

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, February 28, 1973

[The House met at 2:30 o'clock.]

## PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. NOTLEY:

I have the pleasure today of introducing two groups of students to you, Mr. Speaker, and through you to the members of the Assembly. First of all, 11 Grade 12 students from Uranium City High School in Saskatchewan. I note that some of the hon. members may be a little concerned about ideas emanating from our eastern province, but I am sure they will welcome these students along with their teachers, Mr. Lanovaz and Mrs. Keller. They are in the members gallery and I would ask them to please stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, if I may introduce the second group of students. I would like to introduce 24 Grade 7 students from Worsley, Alberta. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. and Mrs. Barnes and their bus driver, Mr. Hagen. They are seated in the public gallery. They have come something over 400 miles to view the session this afternoon. I would ask them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly, seated in your gallery, Dr. Clark Lundgren, who is the president of the Alberta Chiropractic Association and a resident in Lethbridge, and two of his colleagues, Dr. Don Swartz and Dr. Orville Berg.

## FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a Return for the information of the members of the Assembly, as required under The Financial Administration Act, on Remissions and Writings-off.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1972, as required by statute.

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Sessional Paper No. 61, being the Annual Report of the Department of Mines and Minerals.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Glenbow Alberta Institute report for 1972, as required by statute.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Department of Highways and Transport, 1971-72.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary North Hill, followed by the hon. Member for Vegreville.

Oil Export Restrictions

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals. Mr. Minister, will Alberta have to bear all the burden of the reductions in oil export as a result of federal control?

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, we received yesterday information of the restrictions by the National Energy Board. We have had a preliminary check on those figures. The preliminary check would indicate that Alberta will bear the full load of the reduction.

MR. FARRAN:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the federal move toward controls a result of lack of capacity in the inter-provincial pipeline, or is it anything to do with existing...

[Inaudible]

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I think I'd have to answer that by saying that there are nominations filed which indicate the demand. In considering that demand, they do look at the capacity of the pipelines. At the present time, the capacity does not equal the demand.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Vegreville, followed by the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray.

Licence Plates

MR. BATIUK:

Mr. Speaker, this question is directed to the Minister of Highways. Since March 1 is just around the corner, will the new licence plates be available tomorrow? What will the fee be?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, yes, the new licence plates will be available tomorrow at the usual bargain price at which Alberta sells them. I have a sample, Mr. Speaker. It will have an emblem on the top, "Wild Rose Country", and the colours will be orange and blue.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray, followed by the hon. Member for Innisfail.

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Minister of Highways. In view of the fact that licence plates are going on sale tomorrow, and in view of the problems we have had in Fort McMurray in acquiring licence plates, I wonder if the minister has been able to do anything to improve the situation this year?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. The licence plates will be for sale in Fort McMurray at the forestry office. We have a former Treasury Branch agent selling them in that location.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Innisfail, followed by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley.

Fertilizer Supply

MR. DOAN:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. What is the situation as to the supply of fertilizer for farmers this spring?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker I have had a review done with regard to the situation in fertilizer supply, and as far as we can tell, there should be an adequate supply of fertilizer for farmers in Alberta. That is not to say there may not be some shortages in the odd area because of transportation problems, but the outlook is that there should be adequate supplies of all types of fertilizer.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Drayton Valley, followed by the hon. Member for Athabasca.

Oil Export Restrictions (Cont.)

MR. ZANDER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Mines and Minerals. Do I understand from the answer you gave to the first question directed to you by the Member for Calgary North Hill that there were no restrictions placed on Manitoba and Saskatchewan crude?

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I think that's the effect of the order. They deal with western Canada, and the effect of the order is that Alberta will bear the full load of those restrictions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Athabasca, followed by the hon. Member for Smoky River.

Timber Regulations

MR. APPLEBY:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. I would like to know, Mr. Minister, of any changes being considered in the timber regulations to make it easier for the smaller sawmill operators to remain in business?

DR. WARRACK:

The answer is yes, Mr. Speaker. We have had representations in that regard, particularly during the tour of the Grande Prairie area by the cabinet in October.

What has been changed, Mr. Speaker, is that formerly the very small, miscellaneous timber permits were issued locally and the less small, special timber permits were issued from Edmonton. We are combining those two into what we shall call the local timber permits, and they will be entirely available from the local forestry offices.

MR. APPLEBY:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I was wondering if the substantial cash deposits will still be required for these operations?

DR. WARRACK:

As a matter of fact, this was a representation we had had over the same period of time. The cash deposits required were directly related to timber dues and that in turn to the lumber prices which at present are very high, causing an undue and onerous burden on the smaller and middle-sized timber operators. We

have put in new criteria that will relieve this unusual and undue burden for deposits by the small and medium-sized timber operators and we are sure that it will help them a great deal in that way.

MR. APPLEBY:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the smaller operators be able to salvage timber from oil road rights-of-way or other rights-of-way in the timbered areas?

DR. WARRACK:

Yes, they will, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, we have tightened the regulations with respect to requiring the salvage of merchantable timber when there is geophysical or other development that creates surface disturbance on lands that have merchantable timber.

MR. DRAIN:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Do you see this program encroaching on the timber quota areas?

DR. WARRACK:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Smoky River, followed by the hon. Member for Lacombe.

Young's Point Provincial Park

MR. MOORE:

Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests again. Is it the intention of your department to begin development or planning on Young's Point Provincial Park on the north shore of Sturgeon Lake during this year?

DR. WARRACK:

The answer is yes, Mr. Speaker. In light of the fact that there are presently five undeveloped provincial parks that have been established in Alberta, and given that the Legislature approves what we're asking for in the budget, we are hopeful of being able to go ahead with that program.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lacombe.

Kootenay Plains - Stoney Indians

MR. COOKSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of hon. J.A. Adair, Minister without Portfolio. In view of the concerns of Zone 4 with regard to tourism and their concern about the Kootenay Plains, would the minister care to advise the Assembly whether negotiations have been completed with the native people in the area?

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Speaker, that particular question relates to two problems in the area -- two issues. One, the immediate issue, was one in which we had to arrange with the native people for the moving of grave sites that would be affected by the flooding of the Big Horn Dam. In that particular area we have done that and the grave sites have been moved to another site, a site on which a clearing will be erected some time in the very near future.

The other question relates to the area of their aboriginal rights and that, of course, is a federal matter and one that they are discussing with the federal people. We, however, have been discussing with them an issue which relates to a goodwill gesture on the part of our government to provide to them some 1,280 acres of land that would be used as a cultural, historic and religious site, one

that would not be lived on and one which they would use for any religious, cultural and historic ceremonies that they might have in that particular area.

MR. COOKSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can you give Zone 4 people any assurance of the protection of Kootenay Plains for all the people of the province?

MR. ADAIR:

Possibly I may relate that to either the Minister of Lands and Forests or the Minister of the Environment. I am not exactly sure what that particular area is, and maybe I could pass that on to the Minister of the Environment.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, the Kootenay Plains is a very vast area. We recognized early when we took over as government, Mr. Speaker, that before us lay the matter of plotting a very substantial portion of the valley in regard to the formation of Lake Abraham. We also recognized at that time that the government had a moral responsibility in regard to moving grave sites and in handling a delicate situation with respect to the Stoney Indians.

We initiated discussions with the Stoney Indians quite some time ago in regard to effecting a reasonable kind of 'settlement', if you wish -- for lack of a better word. Generally the discussions revolved around the idea of establishing a cultural and religious area so that the Indians who had lived and hunted in that area for many generations could, in fact, have some area set aside for these functions which had been going on for centuries.

Also as the hon. Mr. Adair indicated, there was a need to move the grave sites at the earliest opportunity. Our discussions with the Indians revolved around the idea of establishing this cultural and historic site and moving the grave sites, as well as some cabins that they held for historic considerations, onto this area.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. minister is making a statement of the kind which is ordinarily made on Orders of the Day. Would he come directly to the answer please?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, in all honesty I have forgotten what the specific question was.

[Laughter]

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly the hon. member could repeat the question; otherwise we may be compounding the minister's difficulty in remaining within the framework of the answer.

MR. YURKO:

I now know what the question was. The question was whether or not some minister or the government could guarantee that the people of Alberta would have access to the Kootenay Plains. I think this government can certainly guarantee that. The Kootenay Plains are very large. The Stoney Indians are Albertans and they will also have access to the Kootenay Plains. They will also have a portion set aside for their religious and historic background ceremonies.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood.

Workmen's Compensation Board

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour. Is the hon. minister in a position to advise us when the report of the Select Committee of the Legislature reviewing the Workmen's Compensation Board might be ready for tabling?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I can make this an interim report in two parts. First, the committee has been convened for an important meeting next week, at which time one of the items on the agenda will be the examination of the time frame in which we would bring the report to the Legislature, and when we might table the amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Act. Following that meeting, we will be able to indicate more definitively at what time we will table the report in the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray.

Gregoire Lake Provincial Park

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, this might be by way of a supplementary to the Minister of Lands and Forests. Gregoire Lake Park, in my constituency of course, has been designated as a park for several years now but there has been hardly anything done on it. Is this one of the parks you are considering doing for this year? Will you be opening it?

DR. WARRACK:

I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, just what year the park was established. I believe it was the same year as the by-election in that area! But I am hopeful of the same opportunity at Gregoire Lake Provincial Park.

Farm Credit - Wheat Board

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. In light of last fall's disastrous harvesting conditions, have you had an opportunity to meet formally with the officials of the federal Farm Credit as well as the Canadian Wheat Board to see if some voluntary effort will be taken by these organizations to refrain from taking legal action against farmers hard hit by the harvesting conditions?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, in regard to the Farm Credit, the answer is yes. In regard to the Wheat Board, the answer is that the Alberta Grain Commission is conducting talks with the Wheat Board in relation to that particular problem. There was an announcement yesterday or the day before with regard to the dairy quotas in the area, and I think I also brought the hon. members up to date with regard to the payments that had been approved and are now in the process of going out.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact there are some 2,000 farmers in the Peace River country who are behind in their payments on their cash advances, has the government given any consideration to what the impact would be on the credit rating of these farmers if the Wheat Board proceeds with judgments against them?

DR. HORNER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is part of the on-going negotiations with the Wheat Board, in regard to that -- to see whether or not we can't get them not to go ahead with judgments at this time.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the concern in the Peace River country, can the minister give the House any indication of when negotiations between the Grain Commission and the Wheat Board will be finalized, and when some statement can be made on the matter in this House?

DR. HORNER:

Well, I would hope as soon as possible, Mr. Speaker. As soon as that is done, we will make an announcement in the House.

MR. NOTLEY:

One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the government considered making funds available through the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation -- channelling funds on a priority basis to the region -- not only in the Peace, but throughout the province, where harvesting conditions have been very adverse last fall?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, we have instructed the Agricultural Development Corporation people in the field to pay particular attention to those who had a bad year last year, through no fault of their own. Particularly in those areas where they may have had a series of disastrous years, a hard look has to be taken at re-financing these operations, in the hope that we can put them on a much more stable base.

MR. COOKSON:

Mr. Speaker, could I ask a question of the hon. members opposite?

MR. SPEAKER:

I believe the hon. member could defer his question until 5:30.

DR. BUCK:

You have just been chastised.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Farran]

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, I too would like to begin by paying tribute to the excellent speech in reply to the address from the Throne by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder.

I think we were all particularly impressed by his down-to-earth practicality, deriving from his extensive knowledge of the petroleum industry. All --

Government Motion No. 1

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, a point of order. I would just state that it was our intention initially to call Government Motion No. 1 before proceeding to further consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech. I would ask that we now revert to Orders of the Day, to call Government Motion No. 1.

MR. SPEAKER:

Does the hon. Government House Leader have the consent of the House to revert to Orders of the Day?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. In light of the fact that the motion was not presented to the House until the late hours of last night, and further, in view of the activities of the day thusfar -- which really didn't provide any opportunity to examine the pros and cons of the resolution -- I would like to ask the Government House Leader if they would give consideration to holding the motion until Friday.

MR. HYNDMAN:

That is agreeable, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Does the House agree that Motion No. 1 be held over until Friday?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. FARRAN:

May I continue, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

Certainly.

Continuation of Throne Speech Debate

MR. FARRAN:

Well, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying when I was so politely interrupted by my own House Leader, we were impressed by the speech by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder. I also pay tribute to the speech by the seconder, the hon. Member for Stettler, whose common sense is already appreciated by members on both sides of the House.

To you, Mr. Speaker, I have a few laudatory words, for your erudition, your eloquence and your never-failing wit. To paraphrase Kipling, if ever there was a Speaker who kept his head when all around you, people were losing theirs, you are the one.

The Speech from the Throne is in logical sequence with those other programs introduced last year. It is part of a steadily unfolding plan which, to use an agricultural term, traces its origins and straight-line breeding to the new directions for Alberta which form part of the Progressive Conservative platform in 1971, the platform commitments which carried it to victory at the polls, and brought to an end the reign of the party that had ruled for some 36 years. It has been especially gratifying to me, as a private member of the government party, that I have been able to play a direct part in the modelling of these policies.

The first chapter began last spring with relief for senior citizens, the most readily identifiable of those Albertans on fixed incomes who were suffering from high property tax, rising prices, and the high cost of ill-health. The government relieved them then entirely of basic education tax, and of premiums for Medicare, including the supplementary plan for drugs under Blue Cross.

The government raised workmen's compensation, and the minimum wage. It set the wheels in motion for the first reform of the Workmen's Compensation Board Act since close to the turn of the century. It moved immediately to help the handicapped, particularly needy children. It took action over the pathetic waiting lists for facilities which were immediately cut by the opening of new facilities in Edmonton and Calgary.

Now with a colourful and aggressive Minister of Agriculture, it ended the preoccupation of the agriculture department officials with long-winded advice to farmers, with the teaching of farmers to suck eggs, so to speak, and instead concentrated on the thrust to preserve the family farm through marketing. A thrust not only to provide funds for expansion of food production, but above all an accent on market. And it's paying off, very obviously.

The expansion of horizons is obviously the real solution for agriculture. Sometimes I used to say, when I was a dairy farmer, "You can get your head down so low while you are shovelling out the manure channel that you can't see that with another ten cows you could hire a man."

The move to diversify Alberta's economy is exciting. Certainly it is high time that something was done to reduce our excessive dependence upon the natural resource industry. The great tragedy of the former government was not that they didn't get enough for our oil, and our gas -- not that the \$3.5 billion was mis-spent in 24 years, because I don't think it was -- it was that not enough of it was directed to the stabilization production of job-providing, tax-producing, secondary industry.

The tragedy of Alberta's natural gas was that so much of it was piped at cut-price rates to Sarnia, Ontario, for conversion into petrochemical



byproducts. Those people in Ontario stole jobs, in effect, from Albertans. So the investment of \$50 million of seed money for new industry to The Alberta Opportunity Company is long overdue.

As promised on Page 7 of the Throne Speech, the bold initiatives in the field of oil and gas are to continue. Last year, you will recall that the prophets of doom and gloom forecast catastrophe if the government proceeded with its plan to take an extra \$70 million a year from the crude oil industry. They said the industry would grind to a halt in Alberta, that unemployment would increase and that the big corporations would pick up their marbles and go home.

They were wrong. The incentives for new drilling are working in very dramatic fashion, there is not an idle oil rig in the province, and most of them have full order books for the next 18 months at least. If those incentives cost \$20 million, it was then a net yield from that new take of \$70 million of \$50 million. Now from page 6 of the Speech from the Throne, we know that every penny is to go back to Albertans in fulfilment of promises to relieve property tax.

We were all excited when the Premier announced the two-price system for gas. No longer would we accept colonial status in relation to eastern Canada. If they wanted any more of our gas, they'd pay a fair price, and for once Albertans would get a break as owners of the gas through a rebate for the difference. There was hope at last by a single bold stroke of reversing the trend -- a hope that we would recover some of the jobs lost to Sarnia, Ontario, and other parts of eastern Canada.

In the fall the government laid the corner-stones of policy, the principles on which a party of integrity of purpose is based. The Christian principles of equal treatment for all are easier to say than to apply. There will be difficulties, but I feel sure that every member who searches his heart will agree that those difficulties have to be faced for the sake of principle. The paths of righteousness -- the Good Book tells us -- are narrow and difficult. But we must examine this problem in the light of the basic principles passed on to us through the gospel. However tough it may be to apply, remember that the principle should be stressed. Of course, there will always be some degree of discrimination as long as men are human; there is no perfection outside Heaven. Remember that even in biblical times, our Blessed Lord had noticed that the Jews were having trouble with the Samaritans. But I'm sure that the MRA people at the prayer breakfast next week will emphasize to us again that 'absolute honesty' and 'absolute love' are not so easy to put into action.

In this session we deal with the practical problems of property tax and education finance. The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Plan is a most exciting plan, more sweeping reform than ever attempted anywhere previously in Canada. I wouldn't be human if I didn't say I was proud that the government has accepted the principal recommendations of the task force on which I sat with the members from Innisfail, Ponoka, Vegreville and Drayton Valley. We were proud that they accepted our earlier recommendations in regard to senior citizens, and we were doubly proud when they agreed to the main points in our final report. This plan, in our view, is truly a Progressive Conservative plan -- truly progressive and truly conservative. It tackles the problems of inflation and rises in the cost of living by reducing taxes, by a direct reduction in the cost of living, the cost of shelter. That is truly conservative. It reduces taxes, and at the same time it introduces budgetary control. Nothing could be a more conservative approach than that. It imposes limits on spending -- I shouldn't say imposes -- it introduces guidelines for limits on spending at all levels of government in Alberta, and that limit is the only proper one for the annual growth in the economy as expressed through the gross provincial product.

It is also a progressive plan -- the other part of our name. It makes a serious attempt to reduce the regressiveness of property tax. It takes overall responsibility for the vast human resource programs of hospitals and health. It introduces the concept of paying at least 90 per cent of the cost of education from funds other than property tax, and it leaves only 10 per cent of the net cost of local social assistance with the municipalities.

But by and large it is leaving property tax with the municipalities for services of real benefit to property. By reducing the property tax responsibility for human resource programs it thus increases local autonomy. It takes the huge burden of responsibility for education, health and welfare largely from local government and from the backs of the property owner. It recognizes that renters pay property tax through rent -- the first time this concept has been introduced in western Canada and it must be just. It has an ability-to-pay feature where relief is greatest for the owner of average property and below-average income earning.

There are several other things in the Speech from the Throne that please me which I have not in recent years had a direct contact with, but I have in the past. One is the indication that the province intends to introduce a new Police Act, correcting the terrible errors made when the existing Police Act was introduced a few years ago. Under that ill-advised revision of the Police Act, control of police was removed from the local authority. Even though they were left with the bills, this was almost as bad as the other ill-fated idea of introducing a provincial police force.

Now I understand, and I hope anyway from the Speech from the Throne, that the control of local police forces is to be returned to the local authority, with local autonomy really being recognized in the field of law enforcement. If it had not been so, and some time in the future there had been an argument between a police commission responsible only to the Attorney General and a local council responsible for supplying that police force, the crisis would have been absolutely unbearable.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to give my personal congratulation to the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc -- he is not presently in the House -- on his elevation to high office. He is a likable chap; I feel sure he will do a good job and I was very pleased to see that he did not have to resign. I had heard rumours that he was perhaps going to make way for someone else.

I was disappointed, however, in his first public reaction, presumably speaking for the party, to the Throne Speech. The first complaint was that there were no surprises in the Speech from the Throne, that there was nothing new, that everything had already been revealed and that the government was bypassing the Legislature and appealing over the heads of the members to the people. That was said to be an affront to the opposition. Well, I don't believe there is anything wrong in keeping the people fully informed; this after all must be the essence of open government. Open government must mean maximum dialogue and discussion with the people. In order to discuss and to be flexible enough to change policies, I think one must tell the people what they are and give them plenty of notice, so that the propositions can be discussed from one end of the province to the other and not be confined to these marble halls.

The other complaint, as I understood it, was that the government proposals undermine local autonomy. Now I don't want to be overly partisan, but that does sound odd to me from the lips of the architects of the local accountability theory. And I have seen it from the other end as a municipal official, as an alderman for some ten years in our best Alberta city. In 1969, the previous government froze contributions to the hospital and forced them to go, cap in hand, to the municipalities for their extras. The municipalities had no right of appeal, and they had to pay without question. That was called local accountability, or local autonomy.

So in the name of local autonomy, what was really done was to pull the greatest hoax ever on the poor old property owner. In the name of local autonomy that property owner had to pay through the nose, whether he liked it or not; he had no recourse. The hospital boards were largely appointed; very few were elected. Certainly, some local councillors liked the aspect of local autonomy in regard to hospitals. It gives them \$40 per meeting. I don't see that anything should change under the new proposals about payment for attendance at local hospital boards by local councillors. It should continue, and will continue. But I think that this is over-simplifying this proposition of local autonomy.

Perhaps I should rush to point out here that all Calgary boards don't take this pay. Some do, some don't.

So, what local autonomy meant in 1969 and 1970 was paying bills for the extras through property tax. If the province didn't cover the entire cost of the operation, and it deliberately didn't, the extras had to be picked up, without question, by the property owner. It didn't mean that the people in my riding who went to the Calgary General Hospital got any better treatment or any worse treatment than if they went to the Foothills Hospital. In fact, I have the impression, as a personal view, that the way money is being thrown around without local autonomy by provincial hospitals, the patients at Foothills Hospital probably got more luxurious treatment than those at the Calgary General Hospital in terms of space for their beds and the size of the ward. But so far as the people of Calgary North Hill are concerned, they don't get paid for any board meetings. They'll say they don't know what you mean by local autonomy. They get the same good treatment in either hospital, and if local autonomy for hospitals means that they have to pay more taxes, forget it. Their feelings are not hurt.

Perhaps what was meant by local autonomy, or the complaint from the opposition over the Speech from the Throne, is in regard to the proposed 7.5 per cent guideline which are termed Good Housekeeping Incentive Grants for Municipalities. These are pretty easy guidelines. The suggestion is that they should be applied to mill rates. And since almost all assessments are increasing, they get the benefit of growth. If any of them decline, I presume they can make a special pitch to the minister for special treatment for an exceptional case. So this 7.5 per cent doesn't apply to budgets. It is applied to mill rates. It's giving the full benefit of assessment growth. Since most areas in Alberta have their assessment increasing from 3 to 5 per cent per year, this 7.5 per cent is a very lenient guideline. It is, however, the projected annual growth of the gross provincial product in Alberta for the next few years. In some parts of Canada the growth may only be 6 per cent. It's expected that Alberta will continue to have a booming economy, and will continue to have a real growth of around 7.5 per cent a year.

But that is really all we can afford to spend. For years municipal councils have been yelling their heads off for strict controls to be placed on school board spending. I used to argue that way myself when I was an alderman. That was when local autonomy was really hurting -- back in the old days when the provincial contributions to the foundation plan for education were so small that school boards had to stick their council cousins for an extra levy on property tax. That was local autonomy -- so local that municipal councils had to pinch on services of real benefit to property so they could exercise local autonomy to pay school bills. They knew their people were being asked to pay for far too many things, and there was a limit.

Now, the proposition is that we will have a new form of local autonomy. The councils will be free to direct most of their property tax to municipal services. We have taken most of the cost of education off property. That is real freedom -- real local autonomy -- the sort of local autonomy that people will like.

Of course it has been said that just as municipal councils called for controls on the school boards -- I'll never forget the last government which wrapped them up just about as tight as an Egyptian mummy, with a 6 per cent annual limit. We have said now they will still have a control, a guideline of 7.5 per cent so that we don't spend our people into the poor house. About all the economy can stand are 7.5 per cent increases, and certainly all the people can stand when you think of the high cost of food and everything else they buy. The 7.5 per cent guideline which is being touted as an invasion into local autonomy is not nearly as tough as the 6 per cent guideline applied in the last 3 years, with a mandatory plebiscite if they increase it by the slightest amount after they exhaust their so-called flexibility factor.

Of course the opposition members, if they are saying they favour higher taxes and therefore resent the spending control, well, we'll definitely have to think then of going over their heads and letting the people judge. Our way to fight inflation is to cut taxes and control spending. So don't give us that local autonomy bit. That was the old shell game that used to be played. You held taxes at a provincial level while you pushed them up at a local level and you called it local autonomy.

When we were campaigning back in the summer of 1971, a constant complaint was that in Alberta, too many independent and autonomous boards had been set up over the years. Many of these boards were responsible neither to the elected representatives of the people nor to the court. To say that the reduction of a few of these autonomous boards -- not enough yet in my opinion, but a few of them -- is a blow to local autonomy, is to distort the whole picture. The opposite is really the case. Wherever the jurisdiction has been returned to an elected government, whether it be at provincial level or at local government level, there is actually a reduction in the possibilities for buck-passing, a restoration of local autonomy.

So the accusations which have been made to the hon. Minister for Advanced Education, that he had actually violated local autonomy by returning responsibility to his department, I believe are totally invalid. Appointed boards which are ultimately responsible to no one but themselves are a negation of the democratic system, especially if there is little control over the state funds they disburse. If I had my 'druthers' I would like to see many more of these autonomous boards and commissions abolished. Then we would have really responsible government, not a government, as so often happened in past years, that ducks behind some appointed shield. So I congratulate the ministers who have made a start on this problem, and have not been afraid to take responsibility in their field. That's what they were elected to do.

Mr. Speaker, there are two other things in the Speech from the Throne which give me and the people from Calgary North Hill pleasure and interest. One is the new trend towards providing provincial parks in the two major metropolitan areas where most Albertans live. Just the other day the hon. Member for Highwood said erroneously that urban members were a majority in this House. This is not so. If he would just look at the list and check it again he will find that the rural members are in the majority.

[Interjection]

...He can count but he uses the new math... However, there is no doubt where the majority of the people live. The majority of the people live in those two metropolitan areas. Many of them are on low incomes and find it very difficult to make ends meet. A park which preserves some green, open space within a bus ride of their homes will be a far greater service to them than any distant forest or moose pasture in some remote corner of the province.

The other thing that really interested me -- and it seems so small that a lot of people have overlooked it -- is the introduction of a forest fire fighter service for the Metis and our native people in the North. I think this is a really imaginative experiment, a bold experiment to try to relieve some of the problems we all know exist there.

To emphasize the skills in which these peoples have shown themselves, not only efficient, but better than anyone else; to put them into some sort of a para-military force, if you would like to call it that, with a uniform which I hope reflects their native traditions, to give them something that will encourage pride in their skills in the outdoors, I think this is the way to go. I think it is just tremendous.

I hope that they will be given generous leave and so on from their duties to go back home occasionally. I think if it works up there in forest fire-fighting -- and I don't see why it shouldn't because there have been a few similar ventures like this in the United States which I have been told have been successful -- then I think it should be spread all down the eastern slopes of the Rockies.

It need not be confined to fire-fighting either. I think that an Indian guide in a buckskin jacket from some semi-disciplined force, could be of great assistance to our tourist industry. So I think that it is a most interesting addition in this magnificent Speech from the Throne.

I say The Alberta Property Reduction Plan in which I have played some part with the hon. Minister for Municipal Affairs -- he is the architect, I am only the draftsman -- but that to me has justified my seeking --

[Interjections]

-- office in the provincial government. I said when I ran in 1971 that I was leaving city hall because I thought there was a hope that I could solve some of the problems up here that I was never able to solve down there. And the people thought this was just the same sort of baloney that everybody gives, you know. But it hasn't been, I have been able to do something for them, just little things, but this is a big thing, this Property Tax Reduction Plan, a real, massive --

[Applause]

MR. LUDWIG:

[Inaudible]

MR. FARRAN:

I don't know what the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View was saying but I think he said that he wished that I was with Social Credit, but this of course, is not true. I am quite happy on this side of the House.

MR. LUDWIG:

Don't kid yourself.

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, this is a document which, in my opinion, as a writer of English, is not quite as well written or in quite as good style as last year.

But it contains such a list of objectives and targets, it would be very difficult to put it into flowery literature. I think it is a most fantastic blueprint for legislation this year.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Fincher Creek-Crowsnest, followed by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley.

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, mindful of the tradition that has been established in this Legislature, it gives me great pleasure also to add my voice to the congratulations that have been extended to the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder and the hon. Member for Stettler for their able presentations on the Speech from the Throne. I certainly did appreciate the well thought out speech of the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder. There was a lot of good information in it.

So again we have another sitting of the Legislature, and another Speech from the Throne. Of course, this is a combination of a lot of speeches, and all of them are a little bit different.

I welcome very much the progress that has been made, as outlined in the Speech from the Throne, on the support of the elderly people in the matter of Medicare, drug costs and the reduction of education costs.

However, there is certainly a great area, Mr. Speaker, of social concern that has not been touched on by this particular Speech from the Throne. It has certainly gone a long way. It referred to the Metis people and it referred to the elderly. It mentioned The Workmen's Compensation Act, and it talked of human rights and social reforms. But there is one forgotten group of people that are not given consideration, and I feel truly, Mr. Speaker, that these people should be given consideration.

These people are brought to my attention in the area that I come from, probably to a greater degree than most areas because of the high-casualty nature of the type of work done in the Crowsnest Pass. I refer now specifically to a widow -- though there are several who have phoned me and voiced their concerns and their problems, and I certainly have a sincere desire to help them, Mr. Speaker. But there, again, your hands are tied. So all I can do is bring these problems before you in this particular Legislature.

I refer to widows of miners -- and as you know, miners by the nature of their occupation do not live too long in most cases -- who, after raising their children, and seeing them educated, are forced -- as the hon. Member for Drumheller said in speech, and I didn't believe that until I researched it -- to live on \$30 a month for food, or \$90 a month for maintaining a house.

This happens in the wealthy, good old province of Alberta where we go around patting ourselves on the back; where we gloat about the marvellous things we have in the Speech from the Throne; where we talk about 50 million or 25 million, a park here, culture and all these fine things. And we refuse to acknowledge a problem like this that stands in front of us.

Another problem we are faced with in the Province of Alberta that is totally ignored is -- and I have talked about it before, in our committee to make deliberations -- the human redundancy problem. Now what is this? I can refer to cases where, because of deteriorating health, emphysema or some other thing, a man no longer is socially able to perform and make a living for himself.

What is the recourse in these particular situations? If he is a farmer and he has certain assets, then he can sell them. But he maybe is an industrial worker, a worker in one of our plants in the city or in any of the heavy industries, and possibly he has had a minor injury. And within the purview of settling this particular injury, it has been said, and probably rightly so, that it has been settled on the basis of medical understanding, and on the basis of the capacity that is related to the injury. But not truly, Mr. Speaker, in relation to the problem of what this person is going to do who is an immigrant into this country, who has been a hewer of wood, and a drawer of water, who has worked with diligence and industry all of his life and has made a contribution -- and suddenly at 50 or 55, because of something like arthritis, or some other particular thing -- has not now the wherewithal to make a living for himself. I would think there should be developed a social package that takes into consideration all of these particular things, in order that we can truly say

that in good old Alberta there are at least the smatterings or beginnings of equality for all the people.

I look with pleasure towards the announced policy of the development of secondary industries, in order to stabilize the future of Alberta. I think all of us well realize that as the oil dribbles out of the barrel and down the spout, it becomes a little bit emptier and emptier every day. Certainly this has got to be taken into consideration in evaluating these things.

However, what is the key that will unlock the secondary industries in the Province of Alberta? The key, Mr. Speaker, is the energy that you have. The way this key will function, and open up the lock of largesse for the future of the Province of Alberta, is the way the energy resources of this province will be handled in the future. I urge the hon. members of the government to think big, to think beyond today, and not to sell the birthright of Albertans, as Esau did for a mess of pottage. With judicious handling of our energy resources, with the ability to say "No" in certain areas, we can in effect develop the particular secondary industries that we have.

I welcome and congratulate the government in their efforts to improve the lot of the handicapped children. Much has been done, much more has been done, and I certainly appreciate that.

Ideas are scattered about the Speech from the Throne, but if you dig into any particular document you are bound to find something worthwhile in it.

Now we move to Alberta property tax, and the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill has claimed the fatherhood of this baby that has landed on the doorstep of the Alberta Legislature. He stood up and announced that he is the parent. But what this hon. member did not say when he talked about this particular thing was a very simple, elementary logical thing. This particular thing is -- that if this government has so much money, whether they acquire it by fair means or foul means, depending whether you are on the collecting end or on the giving end is the pre-determining factor whether it is fair or foul -- there evidently must be something wrong.

If government says, from one level of government to the other government, "Here my children, please be good, and I am going to give you something." then it would logically appear to me that the collection has been too great in the area of the senior government. Or, the senior government has been remiss in not allowing the junior government to have the areas of taxation that would have allowed them to stand proud -- do their own thing -- accept their responsibilities as they should have, and look after the people of their particular towns, villages and cities in the way they properly should. But not so, this government and former governments in dealing with municipal government have said, You are not responsible. Therefore, as the crumbs fall from our table, we will feed you these particular crumbs." And this, Mr. Speaker, is a travesty, this is a total misconception; so when the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill stands in his place and exalts the virtues of this founding that is already deformed by his illogical statements, Mr. Speaker, I have to wonder -- I'm concerned.

I welcome the new plan for expanding the benefits of natural gas to rural Albertans. However, Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not make one remark, and that is simply that the financial implications in relation to the people who are going to be serviced should be properly explored.

I talked to a man in my constituency who went along with a gas co-op. This man is 56; he is thinking that some day he will sell his last cow and shut 'er down. He went along with this co-op on the basis of good neighbour policy. So after calculating the amount of money that would have to be put out on his own behalf in order to become a member and relating it to the costs of propane, he would have to live in this particular place and buy natural gas for 36 years to come out even. Now I'm not saying that this is a particular situation that occurs in all areas of the Province of Alberta, but certainly this is one of the criteria that should be looked at.

All I can say about the design for the two-price rebate on the system of natural gas is that now Alberta will have another special honour; they will have now pushed another province, to which I could refer but I will not because of natural politeness. They have now usurped the place of the bad guys in the Dominion of Canada -- another stepchild, Mr. Speaker.

I would think that the new oil sands development policy would require a considerable amount of thought. The reason why I say this, Mr. Speaker, is because my understanding is that there is a considerable percentage of the oil

sands that cannot be recovered by the present conventional mining method. Hence the technology has not been thus far developed to unearth the more expensive areas of tar sands. So I think care should be taken in the allocation of these particular developments, that there should be provision made for the easy and the hard stuff, so that the high-grading will not occur and we will be left with a pile of sand and an expensive tar sand development that is going no place.

I suppose all of us can talk with pleasure about the proposed environmental management through legislative policies, and the dialogue with our citizens which is very good. The land surface conservation and management will be reflected in a Land Surface Conservation and Reclamation Act. But there have been areas in previous legislation which have tied the ability of the hon. Minister of the Environment to function in the way he would have liked to.

I would properly hail the new Coal Conservation Act. I don't know how many of the members in the Legislature realize what happens when a coal development occurs and this development is not allowed to, or does not proceed to the ultimate end of extracting what it was supposed to extract, that is, the total of the coal that you have available. The result is that the development work deteriorates and this coal is thereupon lost in its entirety for ever. What does this represent or what has this represented in the past? Even in my area, hundreds of millions of tons of coal have been lost and never will be extracted. In fact, I would say it is just a sin against natural resource practices, an insult to good management, and certainly when I say this, I realize that the reason for this has probably been the costs and the loss of markets.

I think the end result of the new provincial parks policy with the provision for provincial parks within urban areas is good. But here again we find big brother stepping on the municipalities saying, You want a park, we will give you a park -- a justification for not giving municipal government the type of revenue they should have in order that they can develop a park on their own. However, I still welcome it for this reason. A study has been made of the park usage in the province of Alberta and it has been discovered that those who use provincial parks are the middle-upper-income class of people. Therefore, the working people, the man in the street, the man who carries a lunch bucket, the old, the underprivileged have thus far not had the opportunity of availing themselves of parks and the use of parks. So with this new policy, I would certainly welcome this, but here again, a government dedicated to priorities as this government has been, and this has been the theme song that I have heard so long, that when I wake up in the middle of the night and I have insomnia. I wake up and start to think of priorities -- priorities comes rolling through my mind.

[Laughter]

We've got to get a theme song out of this one. Well, maybe I will have to retract what I have just said and say that this properly is a priority because, in effect, it is assistance to the mass of the people and this, Mr. Speaker, I endorse and welcome.

A thing that I think is of interest and that I would like to talk to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development about, is something that has occurred in our health unit area where our local MO has started a radio response program. This has been a marvellous success. This is a hot line phone-in -- "what is the matter with my chilblains, and why don't they get better?" So every time he answers a letter he saves \$10 for Alberta Health Care Insurance. I hope that the hon. minister in charge of Alberta Health Care is listening real good, because when I became aware of this particular service, I started to do a little person-to-person call on doctors and so on. I asked them to relate what was a psychological problem, what was a go-home-and-take-an-aspirin-problem, and what was a genuine health problem. The ratio was nearly 60 per cent.

I think this particular radio program should be enlarged. It should cover all of the health units in the Province of Alberta. I think it would represent a very significant service to the people of the Province of Alberta, to Alberta Health Care Insurance, and would directly reassure a lot of people about simple things that can be solved by this type of a program.

I would also like to talk very briefly, Mr. Speaker, on the matter of taxation on mobile homes. The tax base, with this rebate of big brother is not truly onerous for the average mobile home-owner living in, say, a city. But when you are living in an area where you are looking at 145 mills, or 92 mills, or 89 mills, this is a very significant thing. I believe that there should be an accelerated obsolescence factor, because a mobile home really is a glorified tin can which looks good, but certainly does not have any long-term value.

I have received many representations from the people in my constituency. I have talked to people in Blairmore who have to pay \$700 on a 16' x 60' trailer parked on land which they do not own. When you relate that to housing costs, to the trailer payment costs, it is a pretty significant thing.

I also can't help wondering aloud about what the hon. Minister of Highways is thinking. He is working away very diligently, but I have to address some of my remarks in his direction, because I'm wondering, now that he has practically got the road re-alignment through the Crowsnest Pass completed, what is step two? What is the hon. minister going to do? Is he going to sulk like Ulysses in his tent, or is he going to get up and put his horse in gear and do something about acquiring the right of way? I urge the hon. minister to think about that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ZANDER:

Mr. Speaker, may I offer my congratulations to the mover and the seconder of the Throne Speech, and also to you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly don't have to congratulate you on your qualities because they have already been voiced in this House.

Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the Speech from the Throne, I would like all hon. members just to have a look at it. Most of them say there is no substance in it. To me, there is so much in it, that really, I think they have only read both outside covers. This is as far as they could get.

On page two, there is the relief to elderly citizens. I wish you would underline those words, "more needs to be done" under Section B. Truly, when we have to take a look at our senior citizens' recreation facilities, there are none. Going into the area of recreation for these citizens, we must remember that these citizens only have a library in that home. There is very little other recreation except sitting and reading or walking about. Certainly it would not take more than probably \$60,000 or \$30,000 to build a recreation facility adjacent to one of these senior citizens homes where they could also enjoy some recreation in the latter parts of their lives.

Under C, Agriculture, this has not been mentioned too much, but I would certainly emphasize that agriculture today has received one of the biggest boosts it ever has in the past 25 years under an able Minister of Agriculture, and a government that is willing to back that Minister of Agriculture.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know that the NFU on many occasions has attacked the Minister of Agriculture and they have often wondered why their membership in Alberta is dwindling rather drastically. Certainly if they concur with Mr. Miller speaking at Athabasca, it's no wonder they will never have any members. In fact, they will lose all they have in Alberta.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

May I just read one portion of the speech that he made in Athabasca.

He said:

It's ironic that Alberta should be taking this attitude because the form of balkanizing comes at a time when other parts of the world are recognizing the need to form a more powerful trading block.

Well, in speaking to a group at Calmar I asked Mr. Miller to retract those words -- because as long as he is going to be able to attack the Minister of Agriculture knowing the farm people of this province have received so much from this government and also from the Department of Agriculture -- in the last paragraph in his speech, Mr. Miller called on all farmers involved in bringing about an orderly marketing of grains, to protest against Dr. Horner's stand. Now this simply means that as far as the NFU strength in Alberta is concerned -- primarily attacking the minister, who has done so much for agriculture in the province of Alberta -- is not going to gain them an additional member.

Mr. Speaker -- on page three -- Alberta farmers and the provincial economy benefited from a strong demand from agricultural products during the past year. If you don't believe this, Mr. Speaker, you hon. gentlemen can talk to any businessman in any town, village, or even in the city of Edmonton. They will tell you quite frankly their business has gone up 40 per cent over the year 1971. Now don't you think these people, also in the small areas, benefit from the benefits the farmers got through the agricultural program of our government?



We talk about agriculture, about helping our farmers, and under the second paragraph, if you'd underline, "Firstly, by providing our farmers with more information on the type and quality of production needed for domestic and foreign markets..." If you only go this far, then we have gone far enough to provide additional markets. This is what we were lacking in the years 1970 and 1971. As you well know, hon. members -- and I was a farmer at that time -- I was selling hogs at less than cost. Today a similar hog, less than two years later, is selling at around \$75 to \$80. Certainly the farmers are proud of their agriculture minister, and well they should be.

The future farms program for the people of Alberta, especially the young -- and I am certainly glad that we are going to go ahead with the program whereby young farmers in the age groups of 18 years and lower can get into agriculture in one way or another. Because we know today it is almost impossible for a young man without funds to get into agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said in this House before -- the aid that has been given to mental health and our physically-handicapped people -- and I think the speaker yesterday or the day before mentioned this. To me, this is a step the former government was reluctant to take, because it took only a little initiative on the part of our government to see that these people got into the same stream of life as all others, and were given a fair chance.

Dealing with a priority program on page four -- objectives and goals of the government -- this was mentioned by the hon. member over there, Mr. Drain. Yes, he has left. He's dreaming of priorities. Certainly this government has priorities and the priorities are fully laid out in the Throne Speech debate.

The development of our natural resources, Mr. Speaker -- certainly the government and also the Premier should be commended for the step taken to provide a two-price gas structure in our province.

Much has been said about the aid to the taxpayer of the Province of Alberta relating also to services. I think Mr. Farran, the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill, has done a marvellous job. If he said he is the father of it, I think that there will be a lot of children sending him bouquets.

In the energy program, and this was said just a few moments ago by the same hon. member -- you know the howl that went up from the opposite side, Mr. Speaker, last year. Especially, I think, from two or three of the members -- they said: "They are going to pull out of the province. There is going to be a wholesale exodus of all drilling equipment out of the province." Mr. Speaker, I can only say this, that in my constituency since the new drilling incentive has gone forth, we have more drilling rigs in that constituency than we have had since 1959. This certainly shows that the program was good for the people of the Province of Alberta to the tune of some \$50 million.

There is, Mr. Speaker, the ever-increasing cost of education and I know the government recognizes this. In the 7.5 per cent guidelines as laid out, some may find it difficult to stay within the guidelines, however I think the minister has indicated that a second look will be given to that program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just diverting a few moments from the Throne Speech, I think probably all the members in this House have received a pamphlet called, The Voice of the Unborn. Certainly the gruesome pictures that we saw -- and we call ourselves a Christian society -- certainly the garbage bags of human remains that were displayed are something that I abhorred that I was reluctant even to look at. But I wonder under the Medicare program, how much we as a government are paying? I wonder how many abortions are carried out, and how many more than one to one person. I still believe, and I am firmly convinced, that abortion should only be carried out when it becomes necessary to save the life of the mother. And unless we, as a Legislature, can bring pressure to bear on the right people, that we depart from this system that our society has looked upon as an everyday occurrence.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about throwing money away, my memory goes back to the days of the \$20 royalty rebate. I think you all remember. I saw rows upon rows of people lining up at the banks. There were native people, white people as well, and some of them I guess, after going to the government liquor store and after a quart or two, forgot that they had taken one or more. Then, of course, the government at that time conveniently ran some of them into goal. I understand that some of them got something like \$1,700.

Now they tell us we are throwing money around and being big brother or big father to our municipalities. I wonder if they could just recall some of the incidents that also lay on their doorsteps?

I recall an other remark that was made by the hon. Member for Drumheller when he said that this government was the most benevolent government that Calgary Power had ever had, or something of that nature.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder which government was more benevolent to Calgary Power than this present government. I've calculated, on an average interest rate, the loan that was given to Calgary Power in 1958-59. It was given for a period up to 1982, but I'm calculating it only to 1973. Mr. Speaker, had somebody given you or I or any member in this House, or any person in the Province of Alberta, \$1 million on an average current rate of interest today, if you didn't want to gamble it -- today you would now have \$1,789,000, or \$789,000 more. You could still give back whoever gave you that \$1 million.

At a speculative rate of interest, or if you wanted to go out on the market, today you could have received for that \$1 million, \$2,255,000 or \$1,255,000 more than you were given in the first place.

Now, if the loans at that time are going to carry to the due date, it could be possible that the gift value of interest saved by that company would well exceed \$30 million. Now, I wonder who was more beneficial -- this government or the former?

Mr. Speaker, we talk about our natural resources, and they were mentioned in the same speech by the hon. Member for Drumheller. We are accused, somehow or other, of abandoning the railroad to Grande Cache and beyond. Now, what did the former government do? They didn't offer any encouragement to the mines that were already on a railroad in the foothills of Alberta. They didn't have to build a railroad that was absorbing provincial funds faster than any large sewer pipe, or as a sponge absorbs water. Yet, they say, "You are responsible." We inherited it, we are not responsible, but we will have to look after their mistakes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, last year's message on the Throne Debate outlined some of the short-comings of the former government as related to my constituency. My constituency is formed on the west by an ID and the western portions of 3 counties whose headquarters are many miles away from the area they are serving. Out of the memberships on the council consisting of 3 counties -- there are 7 members on each, a total of 21 members -- my constituency is only represented by 5 members out of 21.

However, in looking at the tax assessment it represents better than one-third of two counties, and one-half of the third county. I am not convinced, Mr. Speaker, that the county system of government is basically the best. I can agree in part, but we must go a lot further to include some method of cost-sharing with our urban, semi-urban and rural people.

Getting back, Mr. Speaker, to the hard feelings that exist in my constituency over the tax sharing dollars; we must look at what we raise by way of municipal tax, and what percentage is returned to the area by way of roads or other public expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, based on the present assessment and the present mill rate -- and I mean the 1972 figures, which are available to us now -- the western portions of the 3 counties lying within my constituency the assessment would be near or over \$40 million. This, based on an average mill rate of 31.4 mills, would yield this area \$1,287,000 for municipal purposes. Yet the total amount of dollars returned by these counties to these areas, by way of allocations for public works, is just over \$541,000.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, there is red in the eyes in my constituency, when they see themselves digging themselves out of mudholes because of very little gravel on their school bus roads, while their counterparts in the eastern part of the country are not only getting good gravel roads, but are planning for more paved roads. It is not bad business -- but it gives them additional revenue for further pavement that turns out to be a three-quarter million dollar gift every year.

Mr. Speaker, my thanks go to the government, and to the minister, Mr. Russell, that has -- or will -- establish a committee to look into these matters of inequity. And I also say a special thanks to the hon. Minister of Agriculture who has found it very pleasing to give us a DA in that area just a month ago, where we had the use of this DA only one day a week.

Mr. Speaker, my constituency not only has oil wells, but it also has agriculture. This industry, in my constituency, boasts a total of 22,000 head of dairy and beef cattle, and it is increasing in number every year. Much of

this expansion should give credit to the hon. Minister of Agriculture who had vision enough to see the beneficial effects of the policies he set forth.

Mr. Speaker, there is however, some need -- some very pressing need in my constituency -- for a nursing home. It is hard for urban members to even envision -- you can't imagine our local hospitals are filled with senior citizens who should be in a nursing home rather than in an active treatment hospital. Because of the lack of these, they must be in an active treatment hospital, because we are more than 100 miles removed from any place.

And I may add, Mr. Speaker, just two weeks ago I was able to get one senior citizen into a nursing home in Lethbridge because there was no other room in the province. It seems hard to believe, Mr. Speaker, that we have hundreds of millions of dollars to keep a railroad, and a coal mine going in the red every day, but we have no funds to care for our senior citizens. There must be something wrong with our society and outlook on life.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, before I forget, may I say thank you to the government, and to the hon. Minister of Public Works, Dr. Backus. The senior citizens' home is not yet complete, but already it is filled to more than capacity. I am very happy, Mr. Speaker, that our government has seen fit, or will see fit, to depart some way from the larger senior citizen homes, and establish smaller homes in smaller centres. Certainly, the Hon. Neil Crawford, should be congratulated for taking some steps under consideration.

Mr. Speaker, our government has taken a bold step forward in bringing relief to the people of this province who own their own homes, and who also who rent homes and apartments, and trailers. For some, if not most cases, this relief will be about 40 per cent of their tax dollar. This can directly be brought about by our natural resources. There was, Mr. Speaker, a wise policy announced by our Premier regarding the oil policy, and it was a wise one indeed for the cabinet to consider.

Mr. Speaker, we were told by the former government, as I mentioned, that our Premier and our government's oil and gas policy was going to drive every oil company out of the province. But, Mr. Speaker, it has proven false. We have more. In fact, if the hon. member, who is not in the House today, had read the Journal -- we are having an influx of more drilling rigs from the Province of British Columbia than we can possibly handle at this moment. Mr. Speaker, there is no elected member in this House or anyone outside that seeks to get in here, that can come up to the stature and respect the people of this province have for our Premier.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, may I say that our government has accomplished more to the benefit of the individual Albertan and to Alberta as a whole in less than 2 years -- which the former government could not accomplish in 36 years.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker --

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. minister followed by the hon. member for --

MR. YURKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I would first like to pay tribute to our fallen friend. I do want to indicate that sorrow has hit this House. He was a friend, a companion, a colleague, a good and kind man, one whom I know we will all miss. Len Werry was my friend; he helped me when I first got into politics in a major way. He was very willing always. We worked together on many things and I knew him well and I knew his dreams. We had had similar backgrounds and I recognized in him that quality which comes from fighting every inch of the way. He was a good baseball player, and that's something I also know something about. I would like to say that that quality which makes a man fight all the way makes for a very good man.

I first met Len in 1943 during the summer at which time I was working for Northwest Brass in Calgary as a car-brass moulder. There was a lean, strapping, curly-haired youth who mixed moulding sand for me, and it was Len Werry. Len rose a long way from those days and became the Minister of Telephones and Utilities in this House. I think it can be said with conviction that Len was a man of conscience and compassion. May eternity be good to Len Werry -- we will all miss him.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is the fifth time that I have been privileged to speak on the Throne Speech. And first of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest that you, sir, the Speaker, have grown in stature and tact, and in judgment for the benefit of all of us, and we certainly appreciate these qualities in this House.

I would first of all like to congratulate the hon. Mr. Henderson for having assumed the role that he has assumed. It might be said that the hired man has taken over the duties of the head of the household. We all are not yet at all certain whether or not the ladyfolk of the House will accept him in this capacity.

I also want to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to congratulate those who have spoken on the Throne Speech and have made this a very worthwhile debate. It has been very enlightening, humorous at times, and I was glad to see that my friend from Pincher Creek-Crowsnest didn't let us down.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, this is my fifth Throne Speech debate. And I can recall one several years ago when I was sitting on that side. I had read the Throne Speech and I said it was written by a government which had stagnated, which had lost touch with the people, and for which the Throne Speech represented almost an apology. It was an admission of failure. I said at that time that that government was not long for this province, and that it would soon fail; and in fact, it did.

And 18 months ago, Mr. Speaker, we were given the opportunity to man the offices of this government and direct it towards the good of all the people of Alberta. Mr. Speaker, they have been 18 exciting months, 18 months in which we have re-oriented government, in which we have done many things. Our first Throne Speech was a speech of action. It was full of action and that is what we set about to do.

This Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, has in it a number of things. First of all, it is a speech of confidence. One can't help but feel confidence when one reads that Throne Speech and recognizes that government is in good hands. And I am sure that all the people of Alberta who have the opportunity to read this speech will come to this inescapable conclusion.

I think the second thing, Mr. Speaker, that one gets when he reads this speech, is that it is a speech of accomplishment. One can't help but swell with pride when one reads that speech and determines and finds out the enormity of the accomplishment that this government has, in fact, succeeded in bringing about in the short time that it has been in office.

There is a third thing in that speech --

MR. DRAIN:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is blushing when he is making those statements.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, that's no blush at all. I am speaking with enthusiasm for something that is obviously great and tends to make a person's blood run hot. Mr. Speaker, this speech also is a speech of direction into the future.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yours or theirs?

MR. YURKO:

And it is a speech of priorities. Now let me take a look at those priorities, Mr. Speaker -- human rights, the elderly, agriculture, the backbone of our economy, mental health and the handicapped -- good priorities, Mr. Speaker, the very best. Now I would ask anybody in this House if he would choose any other priorities. And if he would, let him stand up now and tell us that he would choose something as a priority above those that we have identified.

MR. LUDWIG:

Next week.

MR. YURKO:

Well, I haven't heard any of them speaking thus far, Mr. Speaker, to give us any indication of what their priorities are, or if, in fact, they disagree with these. No one can disagree with these priorities, Mr. Speaker; they are the foundation of our society. They are the foundation of what we know must be done, in order to bring all our people up to a level of understanding and a level of enjoyment.

Mr. Speaker, what are our programs and our accomplishments as a government? There have been so many that I would have to take most of the evening to recite them all. But I would just wish to put some proper orientation in the number of areas in which we have moved in a very meaningful way and have accomplished much.

First of all, government re-organization and decentralization. I want to suggest that I think we all recognize that the centre of any society today, because of its complexity, is government. So a government must lead, it must plan, it must initiate, and it must always be tuned to the wants and the desires of the people. And this, Mr. Speaker, is our government. We have gone a long way towards re-organizing government, towards making it sensitive to the wants of the people, towards dialogue with the people.

Mr. Speaker, bureaucracy that becomes cold and calculating and insensitive is a dangerous kind of bureaucracy. And this is what everybody talks about, when he talks about bureaucracy. But a bureaucracy that is humanized, that is, in fact, made responsible to the people and provides service to the people is a good and vital thing in any society. And this is what we are striving to make of the bureaucracy of this government, that is the civil service. And they are rapidly becoming responsive to the people of Alberta -- not in all cases, Mr. Speaker, for we still have a long way to go. But we are getting there.

Mr. Speaker, a second area of programs and accomplishments in a broad way is directed towards easing the burden upon the needy and the underprivileged. Here, Mr. Speaker, we have done all sorts of things -- tax reduction, help for the elderly, programs for the handicapped, the creation of jobs, educational training programs, increased minimum wages, and fire-fighting programs for the native people.

And incidently, we are finally paying the native people the type of wage they should be enjoying for fire-fighting. Mr. Speaker, I remember making a speech on the other side of the House on two or three occasions when the old government was paying the native people a minimum wage for fire-fighting, and then they deducted 25 cents an hour for subsistence. Many of these people worked 18 and 19 hours a day without overtime. I remember that I talked with a great deal of compassion in regard to the manner in which that previous cold, calculating and stagnant government was treating these people. Mr. Speaker, we initiated programs of possible water for the Metis, and I can go on and on.

Mr. Speaker, a third area that we have addressed ourselves to in a broad way is the expansion of our industrial base. No one has worked harder in this area than the Minister of Agriculture, because he recognized that agriculture is the backbone of our economy and that if we are going to diversify into secondary and tertiary industry -- if we don't do it in agriculture, where else can we do it in an economy like ours? So I have nothing but respect for the hon. Minister of Agriculture who is working 14 and 15 hours a day in attempting to bring about a great expansion of agricultural industry into secondary and tertiary areas.

MR. BUCKWELL:

Does he get overtime, too?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I know how hard the Minister of Industry and Commerce is working in bringing to this province a petrochemical industry. He has scoured the country, and has spent many nights, afternoons and week-ends meeting and discussing. I know that he will be successful in extending the petrochemical industrial base in this province in a very meaningful way in the near future.

We are also working on expanding our service industries in a very large way. And what a silly argument we had the other day in regard to the tourist industry. No one was concerned about how vital it was, how it was growing and where it was going. They were concerned about petty politics.

DR. BUCK:

The blue cards, that's all. The blue cards.

MR. YURKO:

I'm surprised, Mr. Speaker. And above all, Mr. Speaker, we have concentrated on and have finally taken some meaningful action with regard to balanced growth across this province.

Another very broad area, Mr. Speaker, that this government has concentrated on is resource development and environmental management. I hardly need to get into the area of resource development, because there are so many speakers much more capable than I in giving you a run-down of what the government has done. But the government has acted with wisdom and knowledge and goodness and vision in this area. I, Mr. Speaker, have been party to some of these discussions, and I, as a businessman with past experience, know the quality of these discussions and the directions of action that came from them.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that in any society there will always be problems. We will always have problems because people, for some reason or other, always want more. But I can honestly say that in my opinion no government in Canada has ever tackled its problems with greater vigour and diligence than this government has in the last 18 months. And, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has solved so many of these problems, and is continuing to solve them.

[Interjections]

As I said, Mr. Speaker, when I touch upon very exciting points my blood runs hot, goes to my face, and I, in fact, am all enthused about telling the hon. gentlemen over there, and everybody else, the magnificent things this government has done. I have never worked with a group of ministers that have worked so hard. In fact, it wasn't very often when I got down here that a quarter or a half of the ministers weren't here before me.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken rather generally in regard to the government, and as I said earlier, I could go on and on in regard to the accomplishments of this government in a short span of 18 months.

But I wish now to speak a little bit about my department, the Department of the Environment. I should say that it is a new department, a department which we had to mould and put together, direct and generate enthusiasm. I think it would be wrong for me, Mr. Speaker, if I didn't pay tribute to my Deputy Minister who I know has worked hard, who amongst all else is a diplomat, never seeking credit for himself, always doing the right things, always considerate of everybody else's view; I can't say enough about Dr. Ballantyne, Mr. Speaker, because he has performed very admirably in the last 18 months.

At the same time I also don't want to lose track of all those other people who have worked so hard for the department. They have worked with a great deal of enthusiasm. Mr. Speaker, if we have done anything as a government in the last 18 months, we've excited the civil service, excited them into hard work. That's right. And they are now working with enthusiasm instead of lethargy, as they were when we took over, because how can any organization work if it doesn't have leaders? I mean if the fellow up top there can't make a decision, procrastinates, spends seven or eight hours on the job and the rest of the time he's partying and chewing gum with somebody else -- how can the civil service in fact function unless it's lead? What this government has brought to this civil service is leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to read very briefly a bit about what the Department of the Environment has done in the last year. I could hardly pay tribute to the boys and what they have really done, but I will read very briefly what has been accomplished in the Department of the Environment.

Mr. Speaker, let me review very briefly the overall accomplishments and then I would like to review some specific matters in some detail, probably about seven or eight. At the end I would like to say something about the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment which I was privileged to attend, then make some brief remarks in regard to our government's role in confederation.

The past year has seen progressive improvements in the department's services to the public and to other government departments and agencies. During the year there was further clarification of objectives, the role of the department and the operational procedure and the organization and staffing to

achieve this. As I indicated, we started out with a new department virtually 18 months ago.

On December 1 of this year a re-organization of the department had become effective. Three services were established with an assistant deputy minister in charge of each, namely, the Environment Protection Services with Mr. Kupchanko as the assistant deputy minister. Secondly, the Environmental Engineering Support Services with Mr. Solodzuk as the assistant deputy minister and thirdly, the Environmental Planning and Research Services with Mr. Bailey as the assistant deputy minister.

The experience of the first year and assessment of future demands, and the increasing request for services by other departments and the public indicated that the department should be re-aligned and strengthened in certain key areas to provide better support services, long-term planning, cost-benefit analysis, and internal and external co-ordination functions concerning water resources, pollution controls, land-use and other areas of concern.

The concept that we adopted was not to build up a large staff, but rather to have a well co-ordinated, efficient, multi-disciplined core staff of minimal size. Utilizing staff from other departments is required for enforcement, planning and services. The organization, as outlined in the chart in our annual report that you will soon receive, honours these concepts.

At the early stage of the department becoming operational in a meaningful way it was of real value to have the department's role edited and approved by the Executive Council, and this is what the role was stated as.

The role of the Alberta Department of the Environment, within the context of the total function of government, is to promote a balance between resource management, environmental protection, and the quality of life. This role will be achieved through interdepartmental government planning of policies, programs and services.

These, generally, will be initiated and co-ordinated by the Department of the Environment in co-operation with other departments and agencies of the Alberta government, other governments and non-governmental organizations including industry and the private sector.

A few departmental highlights: first of all the initiation of many studies on environmental matters to provide data for the development of future policies, programs and services.

Secondly, improvements to legislation and enforcement. I might say that we have in our mind a pyramidal structure in regard to legislation, and we are well advanced in that regard. We consider it the apex of the pyramid, The Department of the Environment Act, and the middle of the pyramid is formed by a series of key pieces of legislation, The Clean Air Act, The Clean Water Act, The Land Surface Conservation and Reclamation Act, The Water Resources Act -- which is being rewritten -- The Litter Control Act, including the recycling of beverage containers, a chemical control act which will be a rewritten Agricultural Chemicals Act, eventually a noise control act and a research trust act to provide input into the research area.

This basically will form the middle of our pyramid, Mr. Speaker. At the base of it will be regulations to regulate and permit the operation of these various pieces of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we made a start on the mutual participation and documentation of roles of the various departments of government involved in environmental matters.

The department, on behalf of the government, renegotiated an agreement with Calgary Power to accomplish a number of things. First of all, removal of all jurisdictional limitations on water resource management. In other words, we finally brought Calgary Power completely under Alberta government jurisdiction -- up until now, it wasn't -- placing the company on the same basis as all electrical utility companies for rate-making processes under The Public Utilities Board.

The Saskatchewan-Nelson Basin Study was completed and a summary report was issued. Ongoing studies are now under consideration. The Natural Resources Co-ordinating Council became fully operational.

Position papers were issued in a number of areas. No. 1, financial assistance for pollution control. This is the first time the province has had a

meaningful program in the area of assisting municipalities in regard to sewage disposal assistance.

Position Paper No. 5 deals with financial assistance for water management programs. Mr. Speaker, until this government took over there was a disjointed, uncoordinated program of assistance to municipalities in regard to the financing of water management programs. We have put out a policy statement in regard to financial assistance for lake management and sewage. Mr. Speaker, we still have a long way to go in the area of water management.

I would like to just read a page or two out of a speech -- one of many speeches I gave in this regard -- made to the symposium on the lakes of western Canada. I want to put in proper perspective the federal role in this regard. I am not going to read very much of it, just the first couple of pages, Mr. Speaker, because the speech is public and is available.

I hardly need to remind the experts here that Canada possesses one-quarter of the world's known volume of fresh water.

Fresh water covers 291,000 square miles or 7.6 per cent of this country's surface.

This 291,000 square miles represents a very substantial number of lakes, rivers, streams, deltas and bays.

This vast abundance of fresh water is, perhaps, Canada's most vital and strategic resource.

It is a renewable resource, but much of it can be rendered polluted such that it loses its intrinsic renewable qualities and values.

It is, of course, incumbent upon all governments at all levels in Canada to manage these vast water resources wisely.

It is also highly desirable that the nation have an overall plan of management that provides direction, co-ordination and assistance for the management practices of all other government levels in Canada.

One cannot help but be somewhat skeptical as to whether such a national plan exists.

There is need for a well established cost-sharing formula for financing major water management programs between levels of government.

There is need for a national policy on water quality.

There is need for a national policy on water diversion and water export.

Perhaps it might be fair to say that such a concept is gradually taking shape. But we should also realize that it is still quite removed from practical reality.

In this regard I am talking about The Canada Water Act.

I am disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that Canada seems to be placing more and more reliance on The Fisheries Act and The Navigable Waters Act in regard to controlling water resources instead of trying meaningfully to put into operation The Canada Water Act.

I go on in this speech, Mr. Speaker, to indicate matters of policy in regard to the provinces' thrust in managing its water resources.

Mr. Speaker, our department has certainly participated in the establishment of the sacred, historical and cultural site of the Stoney Indian Band at Big Horn. We feel rather proud of having negotiated the movement of the graves and their cabins before we flooded the reservoir, without fuss, and without a lot of difficulty being involved.

Mr. Speaker, the department has participated in liaison with British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and others concerning the Mackenzie River basin, and other environmental matters of mutual interest.

We made an increase in efforts for public involvement in environmental consideration via the Environment Conservation Authority hearings, advisory committees, delegations, the man and resources program of the Canadian Council



of Resource and Environment Ministers; joint meetings with industry and industry groups; contacts with schools in preparation for my attendance at the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment; it has been a very busy year. The Alberta Environmental Research Trust has become operational.

There are many other important matters, Mr. Speaker, which will be detailed in the annual report when it is tabled in this House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on just a few matters of concern. I have indicated, for example, something about our policies in regard to cost-sharing the water management in the province.

I do want to say the Premier this year made a visit up to Janvier to see how some of our underprivileged people have been living in the past. He was quite struck by the lack of facilities with regard to potable water. And it was within a matter of weeks that we had equipment up in the Janvier area drilling wells for water, so these people could at least be provided with drinking water.

The concern the Premier has had with regard to the underprivileged, the concern the Premier has had for human rights, and the fact that not all people in our land enjoy the amenities of our affluence, has prompted us to initiate a program of drilling wells for Metis communities all over the northern country. This, Mr. Speaker, appears in the Throne Speech. I think it might be considered as one of the proudest moments for this government, when it in fact initiated that program -- because such a program was long overdue by previous governments who looked with callousness upon the welfare of these people, these forgotten people, living in the northern part of our province.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of areas that have concerned us. Pipeline breaks have concerned us. I might just release some figures which I believe I have released publicly.

In 1971, we had a total of 83 pipeline breaks. In these a total of 55,311 barrels of oil were spilled. Of these 83 breaks, 7 were due to internal corrosion, or 8.4 per cent of the breaks. External corrosion was responsible for 20 breaks, or 24 per cent. Pipe failure, pressure breaks that is, was responsible for 13 breaks or a total of 15.7 per cent. Installation failures amounted to 15, or 18.1 per cent of the total. Damage by others - 21 or 25.3 per cent of the total. Miscellaneous - 8.4 per cent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the total volume of oil and products moved through these lines was 456 million billion barrels. The amount recorded as being spilled, therefore, was really only .012 per cent, so percentage-wise the actual spillage wasn't very high. It is reported that approximately 65 per cent of the oil and products spilled were recovered, the remainder being burned or dissipated. The total 83 breaks in 1971, compares with the ten year cumulative total since 1961 of 291 breaks for lines carrying oil and products. Statistics are not reported on a basis which shows a comparison of the frequency of various causes over the ten year period. But it is evident there has been a very dramatic increase. This has resulted in an area could have been prevented. If the record continues to increase -- and the activity in this regard is certainly going to be increasing in the province -- then there is room for concern in this area. And I have certainly indicated to the various oil companies that better performance is not only necessary, but mandatory.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say just a few things about the beverage containers program. Our meeting with the bottlers on Thursday, and our meeting with the depot operators on Friday of this week -- I have just been informed that the manufacturers have raised, or are raising the deposit on refillable ten-ounce bottles to five cents from two cents. This has given us some concern. I'm meeting with the manufacturers' representatives on Friday to determine the implications of this move on their part.

I did give some figures the other day, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the operation of the program since January, and I would like to reiterate some of these figures. There are 146 universal depots operating in the province, all under pro tem approvals. None have received permanent approval as yet. We expect a second generation of depots to evolve.

In Edmonton, as I indicated, we have 12 approved depots, with 10 operating and 2 preparing to open, and negotiations in process for 3 additional depots. In Calgary there are 10 approved depots with 7 operating and 3 preparing to open. Negotiations are in progress for 3 additional depots. Province-wide, a total of 9 depots have closed voluntarily and 1 approval was revoked.

In 1972 under the original act, 12 million soft drink cans were returned. This amounted to approximately 40 per cent of the sale of cans. In January, 1973, under the amended act and with universal depots, 4.6 million liquor and wine bottles were returned. I might indicate that in the month of February -- that's ending today really, and the figures, I think, are up to yesterday -- we had 2.4 million liquor and wine bottles returned. So there has been a drop -- indicating an accumulation prior to January in the return, a very heavy and substantial return in January. We had 2.4 million non-returnable soft drink cans and bottles returned in January. This amounted to 98 per cent of sales, and I might indicate that in February thus far, up until yesterday, we had 1.7 million returned. Approximately, as I indicated before, 30 per cent of the refillable bottles were returned to depots, that is 70 per cent were still returned to the retailers. Bottlers inform us that some bottles have not been used for five years and are coming back through the depots.

All of the soft drink cans are being recycled for low grade steel at mills in Edmonton and Calgary. Negotiations are in active progress for the sale of returned liquor bottles. A glass bead manufacturing industry is interested in all of the clear glass, and stucco dealers want the coloured glass. Until markets are finalized, most of the returned bottles will have to be land-fill.

Problems of retailers have virtually disappeared since the opening of the new depots. Last year a total of 84 warning letters were sent out, but this year a total of only 2 minor complaints have been received. Retailers in general are pleased with the legislation, especially the handling charge they receive.

The overall result of the legislation is a gradual return to the refillable container. Soft drink sales now stand at 82 per cent returnable refillable bottles, 16 per cent cans, and 2 per cent non-refillable bottles. Just a little over a year ago, refillables represented 70 per cent of the market.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that isn't our only thrust in the area of litter. We have used private enterprise in every case possible. We have worked towards setting up Outdoors Unlittered which is a company to which the department has made a grant -- to get it going. The directors of this company are: Dr. Johns, W. R. Sharpe, R. Wood, W. W. Wismer, and A. W. VanWeem. This has been set up to provide education and to provide a series of programs in regard to controlling litter in the province. Through this organization we are establishing Alberta Litter Check.

Alberta Litter Check is a program -- a one-week program -- which will run from April 30 to May 6, 1973. Litter Check is a positive program aimed at the prevention of litter. A litter check symbol is simple and strong and memorable, and that's it.

We have written to every municipality. Letters have gone out to all community leagues, all service clubs and chambers of commerce, all environmental groups, all major industries, all mayors and reeves, all youth organizations, all school principals, all school superintendents, and all the media. Included with the letters were outlines for suggested activities and information sheets on Litter Check and Outdoors Unlittered, the co-sponsoring non-profit organization. Outdoors Unlittered will supply the media with five 30-second radio spots on tape, slides for television use, and cartoon strips and photos for newspaper use. It is a major national program of removing litter in the province between the days of April 30 and May 6.

At the same time, we have had an abandoned car pick-up program under consideration for some time, a permanent one, but this the government hasn't as yet finalized. So during Litter Check week, the Department of Highways and the Department of the Environment will be initiating a car pick-up program. Municipalities will be informed through Litter Check mailings that such a program will be held. Letters were to be sent out by February 15, and I believe these have gone out. Highways and Environment will appoint program coordinators who will approach municipalities to get permission to use land-fill sites as car body assembly areas. If this permission is not forthcoming, coordinators will look for alternate assembly sites.

Individuals appointed by the municipalities will be asked to act as coordinators for this program. Persons wishing to have cars removed will telephone a local co-ordinator. Highways will assist municipalities in picking up car bodies from public and private land. News releases will certainly be given out to identify the program and inform people that in fact it is going on.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say something about the privilege that I was given in attending the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. First

of all, Mr. Speaker, I think that I want to indicate that this was a very impressive affair. I felt indeed humble to represent the Province of Alberta at such an international conference in which global problems were being discussed in all their complexity. But there was one thing that really bothered me. There were at this conference many nations whose gross national product was far less than Alberta's, whose total population was less than Alberta's, whose land mass was considerably less than Alberta's. I couldn't help but wonder why one government represented all of Canada and all of the United States at such a vitally important conference, whereas other governments of much less influence, if you wish, were represented also by one government.

And I very honestly began to wonder since then why it is that a province like Alberta couldn't in fact participate in a more meaningful way in terms of world relations which transcend the area of politics. I consider that matters of the environment in fact transcend the area of politics, because much of the work being done in the environment today is directly related to man's survival in a limited world. Much of the work is directly scientific. And I have found that a province as large and as rich as Alberta could certainly involve itself in a much more meaningful way and play a much more vital role in regard to scientific and environmental matters on the world scene. And I would hope that we, as a government, would recognize that there is a role in this area, which we, as a province, can play which transcends not only the boundaries of our province, but the boundaries of our nation. Because science and concern for environmental matters and concern for survival transcend all boundaries. As I said before, I think that the Government of Alberta, as well as every provincial government in Canada, can play a more meaningful and direct role in regard to some of these areas of a concern in the world sphere.

There were a number of matters that were of vital importance at the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, and it is hardly possible for me to indicate or to really describe the nature and the magnitude of this conference. There were a number of study areas -- five. The first was planning and management of human settlements for environmental quality. The second was environmental aspects of natural resource management, which included water, land, energy, plant life, animal life, and so forth. It might be pointed out that it was realized that energy was in a crisis and that a report was asked for on available energy supplies and use, as well as all other aspects of energy considerations, and that this report be supplied almost on a crash basis by the end of 1973.

The third area discussed at great length was identification and control of pollutants. An earth-watch program was established, of enormous importance. The fourth area, in which I had the opportunity to represent Canada, was called the educational, informational, social and cultural aspects of environmental issues.

The fifth area, development in the environment, was, perhaps, one of the most interesting of all, because the underdeveloped nations recognized that the developed nations could, in fact, have a stranglehold on their development through environmental policies, and they needed assurance and wanted assurance that environmental matters were not going to be used to restrict trade. Furthermore, it was realized very dramatically that the worst form of pollution was poverty, that, by far, all else paled into insignificance when compared to the disease of poverty. It was recognized that development was vital, because the only way that poverty could be overcome in the underdeveloped as well as some of the developed nations was through development, through growth. But it was also recognized that what was needed was managed growth, rational growth, controlled growth, so that all other aspects of human environment could be considered in the process.

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

I would just like to read one or two paragraphs out of a speech made by Robert McNamara, touching on the poverty question. The reason I am doing that is because in Alberta we enjoy all sorts of affluence. We certainly have our poor, but I believe that here again, we are going to have to look beyond our boundaries to determine if there is a greater role that we, as an affluent province, can play in regard to helping some of the underdeveloped countries, as well as some of the underprivileged people of the world. Mr. McNamara went on to say the following:

One must begin with a candid appraisal of the state of development throughout most of the developed world. It is unacceptable because hundreds of millions of people are living at levels of deprivation that simply cannot be reconciled with any rational definition of human decency. Throughout the developing nations hunger and malnutrition are sapping

energy, stunting bodies and slowing minds. Illiteracy is locking out learning and paralyzing opportunity. Unemployment is not only robbing men of minimum means to make their way, but leaving their pride broken and their ambition atrophied. Wholly-preventable diseases are injuring infants, killing children and aging adults long before their time. In some, hundreds of millions of individual human lives with all their inherent potential are being threatened, narrowed, eroded, shortened and finally terminated by a pervasive poverty that degrades and destroys all that it touches.

The picture is not exaggerated. Throughout the developing world the estimates are that well over a billion human beings are hungry or malnourished. There are 100 million more adult illiterates than there were two decades ago. Under-employment and unemployment can trap roughly one out of every five in the labour force. Infant and child mortality is four times greater than it is in the affluent world and life expectancy is 40 per cent shorter. To alleviate pain and arrest disease, there are in some developing countries fewer than one doctor for every 500,000 people, compared to one per 700 in the United States.

Development is vital, but development simply cannot succeed unless that massively-distorted distribution of income, both at the national and international levels, is brought into a more just and reasonable balance. If it is not, the penalties of prolonged injustice are likely to be unavoidable. Restlessness will edge towards rebellion and reason will give way to violence. Not only would that fail to assure development, it would prove to be catastrophically costly to rich and poor alike.

Now there were many quotations and many speeches given at the Stockholm Conference, some very revealing. The Premier of India, Indira Gandhi, made one of the most impassioned speeches that I have heard, laying out the problems of that nation. When I heard some of these speeches and thought back to the affluence that we enjoy in our province, I truly felt compassion for all those in the world that live at such substandard levels.

The last area, Mr. Speaker, that I wish to just touch upon is perhaps the province's responsibilities in the national context. I did say something, I hope, of the province's responsibilities in the global context, but I would just like to make a few comments in regard to Alberta's role in Canada. Under the influence and guidance of Mr. Getty I have had a lot to do in the past year in regard to water management and environmental policies, in regard to our meetings with respect to the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers, and in regard to the meetings we have had in British Columbia, and the meetings we have had with Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

We in Alberta want to play our full role in Confederation, a role as an equal partner with all other provinces in those matters in which we share joint responsibility in the maintenance of a strong and viable nation. Our desire is to co-operate in every way to improve conditions for all Canadians, and to build and maintain a strong nation. In all our negotiations with other provinces and the federal government with which I have been associated, we have put no roadblocks in front of anybody or anything.

There is a great deal being said today about western separatism. Mr. Speaker, such a concept is a figment of an overactive imagination on the part of a few who would rather destroy than build. Some of these are failures who find it difficult to find justification in positive accomplishment. They also say the government recognizes fully the responsibilities assigned to it in the BNA Act. It is determined to exercise these responsibilities on behalf of the people. We will not be constrained, or interfered with, in carrying out these responsibilities. That is why our Minister of Agriculture is travelling the globe looking for markets. And the reason for that is because he knows agriculture isn't a parochial industry. It is an industry that is affected by world wide influences and world wide markets. And it is necessary for him to travel over the world, see how other people are doing things, and teach other people -- because before they buy your products they have to be helped. That is why our Minister of Industry and Commerce is negotiating beyond the borders of our province, as well as beyond the borders of the country.

Our environmental responsibilities do not end at our borders and we are freely and willingly discussing these matters with our neighbours. We are represented at national and international committees, and education certainly cannot be contained by borders. Intergovernmental affairs are assuming immense proportions and none of us envy the enormity of the task being carried out by the hon. Minister, Mr. Getty.

Mr. Speaker, in my mind, Alberta is the Mecca of Canada. All roads lead to Alberta, for here, within this province, lie virtually all of Canada's energy resources. The headwaters of some of Canada's greatest rivers are in our province. Much of Canada's finest arable land -- which is just another way of fixing solar energy -- lies within our borders, so the potential for tourism is great.

Mr. Speaker, so great are our resources that the managing of these resources makes small men shrink and that is what happened to the former government. Instead of growing in stature with the immensity of the task, they become small in mind and some of them in body. But not our government, Mr. Speaker, we shall certainly exercise the trust put in us by the people of Alberta, and we shall do our job. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would first of all like to offer my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne. Secondly, I would like to pay my respects to the late hon. Len Werry. He was certainly a friend, and certainly a sincere person who was ready to help others and to give of himself at any time.

The Speech from the Throne has been described in a number of different ways. It has been described as a fantastic blueprint, it has been described as a speech in which more needs to be done. The hon. minister has just described it as a speech of accomplishment, and a speech of confidence. When I observed the minister, I noted he had sort of a hard time in convincing himself. He appeared a bit unsure of the government's programs. I thought he was something like a young fellow who was about to meet his mother-in-law for the first time and who stood there whistling, and trying to build up a bit of courage.

I looked at the speech myself, Mr. Speaker, and note that possibly 75 per cent of the items that are raised, contain areas where backslapping can be done. Certainly the backbenchers and a number of the members have attempted to concur in that approach to the speech. But as I examine it very closely, Mr. Speaker, and examine some of the actions of the government, I would have to say that, in my mind, it is just a speech of deception. I would like to talk about that for a few moments.

Certainly, the minister who has just spoken illustrated that in a number of areas. I think one of his comments could exemplify just that. He indicated that the civil service is excited, full of vitality, full of fun, and ready to do its job. When I look at one of the letters from the civil service it says, "Another open letter to Premier Lougheed: Civil Servants are being had. We were promised cake and all we receive is crumbs." I think that one of the deceptions placed before the civil servants prior to the last election was the fact that this present government, or the Conservative Party, indicated to the civil servants that they would give them full bargaining rights. Certainly letters such as this are due at this time, to ask them to fulfil some of the commitments or some of the actions which they promised.

That is just one area. Let us look at some of the other areas that have been placed before us in the last 18 months. I think that one of the biggest concerns that came from local government, local people and various communities in this Province of Alberta was the question with regard to decentralization of government responsibilities. I think we, as members, understand that the definition of decentralization is the giving of responsibility and authority to the local level or to local citizenry. In my mind it does not mean the extending of departmental offices into the various communities of Alberta. Yet that, in my mind, seems to be the intention of the present government. To me that is only a growth of the central bureaucracy. As I said at an earlier date, it only extends the tentacles of the octopus into our communities, taking away local authority and taking away local decision-making.

I think one of the good examples of this is the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation. The municipal boards or the county people are no longer really involved in that decision making. But a district agriculturalist -- a bureaucrat in the good sense, I would say -- moves into the farm home and sits around the kitchen table to make a decision which he can't make until it goes through two more steps before it reaches the central office here in Edmonton. There are certainly other examples that we could look at.

What's another example? The Conservatives, at an earlier date, promised to ease the burden of the property taxpayer by eliminating taxes with regard to certain social services. We all remember a number of those statements, and well remember that that was the understanding of the people of Alberta. Well, there

certainly has been a deception. We recognize at this time that the tax plan that was introduced is no more than just an extension of the homeowners grant. It doesn't eliminate the taxes, as was promised at an earlier date. I feel that this is certainly not taking a responsibility that is necessary.

Ministers and candidates at that time indicated that their government was going to go out to the people. The Minister of Municipal Affairs said, "We will listen to all submissions." But no way did he say, in discussing the tax plan, that they were going to go out to the communities, talk to the people and observe some of the difficulties and concerns that they have. And these difficulties and concerns certainly exist in areas around the two cities, particularly where there is rapid growth and a number of problems with regard to school and other services at the present time. To me the deception does exist.

What's another example? The Throne Speech in 1972 said that the government will reduce bureaucratic routine and red tape, but really, what have we received in 18 months? We have an increased civil service. We have an extension of the provincial government into our communities. We have no real reduction of programs, just a shuffle. We have no reduction of expenditure by the provincial government. But at the same time we have indications of reduction of local autonomy and local decision making. To me, that certainly has been a deception in itself.

What about the Conservative government's talk about increased health care, care that is unsurpassed by any of the other provinces? Well, that sounds good on paper, and certainly would sound good as a headline in any of the papers in Alberta, but I think we should really examine what is happening.

I would like to take just a couple of areas. One of the greatest concerns that people of Alberta have is in the area of cancer. Many private citizens and private groups give many dollars every year towards cancer research, and they want the government to contribute and place funds into this area so the program can carry on. The question we ask at this time is: has the government really increased the expenditure in this area? We will see what the budget says, but from all indications and all information that I have at this time there certainly isn't any significant increase in dollars put into that area.

There is another area: heart research and surgery. My information is that there has been a constant denial of increased funds. There has been a freezing of the health care centre to be developed near the university campus. Word has it that the morale is low with the people who are working in this area. There is much frustration and much concern among the various doctors and people who are doing work in this area. They are concerned about the future of this particular program. The Callaghan team that has done fantastic work in the Province of Alberta is concerned about the future, because certainly they need funds and moral support, and they need to know that the government of this province is ready and willing to give them the vehicle to carry out a grave and a great responsibility.

To me, those are just a couple of things, and I am sure we can pick out others to indicate that the government is attempting to say one thing, but certainly when we inspect the records, there are some faults in that record.

Another area is the area of the marketing of agricultural products. Certainly the Minister of Agriculture in his very modest way, last evening, indicated that the market at the present time is buoyant, and that farm income is buoyant, and though he really wasn't taking all of the responsibility, certainly there were indications that he would like to take that responsibility. I can only indicate to him, Mr. Speaker, that the farmers of Alberta really realize what the world situation is, and deception of that kind would not be accepted in any manner at all.

I must say that the Minister of Agriculture certainly received congratulations and recognitions by all of the members on the government side of the House. It makes me wonder once in a while why everyone really pays homage to him. Approximately two or three years ago, it was always indicated that the Social Credit party was nothing but a rural party, and that the Conservative party would do great things for the urban centres. The Conservative party would be urban oriented so it could meet the needs of the people. Well, really, at this point in time we observed another deception when each member stood up. The Minister of the Environment was a good example today. At least twice he mentioned the fine things that the Minister of Agriculture has accomplished. To me, Mr. Speaker, that recognition only says one thing -- that there is an inconsistency between what this party has been telling Albertans during the campaign, at the present time and at an early date. So, Mr. Speaker, I only feel that the consistency of my advice to the government and to the members

certainly is that what we want is a consistent government that represents both areas, both the urban and the rural people, and gives them equal representation.

Last Friday, Mr. Speaker, we witnessed the visitation of a number of concerned Alberta citizens, not only over the repeal of The Communal Property Act, but the concern for land ownership in the Province of Alberta. As legislators we must take great notice of this event. That visit, I feel, has the following implications:

One, that the rural communities of Alberta are not prepared to lay down and die. We have a pioneer spirit and a desire for progress and growth in each one of these communities.

Secondly, that this growth requires the help of our Alberta government. Our goal should be the protection of the family farm, preserving farming as a way of life, and as an individual business venture. If we allow large corporate bodies to own much of this land or independent vested interest groups to settle the lands in extreme concentration, then our rural communities could be doomed. Neither absentee landlords, nor groups unreliant on a local community for schools or merchandise can assist in the survival of a rural way of earning a living by an individual in a competition in a rural centre.

Thirdly, with specific regard to the communal ownership of land, we have some very philosophical questions to answer. If this way of life is an aggressor to our way of life in Alberta, what is the tolerance point of Alberta residents? On Friday we were presented with the citizens' concerns. Remarks from these people vary from: "I recognize we can't discriminate, but can we afford to lose our community?" to: "We are concerned that the liaison committee is not the answer. They have no authority." And in light of that remark, one of my constituents phoned me early this morning and brought to my attention an article in the Calgary Herald of yesterday. In that article they were very concerned with the following quote, and the person making the quote is Mr. Bill Dascavich, who is now one of the members of the Liaison Committee responsible for working between and with the community and the Hutterite people. Mr. Dascavich says as follows, and I quote:

He added that "with their eyes blazing with fear, their souls full of meanness and their hearts filled with hypocrisy, they are saying Hutterite people must be denied their basic civil right to earn a living in Alberta unless they cease to practise their religion, which includes communal farming" . . . from an economic point of view the small-town businessmen are saying that unless the Hutterites buy from them trappings of an affluent society which they don't need or believe in, Hutterites aren't welcome in the community . . . Dascavich congratulated the Lougheed government for ridding the statute books of a Draconian measure.

Mr. Speaker, I take no exception with the remarks of the individual, but what I do take exception with, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that here on this Liaison Committee, sits an individual that is already biased to the situation. One of the qualities that is most necessary for each and every individual on that committee is objectivity -- because I think that members in this House, particularly myself, and I'm sure the Member for Drumheller, and others who have been involved in these disputes -- individuals that must act as mediators are aware that if you become known as a person in favour of one side or the other you have some real difficulties.

I can recall, as an MLA, a number of instances where the community was very hostile. I can recall the Brethren making numerous representations, but as an MLA my responsibility was to establish the most objective position possible so that both sides could be heard, and that objectivity could prevail in the decision which came forth.

DR. HORNER:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am sure the hon. member wouldn't mean to mislead the House or the people of Alberta. Mr. Dascavich is on that committee as a representative of the National Farmers Union of Alberta, and not appointed by the government of Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate what the minister has said and I agree with him that that was an appointment by the National Farmers Union. The only point I am making is that in the final analysis, the government must accept and place that person on the committee. And the point beyond that which I am making, is that we must -- I think -- in talking with these people who are on

the committee, attempt to instill in them as much objectivity as possible. The heat that is in the problem which is going to be before us, is certainly going to be great. I know -- I have observed friends fighting friends, communities fighting communities -- and some very vicious things are often said. If the people who are involved in the liaison committee cannot sit objectively, they will only add fuel to the fire, and certainly there could be some great disasters in that area.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue with my remarks but may I adjourn the debate at this time?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

I take it the hon. member has the consent of the House to adjourn the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I believe there is an error in the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, February 27, which were distributed to us this afternoon. I do believe the Motion for Return No. 144 was agreed to, and Mr. Henderson actually moved adjournment of Motion for Return No. 145.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Clerk has already noted the error and it will be corrected. Thank you. The House stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock.

[The House rose at 5:29 o'clock.]