachers and the trustees, to review the last two years of negotiations to see how they and we can profit from it.

We're asking them to attend to the matter of what is negotiable. My view, Mr. Chairman, if I were negotiating at a table, that would be the first item. I would not begin to negotiate anything until I found agreement with the other side on what, in fact, in our area is negotiable. You will notice that the teachers of Ontario are developing a list of items which they are going to present as their chief points of negotiation this year -- what is negotiable.

The matter of time, as the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc pointed out, is extremely crucial. I simply want to comment on this. There is no absolute time; not one day, not a week or two weeks, or three weeks, or four weeks; it is erroneous to feel that there is an absolute time at which a strike must end. Because the dispute begins on the day of negotiations. In some cases 18 months of negotiations had gone by before there was strike.

Now I took the position that so long as there was meaningful negotiation proceeding, and mediation also, and gains in advances were demonstrable, then, in no way should or ought a government to intercede. So to say that at the end of one week "time's up", or at the end of two weeks "that's long enough", could be a serious mistake. At the end of two weeks -- for instance in the Bow Valley dispute, the two parties were so close together that it was hard to resist from shoving a pen at them and saying, "Here sign because there's nothing between you," it was that close -- and then to assume that at the end of two weeks or three weeks "time's up", is simply not in the spirit of collective bargaining.

But, when it becomes clear as it finally did to me, in this particular circumstance, that there was no way -- that they might sit there for three months and they weren't going to agree -- that is the time.

So, Mr. Chairman, I simply want to summarize by saying that I appreciate the lengthy discussion on collective bargaining. In the many enterprises -- the construction, the road builders, the bricklayers, the education enterprise, the institutional enterprises, the hospitals, the penitentiaries -- these are going to be extremely important to this province and we will need all advice, all help, all constructive criticism, to assist in this matter. So I entreat for that kind of support and assistance.

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MR. HENDERSON:

I want to make one brief comment and ask the hon. minister a question.

I certainly agree with his efforts to anticipate labour troubles and take preventative measures because I rather suspect that in the non-governmental sector one of the biggest problems with bargaining is management. When they get a contract signed they say, "Sweep that under the table. Thank God that's over with for two years." And then the pressure starts building again because there's no communication on an ongoing basis.

I just want to ask the hon. minister very briefly if he could outline what legislative authority does he have in that area. Because I can well imagine, it's only a matter of time that if he doesn't have it, somebody is going to tell him, mind your own business. That's going to be either labour or management. So that's the first question.

The second one is in view of the efforts that the hon. minister and his people are taking to discuss regional bargaining pros and cons with school trustees and so on, and groups throughout the province, outlining the pitfalls and so forth. I wonder if the hon. minister could provide us -- I certainly don't expect to get it from him now -- but just a brief resume of the various suggestions that he is making to the various groups involved, and basically as to what he considers guidelines of the things that they should consider. I would appreciate having a resume on it.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, one of the problems in talking about collective bargaining in this Assembly is that clearly many people here are experienced with it, which in a way is a real strength because we all know what we are talking about. I would suspect that...

MR. HENDERSON:

Would you swear to that?

DR. HOHOL:

The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc has some experience here.

Let me say without any equivocation, there is no authority in legislation for non-prejudicial mediation. And so very clearly, one of my mediation staff is going to get banged on the nose and told -- you know -- stay on the other side of the fence. However, we will still proceed this way. We will telephone or visit management and say, look, we have no authority in legislation, but it's in your interests, it's in labour's interests, it's in the government's interests; and if he is agreeable to discuss some of the smoke that is rising, and some of the bits of flame, then fine -- if not, we will withdraw. We are hoping that this will occur more and more. I'm talking about it quite regularly to management and labour. There seems to be general support for this kind of approach. It's not a new invention, it's being used elsewhere.

On the matter of conferences let me be very clear on this, that it's not just on the matter of regional bargaining because, let me repeat. I would not want to be misunderstood. That is a fact of collective bargaining in Alberta, that is the mode, that is the vehicle, that is not going to change our initiative. The ASTA knows this, the ATA knows this. But they do look at it to see what impedimenta there may be in the very nature of regional bargaining, and how we may improve it.

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One other thing that we discuss with the groups is the matter of beginning negotiations well in advance of the expiration of the agreement. Something else is, to try and come to grips with the matter of what is negotiable. Certainly I agree with the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, that in the first year a lot of this was shaken down. I simply say that it didn't have to be so tortuous, it didn't have to be so painful, it didn't have to be so traumatic. But certainly the list of what is negotiable, including a grey area, has got to be faced up to.

Something else I'm discussing with the associations -- and the people of my department are also -- and this is a sensitive area, but it needs to be discussed, and this is the matter of changing negotiators sometimes during the process of collective bargaining. Now if you sit and bargain and you have two spokesmen, one for either side, and you do this for 18 months, you can get to the point where you can predict what the other person is going to say, when he'll say it, how he is going to say it. He walks through the door -- and you know -- you're just all set for him in a negative way. It's likely that negotiators feel that if they were changed during the process of bargaining that this would be losing face in some way. I don't feel this way at all. A coach changes a pitcher, a coach changes any player -- and I'm discussing the possibility that if there is ever the appearance, much less the fact, of personality or communications conflicts between the negotiators, then they could be changed.

Now these are simply illustrative, Mr. Chairman. The whole range of the vehicles in other branches, the School Act, that make negotiations possible -- reviewing those and trying to profit from the last two years of negotiations under the new approaches, with every intention to make them work.

While the ATA has taken the clear position that it is against the regional bargaining approach, it has also taken the position in the view that I have no intention to change it, that they will do everything they can to make it work. Of course, the trustees support and want it and I feel that both sides are meeting with me and my staff in good faith and earnestly seeking new ways, new attitudes, and new atmospheres so that in the future we will have more success for negotiations.

Appropriation 1705, agreed to \$ 967,505

Agreed to without debate:

<u>Appropriation 1706</u>	Elevators and Fixed Conveyances Act	\$ 190,600
<u>Appropriation 1708</u>	Electrical Protection Act	769,540
<u>Appropriation 1709</u>	Boilers Act	768,860
<u>Appropriation 1710</u>	Gas Protection Act	437,290
<u>Appropriation 1711</u>	Plumbing Inspection	122,280

Appropriation 1712 Apprenticeship Training

DP. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could make one correction in Appropriation 1712 and that is in the totals 1971-72 estimates. If you stroke 96 and place beside it 116, this is the result of combining three appropriations, 1704, which is the Trademans' Qualifications with 13 positions, 1707, the Welding Act with seven people, and 1712, the Apprenticeship Act with 96 people, for a total of 116.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

It is a salaried position of 116 then, Mr. Minister?

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DR. HOHOL:

Yes, by combining three appropriations.

Appropriation 1712, agreed to \$1,274,600

<u>Appropriation 1713</u>	Pensions Benefit Act	79,980
<u>Appropriation 1714</u>	Human Rights Commission	78,034

Appropriation 1715 Fire Prevention Branch

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask a question at this point? There seems to be a lot of dissatisfaction that arises every once in a while between the major cities and their fire department and building code, and our provincial fire protection branch. I wondered if the hon. minister had any representation and suggestions as to how we could overcome this because apparently it can work both ways. I know that our own City of Calgary has used it to their advantage to have a building condemned and then blamed the provincial building inspector over the years. It seems like a two-sided, not just a one-sided affair. I just wondered if the hon. minister would bring me up-to-date on the present situation.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, only to agree with the hon. member that there are these confusing problems, the circumstances are simple. The municipality has its own fire safety regulations which any builder has to meet. Then the Alberta provincial government has its own and it is the senior requirement. Now one of the problems is that sometimes the provincial ones change during the period that construction is progressing on a large building. There are other conflicts that are simply born of two levels of government.

One of the things that will help is a national building code that will have safety requirements or codes in all areas, including fire. This may assist. But all I can say is the point that you made is accurate. We are working at it to try to improve it and that is just about the way it is.

MR. COOPER:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could tell us a little bit about the Alberta Fire Training School. I understand it's the only one of its kind in Canada.

DR. HOHOL:

Yes. It looks like most of the estimates spend most of their time on one appropriation, which is a bit unfortunate. There are several areas of our services in the matter of safety, Mr. Chairman, that are outstanding, that have national recognition. Certainly, the one that you mentioned, sir, is one of those. Our training program is recognized across the nation. Our people sit on safety standards and codes for Canada. We know that we have one of the best training programs in Canada. We haven't enough spaces for all the people that would take the training if we had the space. So you may be looking for an increased appropriation in this area next year.

I do want to say, Mr. Chairman, that the matter of safety is so incredibly important -- that no one gets hurt, whether it's in elevators or in a building or by electrical services -- all the ones that you have here in these appropriations. I've had the opportunity to visit personally and watch the men at their work, become familiar with their programs and services, and so on, and I want to report an outstanding service that obviously the prior government developed over the years. We are giving you the opportunity to take credit. We are in a position to be able to report.

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Appropriation 1715, agreed to

\$ 287,755

Appropriation 1717 Credit and Loan Agreements Act

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, I notice that under Appropriation 1717, the minister has indicated that the services will be extended. I think that perhaps it would be a good idea if we had a bit of an explanation as to what services he expects to extend into. I notice that his budget doesn't provide too much latitude in this regard. After an elaboration on that, could the minister also tell us if he intends to expand consumer education programs.

Further to a question I raised some time ago in the question period, the minister indicated that they are reviewing the role of the government and the Better Business Bureaus, and I'm wondering if the minister would be able to tell us, at this time, how that review is coming and what the results are. I understand that the funds for the assistance to the Better Business Bureaus come from the Treasury Department, but presumably the minister in this department influences government policy in that regard. Also, could you tell us in what areas you feel provincial services are required to supplement the federal Consumer Affairs Department.

Also, I was wondering if the minister would be able to elaborate further as to whether or not the government is doing anything about the situation where senior citizens, students, low income people -- those who simply do not want credit cards, are paying cash. In some instances -- not all credit card systems operate under the basis where the cash buyers subsidize the credit card user, but some do -- it seems to me that we are hurting those who cannot or do not want to use credit cards in those instances where the cash buyer subsidizes the credit card user. I was wondering if the minister would elaborate a little bit on what the government is doing in that regard.

DP. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, with respect to the expectations to increase service, the intent here is to add a staff member in our southern Alberta office in Calgary, to deal in the four statutory requirements of the Consumer Affairs Branch, but in particular to emphasize how services are available to the people through the Consumer Affairs Branch. That is the extent of our increased services for next year.

The rest of the questions, Mr. Chairman, really anticipate the study and the work that we are doing. I just remind the Assembly that this service is new to the government by just over a year. That is indicated by a staff of six people and modest budget of \$50,000. That is as it should be until we know are clear on the federal services and how we can complement and supplement those. I wish the hon. member might give me the elbow room to deal with this when we are closer to the end of our studies which will be made available to the House.

On the matter of credit cards I really feel this should be dealt with in the committee sittings on The Credit and Loans Agreement Act. It has had second reading and we will be prepared to deal in great detail on this matter. One of the amendments deals exactly with this, and I would recommend that we move in that way.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I must apologize. I was out when Appropriation 1714 went through. I wonder if we could revert to that for a moment. I would like to pose a question to the hon. minister. If not I could bring it up . . .

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MR. CHAIRMAN:

You may just before we have the Total Income Account.

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Chairman, I can't possibly sit here all afternoon without saying anything, especially in the matter of labour because I think probably I am fairly well acquainted with this particular subject.

There is one subject I want to mention, and I might have mentioned it before, that a genuine paradox exists in the province of Alberta at this time in relation to the fact that there are numerous jobs, and at the same time, quite substantial unemployment. The problem that the hon. minister is going to have to resolve is how to have a happy medium of these two extremes.

I might mention in passing that in Switzerland they are faced with an unemployment problem where they have 50 people unemployed. The government is concerned; they are wondering about this. It might be presumptuous to suggest that the task force make a trip to Switzerland.

DR. FOHOL:

Not at all.

MR. DRAIN:

If they would come back with an answer to this problem I would certainly be happy to endorse . . . but if they just went there to ski or something I would take a dim view of the subject.

Mention has been made of strikes and the effects of strikes. Certainly, I remember my own background, being involved in a strike when I was 16 years of age, and looking at the levelled rifles of people whose hands were covered with the blood of miners who were killed in Estevan, Saskatchewan. I can assure you that this left a mark on me that I will never forget.

My contention is that a strike, when it does occur, is something that creates wounds that are very, very difficult to heal. I can recall in the strike that I referred to, of strike breakers in the mine . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Drain, are you going to refer to Appropriation 1717 or --

MR. DRAIN:

I certainly am. I am talking about the manpower program.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

No, we are not in manpower. That is 1718. We haven't finished 1717 yet.

MR. DRAIN:

Oh, you are still at credit and loans. I am just a little faster at the draw than you are, Mr. Chairman. Do you want me to start over?

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MR. CHAIRMAN:

You are ahead of me. Did you want to speak on manpower programming?

MR. DRAIN:

I sure do.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Can we get the approval of the total sum of \$61,426 in 1717?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

Appropriation 1717 agreed to

\$ 61,426

Appropriation 1718 Manpower Programming

MR. DRAIN:

I wish I had a notebook to remember where I was at.

I think that probably the biggest problem there is in labour relations is communication. This is the big thing -- between the employer and the employee -- I am not referring to teachers because you are into a different format here. You are entering into an area where production is something that is relevant but is constant insofar as no matter what you pay a teacher you do not increase his productivity.

So in the area of labour relations there is the problem of communication. If the productivity of the concern is on the increase, certainly part of this should belong, by right, to the employee, whereas if the opposite is such, and this information is disseminated back and forth in totality, I think it has been found even in my own area that the exchange of information has resulted in very amiable labour relations. I just mention these few points and I am sure that the hon. minister in his remarks previously is very much aware of this situation.

Certainly his job is one that is all encompassing. He has to sit on the lid of Pandora's box at all times and hope that the box doesn't fly open on him.

MR. PEACOCK:

I know that my colleague, the hon. Minister of Labour wouldn't mind me commenting just a moment. I think possibly one of the most important portfolios in regard to the climate that is established in the province to develop industry is manpower and labour. I think it comes appropriately under this particular vote that we might consider -- and I am sure he has -- the technological changes that are taking place and new approaches that we must have to assure labour -- and with the organization of labour -- of their continued usefulness and dignity in the relationship of the development of the industry in which they're involved. What we are saying is that surely, in the retraining programs that we have, we will bear in mind the responsibility that we have for the human resource in relation to these industries. A healthy labour management climate in the Province of Alberta is most essential for the development and growth of our secondary industries.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, on March 20th I asked the hon. Premier what steps the government was taking to utilize effectively the resources and talents of senior citizens, many of whom wish to make further and

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continued contributions to the province. Your Premier suggested that perhaps we should discuss this under the debate more fully. He did suggest at the time though that the government was considering using the services of senior citizens on various boards and tribunals and things of that nature.

We have many senior citizens who feel that they have a contribution to make and in many instances even without pay. I was just wondering if you could elaborate on your studies to date in the regard to using the talents and resources of our senior citizens who wish to make their services available to the province.

MR. LOUGHEED:

I just wondered if the hon. member was referring to the reply that I gave to the hon. Member for Little Bow a few days ago.

MR. WILSON:

It was March 20th when I directed the question to you, sir.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Well, again Mr. Chairman, the question was directed to me from the hon. member that there was a specific question directed to me with regard to how many appointments our administration had made to senior citizens by the Member from Little Bow to which I replied. I just wondered if we are talking about the same subject.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, to the hon. Premier. My question was of a general nature regarding what steps you were planning to take to utilize the talents of the senior citizens who are perhaps retired but still want to make contributions to the province. You indicated I believe, at that time, that you were studying the matter to see in what areas you could utilize these people.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, to place the question in a fair perspective, I would answer in this way. The subject is one of serious concern of this government obviously from the Throne Speech to date, and the actions that followed in the priorities. In the specific area which the hon. member talks about, this is a complex subject, the same kind that we would have if we talked about Opportunities For Youth programs. Maybe this is the kind of approach that we need to have.

Some of our members are in close working relationships with the Senior Citizens Association of Edmonton I am personally. We are working jointly with them as to how this might be done. This is a complex business but there is a fantastic pool of experience, knowledge and know-how, in many cases freely obtainable.

Also our department in the research branch is taking a look at the problem of the senior citizen and his capacity to serve, not so much serve as to offer service, on behalf of the people of this government. But to say that we have a formal study -- a research type of thing, or an investigation -- would be to presume an answer. So I would simply reflect on behalf of the government the awareness of the question the member puts and our attention to it through studies in my own department, other departments and the Executive Council.

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MR. WILSON:

A question to the hon. minister, Mr. Chairman. Will senior citizens be considered specifically in your studies to determine the development of a manpower capability in the province?

DR. HOHOL:

Again, with some real discipline for myself to make sure that I'm not misunderstood. I would anticipate that the answer is yes, but the list of the research studies or projects that the manpower division of Labour and Manpower will undertake, is yet to be concluded. But being aware of the Throne Speech debate and of the priorities, and of the statements that we will study act, and move on this subject, I would anticipate that my very real answer to you should be yes.

MR. STRCM:

Mr. Chairman, the other day I took the local paper and went through the job opportunities that are available for males. I have to confess that after going through that exercise that I was extremely surprised at the number of jobs that seem to be available. It somehow or other doesn't seem to square with the unemployment situation that we are talking about. I'm wondering if the hon. minister would comment on it, because I thought that in the manpower programming that you are possibly looking at a mechanism that would try and come to grips with jobs available, and the training that individuals have in order to fit them for jobs that are available. I'd be interested in your remarks in this area.

DR. HOHOL:

That's an excellent comment and question, Mr. Chairman. I think that the major point of the division of Manpower and Labour will be very much the kind of thing that the hon. Leader of the Opposition puts before the Assembly this afternoon.

One of the things that we certainly must develop the competence to do -- and this will not be easy -- is to develop a catalogue, an inventory, of the kinds of jobs and careers and the kinds of work that Alberta will have to have done in the decades to come, and at the same time work with the institutions of training and re-training and preparation for jobs, careers -- work to the end that we have this kind of capability in our skills in manpower, our capability to do the kind of things that Alberta will have to have done in the next decades, as my colleague, Mr. Peacock points out. This will be a major job that we will do in manpower programming. We're trying to get this double inventory of what needs to be done and the kinds of skills that will have to be undertaken in the matter of training, to see that they will be done when we need them. This will be the major thrust of our investigations, our research.

I have pointed out on several occasions this very point. While we have a great deal of unemployment there are many jobs which can't be filled. This is because, up to this time in Canada and in Alberta, this kind of inventory has not been done and hasn't been done for several reasons. One was a sort of mistaken concept of what's democratic or interference with the rights of people. I take the reverse position that every individual should know what types of jobs and careers and occupation are open on a long-term basis in this province and then he should be open to placement, and career and occupational counselling in terms of the kind of person he is. Then the choice, of course, would be his. So we intend to move in this direction in a very real way.

This is an aside -- since I'm on my feet -- to the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crownest. I'm surprised to hear that Switzerland ever has even 50 people unemployed because they have conscription and I don't know, these 50 are likely away without leave.

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MR. STRCM:

Mr. Chairman, just a further question. Is it your intention then to work with the industry, particularly, to try and determine what the requirements are and then, following that, to get an inventory of available manpower in the province?

DR. HOHOL:

Yes, exactly, yes. We'll work very closely with the Department of Industry and Commerce and, through them, with the private enterprises and try to project so that things like Grande Cache never again happen in Alberta -- when a business or an enterprise has to go on line and there isn't the working capability to get it on line because we haven't looked far enough ahead to get the people trained to do the job but expect the mobility of people in today's society to fill the job. People will move, but not necessarily people who can do the enterprise in that particular circumstance.

In addition to working with industry, we have to look at Alberta just as it is today, and study out, if I can use that term, the dislocation between the unemployment numbers and the number of jobs which are available -- look at the nature of these jobs which are open and the people who are unemployed and, through training and retraining, try to close the gap on this dislocation. But first we have to know its meaning. Why are there so many jobs open and why are there so many people unemployed?

MR. STRCM:

Mr. Chairman, the last question that I have. I may have misunderstood the hon. minister in regard to job opportunities for Albertans. My understanding was that if an Albertan was unemployed, and there was a job that was taken by somebody else, industry was urged to give the Albertan an opportunity. Now I'm wondering how you relate that to, say, people from Saskatchewan that come into Alberta -- how do you rate it -- because I look upon it as a rather difficult problem. I say it for this reason, that we cannot be too parochial in our outlook as Albertans. I think we have to think of ourselves, first, as Canadians and it becomes a very difficult area. I would be very interested in hearing some of your remarks in that regard. Maybe you would like to hold that until this evening and give me your comments on it.

DR. HOHOL:

I just can't escape the comment that people -- maybe the hon. member chose a bad illustration by using Saskatchewan, I thought they were all here in our labour force already -- however, seriously, that is a real problem. But let me say this, Mr. Chairman and hon. members of the Assembly, we find the very large corporations very co-operative in this way.

For instance, two or three weeks ago, the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals was talking about Canadian Bechtel which, while an American firm, has the largest Canadian component of workers on its staff. In their work at Procter and Gamble, for instance, in the construction phase they have now moved to nearly a total Alberta labour force, certainly nearly a total Canadian labour force. So I agree with you, but industry has a way of working this out by designating these jobs for Albertans, and then Canadians, and then from anywhere if the job cannot be filled by our own people.

This is a process and I am encouraged by the way it is working. It doesn't happen overnight but, certainly, Canadian Bechtel and others are showing that if they work closely with the unions and with government -- and this is where government has to take a leadership role -- it can't stay in the woodwork, it has to get out and talk to

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management and to labour and try to develop this kind of attitude and atmosphere. The figures show that this can be done.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Minister, I wonder if we can call it 5:30?

MR. HYNDMAN:

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

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Is it agreed?

[Mr. Diachuk left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker took 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. SPEAKER:

The House stands adjourned until 8:00 o'clock this evening.

[The House rose at 5:32 p.m.]

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

CLERK:

Under Orders of the Day, the Assembly will await upon His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair at 8:03 p.m.]

[The Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, and took the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER:

May it please your Honour, the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta has at its present sitting thereof, passed a bill to which on behalf and in the name of the said Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request your Honour's assent.

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CLERK:

Your Honour, following is the title of the bill to which your Honour's assent is prayed: Bill No. 98, being an Act to Amend the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1972.

In Her Majesty's name, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor doth assent to this bill.

[The Lieutenant Governor left the Chair at 8:05 p.m.]

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Government House Leader moves that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the Assembly resolve itself into Committee of Supply for consideration of the estimates. Do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair at 8:05 p.m.]

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COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair.]

Department of Manpower and Labour (cont.)

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Committee of Supply will now come to order. Department of Manpower and Labour.

Appropriation 1718 Manpower Programming (cont.)

MR. STROM:

Mr. Chairman, there is one other point that I would actually like to make on this appropriation. I am aware that the government has stated very clearly that they support the greatest use of Alberta manpower, Alberta trained personnel, for the various jobs that become available when factories, oil refinery plants and what not are being built.

This I support.

One of the groups that have been making submissions to us from time to time are the engineers of our province. They have felt very keenly their loss of opportunity on some of the larger jobs that have come along. I want to say that I certainly have all sympathy for them and I'm of the view that we should use them as much as possible.

It might be of interest to the House that about a year and a half ago, we did have a meeting with the engineers, and one of the things that was pointed out to them was that in Alberta they have been rather fortunate, in that they have been able to get work on an individual basis or as smaller companies. The time had well now come when they would need to look toward some association of engineering capabilities, maybe consortiums or something of that nature. I

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recall that they expressed interest, and I hope it is something that will be stated very clearly, because I feel that it would be wrong to look at it as a one-way street where we constantly talk about our support for Alberta personnel without recognizing that there rests upon the personnel of this province some responsibility to ensure that their capabilities are established in such a manner that they can meet the challenge of these larger jobs that come into the province.

I am wondering whether the hon. minister would maybe like to make a comment on it, and I'm also interested to know whether there is any indication -- and I take the engineers again as an example, because I think they are the ones that come to mind first -- on the part of the engineers that they are looking at this kind of an association that will give them the capabilities to handle the kinds of jobs that I think receive the greatest public interest. I think of a job such as Syncrude, in which if there is a possibility of our Alberta personnel handling it, certainly we would like to see them handle it, but again, we have to recognize their responsibility of doing something about being able to meet the challenge.

DR. HOHOL:

Very briefly, Mr. Chairman, I am in complete agreement with the Leader of the Opposition in his statement with respect to managerial, supervisory and technical staff generally, and the engineering people in particular. One of the things that prompts this type of problem is that when the large companies, the international and national companies, move in with their own staff, complete the project and go away, we're no better off in a technical sense. By using Alberta engineering competence, even in an assisting way at first and then as replacement people -- and this is the mode we're using, for example, at Grande Prairie, with Canadian Bechtel -- when the Alberta engineers have this capability they replace the American ones who go back to their parent companies, and our people replace them. Then when the project is finished our engineering capability in that area remains in the province.

The second point the hon. member makes is an exceedingly good one. There is a real onus on the engineers or any other technical or professional group to reflect organizational and performance capability, and they have indicated this kind of intention. They have been in touch with us, we have had discussions with them. It's analogous to some of our smaller companies developing a consortium to be able to do a whole project. I believe we have to move in these ways. I'm sure my colleague, Mr. Peacock, would support this kind of attitude. I agree with you.

Appropriation 1718, agreed to \$ 100,000

Agreed to without debate:

Appropriation 1719 Civil Service Nurse \$ 20,770

Appropriation 1720 Personnel Administration Office

MR. IUDWIG:

I'd like to make a few comments on this appropriation. I believe that there is some undertaking on behalf of the government to -- especially in their pronouncements in the Bill of Rights and the human rights proposed legislation -- to hire people who are not being accommodated with employment by the government at the present time. I believe this is as good a time to make a commitment as any, to start hiring people who are older than has been the case in the past. When we talk about non-discrimination because of age, I believe we have to do more than just talk about it; it has to be meaningful. Once you say it, once you put it down and take a stand on it, it has

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to be put into practice, and this personnel administration office is the place to begin to show whether we mean anything we say or not. Just a lot of nice speeches don't solve the problem or many people who are perhaps over 40, who are looking for jobs, and they are told by government that, "Well, you have the qualifications, you are healthy, you have experience, but the policy is to hire somebody younger". I think we have to make a decision that there has to be a commitment. I don't think anybody could be faulted for wanting the government to make a commitment, and make it meaningful.

I know that corporations and governments -- municipal, federal and provincial -- have a tendency to have politicians speak up in favour of this, which sounds good but we have to really stand up and make it count, and have policy instructions going to personnel to put this into effect in such a manner that the people applying for the jobs know that they have been fairly dealt with. It isn't enough to say, "Apply for the job", then they say, "you were number 6 or 7 and you didn't qualify". There has to be something really concrete to convince the people that all this talk and this Bill of Rights, etc. has some meaning.

I would like to urge the hon. minister -- when I am through -- to perhaps state what he is going to do and when, and make this known to people. Even though it is alright to say, "The previous government didn't do it", but we are dealing with now. We are dealing with a problem, and there is a lot of tragedy involved with people who qualify and get turned down, not because they are old and decrepit, but because they are older than some people competing in the field.

I would like to make a very firm stand on this, Mr. Chairman. I would like other members to stand up and support this kind of a move. It is timely, and I believe the groundwork has been laid. I doubt whether anyone will disagree with what I am saying in this regard.

The second problem I am concerned about -- and I hate to be harping on the same old story of the promises of our hon. Premier. Somehow he very nimbly avoids me or skips out of responsibility or leaves a couple of options open, but I think on this one, we have this one back-to-back, as it were. I don't think he can escape the consequences of non-performance in this regard.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Ah, come on now.

MR. LUDWIG:

I am going to read -- already I am being challenged, Mr. Chairman, but I have this one in writing. There is a nice headline in red. It says: 'Same Rights as Labour -- Lougheed'. I wish the hon. Premier would listen -- he could be indifferent to these promises -- I know they don't mean much to him, but they may mean something to a lot of people. It says here, response to your letter of July 27, 1971, I welcome the

"In opportunity to outline to you and the members of the Civil Service Association of Alberta, the steps a Progressive Conservative government would adopt in matters pertaining to the Civil Service.

(1) Immediate implementation of Bill No. 128, which was presented to the legislature during the last session, by Len Werry, PC MLA. This bill provided for binding arbitration upon both parties to the dispute." This is one of the minor parts of the promise.

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"(2) The establishment of a staff relations board and grievance procedures are matters which we would wish to discuss fully with your representatives; and if necessary, amending legislation could be prepared. This would appear to be an internal matter which could be resolved by negotiation rather than legislation.

(3) The problem concerning changes to the negotiating procedure as to provide for separate negotiations on behalf of occupational categories, rather than a single contract on behalf of one heterogeneous group, is one that we would favour changing in principle.

I fully concur that the present system is most discriminatory and is one that could be fully resolved by consultation in order to overcome one major problem, namely, that of too many bargaining units or locals all negotiating at the same time."

These are words of wisdom coming from the hon. Premier. And here's the clincher:

"In conclusion, I would like to state that a Progressive Conservative government would move very quickly to give the Civil Service a much broader and definitive act which would give the members the same basic bargaining rights enjoyed by organized labour in the province."

Mr. Chairman, I think that's a binding commitment, that's like a signed promissory note which has fallen overdue, but the hon. Premier, if he's sensitive, should probably do what he told me to do -- that is if I don't like it I could get out. And I hope he doesn't go into the same kind of a trauma that he did once when I interrupted him. These are his own words and he should listen to them.

In conclusion, I'll repeat this for emphasis. He says:

"In conclusion I would like to state that a Progressive Conservative government would move very quickly."

I want to place emphasis on the words "very quickly". This is eight months later, and the silence intrigues me. There's nothing said and nothing done. Now there's no excuse. It's a long session also. And you could say: "we're not ready with this," but after listening to all the labour experts on that side today, there's no shortage of expert and professional advice on labour matters. It seems everyone is an expert. I'm also sure that the Civil Service would co-operate with him wholeheartedly to help him draft a bill if they can't make up their minds on it.

I think that this is a commitment, it's irrevocable, and the hon. Premier once more has broken a promise, and he seems to be indifferent about it. I think this is a sad reflection on the kind of performance of a man who is talking about a Bill of Rights when he lets the very people down who he talked into supporting him, because I believe they supported him. And now he's going to make them come and fight for it. The question is, where is that bill? When is it going to be produced? If not now, have you forgotten about it, or would you like to back out? You can take your pick, Mr. Premier; I think maybe you're smiling, but I'm under the impression that you're somewhat embarrassed about this kind of thing. ...

MR. GETTY:

Oh baloney!

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, I'm surprised at the Conservatives who could treat promises of the hon. Premier with contempt and indifference. They laugh at

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this. I don't think the Civil Service is laughing about it. I think they're ashamed of the fact that they got taken. This is a promise and it's binding. I believe that when we make promises they're binding. And so, Mr. Chairman, I don't think that I need to say more. I think I've made my point. I think it's the hon. Premier's turn to stand up and tell us what he's going to do about it. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, I could have, I suppose, if it was my nature, interrupted and saved some time if nothing else, because the fact of the matter is we're bringing in a large measure of the kind of legislation that you talked about. The session is far from over. A great amount of legislation is yet to be brought to the floor of this House, and as all of the Assembly will see, a great number of the discussions that come through will be in the acts that will come before the House.

On the matter of employment of people over 45, there's no question, there's nothing like a campaign for office to bring home the meaning of employment for people over 45 and over 50. The work of the people in the personnel administration office is one of the foremost in the country. It's informed, it's up-to-date, it's in the forefront of personnel policy in practice. And this would include proper and new studies into the matter of employment of people over 45. No person would be withheld from service because of that one factor. I can speak with some feeling about employment at age over 45, but I will simply recall that during the campaign I talked to an airforce pilot who was 49 and whose career was flying. He was a test pilot. At age 50 in the prime of physical, mental and emotional condition he had to retire.

I want to say to you, Mr. Chairman, in all seriousness that those who advocate early retirement without a parallel study of what happens to people who retire early in a continent that has brought us up as children and older people on the work ethic err that the two have to go together. I think the option for early retirement should be there. Our personnel policy will reflect this. I will bring before the House a bill which will enact early retirement with the capacity to buy into pensions, which is forward legislation I know both sides of the House will support. But at the same time as we do this and make this available we must study the likely effects of people retiring early when they don't need to retire early, don't want to retire early, didn't anticipate retiring early, and we are unaware of what happens to them. I know from talking to this man who was 49 and who was in the prime of his youthful airforce career having to look forward to walking from a year hence.

MR. LUDWIG:

In the basic bargaining rights of labour the right to strike is included, isn't it?

DR. HOHOL:

You're speaking of the general principle of bargaining in the private sector?

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, I'm talking about the basic bargaining rights of labour, that the right to strike is included in the basic rights isn't it?

DR. HOHOL:

It's recognized.

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MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Chairman, I think that the record should be clear, and it's going to be clear right now. There is no intention by this government to bring a right to strike by the civil service before this Legislature. We intend to bring a proposal comparable to the bill we presented last year, which was a proposal to give them an opportunity and not be faced with what they have been faced with in the past, and that was a unilateral decision with regard to their salary and wage position by one party, but to turn it over to a arbitration procedure.

MR. LUDWIG:

I'm in no way telling the Premier what kind of legislation to bring in. I just want to make sure that the promise he made to the civil service that he doesn't skip out of it or nimbly back out of it -- that he's to give in full measure what he promised and I want to read again and I think it should be understood --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

No, Mr. Ludwig, I hope you wouldn't read that again. Mr. Notley wishes to speak.

MR. LUDWIG:

I wanted to stress the point. Well I won't read it again, I'll state it again, Mr. Chairman. He said that the basic bargaining rights enjoyed by organized labour -- that's a mouthful and I believe the civil service liked it -- and I think that when his bill comes in that it better contain the basic bargaining rights that are enjoyed by organized labour. Otherwise I'll say that he didn't give them what he promised. That's the position I'm taking whether he gives them the right to strike or not I'm sure that he worded this thing in such a manner that he could put any interpretation on it that he likes. I believe that it's overdue, and I'm glad that I brought it up so that they won't sit on this thing any longer and when they say "very quickly", I think that eight months is long enough for them to bring in a bill and it's overdue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

DR. HORNER:

How about 36 years?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Chairman, so that the record does not show in any way -- there have been many misconceptions here -- I want to repeat again and make it absolutely clear that no matter what interpretation on that letter the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View wants to put he can look at the legislation when it comes in. But it is not the intention of this government to give the right to strike to the public service of the Province of Alberta. It is our intention, as the legislation will show, to place the civil service in a position that is comparable with the position of people in organized labour where they are not in a position where the Cabinet can close that door down the hall and determine what their salary schedules are. We said a year ago in the House when we introduced the bill that we didn't think this was fair and we intend to follow it through. I think it's a very important reform for Alberta.

MR. STRON:

I just want to make a point here lest there be a wrong inference left because I, too, would like to keep the record straight.

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To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of any occasion when the previous government unilaterally forced anything on the Civil Service. I admit that the power to do it was there and I'm sure that this is what the hon. Premier is talking about when he suggests the change. But even in the last negotiations that went on with the Civil Service the report brought down by the mediation committee was a unanimous report and it was accepted, in total, by the then government. And we did not unilaterally force anything on them that had not been first of all arrived at -- that is, we did not force any decision on them that had not first been arrived at by negotiations.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Chairman, I don't think there is any merit or any progress that can be gained in this House by arguing in terms of an historical sense. What we are talking about is in terms of the future and the position we're proposing by way of legislation within the next few days. And that position is to give the right to the public service, if they so desire, to be in a position -- and an independent board of arbitration can determine what would be a fair and reasonable settlement of the wages and salaries schedule for the public service. That position would then be binding upon both the government as well as the association, and that is the proposal we're making.

I think that position is well understood because I think the previous government also considered the pros and cons of taking such a step. But because of the matters that have been raised, I did want to make it absolutely clear that that is the position we're taking for the future and it should not be interpreted that we are going beyond that position in any way in relation to other matters that have been raised.

MR. STRCM:

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I appreciate the point that is being made and I am not in any way debating it. I simply want to make another point if I may and suggest to the House that progressively the arrangements for negotiation with the Civil Service have been undergoing changes which, in fact, established greater opportunity for them to exercise in the spirit of true negotiation.

I want to say, too, and I didn't say it when I rose to my feet in the first place, that we have always appreciated the very loyal service that we have had in this province, the excellent job they have been doing. I certainly concur that there are changes that still need to be made and I would like just for the record to say tonight that I would be loath to even suggest that we should be giving consideration to the right to strike. So I'm with the hon. Premier in the statement he has made.

I think it's of interest to the House to find that the Province of Ontario, for example, have now said that that is one of the rights that they do not want the Civil Service to have and, if I understand it correctly, they have had it and they will be taking it away from them.

MR. NCTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, just a couple of very brief comments on this. I had intended to ask several questions but both the hon. minister and the hon. Premier answered them in their remarks. I was a little curious at first as to whether this legislation respecting the Civil Service would be brought in at this session this spring. I understand it will be. Then, of course, the second question was whether or not the government intended to extend the right to strike to civil servants and the hon. Premier has clarified that position.

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May I just state for the record that I feel we should give our public servants in Alberta the option between arbitration on the one hand or the right to strike on the other. There are, of course, certain public servants where perhaps the right to strike is a right that because of the essential nature of their service they shouldn't possess. But that is not true, Mr. Chairman, of most civil servants in this province. Let's take the Liquor Control Board, for example. It's hardly an essential service although the hon. Provincial Treasurer might think it is, and if we had a strike perhaps he might be out picketing the Civil Service Alliance to try to get them to stop it because of the revenue picture to the province. But it's not really an essential service any more, I submit, Mr. Chairman, than many of the corporations that operate in this province or much of the private sector, and because a large number of people working for the private sector, indeed people generally working for the private sector, are guaranteed under The Labour Act, once they achieve certification and have bargaining units, the right to strike. It is my submission that this should be extended to the public service in the Province of Alberta.

The only area that I think perhaps is a gray area, are those particular responsibilities which do pertain to public safety, and perhaps there we may not be able to extend the right to strike. But that is not necessarily the case with most of the civil servants in the province.

Might I just conclude by saying that the Province of Saskatchewan has had legislation of this nature for some time, and they have found that it does not in any way, shape, or form undercut the efficiency, or the morale, or the loyalty, of the civil servants, but in fact it perhaps tends to strengthen it.

I don't intend to draw the House into a debate on this matter tonight. Perhaps when we discuss the bill that the hon. minister intends to introduce, at that time we can perhaps consider the implications of the right to strike in more detail. But since people are setting the records straight, and stating where they stand, I want to do that now.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, there's one or two points I'd like to touch on that are important to our civil servants. At the present time they are more important than the things we are talking about, because it is something that is bothering them a great deal more than even the right to strike. I refer to the fact that there have been statements made by the hon. Premier and ministers of the government that we had a very large civil service compared to the population. It was used in the election and there has been talk since. I think this is what has our civil service feeling a little uneasy. As a matter of fact, I am sure all the hon. members read the Civil Service bulletin of a couple of months ago where the headline was: "Will The Civil Service Be Reduced?", and according to the headline, the answer is maybe yes, and maybe no.

I really believe this is the thing at the present time that is causing more unrest than the other items we have touched on tonight -- and I'm not trying to take away the importance of the items that we've talked about tonight -- but the thing that has to be settled once and for all is a clear statement from this government. If they feel that the civil service is too large, and if this is what they have decided upon after their experience of eight or nine months in office and working with the civil servants that much closer, they should be in a better position today to state to this House whether there are too many civil servants, and if there are -- if their conclusion is that there are -- what are they going to do about them, or who are they going to reduce?

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It's a very uneasy time at the present time. The employees of the government are asking what all the furor is about. They are worrying about their future working with the government. Heads of households, as well as others, have a right to know what is behind all the talk. In times of high unemployment, employee morale does not increase by the talk of staff reductions. In particular, when we are spending a lot of time in this House talking about what we want to do about the mental health patient, the youngster at Red Deer -- these are the people who are working with the very people that we are concerned about. So their morale must be kept high. I only cite that one particular department, but it's important in every department that the morale be kept high.

The uneasiness that has come about in the last year has to be cleared up, and I think everyone on both sides of the House will admit that we have a good civil service. But the argument is, do we have too many? I've had no clear-cut statement from the government since the election that there are too many and they are going to take action. And I think the least we can do for the civil servants, is to indicate to them that we feel they are doing a good job and the number aren't going to be reduced. Or if they are going to be reduced, who is going to get the axe, so they have a chance to look around for another job. Because we have spent many hours here arguing that when a private company closes down it should give ample notice to the employee that he or she is going to be laid off. And I think it is just as important, if we are going to take action, and I'm not suggesting that we do, because from this side of the House we never advocated that our civil service was out of proportion. It was the government side that did it. This is what has caused the uneasiness in our civil servants today. And I think we are very fortunate as a government that they stayed on the job without too much disruption.

While I am on my feet, Mr. Chairman, I will touch on another point -- and I am sure the hon. minister will be pleased to answer it -- the Order in Council of October 15, 1971, offered a new agreement to the employees in the provincial gaols and correctional institutions where there was a salary modification over and above the settlement they had had earlier. I was wondering if any other class of employee has been raised beside the correctional institution employee, because it must be causing some anxiety where they say 'well, they got the extra, are we going to get it?' So I think this is another thing that an answer has to be given to.

Mainly, Mr. Chairman, is this fact: I think once and for all we should make a clear-cut statement as to the role of a civil servant and as to whether any drastic action is going to be taken. I would be the last one to recommend it but I think this thing should be put to rest once and for all. I'm sure that from there, the morale of a civil servant -- if it is being affected by this talk over the last 12 months -- can be put at rest once and for all.

MR. LUDWIG:

One more question to the hon. minister. Will that legislation be brought in this session and is it intended to pass it during this session?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Minister, do you want to answer these now? Any other questions before the hon. minister answers these? Very well, Mr. Minister.

DR. ROHOL:

Mr. Chairman, the questions are well-put and important ones and I appreciate the opportunity to set the record straight. This seems to be an evening for this. I think this is an important part of

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Legislative work, to be clear on important issues to the people of this province, with respect to the civil service.

In government, as in our campaign, we said only one thing: that the civil service was high, not in a judgmental way, but in a factual way. The civil service in Alberta is the second highest per capita in Canada. That is a fact! It is not a judgment, it is a straight computational quotient. That is the first point, Mr. Chairman.

The second point is that there is no intention to reduce the civil service. I doubt very much that any statement by any minister or by the Premier ever indicated that kind of proposition. But what we have said, and what we, in fact, are doing is controlling the growth of the civil service. The analogy is in the foundation program. While the school boards are saying they are getting less money than they ever got before, what they really mean is that the rate of increase has been reduced rather than that they are getting less money this year than they got for education last year. The analogy is a very apt one here with respect to the civil service. The rate of increase is being decreased. In other words, the growth of the civil service staff will be controlled. So, in the 1972 budget, we have the lowest growth or increase in the civil service in six years. To put it in perspective, those are the facts, Mr. Chairman.

Statements about reducing the civil service and letting people go, these are statements which are at least non-responsible, if not irresponsible. Because I share the views -- and I know from experience that the civil service is one of the best in the country -- I want to be clear on this other point, sir, and that is the one with respect to morale. I reject outright and would seek evidence from those that have it that the morale of the civil service is bad. My experience, personally, is from my own department, and from being the minister responsible for personnel administration, these problems become very directly mine. Also, I am the minister responsible for The Civil Service Act, which places me very close to the employees of this government. I say categorically that, with exceptions of course in such large staff, the morale of the civil service is high. They work exceedingly well, and they work well beyond the call of working well. We're getting extremely good service. They can't keep up to the work there is, so that if morale means being busy and working to the full capacity of their personal competence to work in that way, then they have this opportunity.

So let me say for the government that we have a high regard for the civil service of Alberta. Let there be no non-responsible talk about this government reducing the civil service. Let me say, too, that the legislation, with respect to The Public Service Act, and The Crown Agencies Act, will be brought to the Floor of this House in this session with the intention to give it the necessary three readings and conclusion to enact them at that point.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to add to that. I see three or four members on the other side waving their heads that this is not the lowest increase over the last five or six years. I would like to make it very clear that in the estimates, the new positions when I presented the budget, total 913. Up until the time I presented the budget, some positions we had abolished in departments which are going on and negotiating between the Treasury Department and various departments. In other departments we had not abolished certain positions. The total positions abolished from the time that we have, in fact, presented the budget, have been 449. So the net increase is 464 positions, when it comes out in the wash, much of which was done after I presented the budget. This, Mr. Chairman, is the lowest in the last five years.

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MR. FENDERSON:

I think this is the old case of whether liars figure or whether figures lie. I'm not saying who's right or wrong, but as the hon. Treasurer knows, there is a vast difference between positions and number of people on the public payroll. There are several hundred more positions that exist and have been approved by Treasury than have actually been filled at any time. That situation still exists. The figures that I got in a Return I asked for, from the Minister of Labour earlier in the session, point out here that -- these are his own figures, and I just totalled them up, permanent and temporary -- on April 30th, for example, approved positions -- this is under the previous administration, April 30, 1971 -- was 21,318. The figure for 30 days previous to that, March 31st, was 21,676. But if you actually look at the number of people that were on the payroll on April 30th, the number jumps substantially. So there is a big difference between talking about positions and the number of people on staff.

I know institutions such as the mental hospitals carry a lot of positions -- because of the ground rules of the Public Service -- that they can't carry as temporary positions, so they carry them year round as permanent positions and they are only used in the summertime. I think before the Treasurer gets a little bit too much of this holier than thou element into it, let's be clear on the fact that we're talking about approved positions, as a different thing entirely than the number of staff.

The figures I have, on the basis of the return I got, was on March 31st of last year -- I ran a tape and totalled these, to the best of my accuracy -- there were 16,935 people on staff. On September 30th, there were 17,844. On March 31st there were 18,074. In every case there are about 3,000 more positions than that, on the books, that are approved and aren't filled. So one has to qualify pretty carefully what he's talking about in this business of the Civil Service with people coming and going all the time and classifications coming and going.

I could point out, between March 31st and April 30th, last year, that we reduced the number of positions in the Civil Service by 351, but in actual fact, the staff went up by 700 people. Let us be careful about what we are saying in this regard because the number of positions and the number of people -- there is a significant difference in them; just because this administration, or the past, has reduced official treasury positions, is somewhat meaningless as the basis for discussing the subject.

Relevant to this, I think, quite frankly, the statistic that is quoted -- and I am pleased to hear from the hon. minister the 'now' government is assuming a bit more responsible position in its approach to this matter than it was previously. I can't associate the hon. minister with it, but some of his colleagues, when they quote this figure about Alberta having the second highest per capita number of civil servants in Canada, in my view this reflects not only on the government, but it reflects on the Legislature on the type of politicians that the people of this province send in here to run their affairs.

I don't know if the hon. minister can answer this, but I would be interested at some later time -- maybe in the fall session -- of hearing the results, if you would look into what the implications are for example, of taking the mental hospitals in Alberta, where we have these two large mental institutions which employ somewhere in the range of 5,000 people, something like one-quarter of the civil service is employed at Ponoka and Oliver. In another province, where a lot of the facilities and services are decentralized under a local authority, they don't carry those on their civil service status. So, when you quote these comparative statistics, let us be sure we are

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comparing apples and apples, and not apples and elephants. I am not sure myself -- and I was never concerned enough to check into it -- but I think it might be worthwhile for the hon. minister -- as a matter of record at some future date -- to examine this question so we could satisfy ourselves where we do stack up in comparison to other provinces, talking about the same basic ground rules.

I can only suspect, from looking at the fact that close to one-quarter of the civil service is employed in the mental hospitals, that a lot of the figures that are bandied about by politicians regardless of what stripe they are, are somewhat fostering an injustice to the civil service that we do have in total in the province.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Chairman, first of all I would like to say that I have not said -- as the hon. minister has said -- that it is an easy problem. I have said, as the hon. minister said, that "We hope to control the future growth of the Civil Service". I would say that in fact, when we did assume office, there was no positional control. If you want to talk to the Provincial Auditor about that -- because he set it up since we have come into office.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, if the hon. minister would care to sit down, I am sure myself and some of my hon. colleagues can stand up here and elaborate at some length on the difficulty of trying to get new positions established as minister, because of the ground rules and checks that did exist within the Public Service Commission on it. From the standpoint of the hon. Provincial Treasurer, I have no concerns about hearing him talk that way because that is the way it should be talked. But when he stands up and suggests that there was no control on this business in the past, before this 'now' government came into existence, that is absolute hogwash. The record doesn't substantiate that. It may not be his version of what he thought was acceptable control, but I am well aware of some of the arguments I went through with the bureaucrats inside the government, in order just to try to get a position established.

For him to stand up and say "There was no control", my temperature starts to rise a little, because I thought some of the controls were absolutely ridiculous. But by logic it got written into the rulebook somehow. I did my best to get the rulebook thrown out a time or two, without success. But to say that there was no control on it, I suggest, is not in keeping with the fact, because you couldn't get a position approved, classified, initiated, without getting the approval of the auditor, if it was not provided for in the Estimates. If it wasn't there you had to go through other procedures to get it. It wasn't a question of no control at all.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Chairman, clearly, when I speak of control, I speak of control related to the budgetary provisions for staff. You might have thought it was there --

MR. STROM:

I appreciate the point the hon. minister is making and the need of control. We are not arguing that or debating it, because I think this is recognized by both sides of the House. But for the information of the hon. minister, the Treasury Board had to approve every new position, and even positions that were established had to be cleared before they could be filled. We have exercised that for at least the last two years.

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MP. CLARK:

I think the only additional comment I could make, if the hon. Provincial Treasurer would care to go back and check the former Treasury Board minutes, he would find that positions which were included in, in the Estimates -- and I became familiar with them at a place like NAIT or SAIT, where places that were included in the estimates and -- and they can say it -- had to be approved by Treasury Board before you could do the hiring. Even though they're in the estimates, Mr. Treasurer.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Very well. Any other comments?

MR. DIXON:

Further to my earlier comments, I was pleased with the reply I received from the hon. minister, because you've assured me that there is not going to be any reduction, your program is to watch future employees as far as employees coming into government service.

My next question would be -- you have an extension of your program, we hear every day of some new bill coming in which is going to take more personnel to carry it out. Now, is your government then going to be using the private sector more than the public service to carry out these programs? Is this the idea? Because the slack has to be taken up somewhere. If you're not going to use civil servants, you're going to have to use someone else to carry out these enlarged programs. I was wondering if you could enlarge on how you're going to do it. What are the fields that are really going to be affected? Are we going to be hitting more at the man at the lower level of the salary scale or are we cutting down more on the higher level?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, an exceedingly good question that presents some difficulty to give an adequate answer. The Personnel Administration office in conjunction with Executive Council is dealing with this very matter. We're looking at our priorities and our objectives of government for the province on a long-term base. This will, in large measure, decide the kind of personnel and staffing capability we will have to move into.

I can use my own department as an illustration to, in part, answer the gentleman's question. In developing a capability in Manpower, for example, it could well be that a great deal of the function will be a co-ordinating one -- co-ordinating the work of various departments of government, and that of industry in the private sector. This can be additional work, additional function for existing staff. Certainly the Deputy is going to head up Labour and Manpower. It may be that we will add one division head and it may be that we will not add more than three or four people to bring in a competence that may not exist in the government because Manpower has not been a provincial function. It could be that we will find these people in other areas of government, and will transfer them.

Again, using school systems as analogies, one of the difficult things that faces social organizations like governments and school boards and city councils and so on, is to drop some anachronistic and used-up and worn out programs which have been good ones, effective ones, and necessary ones at some point in time, but are no longer the case, but usually remain because they are simply there. I take the view, and the government takes the view, when you add a new program of some consequence, then you have to cast about and see if there is not an anachronistic program that no longer serves the people of Alberta but sort of swirls about its own activities, whether it's in a private enterprise or in government, or in a school system,

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whatever the case may be. So by lateral and horizontal transfer, by addition of some new staff, you can begin new programs. You can initiate programs in a private sector also by co-ordination. We're looking at this in a total approach of a Manpower capability for the government to work with the Executive Council and the Personnel commissicner.

Now, while I'm on my feet, I'm just answering the question, I think it was yours, sir. You asked if any other agreements were settled in addition to the one at the penitentiary. Let me comment on that one.

While it's rather fruitless to review what happened in the past, if in the setting of records -- this one too ought to be set straight in the spirit and the practice of collective bargaining -- a unanimous or any other kind of award of the mediation board may or may not be accepted by government, so that, in my view, the mediation award brought down by the board, and accepted by the government but rejected by the penitentiary people was in fact unilaterally imposed as the authority permitted the government to do. Because the government could have done something different. It could have imposed less, or it could have imposed more. It imposed exactly what the mediation board recommended, but that is what a mediation board does; it recommends, it does not decide as does an arbitration board.

Having said there was one other -- and in no way related, let me point this out -- that the settlement that we made and I'm not speaking about eight months as one member did. On the first day of September we got an agreement for the penitentiary guards to return to their work on the proposition that we set up a six-man committee -- three from the Civil Service Association, and three from Government -- to bring in a recommendation to government. We accepted that recommendation and the recommendation was such that it isolated that particular agreement so as not to spread to other divisions of government. So we did not re-open that particular agreement. The award was contingent on the penitentiary people taking additional training and the increment which they earned was for training. That was the agreement and I think it's important to make this point.

The second group, completely unrelated and unaffected by the agreement with the penitentiary guards, was that of the power plant engineers. It seems to us that the records show that a special committee established by the earlier administration was set up to look into the matter of the dispute with the power plant engineers. No increase in the maximum rate was made as it was found to be in line with the market at that time. However, it was also discovered that our pay ranges were much too long and this unduly delayed the ability of the employees to reach the market rate. So there are two things here that while the market rate was the same, the range was so broad that the employees had too long a wait to reach comparability with the market, and so we increased the wages in that division also. That was the second one.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, that's a good explanation on that too. But I think there were other things that weren't really in the original argument as it came about. For example, under the Order in Council you covered the correctional institutional salary modification which made quite a difference and you added other fringe benefits, such as \$6 a day if a guard was out at the camp and things like that. So it did really go beyond the original agreement -- I'm not using the correct term -- which they turned down. We extended, but also added some other features such as guaranteeing that every six months they would go into a higher grade. Am I correct?

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DR. HOHOL:

Yes, you are. The committee brought this to my attention and I felt that while they were minor they were important. We did want the penitentiary people out working and that the work pay should have some modicum of resemblance to something beyond the token so this was agreeable. To me -- you're perfectly right. It's consistent with the kind of attitude that you will find in The Workmen's Compensation Act when we bring it to the floor, which will cover the penitentiary inmates with compensation, whether they are working inside the building or out somewhere in industry away from the penitentiary site.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, possibly we may just as well do this at this particular time. In one of the other estimates it was suggested we should discuss the STEP program at this time. I wonder if the hon. minister would like to outline the STEP program and also the winter program which is really the next appropriation.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Do you want to take both of these under the next one, Mr. Taylor?

MR. TAYLOR:

That's fine with me.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, concern has been expressed to me, and this goes back to the statement of the hon. minister a while ago about somebody retiring at age 49, in the time of unemployment we see some of the young people and we see these people who retire on full pension presumably, and the next day they go into full employment again in another job which these young people feel they could be filling. Have you any comments on that?

DR. HOHOL:

I can only say it's another excellent question to which I can't give an excellent answer because the problem, the principle here is that of free enterprise -- the worker going to the place where there is employment. This just points out the enigma of the thrust to push the pensionable age downward.

I repeat, I'm not one of those proponents that feel that early retirement is good for the soul and for everything else, until we learn to find out what happens to people. And the fact of the matter is, this airforce chap that I can see right now in his home the intensity and the commitment to give his country the services he had given it and his wish to continue. Inevitably he will present himself to a series of employers, or maybe only one, and this employer will recognize the competence, the experience, the knowledge, the commitment, and hire him.

So this is the enigma, that while we're moving the pensionable age downward and nearly inviting people to retire, nearly suggesting it isn't right if they don't, because there are younger people who have to get jobs, it brings these kinds of paradoxes to bear and in the process of working these out some people will get hurt.

But it's difficult to intervene or interject in the normal process of employer-employee relationship because the employer has the right to employ that person who he feels will earn his wage and show the employer a profit. You make an excellent point, sir, and I think governments and the private sector have to be aware of the

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consequences of retiring too early and also the problem of younger people having to have jobs. And our commitment is jobs.

I think there is a real problem when we talk about opportunities for youth, opportunities for the retired. I think we have to talk about people and these are our commitments to both the younger and the older, though I don't see a person of 40 or 45 as old and I think we err in pushing too quickly, and we've done it already. I don't mean in Alberta but across North America the early age of retirement is an enigma that will work itself out in time, but people get hurt along the way.

Appropriation 1720, agreed to \$ 828,500

Appropriation 1725 Special Employment Projects

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Chairman, I asked some questions of the hon. Minister of Tourism in his vote and I was referred to wait for this vote. I believe this is the STEP program. One or two questions; is this a shared program with the federal government and, if so, what is the sharing arrangement?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, it is not a shared program. It is altogether a Province of Alberta program.

MR. FRENCH:

Another question, Mr. Chairman, have all the funds been allotted now to the towns, villages and cities?

DR. HOHOL:

If we get into detail, I will ask my colleague, the hon. Minister of Tourism who is the chairman of the committee to assist there, but I can tell you this, that the funds were oversubscribed by a large, large margin. We have received many creative, bold, well thought-out, well put together proposals, and we couldn't begin to meet the requirements of submissions from across the province. In a way this is disheartening because many excellent projects went by the board. On the other hand it's encouraging that the province can come up on short notice -- the province the towns, the municipalities are aware of their priorities, the things they want done, and have aspired to do over many years and couldn't. So in this sense it is encouraging and our plans are to build programs like STEP and PEP, into a regular employment program on a long-term base.

MR. FRENCH:

I just have one or two more questions, Mr. Chairman. Were any funds allotted to the school divisions this year?

MR. DCWLING:

Mr. Chairman, if I might answer that question. There were no funds allotted to any municipal districts, or anything other than towns or cities. We had one county that was awarded \$10,000. That was the county of Camrose and the only reason they were allotted funds was because the City of Camrose failed to get their proposal in on time; we did wait a month, but they didn't get it in in time. There were no school districts or school divisions of any kind who received funds. And all of the funds have been allotted as far as we could let them go at this time.

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MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Chairman, in view of the fact this is apparently a long-term program, I would strongly recommend to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour or the hon. Minister of Tourism, whoever is looking after this STEP program, that consideration in future years be given to the school divisions, because I'll give you the problem. If funds are allotted to the counties, they may in turn go out to the school system of the particular county. Whereas in the school divisions or school district as such, then these people have been denied some assistance which is going to other school authorities in other jurisdictions.

I think when you drive through the rural areas that it's quite a credit to the community to have the rural school painted. I know this is maybe a small request, but I'm sure that if we could provide some funds to some of these small school districts -- I think last year there was a program to give some assistance. Some of this went into the painting of these buildings and I am sure it improved the appearance in the rural areas. Apparently today it is very difficult to get some of this work done under the School Foundation program. So I would suggest in future years that maybe you could keep this in mind and see what could be done in this area.

DR. HOHOL:

I think what the hon. member is talking about are the funds set up by the prior government and the hon. Minister of Education for the renovation of older schools. You're not referring to that?

MR. CLARK:

The ecology corps.

DR. HOHOL:

The ecology corps? Oh, I see, all right. Then let me comment in this way. The committee, which includes Mr. Dowling, Mr. Schmid and myself -- I think we are going to recommend to the Executive Council that rather than going to special projects as such, that work like this will be co-ordinated by a committee, but the work will be done through the departments. The departments could then allocate funds to municipalities, and I'm just supposing that if a school district came up with a proposal that made sense to the municipality rather than to us, that it would get favourable consideration. In that context I would agree with you.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Chairman, if I could make an additional comment. I meant to say in support of the hon. minister that we were oversubscribed in proposals, seven to eight times the amount of money we were able to allocate. And one of the main objectives of the program was employment, although we wanted to stimulate improvement of the environment and things of this nature. The major purpose of it was to create employment and that we felt we did.

MR. NOTLEY:

Just a couple of points on this matter. I'm first of all glad to see that the hon. minister suggested that this is going to be an on-going program because I think any program like this, to be effective, probably requires more preplanning than was able to go into this program.

For example, in my own constituency over the weekend I had two of the village mayors come to me and they weren't very happy that they had received application forms, had gone to a great deal of work to make a submission, and then had found out that villages are not to be granted any money under the program. Naturally, they feel quite

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annoyed at this, and I think it's probably incumbent upon us in the Legislature not to put our local government people to any unnecessary busy work. I realize that it is perhaps the sort of thing that happens because we try to implement a program quickly, but it's also one of the reasons why there should be so much pre-planning so we don't hold out expectations.

Just on that matter, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if perhaps -- just to follow through on that particular question of money going to the villages -- perhaps the hon. minister Mr. Dowling or the hon. minister Dr. Hohol could advise me as to whether the reason that villages were not included was the oversubscription, that the response was much, much better than anticipated, or whether it was some other reason. Because, again, it seems to me that there is this problem of a very great amount of work that these people have gone to, and at this stage it seems as if it is to no avail.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Chairman, if I may just comment on that. The problem was an oversubscription. In the previous ecology corps we gained a great deal of advantage from reading the reports of what they did last year and we based our planning on more or less what had gone on. The number of proposals that were made last year as compared to this year was, I would suggest, four times larger this year. On that basis we had to make a decision which wasn't a very easy one for us to make. We had to make a decision that the departmental funds would normally be funnelled to rural Alberta, which they are. The Department of the Environment, the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation, the Department of Lands and Forests, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Education etc.

So, on the basis of this rural accent by the departments, we felt on this basis that we could accent the towns and cities with the municipal grant situation. That way we got a fairly even coverage although not all we wanted, but we did get a very even coverage in terms of census division allotments for STEP programs, Opportunities for Youth, and departmental projects. Overall, there was an excellent balance achieved.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, just two or three questions. Number one, I was wondering approximately how many students were unable to be placed in the STEP program?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Chairman, we are unable to determine this at this time. We have all our positions filled. We are still accepting applications on the understanding that some of the young people may not stay the full term. There may be a natural attrition. We will be taking other young people on during the course of the summer. I would suggest we wouldn't be able to make a report until the fall, but we will have a running report, a matter of every month during the summer from this point on. At the end of the season we will definitely have a report that will be available to the Legislature.

MR. TAYLOR:

That is quite understandable. Are Grades XI and XII students being considered during the summer or is it confined to university students?

MR. DOWLING:

The number one requirement is the age group 18 to 24. We have stipulated that one of our concerns is that these people are

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students, but we are accepting applications from anyone in this age group that truly wants and needs a job.

MR. TAYLOR:

One other question to the hon. Minister of Labour. The STEP program doesn't come out of Appropriation 1725. Is that part of the \$5 million? This is a separate item from the STEP program. Am I correct?

DR. HOHOL:

You're correct.

MR. TAYLOR:

Of the \$5 million for special employment projects, could you give us some indication of the allotment? Is there going to be so much used for the summer for strengthening the program so there would be less unemployment in the wintertime which is excellent? I concur with what the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview said about planning. Is there going to be a certain portion of it retained for winter projects?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, this \$5 million is just not very much money. I think it would be a lot of money if you or I had it, sir, but for reducing unemployment it is not very much. The strength of it lies in the fact that students are on jobs for some more supplementary income. Many are students and are staying in the city between terms. Many are in the towns and villages at home, between university or high school terms. Our hope was that this might bring many students back to their homes for the summer. When it comes to winter unemployment, we are really concerned because the students are back at school, but the breadwinner, the head of the household -- and this is a very, very different matter -- this is a person who needs employment because he has one, or two, or five, or nine dependents.

I believe that we assigned about half of this amount of money for the summer. I was trying to hold the line at \$2 million, but I think it went up to about \$2.5 million for the summer. The rest is left for the winter.

I have to say to you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Assembly in view of our experience last year in which we set aside \$10 million, and spent just under \$10 million to reduce unemployment, that places the \$2.5 million in perspective. We hope that there is little unemployment next year, but should there be a high level of unemployment, then certainly the \$2.5 million isn't going to reduce it that much and other measures will have to be taken and we will have to come with proposals to the Legislature for them.

MR. TAYLOR:

One other question to the hon. minister. I take it from what you said that the summer employment is largely for students and young people. Do I understand that the winter employment would be for anyone? If so, I support that. I think in the winter time, employment is probably more needed by people between the 50 and 60 age group, than it is by the students who are back in school.

DR. HOHOL:

Yes, it is.

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MR. TAYLOR:

I'm glad to hear that.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, just two quick questions, one to Mr. Dowling. Did you say that no counties or municipalities received assistance for projects approved under the STEP program?

And to Dr. Hohol, what kind of assessment are you doing of the PEP program last year -- an actual assessment of following people through from the training they took, to jobs, and how do you plan to kind of involve that in your planning for next fall?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Chairman, I'll answer the first question. No, the only county that did receive any financial assistance in the way of projects was the County of Camrose, because the city wasn't in time, and we just felt that that area needed something. That's the only municipal district that received any assistance.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, we are in the process of concluding a study of the PEP program. I believe the word research -- I'd have some hesitation in using this -- it's an investigation into what happened in a post facto sort of way, rather than the preparation of research. I feel it's going to be a very good piece of work. I think we're going to learn a good deal about the people who went to training programs, and also those who went into work. I hope to have this report completed when we discuss, for the third time in committee, The Manpower and Labour Act. Certainly that report will be very instrumental in our plans for the next year.

MR. CLARK:

Will the report be public?

DR. HOHOL:

Yes, we'll certainly table it in the House. I'll give it to you immediately.

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Chairman, with respect to Table C2, Income Account, there's \$8,120,000 there for training and manpower. Could we get a breakdown of that \$8 million?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

What was the question again, Mr. French?

MR. FRENCH:

On Table C2 -- I can't give you the page, Mr. Chairman, because the pages aren't numbered.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

That's in the Budget Address.

DR. HOHOL:

Yes, that's the provincial contribution to the Winter Works Program. The name isn't accurate, as it isn't winter works, but a project designed to increase employment. If you recall, we initiated our programs, and three weeks later, the federal government announced

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a massive -- at least in their view -- I'd better change that, it wasn't that massive. My comments at that time were "not enough and not soon enough", as that came, I believe in October, when the October unemployment figures were reported, then Ottawa released a plan that it had been holding during the summer. That particular amount of money was for the federal initiatives, things like the LIP, Local Initiatives Program, and others that were supported by federal grants. We administrated them through the Canada Manpower office in Winnipeg.

MR. FRENCH:

You don't have a breakdown of the \$8 million then?

MR. FUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, was there any of this money here, of the \$5 million that goes to Culture, Youth and Recreation for their guidance, and if so, what percentage?

DR. HOMOL:

Yes, I am nearly loath to ask my colleague to give the information because his enthusiasm and his infinite knowledge of every program will lead him to give you accounts for all of them, but let me be serious, and simply say, yes, the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation has a good fistful of this resource. My hon. colleague, Mr. Schmid, has them all over the province, in the villages, in the towns. He has done a tremendous job. We nearly had to beat him down with anything within reach to make sure he got no more than his share.

But very seriously, he has provided many young people with not just make-do work -- which is dishonest -- but very excellent work. With that kind of background, maybe you could give the Assembly some -- information.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ruste had one question, Mr. Minister. What percentage?

MR. RUSTE:

Either one can give me the percentage of that amount.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Chairman, in reference to the gentleman across the road who has interjected too much, I would like to state that his sarcastic insinuations are too obnoxious to appreciate his personal charms.

In reply to how much money the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation received from the STEP program, it amounts to \$447,000. Out of that amount several student groups have been funded in the program they have in finding employment for their own students in the different universities, in the colleges, and also in the smaller villages, and even hamlets, where there was interest. They received a \$200 grant each to start a youth employment service, where the students themselves are taking the initiative to try and find employment for the students of the hamlet or village.

There are of course several other programs. For instance, the Library Association and the Library Trustees' Association of Alberta have requested a study of the library service delivered in Alberta before The Library Act is being considered for change. We are doing that survey also under the STEP program because this happens to be a program which is not ongoing. There are a number of other programs. The most important one -- and as far as I am concerned the most

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heartwarming one -- is still the Alberta Service Corps, because there we have this year a greater number in Red Deer as well as in Ponoka, and of course in Alberta Hospital as well.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen was referring to the item the appendices to my budget address Table C-2, which is Government of Canada Training of Manpower, \$8,202,000. I would have to undertake, if you want a full breakdown of the different agreements that it is under, to bring that back to you at a later date. Some of it is under the Department of Manpower and Labour, some of it is under the Department of Advanced Education, and some under cost-sharing arrangements and manpower training.

MR. FRENCH:

Actually, Mr. Chairman, if you just had a ball-park figure it would be all right. I mean just roughly --

MR. MINIELY:

What was your specific question?

MR. FRENCH:

It concerns the breakdown of the \$8 million, that is all.

MR. MINIELY:

I couldn't give you the amount. I could give you the figure under the Department of Labour as an example. We have, from the Government of Canada, half a million dollars related to the apprenticeship training program. We have the program under the Department of Advanced Education which is manpower training programs carried out in Alberta vocational centres, in some of the agriculture schools which are considered cost-sharing in manpower training. Basically, between the two departments, the cost-sharing arrangements total is \$8,202,000 that you are talking about, various manpower training programs.

Appropriation 1725 total agreed to \$5,000,000

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Total income account. Mr. Notley I believe you had a question back on one of the other appropriations.

MR. NOTLEY:

I had a question relating back to Appropriation 1714, and I wanted to make just one final conclusion Mr. Chairman. The question I'd like to pose to the hon. minister relates to the Human Rights Commission. I notice that we're budgeting \$78,034; we will have seven salaried positions as compared to four last year. Now, my concern, quite frankly, if we're going to give any life to Bill No. 2, we're going to have to have a Human Rights Commission that is adequately funded.

Just by way of comparison, Vote 1705, the Board of Industrial Relations were allocating just under \$1 million for the Board of Industrial Relations to police the Labour Act. I've talked many times to Mr. Jamha and his criticism of the Labour Act is that he feels there isn't enough policing of it. Now here we have a little less than one-tenth of the amount we're allocating to the Board of Industrial Relations which is being allocated to the Human Rights Commission.

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So my question to you is do you consider this adequate for the current year? And secondly, is it your view that next year's appropriations will see a very substantial increase in this appropriation so that we can engage enough human rights officers to give meaning to Bill No. 2?

Then I want to make just one final comment, Mr. Chairman, with respect to collective bargaining, and I don't necessarily expect a reply on it. We hear an awful lot about strikes, and I think people tend to blow strikes out of all proportion. But if you look at the 1971 report of the Board of Industrial Relations, and I think the hon. member should give some thought to what it says. Seventy-six thousand man days were lost because of strikes, according to this report. That may seem like a lot, but on the other hand, 725,000 man days were lost due to on-the-job injuries, or ten times as much time was lost due to on-the-job injuries as was lost through strikes.

We take it one step farther, and we look at the amount of time lost due to unemployment. We find seven million man days lost or one hundred times as much loss through unemployment as was lost due to strikes. So I think perhaps, Mr. Chairman, it's well to put this whole thing into perspective and realize that the number of strikes are very rare, that we have an excellent record in this province of labour peace, and I want to quote on this, by saying that, I've always been convinced that, "the best possible approach to industrial relations is the free collective bargaining process with the right to strike." In my view, when you look at the facts you find pretty clearly that any damage done by strikes is really very small compared to losses for other reasons.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Do you want to comment on that?

DR. HOHCL:

Well, there was a question, Mr. Chairman, on the matter of human rights and the size of the budget. I will simply put it this way, that the third reading of the act will be in the second half of the session, that is to say in the fall. So we're looking at expenditures for four months. And at the end of four months we will assess the needs and the requirements, and at that time make the commitment to budget for 1973. This is something I couldn't undertake at the present time. Let me say this also, that in the Department of Labour we have standards people who are in the field and who will back up and do human rights work along with the commission, so that we do have standards people and basically the matter of human rights has to do with standards. We also have a human rights branch that is staffed and geared to do this kind of work, so that we feel we are in a position to do the kind of work that the act intends us to do and if we can meet this commitment, reassess it in the four months.

I will welcome, I quote, "in the hard scrutiny of the concept of free collective bargaining" in which I believe -- but what it really means, the right to strike, the right to mediation, the right to a final position offer, there are all sorts of rights and obligations, responsibilities and commitments and all of them need to be placed in perspective and alternatives have to be sought to some of the steps to make sure the third parties are not hurt at all.

Let me say only this: one of the best arguments is by analogy, if the analogy stands up. But I don't think that you can make the case for strikes because it has fewer man-days off than because of

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accidents. The analogy is the same by the people who say let's legalize marijuana because look at all the damage alcohol does. Those two arguments simply don't go together. I'm not saying I'm against strikes. I'm saying that it's part of the collective bargaining process and used in a responsible way has a place in that process. But I say that you don't make the argument for strikes by saying that people lose more time from jobs through accidents than they do through strikes, no more than you would to legalize marijuana because older people abuse or misuse alcohol.

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Chairman, a point of clarification here. The hon. member referred to this part of the fall as the other half of the session, and I hope he doesn't mean that it's going to last as long as this one has.

Total Income Account \$11,328,625

DR. HCHOL:

Mr. Chairman, just in 10 seconds let me tell you, sir, and the Assembly how much I appreciate the help and the constructive criticism in the discussions on a very vital estimate -- that of Manpower and Labour. I sincerely appreciate it, no question about that. I have just one comment so that there is no misunderstanding about the role, or our respect and concern in our relationships with the civil service. When the hon. Member for Leduc talked about establishments and so, I agree. It depends on what you're talking about -- staff, officials, or establishments. When you talk about mental hospitals it's my view that they are badly understaffed.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Very well. I'm sure the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour meant Wetaskiwin-Leduc.

MR. HENDERSON:

I didn't say they were understaffed. I just said look at other provinces to see if they were included in their estimates.

DR. HCHOL:

I said they are understaffed.

Department of Telephones and Utilities

Appropriation 3201 Minister's Office

MR. RUSTE:

On the telephones -- would the hon. minister outline if there have been changes as far as providing private line service to members of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. WERRY:

What was the question again?

MR. RUSTE:

I was just wondering whether the hon. minister would outline whether or not there have any been changes in the providing of private line service to members of the Legislative Assembly.

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MR. WERRY:

Yes, that was one of the first things I had the privilege of doing. Any member of the Legislative Assembly that was on a four party line or a two party line, at that time if the ground was frost free we did put in a private line for all rural members. I think there's maybe two or three rural members that did not get the private lines service, it will be going in first thing this spring at the normal charge.

MR. RUSTE:

A supplementary question to the hon. minister. Does he consider refunding those that did it before on their own?

Appropriation 3201 Agreed to

\$ 62,305

Appropriation 3203 Public Utilities Board

MR. CLARK:

Before we leave 3201, the hon. minister and I have both been getting a great deal of correspondence from people in the west side of my constituency from Cremona and I suspect some may be coming from Sundre. The problem there primarily is the people in that area are approximately 20 miles from the closest town which would be east of there, as far as Cremona is concerned Carstairs, Crossfield or Didsbury, as far as Sundre is concerned Olds. They had no free toll service at all.

The matter has been raised a number of times previously with AGT -- both by the people in that area and myself. The commitment from AGT at that time was that AGT would be looking at this following the completion of the underground cable programming. From statements that the hon. minister has made previously I understand the government is looking at this whole matter of extended area service and might I say to the hon. minister that the representation that's being made to both of us at this time from Cremona is, in my judgment, very legitimate. The people in that particular area, as I indicated, have no free toll to any area at all and if you go 20 miles east of there you have people who have free tolls to two towns north and south.

I can say that it's a matter I felt was a mistake for the last several years and if the hon. minister were to go back and check with the Telephones Commission he would find that there has been more than passing representation made on this matter. In light of the fact we are both getting sincere representation from people in that area I would ask the hon. minister to comment on this situation as it stands at this particular time.

MR. WERRY:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. One of the things that confronted me when I first assumed office was the large delegations that were arriving in flocks requesting what is known as extended area service. At this point in time we have on record over 80 rural exchanges that are requesting toll-free service or some measure of extended area service. That is a total out of approximately 365 exchanges.

I would suspect that there are probably another 80 that would also wish some measure of extended area service so that, really, the problem is not known to us in totality.

The previous administration had started the ten-year buried cable program commencing in 1964, which would terminate in 1974, and along about 1967 or 1968, I believe it was, they had been providing extended area service to various exchanges that had met certain criteria. But around 1968 they decided that they would not implement

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any further exchange programs until after the buried cable program had terminated.

So when these delegations started to arrive and because of the large number, and also because of the correspondence that seems to emanate from various areas and I would suspect that it has been provoked by someone -- there is usually a large degree of correspondence along with petitions requesting extended area service. Faced with this, the government made a decision that the study that would have normally taken place at the termination, being 1974, would be moved up to commence January, 1972. We expect that the study will be complete very shortly. Also, the study that is completed by AGT will be reviewed by experts from eastern Canada and the United States.

Therefore, there will be a number of alternatives that will be available in this study and then there will be a policy decision made as to which one of those will be implemented. Then, again, there are the priorities that will have to be placed in providing the extended area service throughout the province.

I do not intend, as a minister, to go about bringing relief to one exchange at a time on a political basis. It is going to be on an overall provincial basis because I have seen some of the problems that have emanated from previous decisions where you give in to one group and it merely enlarges the problem in the total exchange area. So we're quietly dealing with the correspondence and the petitions as they come in and documenting them. These will form part of the study.

MR. CLARK:

I would like to ask a supplementary of the hon. minister, Mr. Chairman, and without trying to put the minister on the spot, is it fair to assume that perhaps by the fall session this year you would be in a position to at least have the study completed and give us some indication of what the alternatives might be?

MR. WERRY:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, the study will be complete, hopefully, in early June. A policy decision will probably be made in July or August and I'm prejudging if I say it will be a decision that will be released by the Executive Council or it may, in fact, be held over until the fall session, depending on the costs and some of the problems that will come from the recommendations. But something will very definitely be forthcoming this summer and, hopefully, be well under way by the fall.

MR. CLARK:

My last supplementary question, I promise, Mr. Chairman. On the question of centres that do have the option to call one place north, one place south, without paying a long-distance toll. Is there some consideration being given to increasing the rates or the service charge in those particular areas?

MR. WERRY:

I haven't had any access to the studies, so I would not want to comment on that at this time.

MR. FENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I just want to make one comment on this question of toll-free extended dialing. Before doing so, I was certainly pleased to hear the hon. minister point out the pitfalls of making decisions in this area on the basis of political expediency, and I

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hope he keeps that foremost in mind when it comes to dealing with Edmonton City Telephones. A lot of pitfalls in that one, Mr. Minister.

I don't intend to make any sales pitches, Mr. Chairman, so far as solutions to the problem of extended toll-free dialing within the province because obviously if one wished to put the average monthly rates up enough, presumably we could have toll-free dialing throughout the Province of Alberta with the exception of Edmonton. But the government has announced its policy or program on trying to promote secondary industry throughout the smaller communities in the province. And certainly that policy is not going to be as effective as it should be without some particular consideration to the question of telephone communication for the business community. I quite frankly, in spite of the pressures from my own constituents, can't get too excited about the complaints of somebody living at Devon, 25 miles out of town, having to pay long-distance to phone into Edmonton.

But I am aware of the difficulties that it does place financial pressures in places upon many business people and the fact that, for example, Nisku is toll-free dialing. You go about four miles further from Nisku to Leduc and the cost of telephone service goes up phenomenally. I did some work last fall for a company looking at the operations and organization of their business. And one of the questions they were looking at was whether to move into Edmonton to locate their business. I just pass this on for the record, that one of the significant factors that came out of the study which I did, so far as the company was concerned and the relative merits of locating their business in Edmonton, was the cost of telephone communications, which was costing them \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year. And for a small firm it was a fairly high operating cost and the firm in question still hasn't made the decision whether to move from Leduc into Edmonton, and there is no advantage to them being in Edmonton whatever as far as their business is concerned, because they are a service business which operates throughout the province. But it boils down to the annual operational savings that were related strictly to their telephone bill by virtue of the fact they were located 25 miles outside of Edmonton as opposed to being in Edmonton. This factor was certainly tempting them to pull up stakes in the town of Leduc in this case, and move either four miles to Nisku in order to get on the Edmonton Telephone Exchange or move into the City of Edmonton, notwithstanding the fact that there was a substantial higher real estate cost involved in locating an office facility in Edmonton.

But when you look at the economics of it, this very definitely is a factor which will detract from a profit program of trying to promote small secondary industries in the smaller communities around the province. If it's going to be secondary industry that deals throughout the province, they have to have access to the telephone communication system at rates that are competitive with those which exist within Calgary and Edmonton. Because as I say, an expenditure of that magnitude, to a small firm, \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year just on their telephone bill by virtue of being outside the Edmonton dialing areas, is just enough to mean that in spite of the capital incentives to move or to locate outside of Edmonton, with having to deal with suppliers and so on throughout the province, or primarily in Edmonton, they simply from an operational standpoint are not going to take up the incentives that are offered by the program.

So I'd like to make a plea so far as the long distance dialing is concerned, not on behalf of the householder, the family consumer of these services, but I think there is something to be said for making an exception on this question of toll-free dialing or extended dialing privileges for the business community in the parts of the province that lie outside of the cities of Calgary and Edmonton.

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In my view, the government's policy or its industrial incentives policy towards secondary industries in the small communities is going to have a very major gap in it if this particular element isn't taken into account so far as telephone communication costs are concerned. Because right now it is highly prejudicial to the small businessman who is in a small secondary manufacturing or service industry that tries to deal with customers throughout the province. He is at a distinct disadvantage over the question of the size of his telephone bill in many instances.

MR. MANDEVILLE:

Mr. Chairman, there were commitments made to some of the areas that they would be given extended area service at the time that they got buried cable. The question I would like to ask, are these commitments going to be carried out? The one specific project I was thinking of -- I don't know whether you are aware of it or not, Mr. Minister -- but it was down in the Tilley area. They are about 13 miles out of Brooks and they were slated to get the buried cable this coming year, but they decided not to give them the buried cable this particular year and they would give them extended area service and the buried cable when they buried the Brooks cable. I was wondering if this commitment will be fulfilled?

MR. WERRY:

I'm not aware, Mr. Chairman, specifically of the Tilley area problem. However the 13 miles would certainly fall within the 15 miles that has been established as a criteria by the Public Utilities Board. If you would care to give me copies of the correspondence I will look into it for you.

With respect to the remarks made by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc, certainly we are well aware in rural development programs of the utility rates being a deterrent in some measure to locating in small communities. Power rates in some cases, water and sewage, telephone rates are factors that have to be taken into consideration, but I would like to point out that two services are available for businessmen, private line service and WATS service which provides a semi-private line. These being unregulated rates as far as the Public Utilities Board is concerned, we are able to derive rates, but the rates have to bear directly on the cost of the service. As technology increases the private line service and WATS service charges would be able to be decreased, hopefully to the extent where it will improve the competitive position for small industries in rural Alberta.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the hon. minister could tell us if there have been terms of reference set out for this study, or have there been ground rules established for the study?

MR. WERRY:

No ground rules.

MR. TAYLOR:

No ground rules at all? The reason I ask is that I don't want to start outlining the various problems in my own constituency in regard to the 14 or 15 mile dial-free area. I think it would be a mistake to have said to any study group that there is going to be a certain mile limit. I believe the principle that should be established for dial-free telephoning should be based on the marketing centres to the greatest possible degree. There are some areas that have no dial-free access to their largest marketing centre.

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While the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc made a plea for businesses, I think the same thing can be said for many farmers. Many farmers who have to call for machine parts, for dental appointments etc. are in the same category and their telephone bill amounts to quite a bit. Examples of this in the Drumheller Hanna area is the Craigmyle-Drumheller line, the Rosebud-Drumheller line, the Carbon-Drumheller line. Whether or not these various areas have access to two large marketing centres is one thing, but some haven't even got access to one large marketing centre. I think this is a very important item.

The other item that I'd like to mention is that in the decentralization of industry and getting labouring people into our smaller centres, the telephone bill is a factor, maybe not a very large factor, but it is a factor. While a farmer and businesses can put their long-distance telephone calls as an expense against the business, a labourer can't do that. It's a straight expense that he has to absorb out of his wages. It does put the labourer in a different category. When the labourers in our smaller towns have to pay long-distance for every phone call they make to their main marketing centre, it becomes an item that's pretty worrying financially to many, many people in this province. So rather than trying to plead for consideration for areas in my own constituency, I would like to suggest that in the terms of reference or the ground rules for extended dial-free telephone service, that we endeavour at least to have people connected with their main marketing centre, toll-free. I think if we can do that we've gone a long way towards solving many of the problems that are worrying our people today.

While I'm on my feet, I'd also like to ask the minister if there is any consideration being given to the matter of pay telephones? It appears that AGT throughout the years has had some reluctance in putting in pay telephones for umpteen reasons in many cases. I know that sometimes a pay telephone may not actually pay its own way at the time, or the potential may not appear to pay its own way, but there are locations in the province where a pay phone, I think is an emergency item, a matter that should be there for life or death reasons. I think there has to be some consideration, when the telephones belong to the people of the province, to do a certain amount of pioneer and evangelical work, if you want to put it that way, where there are some centres that actually don't pay, but the telephone is there because it's essential for the benefit of the people of that particular area.

MR. BENOIT:

A question to the minister. May we assume that those who have made representation for extended area service will be taken into consideration, or should they be making an application now that the whole matter is being looked at again? I'm referring to those who have made application in the last three or four years.

MR. DRAIN:

One question to the hon. minister, Mr. Chairman. We have emergency phones in some areas along the highway. The question was posed to me, and it was probably a very serious question -- I would think emergency means emergency and you have to have a dime, you know, otherwise you can't communicate. I could foresee -- now let's not laugh about this -- because I can foresee a situation on the highway where there's an accident and the guy is loaded with quarters -- he's probably a plutocrat like the hon. Minister of Agriculture there. This is something that should be changed.

MR. WERRY:

Mr. Chairman, I wish I had every dime that I put into some of the Blairmore telephones by mistake, because first of all, when you

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pick up the phone down there, the operator comes on the line and then you put in your dime. Well, I, being a rookie, put in my dime and then the operator came on and she wanted some more money and I had run out of dimes by this time. The hon. member does raise a valid point, though. I have certainly given consideration to and looked into Ontario's and British Columbia's experience with respect to being able to contact the operator without putting in the 10 cents.

The point that the Member for High River raises -- to be on the safe side I would send in a petition or have one sent in, or just have a number of people send in some letters.

The hon. Member for Drumheller raised a number of points, and I would caution him on toll-free service. There may have to be some deterrent fee or extra charge because of the connecting of one exchange to the other. The only limitation that has been placed on the study is that it will connect one exchange to another. It will not, generally speaking, unless cases are extreme -- you will not be able to phone four exchanges that are adjacent; it will be merely to one exchange. That is the only one limitation that has been placed.

The other point you raised with regard to labourers and working people who pay long distance charges; I think the same problem is incurred by people who are on fixed income, and senior citizens. If a community gets extended area service under previous rules and regulations, and the cost had to be raised by \$1 or \$1.50 per phone to provide that service, in a lot of cases the people did not want the service and will have it forced on them. There is no one way of being all things to all people. I hope everyone recognizes that.

MR. NOTLEY:

Further to the points raised by the hon. Member for Drumheller. I think, Mr. Minister, when the 15 mile proposition was raised with respect to an extended area service or toll-free service, that perhaps inadvertently the people designing that policy were looking at the province almost as if they viewed the No. 2 Highway between Edmonton and Calgary, where you had the location of towns about ten, 12 or 15 miles apart -- so the 15 mile radius made some sense.

But there are places in Alberta where you have fantastic distance problems. For example, in the Hanna-Oyen area, if you are going to provide toll-free services, 15 miles really isn't far enough. In my constituency, for example, I have a homesteading area that is just developed. You are probably aware of a submission made by a number of people in our community, called Silver Valley, which is 35 miles from Spirit River, which is their main centre. At the present time they have to pay long distance charges every time they phone in to their marketing centre.

I would like to second the comments made by the hon. Member for Drumheller, that as we review toll-free service, we consider as our starting point, the right of people to phone their marketing centre. Certainly, this is true of the more remote areas of the province, all five northern ridings -- I think hon. members could cite cases in their constituencies where a 15 mile radius just isn't adequate. But that is true in the eastern part of the province as well.

I hope we don't fall into the trap of setting a radius which may make sense in the established areas of the province, but just isn't too workable in other portions of Alberta.

Several additional questions I would like to pose to you. Let me pose the first one, and that might settle all the others. Are you in a position to make any comments tonight on rural electrification problems in this province, or are you awaiting this report which the hon. Minister of Agriculture has indicated is being prepared?

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Perhaps either you or he could give us an idea of when that report might be tabled.

I raise this because I have had a number of requests in the last three or four days from people concerned about rural gas co-ops. While they are prepared to lay in wait for a while, they are getting a little impatient. I would be interested in knowing when this report is prepared, when it will be submitted to the Legislature. Flowing from that, I may have several supplementary questions.

MR. WERRY:

If you want to look at my budget you will see that there isn't that much money in there for study, so I will defer the question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture.

DR. HORNEP:

I would hope we would have something within the matter of two to three weeks in regard to both the question of rural gas, and in regard to the question of costs in relation to the REA's.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to move from the rural areas to the urban areas of our cities, because as far as the future of AGT is concerned -- the future of how great a telephone system we're going to have in Alberta is going to have a great deal to do with the settlement that is reached between the City of Edmonton Telephones, and Alberta Government Telephones. I know the hon. minister is probably not in a position tonight to enlighten us on the final details, but I'd like him to bring us up to date as to where the present meetings stand as far as AGT and Edmonton Telephones are concerned.

The thing that I'd like to point out to him is the recent news report that Edmonton Telephones are showing a profit of 15%, which seems quite high compared to AGT which has the City of Calgary under its prerogative and I'm sure that he'll probably be able to enlighten me on why they should show such a profit compared to AGT.

I too can sympathize with the people who are trying to make an agreement or trying to come to an agreement with AGT and Edmonton Telephones, because I believe the hon. premier of the province made a blunder when he mentioned the fact that he was going to allow Edmonton to expand out to its natural boundaries. This was prior to any decision being made. So I think Edmonton is taking the right attitude although I don't agree with it, that it need not be discussed any more because they are already committed, the government has, in effect, already committed themselves to the fact that they are going to allow Edmonton Telephones to expand out to its boundaries. This to me has thrown away the ace card as far as any agreement is concerned with the City of Edmonton.

The decision that is going to be made will have a wide ranging effect on all of Alberta unless the settlement is fair to AGT. Because AGT over the years has served that particular area and it's not as if we're talking with a private company. Even if a private company was in there I'd have my reservations. But, to have two publicly-owned companies who are arguing about servicing the same area, not a private enterprise company versus a public company, but in this case you have the two public companies -- so I would appreciate the hon. minister enlightening the hon. members of the House and myself on the meetings, at what stage they're at.

I notice that one of the aldermen is demanding a written report on the present negotiations between AGT and Edmonton Telephones. I, along with the rest of the hon. members of the House I think, would

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be very disappointed if he was able to get an answer prior to this Legislature getting an answer. Or, if any agreement has been reached up to the present time.

Turning now to the Calgary area, I wonder if the hon. minister could briefly outline to the House the present status of the very large building program that's going on in the 7th Avenue area of Calgary for the expansion of the facilities in Calgary. I was wondering if all the tenants that are being affected by the building being sold to take care of this expansion have found new accommodation.

A further question I'd like to ask the hon. minister: Does the AGT plan to buy up that complete lot from 6th Avenue to 7th Avenue, for example the Loughheed Building that's on the corner of 6th Avenue and 1st Street West?

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, I may as well ask this question too of the hon. minister. It's regarding the public ownership of power. The hon. minister made some remarks about three or four months ago that he was going to recommend to the cabinet that they authorize a study toward the public ownership of power in Alberta. And I wondered what stage this study was at. Has it been implemented at the present time?

The other thing I would like to touch on too while I'm on the power situation: I understand that Edmonton is applying to double its capacity in the Clover Bar power plant, I wondered what stage those negotiations were at and is the government going to look favourably upon that expansion?

Those are the major points I had in mind, in particular the one regarding the negotiations between Edmonton Telephones and AGT because this can have a bearing on the whole telephone situation as it affects the whole Province of Alberta.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. French did you want to ask something now? Fine let the minister answer that.

MR. WERRY:

There's about eight questions in there, I think I would like to deal with those before I get another list going here, Mr. Chairman.

I'll deal with the last question first. An up-to-date report on the telephone mediation committee -- the two legislative bodies are continuing their negotiations. We meet every Thursday evening, and this forthcoming Thursday will be no exception. I would say that we are making good progress. The meetings have been in an environment that I'm certain will lead to a conclusion that will be to the satisfaction of both the City of Edmonton and the rest of the residents of Alberta that are served by Alberta Government Telephones.

With respect to one of the aldermen to have a written report tabled in the council chambers in Edmonton, I have been assured by the mayor that under their present rules and regulations that they do not have to provide a written report. I fully concur with the hon. member that if such a request were to be made by City Council that I would think it would be advisable that the telephone mediation committee of the government would also make public the items that had been settled prior to that date. So I think that I can assure the hon. members that they will receive knowledge of the progress and settlement as soon as any other body within the Province of Alberta.

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I think rather than talk about a telephone system we must look upon AGT as providing a total, integrated, communication system. In a communication system there are profitable items, and there are profit centres that do not generate a rate of return. In this communication system we try to average things so that the telephone subscriber does not have to pay for too many uneconomic services that are provided for the total communications needs of the Province of Alberta.

With respect to the rate of return I think the 15 per cent -- I did not see the article -- I would refer the hon. member to page 18 of the report and recommendations of the telephone mediation committee and specifically item 102, which states that because of the accounting system that Edmonton Telephones have followed up until the end of 1971, whereby they had a policy of writing off their equipment over the terms of the debenture issues. Which meant that if they were able to go to market and borrow \$5 million for 5 years and that was allocated to some specific equipment, that equipment was, in fact, written off over the term of the debenture -- five years -- and that equipment could be in service for 20 years. Item 102 points this out and says that the \$50 million capital account of Edmonton Telephones should be increased by approximately \$10 million. Then if you look at the bottom of the page they say that the rate of return that Edmonton Telephones showed on a book-basis in 1970 of 15.3, the actual would have been less than that. Also then 1971 estimated on a basis of book, while the estimate was 13 per cent, the adjusted figure would be more in line of 10.5. I think you have to take these into consideration when any statements are made public like that.

With respect to the toll centre in Calgary, specifically the Greyhound Centre, there were two alternative sites that were being looked at. One was, I think, the Munshaw property on the east side of the AGT toll complex in Calgary. They were holding out for a rather high sum because they thought they had a captive audience and didn't realize that Greyhound property would be available, and subsequently when the negotiations started to finalize on the purchase of the Greyhound property, Munshaw's property became a lot cheaper. So if there was any expansion I wouldn't expect that there would be within the next ten years in toll centres.

I think in the projected plans there would be an office building going into Calgary in approximately 1978 or 1979. The toll building will be completed in 1974 and equipment will not come on-stream until 1976, so there is a period in there where AGT personnel in Calgary will be able to be consolidated into one building. But as the equipment comes on-stream and new equipment is added, then various divisions will have to look elsewhere for space. To meet the total requirements an office complex is looked for in the future and that office will not be tied to that toll complex on sixth and seventh avenues.

I might mention also that the leases that are in the Greyhound building are the responsibility of the Greyhound people for terminating them and I do not have an up-to-date progress report as to the number of people they have been able to settle with and those that are still holding out. But, as I say, under the terms of the purchase Greyhound is responsible for terminating the leases.

I did indicate publicly in November, I believe it was, that there were a number of studies that should be undertaken regarding power in Alberta in order to develop an overall power policy for the government.

There are some major problems here because we do have what is known as postage stamp rates in Alberta because we are an island to ourselves. We do not have inter-connections or inter-ties with other provinces and also we have now, because of consolidation, two private utilities that service areas on a franchise basis in Alberta. We

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also have municipalities that are in the generating business, together with various cities that are able to bulk-purchase from the two major manufacturers of power on a wholesale basis and then able to, you might say, raise revenue through sale of that power to the consumers.

In here we have a number of things that have to be looked at and this would include major connections with Saskatchewan or, alternatively, British Columbia and I would think that British Columbia would be the alternative because B.C. is tied into the Bonnyville power pool in the Pacific north-west. If we did have a major tie with British Columbia we could have the backing not only of British Columbia but also the Bonnyville power pool.

Also up-dated studies that have to take place are development of hydro-generating on the Slave and Peace Rivers. Now possibly if there are three or four sites there that can be developed economically we might be looking at power export, and also the question of transmission corridors. A lot of the rural members are aware of the problems of power companies putting in transmission lines, and I think we have to look at corridors, and these corridors would not only take in transmission lines but would take in pipelines and hopefully alleviate a lot of the problems that go with putting in a pipeline or a transmission line when it comes to expropriating that property.

Also I think we have to look at the adequacy of the reserve sharing agreement that the utility companies now have. Each company, it seems to me, has a vested interest in developing for their own use, and while developing for their own use it may not be in the best interests of the province, or the citizens of the province. So this reserve sharing arrangement has to be looked at.

So there are a number of studies that have to be undertaken and as I indicated in the speech I gave in Calgary publicly, one of the lines I stated in that speech, was that there would also have to be a study undertaken to consider the question of public power. I didn't go on to enlarge on it, but it was a question that would have to be studied in the total complex, not in isolation.

Then to terminate the questions that the hon. member had raised with respect to the Clover Bar addition by the City of Edmonton -- Edmonton Power specifically. The application was made some time ago to the Energy Resources Conservation Board, and about the same time Calgary Power also applied for an addition to Sundance III and IV. It will be public knowledge tomorrow, the Executive Council has passed two orders in council today approving the Clover Bar addition of 150 megawatts, and also the two 375 megawatt additions that Calgary Power had requested for Sundance III and IV. Without going into the details of it there are some environmental restrictions placed on the Calgary Power additions at Wabamun and Sundance III and IV.

I think that pretty well covers all the questions that were raised.

MR. DIXON:

One final supplementary question then. Will the power plants that you will be announcing tomorrow, which you have announced more or less tonight, the Clover Bar and the Sundance project at Wabamun -- will they come under the new bill that was just introduced in the House under environment regulations? Will they be covered under that?

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MR. WERRY:

Well, I might put it this way. The Energy Resources Conservation Board, without having the exact legislation before it, I think did put what is the intent and spirit of the changes in the amendments to the Hydro and Electric Energy Act into the restrictions that were placed on Calgary Power. The Clover Bar plant is a gas fire plant, while the two at Sundance are coal-fired. The restrictions are that units I and II are not to increase the heat of the lake, and also that units III and IV are not to increase the heat of the lake. The onus is on Calgary Power -- and I think this is important -- to prove that the weed problem in Lake Wabamun is not their responsibility, and this has been a major departure from previous experience. So now Calgary Power must, within the next two years, prove to the Energy Resources Conservation Board's satisfaction that the weed growth there is not related to the heat that is passed into the lake because of Sundance units I and II, and also units III and IV when they do come onstream in 1975 and 1976.

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Chairman, with respect to extended area service as I understand tonight, the hon. minister has indicated there is a study going on. There is something better than 80 exchanges that have been approved today. There is some consideration being given to extend the distance beyond the present 15 miles. You have also asked the members to write in and either confirm the 80 or whatever number you have. My question is this. I certainly want to go back to a year or two ago when some of the personnel of Alberta Government Telephones people came out to the rural areas and it was a matter of integration between some of these smaller exchanges. At that particular time Alberta Government Telephones explained the policy and said they would be getting extended area service. It raises one or two problems and it is quite a sensitive area. I was wondering if it would be possible for the members to have a list, or I suppose we could write in. But if you check it out in the particular areas it means that you are going to generate some sort of problems in local areas, which possibly are better to be not generated, if you know what I mean. Secondly, when will the study be completed in the event that this area will go beyond the 15 miles? I just want to be sure of what the position is.

MR. WERRY:

No, Mr. Chairman, I didn't want to mislead the hon. member. We are looking at all of the exchanges in Alberta. We are not just looking at the 80 that have applied. I was being rather facetious with the hon. Member for High River saying that he should write in and make sure he gets placed on the list. But we are looking at all of the areas in the whole province and as indicated to the hon. Member for Drumheller, the only restriction is that it will be from one exchange to another, not toll-free between adjacent exchanges. You might have four exchanges that you could have toll-free service to or some measure of extended area service. So I think we are addressing ourselves to the question of one exchange as to what is their community of interest. That is the central question that the study will address itself to. It will take in all of the exchanges in Alberta and not just the 80 that have put in petitions or have made it known that they would like some measure of extended area service.

MR. FRENCH:

I just want to thank the hon. minister. I was going to say I think this is an excellent idea. Could I ask when you expect the study to be completed?

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MR. WERRY:

Yes, the study should be completed in early June and the analysis will be completed by some Bell people and also from some people in the United States that are experts in the area of extended area service.

MR. FRENCH:

Is that June 1972 or 1973?

MR. WERRY:

1972.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, this isn't too serious but I thought I would bring to the hon. minister's attention another matter about pay telephones. I don't know whether the accounts -- I believe they are -- are kept separate for pay telephones in AGT. I am just wondering whether AGT or the public come out the winners. Last November, one day at one of the city hotels in Calgary, I lost 40 cents and didn't get a call through. The dimes didn't come back and I was thinking I had better contact the hon. Minister of Telephones. However, about three or four days later I was using the telephones in the same hotel and I put my dime in; there was no answer, I hung up and out came five nickels.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The jackpot!

MR. TAYLOR:

I tried it again and out came three nickels. I tell you, if I was at Las Vegas that night, I would have made a fortune. So I really came out five cents ahead. If I don't lose any more dimes I will return the nickel to AGT later on.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Are you sure it was only a nickel!

MR. WERRY:

To reply to that one right now, Mr. Speaker, obviously the hon. Member for Drumheller wasn't monkeying around with telephones at the same time that I was, because when I was a youngster in Calgary, one of our favourite tricks was to chew up some gum, wad it up behind the coin return, and then the next day we would go back in and hit the jackpot for maybe a dollar and a half. Maybe I'm telling tales out of school -- [laughter and interjections] -- I'll pay it back, honest I will. The telephone booths generally are a profitable operation.

I should have indicated earlier that it has been my policy, when anyone brings to my attention where a booth is required, and there is need, it does not have to justify a rate of return. That telephone goes in.

I'd like to outline in this House tonight a problem that does arise with planning on sub-divisions surrounding major centres. Some of the developers will go in -- especially developers of small holdings -- and will cut up 20 to 40 acres into small acreages, and the last thing that anybody thinks about is a telephone. The person moves on to the property and builds his house, and then applies to AGT for a telephone. There is no buried cable running out there, there are no overhead lines, or if there are overhead lines, they are run to capacity. Generally, the first time we are aware of it is when the first subscriber applies for a telephone.

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If it happens in the winter they just can't get a phone because we can't run cables out there. A lot of developers are not aware of this. The only way that we can overcome this is to take one private line away from an individual in the area and put the telephone booth in that general locality.

So if any of you have any knowledge of developers that are developing on the outskirts of centres, I would suggest that you pass on that they should contact AGT and inform them that they are to expect a number of subscribers in the very near future. Also, if there is a need of any telephone booths throughout the province, I'd be pleased to look into the matter.

MR. BARTON:

I'd like to direct just one question to the hon. minister. When you were mentioning power generators on the Slave and Peace Rivers, is there any, say, immediate future of one being on the Athabasca -- within ten or twenty years, to your knowledge?

MR. WERRY:

Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of any possible hydro sites on the Athabasca River. There are a number of hydro sites that have potential on the Peace and also the Slave Rivers. But as I say, the general conditions of the Athabasca River, as far as I know, are not conducive to building any thermal plants or hydro plants on it.

MR. BARTON:

I have just one more question, then. Is it safe to assure the people of the Smith area that there is a future for them in that particular community? They have been sitting under the shroud of a dam down river from their area, and their community being flooded for several years, and I would like this clarified.

MR. WERRY:

Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware of any studies that have taken place with respect to the Athabasca River. There have been a number of studies that have been initiated with respect to the Peace and Slave Rivers, because they are the potential hydro sites in Alberta, but I'm not aware -- there may be -- but I'm not aware of any studies that have been made for development of a hydro site on the Athabasca.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to follow up some of the questions raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican. First of all, you answered his questions about studies and suggested that you may, in fact, even be looking at public power in the total context of a study of utilities in this province. In addition, you mentioned studies of power sites on the Peace River and the Slave River. My question to you is, can you give us some sort of time table for this study? Who is going to do it? Is it a study which is going to be considered over the next three or four years, or is there a definite time limit? Are we looking at six months, a year, two years, or whatever the case would be?

In addition the hon. Member for Calgary Millican raised the question about the provision of electrical services in our two major cities where there is some conflict from time to time with privately owned utilities. My question here -- as I understand your answer, you said this was going to be studied -- my understanding is that the Burton Report did in fact study this very problem and came out with a number of very specific recommendations to deal with it. My question to you is, are you prepared to follow the recommendations of the

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Burton Report as to the electrical services in municipalities and growing areas of municipalities?

MR. WERRY:

I am not too sure of what the reference was to the last question, but The Hydro and Electric Energy Act that did come out of the Burton Commission, and also the Public Utilities Board, allows a municipality -- when they annex property -- to apply to the Public Utilities Board to have that area serviced by the municipal authority. Also the act isn't that definitive. The municipality can, in fact, also put in an application to serve an area that is not within its municipality. So there is a fair amount of latitude in there.

With respect to the number of studies I would like to see undertaken, this is a matter that is on the agenda for the Natural Resources Environment Committee of Cabinet. If this session ever grinds down and we get to that item in the agenda, hopefully, the cabinet committee will be able to deal with terms of reference for the study that I would like to see undertaken. That committee would be the one who sets the terms of reference. We would probably be contacting three or four major firms in Canada that could undertake such a study. So, I would suspect it would be three or four months before the terms of reference and the company has been selected.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. minister made a statement that I think should really be questioned and really looked at very seriously. The statement was to the effect that an order has been issued to Calgary Power which in effect says -- as a principle, the way I interpret it -- that in this matter of environmental control we are embarking upon a completely new philosophy in this question, by saying that someone, even a company, is guilty until they prove themselves innocent. There may be precedents in Alberta law already in this regard, but even in the question of environmental matters I think that principle is fraught with many perils.

I can say I appreciate it is politically attractive in the case of a big company to say, because it is popular to belabour it that it is OK to apply the principle. But I would like to point out to the members of the House that even in this area, eventually it is going to be coming to grips in dealing with individual citizens. Once one starts down that road I think it should be very critically examined before we start it, because of the long-range implications.

Before the members blithely accept that principle as a matter of policy, I think they should examine the fact that the Energy Board and the Department of the Environment both have tremendous legislative powers to make some very arbitrary decisions that are based, supposedly, on technical data. They are decisions that are not subject to court appeal. The orders of the Department of the Environment and the orders of the Energy Board and its rules so far as the Oil and Gas Conservation Board are concerned -- their orders are subject to court only on the matter of law and jurisdiction. The order itself is not subject to appeal of the courts.

I look with considerable alarm at a legislative policy where we have jurisdiction such as this, where there is no appeal to the courts and we have delegated tremendous arbitrary powers. The Department of the Environment Act, if one really wants to study it closely, and I'm quite familiar with it having done a good deal of the drafting on it, has tremendous policy and should be exercised with extreme caution and discretion. I can only say, Mr. Chairman, that to hear it now enunciated as policy in these matters, that this government is going to take a position that all and sundry in these areas are guilty until they prove themselves innocent, I think, is

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going to prove to be a rather backward step so far as the traditional approach to British law administration.

I believe that some of the French judicial system operates on that basis. You're guilty until you prove yourself innocent. But by the same token, a doctor would be in the position if one goes down the road, that if his patient dies, the onus is on the doctor to prove the patient didn't die due to his negligence, instead of the other way around. When one stands up and applies this principle to a large corporation such as Calgary Power, that we're dealing with, and does it under the jurisdiction of legislation, either The Energy Act, or The Department of the Environment Act, where there are tremendous arbitrary powers allocated by this Legislature to these particular bodies or departments of government, I'll have to say that I think the government would be well advised to seriously re-examine the application of that principle. I would shudder to think of where it could lead.

Now there may be lawyers in the Assembly here and it's unfortunate the Attorney General isn't here. But if there are precedents to this approach in law, I'd very much like to hear them, and I'd very much like to hear the hon. minister's response to what assurance he can give this House, where a procedure such as that is applied and followed and that principle is established, and there is no appeal in a court of law to the arbitrary decision of the agencies involved. I would like to hear the hon. minister outline to the hon. members of this Assembly how he believes that the long-term interest of justice is going to be served so far as all the people in the province are concerned. It isn't just a big company, it can be an individual, a single citizen that could face the same consequences and the same principle, I think, could prove extremely harmful.

MR. WERRY:

You're right, the hon. Member for Clover Bar. I did not say -- I'm sorry if I left the impression that it was a general principle. This was a specific application with respect to Sundance I and II which -- it was felt by the Energy Resources Conservation Board that the heat coming from I and II was responsible for the weed growth in Lake Wabamun. It's not a general principle. I think if you'll look at the amendments to The Hydro Electric Energy Act, introduced into the House yesterday, you'll see it is not a general principle in that light. I didn't intend to leave the impression that it was a general principle. It was a specific application to the weed growth in Lake Wabamun, which you are familiar with.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, in that regard, I'd like to follow up my comments by saying that even there, even though the Energy Resources Board has come up with this recommendation, I still suggest that the recommendation of the board should be critically examined. I think the board -- its practices are basically tied to the manner in which it deals with the oil industry. There's a very significant difference, so far as the long-term public interest is concerned, between applying that type of arbitrary decision-making with an operator in a single oil well in the oil and gas industry and applying that principle to the question of hydro-electric generation.

For example, while I was a minister for the short period of time involved with water resources -- even before I became involved as minister -- I had Calgary Power give me some estimates of the cost of putting in a closed cooling system, and eliminating the discharge of warm water into the lake. I forget what the figure came up with, but it was going to add a cent or two per kilowatt to the cost of power that was generated in that plant. When one compares that plant to the size of Alberta there are some sizeable economic considerations involved in it. I was most reluctant to see the government, in spite

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of the fact that I had some sympathies for the complaints about the lake, step in without a lot of careful consideration and just arbitrarily say to Calgary Power that you have to put a closed cooling system in. Because basically when you put the limitations on heat transfer to the lake from the plant this is essentially what's involved. They have to go to a closed cooling system to do it and technically it's possible. But there's no question to the fact that it would add a long range -- even a short range -- but a long range effect on the cost of power.

I suggest Mr. Chairman, if the minister were to check into it he'd find that the experts -- we had a committee of people supposed to be knowledgeable in their field from the university, within the Department of the Environment and other departments of government examining this problem for quite a lengthy period of time, they were not able to establish, on a scientific basis, with any degree of certainty whatever that the Calgary Power plant was causing the growth of weeds in the lake. You could examine weed problems in other lakes elsewhere in the province and you find also that they had a weed growth.

Now the hon. Minister of Agriculture is shaking his head and he's not dealing with the fact of whether it's a doctor who is playing God on the question. I'd like to think if I were convinced that the Calgary Power were guilty I'd say get at it. But I think when we talk about injecting a new principle into the operation of government agencies which basically say that the agency is guilty until it proves itself innocent that we would be most remiss in our responsibilities on this side of the House by not standing up and challenging it.

It may well be -- I don't know -- that the problem and the fault lies with Calgary Power and I appreciate the political pressures and the attractiveness of taking this type of arbitrary step to deal with it. But I think the minister has to be extremely naive to think that he can single out this one instance and say, "Oh this isn't a general policy, we're just going to apply it to Calgary Power". It gives even more cause for concern than it does about applying it as a broad policy because very clearly it becomes discriminatory. I think if this is to be pursued because once it's established in one case I don't see how one can possibly say, "Well we aren't going to do that again, it's not a general policy," because my experience proves that pressures will force taking a similar step and say; "Close out coal mining in many of these areas because you have two years to prove it isn't detrimental to the environment". It's not just as simple as that because there is really the entire question of economics so far as all the citizens of the Province of Alberta are concerned. Even more important -- and I come back -- is the question of basic principle involved, which I think is fraught with many perils.

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Chairman, to bring this back from power to my constituency where I must have at least a dozen exchanges. Whoever designed that system back there in Camrose sure figured out a way to make the maximum revenue from the toll calls as possible. Now, Mr. Chairman, when farmers living within a few miles of their town and their exchanges still have to pay long distance charges I'm the one that gets it in the neck and I have to take these justified complaints on behalf of AGT. Why not toll free services throughout Alberta for the first one minute and let AGT figure out some other way to pay for their \$25 million building downtown?

MR. RENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I'm just reluctant to leave this without hearing something further from the minister on this. Because if this is going to stand then I suggest very seriously that the legislation

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under which these particular actions are taking place be re-examined. They should be subject then to court appeal, at least to that extent, be assured that we are not getting into some system of kangaroo justice in the Province of Alberta. Just to casually get back to talking about some other power distribution elsewhere in the province, I don't think really does justice to the seriousness of the problem.

MR. WERRY:

Well, Mr. Chairman, the vote, or the principle, that we were discussing earlier, relates to the present weed growth in Lake Wabamun. From a lot of the evidence that has been put forward to date it has been suggested that the growth is accelerated by the heat that is passed into Lake Wabamun because of Sundance I and II. I must say that Calgary Power has more than acted in a responsible manner because they have agreed, without the onus of responsibility being placed on them, to a weed clearing program, along with the residents in those two particular areas.

The restrictions are that no heat will be allowed to pass into Lake Wabamun with respect to Sundance III and IV unless, in the next two years, Calgary Power proves that the heat that is transferred from I and II does not accelerate the rate of weed growth in Lake Wabamun. Otherwise, what we are liable to find when III and IV come on is that we do have a large weed problem out there. Also, what does it do to the whitefish in the lake and there may be even other problems that may come along with the additional third and fourth thermal units. So that is why the onus is being placed on this particular company with respect to the present two operating generating stations at the plant site now.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Farran and then Dr. Buck.

DR. BUCK:

I was ahead of him, Mr. Chairman!

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Chairman, the time is getting late and I wouldn't want us to miss a point in all this verbiage and I know that the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc would be grateful if I remind him and ask the hon. minister if there was anything in Appropriations 3201 and 3203 for task force expenses? May I have an answer, Mr. Chairman?

MR. WERRY:

To the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill. I'm sorry, I didn't rate. I did not get any task forces in these two appropriations.

MR. FARRAN:

I just want to make sure. Was there anything in the appropriation for an aircraft from the Department of Lands and Forests?

MR. WERRY:

Again no priority, Mr. Chairman. No aircraft.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Very well. Dr. Buck.

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DR. BUCK:

Mr. Chairman, I find that the hon. minister is in more hot water than the Calgary Power people are going to be in. It's beyond belief that a government that talks about rights --

AN HON. MEMBER:

We talk about acts!

DR. BUCK:

-- brings a bill in about rights and then they say, "You are guilty, prove yourself innocent." Now that is beyond belief and the point that my colleague is trying to make is basically that. Somebody must have led you down the path, hon. minister, is all I can understand. What you are saying is you start on Calgary Power! I think all you are trying to do is justify a take-over of power in this province and this is the first step.

MR. WERRY:

That's nonsense!

DR. BUCK:

But if you can say to Calgary Power, "You are guilty, prove yourself innocent," then you can go down the line with any company and any individual in the province and do that very thing. I think that the hon. member that's writing up there that comes from Britain, I think he almost fell out of his chair when he heard you say, "You are guilty, prove yourself innocent." Because that's what you're doing. You can go right on down the line using this theory anytime that you get into a bind, say "Look fellas you're guilty, prove yourselves innocent." Now that is justice, for a government that is supposed to be a champion of justice!

AN HON. MEMBER:

We are all champions.

DR. BUCK:

It's unbelievable and I would like the hon. minister to go home tonight and sleep on this and think about what he's doing. Because what he's doing is a disgrace to all the people and the corporations in this province.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Very well, no further comments.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed! Agreed!

Appropriation 3203, agreed to

\$ 152,620

Total Income Account

214,925

Department of Highways and Transport

Appropriation 1501 Minister's Office

MP. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, in spite of your great hurry to get along with the program, there are a few remarks that I would like to make in regard

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to some of the things that I have done in the last several years -- several months, it just seems like years.

In the period from September to now, the general administration of my department, as you have already probably noticed in OK-ing the first vote, is down some, and one of the very first things we did was to give priority to local autonomy and to local decisions. We did this first by allowing the City of Calgary -- and the legislation is now before the House -- to set the speed limits that were compatible to the usage of their streets and the speeds that they feel are safe for the people to operate under.

One of the second things we brought about was a change in policy in regard to senior citizens and the driver examinations and the discriminatory factors which showed up in that area. I think that the policy has been well received and certainly when it was examined carefully it showed that senior citizens were being discriminated against, and that the policy we put in requiring a medical for senior citizens is a good one. And it showed up one other thing, that maybe all of the people who were driving automobiles should regularly have a medical examination.

Another thing we did in the same line, for Albertans was to establish the confidentiality of driver licence abstracts, and I want to assure the House now that we have made a successful arrangement with the War Amps Association in regard to the acquiring of those names of people who have car licences so that they can continue to make the little licence tickets that go along with their key chains. And the agreement states that there will be no further distributing of those extracts to anyone else other than the War Amps.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we will have to feel our policy a little bit, because in this area we have other considerations in regard to law and administration of law. It was proven that there was distribution to well over 75 different agencies on the past, and it ended up, I'm sure, giving a lot of people mail that they did not ask for, and information that was not really pertinent to the operation of a car.

The demerit point system which was started under the previous administration is a good system. We intend to publicize it more and make people more aware of it. It is working and I am sure if the people know more about it, it will work even better. And I think that we should work very hard to stop the slaughter that is going on on the highways. It is governed by many things, the attitudes of people, and the demerit system can go a long way in helping the attitudes of those people.

The impaired driving penalty that is in force is taken pretty lightly by most of the people in the province until they have been apprehended. Then they realize how serious it really is. Again I think it is the attitude that people generally have towards drinking. They think it is neither dangerous or tricky to be drinking and driving -- it is a way of life with many people. I am sure that if a breathalyzer test was used at this time of the night on people close to bars entering their cars, there would be a very significant rise in the number of apprehensions. Because everybody does it, it is taken very lightly until their licence is suspended and they start enduring a walking period which for the first few days doesn't seem too important, but as the time goes on the severity of the penalty soon registers.

Also the 78 per cent of all accidents that are investigated have alcohol involved in some degree or other. So it is one of the prime factors of some of the accidents that happen on the highways. It doesn't always necessarily involve the driver of the car, it sometimes involves the pedestrian. A car doesn't look so big to him when he is full of antifreeze.

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I think there are those in the province, some people that are due for recognition, and one of them is George Strachan and his efforts in safety courses and the work he is doing in educating the public against impaired driving. In my own department, there are some acknowledgments to people like Clarence Kenway, Mr. Tait, and Mr. Hinman. Certainly these people have contributed a lot and are recognized authorities in Canada in regard to promotion of good practices on the highways. One of our foremost judges, Judge Carl Rolf, when he sentences a person for impaired driving, part of the sentence is to take a defensive driver course and a safety driver course, and this certainly has a very marked effect on the people that have had to take it. We are going to encourage this more throughout the judges on the bench dealing with these people.

Certainly driver education is expanding and we are going to encourage free enterprise in driving schools to participate in this field as much as possible. It seems that when a young person is taught by someone else, other than his family, and given the responsibility and sometimes the right to fail once or twice, it seems to bring home to him a more responsible attitude towards driving. We have 15,000 or 20,000 new drivers every year. You are going to have a certain amount of recklessness in that group that either feel they know more about driving than anybody else until they get into an accident and it causes a great deal of trouble for other people on the highway and hardships and heartaches as well for those that get hurt. As a matter of fact, every month in the Province of Alberta, approximately \$4 million worth of car damage alone is created and that is a pretty significant amount of damage.

We were dealing with the clean-up program of cars that was started last year, collecting the cars that were scattered all over the country, and I think this was a very popular move, although it was quite expensive -- picking these cars up that were abandoned all over the country. We had about 15,000 of them piled in different parts of the province and we tried several ways of getting rid of them at the least cost to the taxpayer, but the total bill seemed to end up at approximately \$270,000. We have got a report now from a task force that we had, to study ways and means of coming up with a program for recycling of cars that are piled up in various yards and so forth. In fact, many of the automobile dealers who are dealing in second-hand parts have bodies stacked up till frost wouldn't come over Hades, but anyway --

DR. BUCK:

Watch that language.

MR. COPITHORNE:

It's clean. I've been practising on it, just for this delivery! These car bodies are a liability to them, and hopefully we can come up with a recycling program that will be acceptable to all people.

My department took a very active part in the PEP and STEP programs which involved the putting to work of our young people and our unemployed, last winter and again this coming summer, and it has had a very profound effect upon those that were unemployed.

Next year we'll have a new license plate, and for the first time, it will have a slogan on it -- "Alberta, Wild Rose Country." Our provincial flower is the wild rose. It's unique, and it's nice and it's clean, and I think every Albertan is proud of the wild roses that we have in Alberta. Certainly, it is wild rose country when the month of June comes around, because I don't think there is anywhere that you don't see them, and certainly they are an emblem worth honouring and having our province represented by.

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The objectives of our platform as political party are to promote communities, to decentralize to a degree, the flood of people to the major cities of Calgary and Edmonton -- to put industries in and promote certain small communities -- because it's possible that every small community will not survive. Certainly many of them will survive if we can encourage industry and improve the transportation of small towns throughout the province. This will be one of our main objectives. This is brought about, primarily, because of the areas that are not served by other facilities, such as railroads -- the abdication of the railroads has hurt many of these areas -- so we have to resort to our trucking and mobile transporting systems.

One of the other objectives that we have to embark upon with more vigour is the trucking industry which will be able to carry loads of at least 72,000 lb. capacities. This is a big job and a costly one, but a most necessary one to promote competition and the marketing of our products.

We place a very high priority upon an area where an industry will settle. One was the Lindbergh salt mine. When we proposed building a paved road in that area, it put them in such an economically competitive condition that they increased their plant, employed, I think, eight more people, doubled their capacity -- [Interjections.] The hon. member maybe has some relations and some old wives' tales out in that area, but on the other hand the truth is coming out, and if he listens and is quiet he will get some of the answers to the questions he has been posing for quite some time. I told him that if he waited until this golden hour he would find out about some of these things.

Now that he is getting a chance, Mr. Chairman, to listen to these things, we can proceed with the information if he cares to hear it. If he doesn't we will short-cut the program -- [Interjections]

Mr. Chairman, we can get rid of the notes as far as that goes, but I wanted to cover some of the points. It is too bad that somewhere along the road we couldn't have taken some of the other hon. member's notes away too.

In the past there has been a reasonable application of federal government's responsibilities to highways that are provincial links. Certainly I don't suppose there are many countries in the world where a national organization hasn't taken major responsibilities of major thoroughfares through their country. But our federal government, I must say, has not really done too good a job in this area. I am sure that my predecessor would agree in this and in the negotiations I have read through, that he carried on with Ottawa. Certainly we have three or four major areas of responsibility in Alberta. One is the Yellowhead route, normally known in Alberta as Highway No. 16, the Trans-Canada highway, which is Highway No. 1, the Howse Pass, which we are putting a fairly high priority on, and the Mackenzie highway which is a very vital highway. We will have a very high priority on it and are quite excited about the federal government's announcement that they are going to put a great deal of money into building this road. Because it is an election year I look forward to seeing their promises on the dotted line.

When I acquired the department last year we had about 140 expropriation proceedings that were not settled. We still have a very high number not settled, but hopefully we will be able to settle some of these shortly. It's a very difficult problem, gaining rights-of-way, and it's one area where a very firm policy has to be established.

Last winter when I was at a Road Builders' Convention in Arizona, I spent an afternoon visiting with my counter-part in Arizona. They have a very considerable budget, I think \$185 million, and they don't build very much road because most of their money goes

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into moving people away from the road in order to build some more roads. Now the problems of building highways in Arizona are much different than they are in Alberta where we have a tough winter and hard winter conditions. In Arizona, they only have to put down a blade, smooth the ground a little, and run some asphalt on it.

I was amazed to find out that in that area -- it was a lesson to be learned -- that we want to zealously protect our highway rights-of-way in areas where we anticipate there will have to be some development in the next several years. It's one area where a lot of money can be filtered away without much show of progress. You never earn any friends in any expropriation proceedings, you never earn any friends when you have to start moving people.

It's a very difficult thing and it's the area where I've been involved a lot in my lifetime, and now I'm heading up probably the largest expropriating organization in the country. It's a unique situation for me to find myself in.

But it isn't without understanding that I'm in this position. Hopefully we'll be able to come up with a reasonable assessment of these properties. It's a little bit like my hon. friend when he pulls a tooth. He puts a little frost in the gum and it doesn't feel quite so bad until afterwards. That's when it really hurts.

Now, in my department we authorize trucking authority to truck lines and to bus services, and this is to keep an orderly balance in the traffic patterns and the trucking organizations throughout the province. It's a very difficult situation to handle, and it also has to keep in the proper perspective the number of trucks that are coming in from other jurisdictions. There's been a great deal of work in the past done in regard to having reciprocal trucking authorities throughout the country. It's certainly helped the economy of the province of Alberta. It has also kept the products that we produce, ship, and import in a reasonably competitive ratio to other types of transportation.

This year also, with every major road program, we're going to have a series of signs informing the people of the number of dollars a project is worth. I think it's important for the people of Alberta to know what their road system is costing, because very few people realize that the grading and paving of a road to a 72,000 lb. facility costs in the neighbourhood of \$145,000 to \$150,000. In fact they're quite staggered when they find out that this is what the figure really is. I think that certainly if they know what the costs are, there will be more understanding in highway construction generally -- that's per mile.

This year we will have the second largest budget in history. We have nearly \$9 million carry-over from work from last year. It was brought down primarily because of not enough competitors in the field of road construction and it's hard sometimes to get the programs out in time. Some of the bidders take up too many of the contracts and consequently it's carried over. So we have that much carry-over.

But we still have a very good program and we have been letting out contracts at an early stage so that the contractors could get into the field and get the work underway. Hopefully we have had very good prices on the road programs that we have let out and we have created quite a lot of work and a lot of people are working now on the projects throughout the province.

This year we will have the largest road program in history: 122 miles of grading in the primary system, 202 miles of stabilized base courses, 344 miles of asphalt concrete pavement, 340 miles of seal coat, 6 miles of grading approach roads, 14 miles of stabilized base course, 13 miles of asphalt concrete pavement, 23 miles of oil treatment to approach roads, 110 miles of grading to secondary

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systems, 175 miles of asphalt concrete pavement on the secondary system. Mr. Chairman, on both the secondary and primary highways we are going to do nearly 750 miles of oiling. I think that's an impressive program.

The oiling program is one in which we look forward to curtailing not only the dust problems, but we think it's good economics too. Firstly because of the cost -- a mile of oiling costs approximately \$1,400 to \$2,000 -- and it's good economics in that the road does not blow away. It's good economics in that the road does not need as much maintenance as it did before it was oiled. On top of that, in the time of a storm it sheds the water very well, and I think makes a much more stable road-bed. I think that this is a good program. I know that it has to be done every year. It's a substitute for asphalt but it's one way of getting a lot of road built and protected to provide the tourist industry with roads, and people with some comforts that they expect.

Incidentally, Mr. Chairman and hon. members, the people of Alberta, basically, have a pretty cheap package when it comes to operating a car in Alberta.

We plan on building about \$9 million worth of bridges this year, and overruns, and that's an impressive program as well.

The biggest project we have is the bridge at Fort Vermilion. It's 200 miles from the nearest bridge. It's serving the oldest communities in Alberta and it's big news in that area. One of the old-timers that came from my part of the country said, "I knew we'd have to get a bridge eventually and I hope I live long enough to see it in operation." I hope she does, too, because she has been a pioneer in that country since 1920.

We have programs for the cities. The City of Edmonton and the City of Calgary will share in a \$4.5 million budget for the construction of their major programs in regard to transportation. Part of this will be spent on the bridge at Devon -- not at Devon but the name has escaped me for the moment -- but in the city.

The programs for the other cities in Alberta will be the same this year as they have been in the past. Last year we honoured the program between Calgary and the Highways Department, made by the former minister in regard to the Blackfoot Trail, by supplying to them an extra \$5,100,000. This was obligated by correspondence and this was above the \$4,500,000 which annually went to the City of Calgary. This was based on an accumulation that they didn't use up in the previous four years. It has created a problem in Calgary inasmuch as many of you hon. members have heard about the problems on Sixteenth Avenue. They are only just beginning because we have three of the major highways all ending at Sixteenth Avenue. The Trans Canada from the east and west and No. 2 from the north, all centering on Sixteenth Avenue. So I expect to hear quite a lot of news about the congestion on Sixteenth Avenue this summer.

I think that the program we have lined out will be a good one. As the hon. members know, wherever they come from, the program is only half big enough. The demand is certainly very great and I wish my estimates and the capabilities of the construction in the province were capable of having a program twice as large. But I still think we have a pretty impressive program for this year. Thank you.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Chairman, just in case you figure on finishing this tonight, I'll make my remarks early and go home to bed and let you people carry on.

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First of all I'd like to commend the hon. minister. He mentioned the part about speed limits, and the reasons you point out as the causes for accidents. I want to point out that I have a vested interest in safe driving in the Province of Alberta because when you are in the automobile insurance business, you're on a profit sharing basis and you're quite interested in the loss ratio that you have. Don't think that I'm not concerned about loss ratios and accidents and property damage on the road. I also take note of your remarks where you said that 78% of the accidents are caused by alcohol. I would submit at this time that any pressure that you put on, or any penalty imposed for the impaired or drinking driver, I would back up 100%. As a matter of fact, there are some countries in the world where they just put them right smack in the clink with no questions asked and there is no fooling about -- so I concur with what you are saying in that regard.

However, on the matter of speed limits, and I know what your position is at this particular time, and I respect this because you probably believe in it. Nevertheless, I would like to see some experimentation at least. Now for example, I think it's from Leduc to Red Deer, it's 70 miles per hour if I'm not mistaken, and from Red Deer to Calgary it is 65. Now even in that small differential, have you anything to indicate that one portion of that highway from Calgary to Red Deer is going to have more accidents than on the other portion for example. Would you consider -- where we have these divided four lane highways in particular -- taking a stretch, say from Calgary to Edmonton, and taking off the speed limit and just using the safe driving signs, prudent driving and careful and expedient driving -- forget about the speed limits for awhile. And on an experimental basis and really see if this is the answer.

You know I'm not totally convinced that speeding per se is really the cause of a lot of accidents and property damage. Again, I have the statistics you know because of the business I'm in, that this is not really the big problem. I believe you have put your finger right on it with this alcohol business, and there are a few other things too, but it is careless driving -- driving without due care and caution and all that. It isn't really speeding in itself I don't think. So that is the suggestion I would have there.

Also, there are a couple of other little items. You mentioned something about signs. You are going to put signs up indicating the cost of certain highways and so on and so forth, and this is fine. But I hope you will carry it a little further. Now as I mentioned earlier in the session in one of the talks I had given, that in Lethbridge -- not in Lethbridge, on each side of Lethbridge -- the signs indicating that you are approaching Lethbridge from the east or from the west are totally inadequate. From Medicine Hat coming west there is nothing, from the west coming in there are just not enough signs. Now this wouldn't be an expensive thing and I would hope that you would have a look at this situation. We think that we should let the good people know that they are coming to Lethbridge -- they are entitled to know that they are in for that treat.

Now the other thing regarding signs, that I hope you will relieve us of, is what I think has been an over zealous program in the past regarding signs pointing to certain business or recreation facilities along the highway. Now I'll give you two illustrations in Lethbridge of which I am very concerned. The hon. Minister of Lands and Forests was in Lethbridge on Sunday to open a game farm. Now I submit that if he had to find that place by himself, without a sign, if he couldn't be taken there -- he couldn't find it. Now I think as a tourist attraction, that there certainly should be adequate signs showing where this type of attraction is located. I see nothing wrong with that at all. I don't think it would be a distraction, and I think we are really entitled to these types of signs that would point out things like that.

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And there is another one there. There is a very well-known auction market. Now people come from all over western Canada and the western United States at times to go to special auction sales there. But surely to heaven, you know, they are entitled to know where they are going. I don't think this is an unreasonable request and these are some of the things that are not too expensive, and not too demanding that I would hope you would consider, and I want to congratulate you most heartily for mentioning and committing yourself to building highway number 3 out of this appropriation. Thank you.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Chairman, just a short announcement. The members of the press gallery -- as a matter of interest to all members -- have undertaken to purchase poppy tea laced with hemlock for all members still in attendance at 1:00 a.m.

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Chairman, this is very encouraging and I am just hoping that they include marmalade. I am now impelled to make a 40-minute speech. With the encouragement that I have received from the hon. members of the press, I will just proceed with this. So brace yourselves.

The first subject that I want to talk about is the demerit system. There is one thing that the demerit system does not take into consideration and that is the exposure factor. Driver A drives 2,000 or 1,500 miles a year and he saved harmless from any infringements on the speed limit for the various fact that he is only on the road for a very, very short period of time. Driver B is a commercial traveller or has reasons to travel and he drives 80,000 miles a year. So hence the risk factor is enhanced by approximately 70 per cent in the case of driver B. So therefore, he gets demerits for speeding. This is an inequality that creeps into this particular thing. How this can be corrected I don't know, but this is something that I want to mention.

However, I was also encouraged by the hon. minister's remarks about protection of highway right-of-way. Now here is where I want to help the minister. I want to get the minister up to the Crowsnest Pass. I want to talk to him about where the road is going, I want to get this all settled. Let's get with it, let's do it this summer. I am certainly looking forward to seeing him up there in the Pass, sometime this summer.

Another subject that has been mentioned is the subject of speed limits. This is something that certainly has to be approached very gingerly, because what you have to look at is a speed limit as a norm in dealing with people. In a very sophisticated approach to this problem, there would be some sort of computerized analysis which would predetermine the potential of a person to drive. This is far-fetched and probably won't come until 1984, when Aldous Huxley's Brave New World comes into being. I know I rode down with the hon. Member for Calgary Bow, peacefully from Edmonton to Calgary, at a peaceful 60 to 62 mph last week and I assure you it was very boring because the flies were settling on the car all the way. It represented a very serious problem in getting down there. So with these brief remarks and having regard for the desire of the hon. members to stay here a little later, I will sit down. Thank you.

MR. COFITHORNE:

I am just going to say a few remarks to the hon. Member for Lethbridge. He is sitting just about where I was sitting last year, at the end, and I thought for a minute he was reading my speech in regard to signs. This is a tough situation and I get lots of static on the sign business, as I guess this goes along with the Department

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of Highways. I hope that maybe we can come up with something. At least we are searching, anyway, for something that will be acceptable and not fall overboard where they become objectionable. It is a fine line.

In regard to the demerit system and the exposure and all the rest of it, we could talk for quite considerable time, in fact, we could talk well into breakfast time about that. We are not about to do that unless some of the rest of your pursue it further. But there are many areas in it that we can improve. It is a good system, it is working and we will keep it working if we can possibly do that.

MR. BENOIT:

Mr. Chairman, I have a few remarks to make. I have lots to make with regard to our constituency, but I will just speak on something that is of public interest. In particular, I want to express my appreciation for the hon. minister's remarks. He seemed sometimes uncomfortable, but tonight he is in his element and he provided us with a lot of information that I appreciated. I couldn't help but smile when he expressed the fact that the chickens were coming home to roost so far as expropriation was concerned. These things have a habit of doing it. For that reason I want to keep my remarks as uncritical as I can.

The Department of Highways has a tremendous responsibility. It covers the entire province and controls many square miles of development in the province. As a result, it affects a lot of businesses, both pro and con. For that reason, I think the responsibility is quite onerous, because a lot of people have been put out of business because of the way that the highways go and are zoned, and the way that the areas are zoned, and so on. On the other hand, of course, it provides arterial access for a lot of other businesses that didn't have it before.

It has a direct and an indirect effect on all departments, almost, I think particularly in the Department of Municipal Affairs planning. Nothing can be done by The Planning Act unless the Department of Highways approves of it -- the opening up of new areas like the North -- probably no other department has more effect on tourism than the Department of Highways does. All the tourists travel on these highways. So far as recreation and agricultural markets are concerned, industry and commerce, the parks of the province, the Department of Highways has a real influence, either favourably or otherwise, on all of these things, also the environment, and I want to say a little bit about that.

The reason I got up, Mr. Chairman, is because of one particular problem that the department has had. I don't know whether the minister will agree that it has been a problem or not, but there have been problems mentioned to me in connection with it. What I say tonight I don't intend to say as criticism, but simply as a warning. I may not have all the facts, but all the facts I have I've received from the Minister of Highways and the Department of Lands and Forests and some other people -- who have provided me with some information which I do not say is always factual. But I want to cite this one example of the new highway that has been put in -- or at least the clearing for which has been done during the winter -- and that's Highway No. 940 on the Kananaskis. It is a case of preparing and building a hard-surface highway for approximately 11 miles, in the initial stages at least. The first consideration of this was given way back in March, 1970, and they talked about it all that summer. About October of 1970, correspondence stopped and was left in limbo for about a year. Then this year after about November, a new consideration was given to this particular road, and apparently it was pushed for winter works, and was to be done by March 31st, 1972 -- a deadline of about four and a half months. It required following the Kananaskis forestry road part of the time, and part of the time

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it veered off in its own direction and upgraded the standards of the road. It's aiming at the 200 foot right of way. About 150 feet, I understand, have been cleared, but 200 feet are involved in the middle of the bush. It involved two senior governments and several private firms and considerable surveying through some virgin territory in the foothills area. The correspondence has been filed and personal reports that have been made indicate that one of the main problems was that the whole project was done too quickly.

Now I really appreciate the good intentions of the 'now' government to do things 'now', because I'm all in favour of that. Sometimes we hang on too long, but there are some times when we ought to take more time and some times when we ought to speed it up. All those involved complained that there was a lack of prior notice and a lack of providing for extensive lead time, so far as other departments were concerned. Now there is no objection to building the road, as far as I can see. But there are a number of people, departments, personnel, and industries who objected to the way it was done. The whole thing was primarily a result of too much haste.

As a result there was a loss of considerable spinoff benefits in the clearing of the right-of-way. Hundreds of thousands of feet of merchantable timber were lost. This could have been used in the industry but was not salvaged because of a lack of time and a lack of prior notice given to the industries involved. There were a number of native workers who might have been more involved had there been more time and more opportunity to get them employed. Insufficient notice was provided to industries who wanted to use the timber and the lumber for various reasons. They were notified, but too late; they couldn't salvage the timber before the clearing had to be finished to meet the deadline date. As a result some of them gave up in despair and never even attempted; others made a feeble attempt and gave up.

Other departments that were involved didn't get sufficient notice so that they could make preparation with regard to the environment, making the proper impact studies, and this sort of thing. As a result there is an irretrievable loss of information regarding the environmental effects. There will still be studies made but they are not able to make the primary studies that should have been made before the clearing was done.

In all of this I appreciate the fact that a great deal of money was saved because the lowest bid was taken, and there was a lot of difference between the low bid and the high bid in this particular instance. But I am afraid that the money that was saved by the low bid was lost, in some part at least, on the sale of the lumber products, the stumpage, and this sort of thing. I think that some of the money that was saved by the low bid was lost because the rushed operations required the money be spent on welfare instead of worthwhile employment. A number of people could have been employed in this project who were not employed in it because the job had to be done in such a hurry. Some of the money that was saved by the low bid was lost in cost-sharing of winter works and broader employment opportunities whereby quite a large number of people could have been employed. Due to extenuating circumstances, unfortunately, the contract was not finished at the deadline date, and had to be extended anyway.

I am not sure of the details so far as to the cost -- whether there were additional costs involved or not. That is beside the point. The fact is that this was a good project, the only thing is it was put through so fast that the other departments and the senior government could not co-operate to the fullest extent to get the best benefit out of the entire project.

Some people have criticized the whole concept of the standard of roads, and it is a question. I admit that truly it is a matter of

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opinion, because the experts don't agree on these things, but some say we didn't need such a high standard of road in this particular area because it is a scenic road. They complained because it was a speedway, and this sort of thing. I am not arguing that point, Mr. Chairman. The point that I am trying to make is that we need to have time for these things.

On the other side of the coin, I have seen -- and the previous administration is as guilty of these things as this administration in this instance --

AN HON. MEMBER:

Where were you?

MR. BENOIT:

I have seen some places where we have surveyed and staked three, four, and five times for one overpass and this sort of thing. I don't understand all of these things. Maybe this is necessary, but it seems to me that there are times when we take too much time; we spend too much time, and we go into too much detail, and there are other times when we rush. All I'm saying for tonight, Mr. Chairman, is to point out we may have to profit from our mistakes and I hope we will, but if we don't, woe betide the taxpayers, because it costs a lot of money sometimes attempting to save some money.

Now I would like to make just one or two final remarks with regard to -- and probably in the form of -- a question. With regard to the grid road system that has been started, I would like to get the hon. minister's opinion as to what his plans are for that, for this year.

The minister concluded by saying that there was a big and impressive program that we are going to undertake this year. I sure appreciate that. Only he should have added, God willing and the weather permitting, because, as he knows, and we all know, that sometimes the big programs we plan for roads don't come through on account of the weather, and that is one of the big features that has a tendency to retard the progress in the road systems of this province.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for a few moments to share some of these thoughts, and I want to commend the minister again for his exposition of his department.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, to start with, it is fortunate for the hon. member that he got into the opposition, because this is really the first year that he has taken a great deal of interest in any road, anywhere, in regard to what has happened in the construction of it.

We are talking about a program of about 11 miles. We are talking about a width of 150 to 200 feet. This isn't at all uncommon for a road width. And this will become eventually a major road and I would hope that my department and this government plan for roads that are adequate for the type of roadways that are necessary in the future.

Furthermore, when the initial construction period is on, it always looks worse, and those bleeding hearts who care to go and look at it. It's pretty sad, I must admit, but it's one of the things that happens in the four years -- three or four years -- that the construction period is on. It's an ugly experience for any community, but it is an area that is needed for people. It will be developed for people, and the highest of standards will be set down and the area will be developed under those standards.

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We will make some mistakes. Yes, we will. And hopefully, we will not make them a second time. We are going to study the environment, the effect of people on the environment, the effect of people on the animals in the area. There is a lot of data already on this. We have some very qualified people who we want to acquire to do this study. I think this is a step forward that has never been taken anywhere in the past on the North American continent in regard to developing an area for people. We want to study if there are any archeology artifacts in the area that should be carefully recorded and preserved. Certainly this is necessary, and on top of that we want to plan how the area is to be used for people ultimately. And the ultimate plan, somewhere down the line, is going to take quite a lot of money to develop but it could have a tremendous effect upon the economic future of Canmore.

These things are all very long-range, and we are only just starting on it. As far as the hon. member's worry about the jobs that were lost by the hurry-up job, it wasn't a hurry-up job, it was to some people because they are used to moving slowly, if they are going to move slowly, then they are going to lose out.

There were a great number of bids on the project. There was also 4 1/2 to 5 feet of snow in that area. The hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest has lots of experience in clearing timber, and you do a lot of hoping in some of these things, particularly when you have a bid that was acquired for clearing that timber off, but they were by reputable people, and the job will be done and it will be done properly. Certainly they helped out -- and they did create winter work.

I don't know why, on eleven miles of road, that the hon. member gets so upset, because for years the former government made slashes all over the country in a wild exploration of 30 feet to 36 feet wide and there was never a shot fired at that. It didn't create any work in regard to timber salvage and it's very questionable the economics of salvaging timber on a strip of land at any time -- very, very questionable whether there's an economic salvage on timber -- because we were very careful that there wasn't a separate road made off of the right of way. Most outfits that would go in and salvage that kind of timber operation would find their costs were very high anyway. On top of that some of the timber was salvaged, perhaps enough of it to prove that what I have said here has a great deal of wisdom.

As far as the secondary road system goes, if the hon. member had listened carefully when I was speaking he would have heard what my intentions were this year -- 110 miles of grading in the secondary road system, 170 miles of asphalt-concrete paving on the secondary road system, 100 miles plus for oiling. That's what we're doing.

Speaking of the grid road system last year was the first year that there was an embarkation upon it in a major assault, and we have equalled that this year as well in cost. I have some apprehensions about how we are proposing it, because I find that many of the municipalities are letting their secondary roads -- the ones that they use the most -- go, and I say in cowboy language, "Go to hell!" because they're hoping that the provincial government will come in and build that road for them instead of acting responsibly towards it. I hope we can have co-ordination or come up with a policy that will prevent this so that they will know what their responsibilities are and it's not an easy task.

Appropriation 1501 total agreed to \$ 26,630

Appropriation 1502 General Administration

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MR. BARTON:

I have a few questions, I'll refer them to the hon. Minister of Northern Development and catch my constituency as we go along.

I was wondering what your intentions are on the Clear Hills road from Grimshaw to the B.C. border -- and whether you have had any correspondence with the B.C. government to continue it on to Fort St. John -- also the Rainbow Lake road, roads to new settlements, homestead areas, Highway No. 58 to Wood Buffalo Park, and whether you were going to double the paving appropriation on the Mackenzie Highway as it was promised from last year to this year.

MR. COPITHORNE:

The promises that were made last year in regard to highways don't hold any water as to what's happening this year. As far as being specific about certain road programs they will be announced as they come about. I'm not going to take up the time of the Legislature in describing to each hon. member what's happening in his own constituency.

MR. BARTON:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to follow that up. I think the promises were made by two prominent Conservatives just several months ago.

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Chairman, I would like him to clarify who made them.

MR. BARTON:

In tourism, who valued the potential of the North in tourism? The hon. Minister of Northern Development?

MR. ADAIR:

I didn't see you at any of the meetings that I was at and hearsay won't get you anywhere.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, to the hon. minister, does he intend to continue signing these orders to expropriate property? Also, will you make available to us a list of the highway projects that will be built with the monies you have allocated?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, the act of expropriation is one that has to be continued. There are certain times where the point of fairness is reached from our point of view and, certainly, we look at it very, very carefully. I think the former minister would also speak in this regard. I don't think there is any way out of eliminating all expropriations. But even if we reduce the number of expropriations I think we have made some progress.

Appropriation 1502, agreed to \$ 503,100

Agreed to without debate:

<u>Appropriation 1510</u>	Roads Maintenance Branch - Administration	\$ 947,780
<u>Appropriation 1511</u>	Ferries - Maintenance and Operation	267,000
<u>Appropriation 1512</u>	Primary Highways and Access Roads - Maintenance	10,770,000

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Appropriation 1513 Maintenance Grants to Improvement
Districts

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to direct a question to the hon. minister with respect to Appropriations 1513, 1517, and 1588, all dealing with grants to improvement districts. I notice, Mr. Minister, in adding the three appropriations together that there is a drop of some \$250,000. My question to you is, on what basis is there a cut-back in grants to ID's this year?

Let me make a quick pitch before you answer the question. I really think there is a strong case to be made for providing increased funds for ID road construction and maintenance in the province. Especially when you consider that the ID covers the newly developing areas such as northern Alberta, for example, where increased services are required by local residents.

MR. COFITHORNE:

Actually, Mr. Chairman, there had to be some cuts made somewhere. I wasn't as successful as my predecessor in bargaining with my colleagues for money and, as you see, we cut in many places. This is one area where we cut. And I agree with the hon. member that there is a great need for roads in these areas, but this year we'll just have to do without, because the budget is not there and I know it will be a hardship on many areas. The area of maintenance is also cut and it is very difficult to cut people's services because the bump out in front of their gate will not get fixed and they'll not remember me fondly by bumping over it every morning.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, one question to the hon. minister. I had an Alberta contractor, who I know quite well, complain to me the other day that he placed a bid for highway construction in Saskatchewan and he was the low bidder on the job. But because he was an Alberta contractor they awarded the contract to the next very close bidder who was a resident of Saskatchewan. I am wondering what is the tolerance that we use if it was the other way, in case we had several bidders from Alberta and one low bidder from Saskatchewan who was close to the lowest Alberta bid -- what is the tolerance we use as a department?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, that is a very good question. First of all, I think the people in Saskatchewan need to protect and look after their contractors because in discussion with them last winter they were quite worried about the programs they were having and going to have in their province.

We haven't a tolerance here, actually, in the bids that we accept. But it brings up a good point. On a certain bid last winter which required quite a lot of work to be done out of the province, although the second bidder -- the low bidder actually wasn't the low bidder, he was really the second bidder -- because when you took into consideration the work that was being done here, and the engineering that we would have to pay for -- some of it out of the province -- it became a very narrow division on who was the low bidder. Because of some wording in our advertisement, which we have now corrected, we will be able to take advantage of further bids that may not be the lowest bid, but because of the circumstances and the conditions, they may well be the low bidder and this will be considered in the future. It's a very good question.

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MR. TAYLOR:

I'd like to say a word in connection with this. I don't agree with a policy that sets out the condition of giving certain people preferential treatment at the expense of the taxpayer. If a contractor from Saskatchewan wins a contract in this province at a lower price than the Alberta contractors, and establishes his office in here and takes out the necessary insurance and so on, the people of Alberta will benefit through that lower price and it leaves that much more money to go on to another contract. I think it is a pretty dangerous policy to start this tolerance business -- as B.C. uses and as some of the other provinces use -- because it actually costs your people extra money. I think the primary object is to get the work done at the lowest possible price, and then you have the extra money to use on other projects in your province. So I would certainly suggest that any such policy be examined very carefully before adopting a preferential treatment for certain contractors.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to second the remarks of the hon. Member for Drumheller. We've heard the hon. Minister of Agriculture in the House say very specifically that we shouldn't have any interference with the flow, for example, of agricultural products across provincial boundaries. I think if that is the policy there that the same policy should apply in this area. I find the preferential treatment at the present point in time a little difficult to follow, and I'm not sure if the minister is following this. But if this is the intention in view of the statements he has made, about the tremendous program they have this year, the fact that an amount of money has been cut, and the shortage of contractors in Alberta -- it just doesn't seem to all add up to me with all the factors taken into account -- that pursuing a policy of anything other than the lowest bidder is really a very sound one so far as being in the overall best interests of the people of Alberta.

The other approach might be in the best interests of a few contractors. But certainly it isn't in the best interests of the people of the Province of Alberta in total. So I think the point that is brought up by the hon. Member for Drumheller is a very valid one. We should be extremely cautious about injecting artificial ground rules, and saying that we won't accept a bid from outside the province unless it's a certain percentage below the lowest Alberta bidder -- this type of ground rule -- because it just won't hold up in the long run. It will create more problems than it will solve.

MR. COFITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether the hon. members didn't understand what I said. But we are accepting the lowest bid, and we find here in Alberta that some of the other provinces are good places to come from. When they come from Saskatchewan or Manitoba, they come to Alberta and they find it was a good move, and we accept the lowest tender, and we get the best prices and we'll get quite a few more roads built. Incidentally most of the contracts this year are in units of ten and twelve miles. This is a kind of an economical amount of road to build for a contractor. We try to keep it in that area, so that we get the maximum benefit out of a unit of construction.

Appropriation 1513 total agreed to \$2,968,750

Agreed to without debate:

<u>Appropriation 1517</u>	Improvement District Trust Account	\$3,500,000
<u>Appropriation 1530</u>	Bridges, Maintenance and Replacement, Salaries	769,170
<u>Appropriation 1531</u>	Bridge Maintenance, Primary Highways	335,000

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Appropriation 1532 Bridges, Maintenance and Replacement,
Municipal Districts, Improvement
Districts, and Counties 565,000

Appropriation 1550 Motor Vehicle Branch

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, is there some reason for the increase of 69 persons in this department?

MR. COPITHORNE:

I didn't hear the hon. member's question.

MR. TAYLOR:

What are the reasons for the increase of 69 persons?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Basically, this Appropriation 1550 deals primarily with materials and supplies and postage.

MR. MINTELY:

Hon. Minister, would you like me to answer for you? What it results from is the transfer of the enforcement division from the Department of the Attorney General to the Department of Highways and Transport, which represents 68 positions. So actually there is only one new position.

Appropriation 1550, agreed to

\$5,412,610

Appropriation 1552 Equipment Branch - Administration

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say just one word in connection with public service vehicle licences. I want to say it here because I think possibly under capital account, it probably would be barred. The hon. members who were in the House last year will recall that we established hearings for PSV applications in the province and it was announced in the Legislature to handle the case of Smith Transport from Manitoba. At that time I made it very clear that it was our intention to remove that requirement just as soon as either one of two things happened: either the Supreme Court of Canada gave us a favourable decision, or secondly, the federal government amended the federal legislation. In order to protect Alberta truckers from the truckers from outside, it was necessary to establish some type of hearings at that time. Since that time there has been favourable decision from the Supreme Court of Canada. I am wondering if the government, through the hon. minister, is planning to remove that requirement for hearings for PSV licences in the province?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, we are considering this area at this time as well as trying to co-ordinate. We have had further meetings with some of the other members across Canada in this regard and hopefully will be able to come to some conclusion at this fall's ministers' meeting. I think it is going to be held in Newfoundland. Certainly at that time, we may be able to resolve what should be uniformly done across the country. I think we should try to move in a uniform way, rather than individually.

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MR. TAYLOR:

I can well appreciate the inter-operation and I know there are quite a number of complications right across Canada. What I was referring to was the public service vehicle licences applies only within Alberta. The present regulation, I think, is simply a regulation that now is unnecessary, and I would recommend that the hon. minister review this with the aim of removing it as soon as possible.

DR. BUCK:

I would just like to ask the hon. minister one question and this is in relation to the role of the independent trucker, in the letting out of contracts. Is there any policy that X number of percentage of truckers must be independent truckers or can the contractor have all of his own trucks on the job? Is there any policy in this matter?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, that is a very good question and it is a question that causes a great deal of concern. There seems to be a great deal of bickering amongst the trucking fraternity. During the winter when we were trying to share the wealth around the areas where we were doing winter works programs, we had a policy that you earned up to \$1,500 -- we later made it up to \$2,500 -- then that trucker would be cut off and we would allow another one to come in. But we gave a priority also to the ones in the local area. They had the first priority. There were some mornings when there weren't enough truckers to go around and a few of them earned considerably over \$2,500. But it would have cost the contractor and it would have cost the department a great deal more money trying to hustle up extra truckers to just finish a job. It's a hard thing to administer, but I think it does do a lot of good to take a little time and try to -- under those circumstances -- share the wealth around. In the summertime there seems to be pretty well enough work to take care of most of the truckers throughout the province.

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Chairman, the minister took me around and around the straw stack, but he didn't answer the question that I asked. The question was, when contracts are let out for say ten miles of road, is there a specific number of truckers that must be hired outside the contractor's own trucks? This is the question I'm asking.

MR. COFITHORNE:

Local trucks?

DR. BUCK:

Local truckers, right. Not the contractor's own trucks.

MR. COFITHORNE:

No, Mr. Chairman, the contractor who takes the job, hires and looks after the trucks. Most of the truckers follow the jobs and the advertisements pretty closely and work that way.

DR. BUCK:

So then theoretically, if I had the contract, I could get my own fleet of trucks and do the entire job myself without letting the local truckers in. Is this what you are saying?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Theoretically, yes you could; with the competitive nature of the trucking industry, and also the number of people you have to handle,

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and one thing and another, I think you would find that you'd be up against pretty tough competition. And believe you me, these contractors have their pencils pretty well sharpened when they are bidding on these jobs. We have gotten some excellent prices this year.

DR. BUCK:

On the contrary, there is nothing to say they can use just their own trucks exclusively -- then you've taken the competition out. The fellow that's from Kinuso maybe has one or two trucks in that area -- they will not get on these jobs if the contractor uses his own trucks exclusively. This is the point I'm trying to make.

MR. DRAIN:

No way can the contractors run trucks exclusively.

MR. TAYLOR:

I'd just raise the point, if I understood the answer of the hon. minister right, the contract must have been changed, because the contract previously, and as far as I knew -- as far as I thought was still in effect -- the contractor is required to hire some two-thirds to three-quarters of the trucks. He can't have his own. He's permitted to have a reasonable percentage and I think this is less than 25 per cent. The balance must be hired from other truckers, and of that percentage the greatest possible number from the local area must be hired first. Is that not still in the contract?

MR. COEITHORNE:

That's still in the contract. The basic contract has not changed primarily.

MR. BARTON:

Mr. Chairman, just one further question. I didn't get it on the Motions for a Return. Northern Transportation Study, which laid out the roads done by your department in the last two years, laid out the roads for north-central Alberta. I understand that the road from Fort Vermilion to Lesser Slave Lake is a cost-sharing road with the federal government. In what part does the federal government participate, and what restrictions did the federal Government put on, and is your department going to continue negotiating with the federal government to have that particular area expanded -- for instance, for an access road to High Prairie to the main road, and one from Peace River to the Loon Lake area, to develop the resources in the area, and the recreational potential in the area?

The next question would be -- Highway 58 to Wood Buffalo Park -- I would appreciate some remarks in that area. In view of the fact that Smith is not going to be flooded and there are no anticipations in the next 10 to 20 years, I wonder if your department is considering at least putting an oil base on the nine miles of road which is basically sand, and pounds out over a matter of days. They have a very large industry that employs from 125 to 150 men in a federated co-operative's operation, so it is a little town with a future. I was wondering what your views are in that particular area.

MR. COEITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, again the hon. member is getting down to specifics, and I have no intention of discussing that with him tonight. If he wants to discuss some of these specifics with me sometime, I'd be very happy to do it. We could talk over what's going on in that area. We are going to have some talks with the federal Department of Transport. We are now momentarily waiting for

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an appointment with the minister, Don Jamieson from the federal Department of Transport, to discuss some of these problems that we have in regard, particularly to the Mackenzie Highway and to other programs and concerns we have in Alberta in regard to transportation.

I am well aware of Highway 58. I know also that I have told people in that area that I am coming up there this summer to have a look at it. But as far as dealing specifically with new roads, we could spend two days here talking with the hon. members. They have the endurance and so do I.

MR. BARTON:

Mr. Chairman, I don't classify roughly 200 miles of little road and 70 miles from Peace River to Peerless Lake little roads.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I am rather concerned about the attitude of the hon. minister. If he doesn't know the answer, all he has to do is stand up and say so. But to stand up and say to the hon. members of this House that it is beneath his dignity to answer a member's question about his constituency, particularly when the hon. Premier of the province has been standing up and saying what a good thing it is to hear all the members standing up and presenting all the views, and asking all the questions about their constituency problems. Then to hear a minister of the Crown say that he is not going to answer these questions. I think the hon. minister is demonstrating nothing but contempt for this House.

I must confess I have, thus far in the session, been pretty well impressed with the manner in which his hon. colleagues have stood up and answered questions straightforwardly. I have been impressed with their grasp of the jobs they are doing, the departments they have. I am quite prepared to say I am very much impressed with the efforts, for example, the grasp that the hon. Minister of Agriculture has for his department. While that doesn't mean I am not going to disagree with him very violently in the future, I still, nonetheless, think so and I am quite prepared to stand up and say it.

But now, on the question of highways, to hear one of the hon. ministers of the government stand up and say that he flatly refuses to discuss details, even if he knows the answer, I think it is completely inexcusable. If he doesn't know the answer I think this is quite understandable and could be accepted. But to stand up and say that he isn't going to discuss details I think is really making a waste of time for this whole exercise. We might as well give him a blank cheque and go home. If we don't have the opportunity of getting intelligent answers out of him, this whole thing is a waste of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I honestly appreciate that the hon. minister has offered to go into detail with any hon. member about any constituency. He hasn't refused that. He has indicated in his explanation that he wasn't going to get into specific constituencies here. That is the way the Chair understood. I don't think he refused Mr. Barton the answers. He had offered to sit down even if it took two days -- am I right, Mr. Minister?

MR. COFITHOPNE:

I have told Mr. Barton that I would discuss the problems of his constituency with him any time he is available and I am available also. Certainly, sometime we will both be available.

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I have also got a fishing trip lined up, which I hope to have as a side effect when I visit the town of Smith in looking at their problems. I am going to also visit the community on Highway 58 from Fort Vermilion. I have told those people in that area that I would come in there and look at it.

I hope someday, when we get out of this Legislature, to have a look at many areas in the province, and see what their needs are. As yet I haven't had a good chance to do that. It isn't that I don't know.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Barton --

MR. COPITHORNE:

I am still talking! When the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc gets up and says that I don't know, that is not right -- [Interjections] -- I beg your pardon?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Minister, would you please continue.

MR. COPITHORNE:

I find that the remarks of the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc is like calling the frying pan smutty.

MR. BARTON:

Could I continue on, now? While you are travelling to the north, and especially to Smith, would you take notice of Clyde Corner, and maybe put up the appropriate signs as to which communities are on the left, and which communities are on the right? I could explain them to you, but I am sure, with your background, you will know what communities I am talking about.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, there is a question I would like to ask the minister, and I hope he's able to enlighten us a lot on it. Are the present negotiations in Calgary, as far as the international airport is concerned, and the road changes that are going to take place -- I mean, the new highway is now through the coulee -- is it the government's intention to maintain the land from the 16th Avenue cloverleaf north, to where it enters the new highway, the present, new construction? It is still being used a lot, and some of the businessmen in the area are concerned about that stretch of road. Is it the government's intention to leave that open -- that is, on the east side of the airport, the old highway?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, under the agreement, the department is obliged to maintain this area for a period of five years and then it reverts to the city. We have now completed -- what -- two years of the contract, and there are three years yet to go, so we will be looking after it.

MR. FARRAN:

I just -- we don't want to miss one important question. I was afraid I wasn't going to get a word in edgewise, with the jockeying for position between the -- you know, in the leadership race -- between the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc and the hon. Member for

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Lesser Slave Lake. I thought I couldn't get it in, but it's a very important question. I'm certain they wouldn't want me not to ask it. Is there anything in this appropriation for task force expenses? I hope that...

AN HON. MEMBER:

What does this have to do with the Highways Department?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I hope it is going to be something with regard to the Highways Department.

MR. FARRAN:

Yes it is. In the total appropriation for the Highways Department, is there any provision for task force expenses?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't believe there are any provisions in this budget for a task force.

MR. FARRAN:

A supplementary, Mr. Chairman, I wouldn't want to disappoint the hon. Member for Drumheller. Is there anything in this budget for an aircraft from the Department of Lands and Forests?

MR. COPITHORNE:

No, Mr. Chairman, there is nothing in this budget for an aircraft.

DR. BUCK:

I would like to ask the hon. minister a question. From this line of questioning from the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill, would he gather that possibly the hon. member is quite concerned that the pot is going a little bit dry, because he has only got a few hundred dollars out of it. Possibly there should be a little bit more put into your department, so that the hon. member could get more than the five or six hundred dollars that we find very difficult to account for -- [Interjections] -- would just like to consider that, possibly, maybe you could put more in there for him.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, I think the period when the pot was really flush has passed by, about twenty years ago.

MR. BARTON:

Just one more question, I have got to get back to that north transportation study. Is the highway between Fort Vermilion and Lesser Slave Lake a cost-sharing project on a 50-50 basis? That is a straightforward question, yes or no.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, there has been some cost-sharing in the area. But I don't believe that one is.

Mr. Adair tells me there is part of it. But I am not sure on that.

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MR. BARTON:

Mr. Chairman, could I follow that, then, with a supplementary to the Provincial Treasurer? Are you familiar with what part they are participating in?

[Interjections]

No, this is the Lesser Slave Lake one.

MR. MINIELY:

Not a specific agreement. Any remarks I have made with respect to certain aspects of the project, the Lesser Slave Lake agreement as such, I don't know whether this is -- I cannot tell you all the details included in that agreement.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

Appropriation 1552 total agreed to \$ 250,300

Appropriation 1581 Surveys and Properties Branch

MR. STRCM:

Mr. Chairman, this surveys and properties branch: is there any consideration being given to tie the survey branch of the Department of Highways and the surveys of the Department of Lands and Forests as a single unit?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, we're planning on co-ordinating this in the next year or two.

MR. STRCM:

Within the Department of Highways or within the Department of Lands and Forests?

MR. COPITHORNE:

That hasn't been determined yet, Mr. Chairman.

Appropriation 1581 agreed to \$1,629,960

Appropriation 1582 Secondary Road Construction

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, a question to the hon. minister on this Appropriation 1582, as well as Appropriation 1584. I think you related a short time ago the number of miles that are going to be done in each of these categories. Would you make available to the members a list of these and their locations for our information?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ruste you are asking at a later date, not necessarily tonight?

MR. RUSTE:

Yes, at a later date, just make available to us that information.

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MR. COFITHORNE:

Yes, that information will be made available.

MR. RUSTE:

How about how soon?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Don't get impatient. It's equal to what was done last year. The units are a little bigger than they were done last year. I'm still clearing up some of the ones that weren't done last year.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, is there a change in the design for the secondary roads this year, as compared to last year?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Not really, Mr. Chairman, we're trying to use the highest possible standards of construction that are available and that our department is capable of doing.

MR. STRON:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. minister has replied that the work this year will be increased in mileage. Is this what I'm to understand from the answer that you have given on the grid road system?

MR. COFITHORNE:

Actually I suppose it would be increased with the oiling, it depends on how you measure it. The same amount of dollars is being spent and the mileage in the units that are being allowed out are greater. In other words, as I said earlier, we're trying to put the units out in not less than 10 and up to 15 and in that area. So it's an economical unit for a contractor to do. We think we get the best value out of it. Now there are some jobs that we're finishing up that are three, four, or five miles in length and we're doing those this year to finish connections and so forth, but other than that they will be done in what we term economical units. This is 10 miles and over.

MR. STROM:

When you say that you are finishing up roads that have been started, let me ask you: can I assume then that roads that were started between Highway No. 61 and Highway No. 3 for example -- this was a grid system -- will they be completed this year? Is that what you are really saying? Not necessarily.

MR. COFITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, I have personally given the people in that area a personal commitment that I will go into that area to discuss not only that road with them, but also the Highway No. 48 to the border -- which is quite a concern to the people of Medicine Hat and in your constituency. When I look over the files that are available I find a similar thing that the former minister found -- there's a great deal of division of opinion between the local people as to what has the highest priority in the area. I cannot make up my mind -- I know that area very well -- I'm going to go there and satisfy myself about some of the things that I have found by researching the information available in this regard. Hopefully I will be able to make a good judgement on where some of the highest priorities are in that area. There are quite some differences of opinion where the priorities are and, certainly, I think we can come up with a sensible location.

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I might say this, regardless of where you build a road, it may not be in the very best place but it will be a road that's needed.

MR. STRCM:

Mr. Chairman, I'm talking now about the secondary road construction and I take it that you are talking about secondary road construction and primary highways, because you mentioned Highway 48 and I'm not discussing Highway 48 at this point. I do intend to raise that when we get to the primary highway construction.

But on the secondary road program, priorities have been established and accepted by the majority of people. My question to you is, you are not giving consideration to reviewing the present priority road program as established in the secondary road plan, are you?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Chairman, we're going to review all the road programs. We're not holding any of them sacred. Hopefully we'll be able to come out with a comprehensive five-year program as one of our ambitions and one of our goals. At that time, as I said earlier, some of the areas -- and Highway 61, incidentally --

MR. STRCM:

Lethbridge to Medicine Hat.

MR. COPITHORNE:

That's right. In my opinion that has hurt the economy of Medicine Hat more than any other single factor in that area because there wasn't a complementary road south from Medicine Hat to equalize the competition. It's a lot easier to drive an extra few miles on good road than to drive on the rougher roads particularly when they're gravelled they get pretty rough if they're used a lot. We're going to review all of these priorities.

MR. STRCM:

Mr. Chairman, I'm still not getting any answer on the secondary road program. Is it your intention to go ahead and continue building on the secondary road program as started between Highway 61 and Highway 3?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Chairman, I might as well tell the hon. member that we will but it may not necessarily be this year. As the hon. member knows, it is not every area that gets very much secondary road program and others get more. It's share-as-you-go. Last year it wasn't every area that got some secondary road program.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could raise a point of order. I don't know whether the government intends to try to complete the capital works or not, but I'm suggesting that it is very unfair for important items like this to be rushed through at 1 o'clock in the morning with half the members here. I think this is far too important for that and I don't know what the intention of the government is but I notice that there are 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11 backbenchers over there and about 13, 14, or 15 ministers, it was down to 11 ministers at one time. I think we're making a mockery of this thing if we're trying to force this through to limit debate, or whatever reason it is. I can't see the haste to try to complete the capital works of an important department like the Department of

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Highways at 1 o'clock in the morning, and I would respectfully ask the Government House Leader to reconsider if this is the intention.

DR. HCFNER:

Mr. Chairman, we're pleased to see that the hon. Opposition House Leader has some concern in this regard. In my view, while I agree with him that this is an important area of the estimates, I would also point out to him, and to the rest of the members of the House, that we spend a considerable length of time on estimates, generally, and in my view there comes a time when the estimates have to be dealt with. If the hon. member is saying that he is not able to deal with them tonight then we will give consideration to adjourning if that's what he is saying.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, that's what I'm saying. I don't think it is fair to continue the capital works of the Department of Highways at this hour of the morning.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, concerning a point of order. We made an offer in this House to sit Wednesday night, and to start at 7:00 o'clock in the evenings which the government turned down. And then to get into this type of an exercise and hear the hon. Government House Leader or the Deputy Premier stand up and make statements such as that, I think it is somewhat of an injustice to the members on this side of the House. Because we clearly indicated our interest in expediting the affairs of this Assembly, but now to see the government turn around and make an endurance contest out of it -- fine -- I can last as long as the Deputy Premier can, and I'm quite prepared to sit here and raise hell until 6:00 o'clock in the morning if you think it's going to get them done, but I don't think it's really going to do justice to the business of the House. If this is the government's idea of how to conduct the affairs of this Assembly, to turn down what we thought was a reasonable request -- they've got the voting strength to shove it down our throats, so let's get on with it.

DR. HCFNER:

Well, Mr. Chairman, the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc likes to distort and do all those kinds of things....

MR. HYNDMAN:

Oh, let's get on with it.

DR. HCFNER:

Oh there are other commitments that members have between 6:00 and 8:00, and we accepted the reasonable request of using this afternoon for estimates. If the hon. member wants to become obstreperous and to continue this way, then, Mr. Chairman, I suggest we continue.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I think we have to remember one or two things...

DR. HOFNER:

Believe it!

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MR. TAYLOR:

First of all we are representing the people of Alberta here and I don't think any of us including the government members do their best work at 1:00 o'clock in the morning. And secondly, if three-quarters of the members were here -- if the benches are going to be half empty -- I don't think this is fair either. I just don't think it's fair. I sit in this House as much as anybody, and I plan to sit here just as much as anybody and I'll stay here until the thing ends, but I just don't think it's fair to expect the members to carry on reasonable and sensible debate on a vote as important as Highways and Transport at 1:00 o'clock in the morning. Now if we had some deadline to meet, that's fine. But there is no particular deadline in this particular vote, and I would again request the hon. Government House Leader to reconsider this. I think it would be far better to adjourn at this time and do this at a proper hour.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Well we might consider that, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to make one particular point that the offer made by the other side could very well have been made in March or April of this year. They proposed a major change in the rules of this Assembly that has not been invoked for some 20 years, and I think it is very clear where the blame lies in terms of delaying this session. [Interjections.]

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

MR. CHAIRMAN:

It's been moved by the hon. minister that we report. Do you agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[Mr. Diachuk left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker took 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, I move that the House do now adjourn until this afternoon at 2:30 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER:

Moved by the hon. Government House Leader that the House adjourn until this afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. Do you all agree?

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HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

[The House rose at 12:50 a.m.]

