

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Monday, March 12, 1973

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 208 An Act for the Protection of News Sources

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill being An Act to Provide for the Protection of News Sources. I wish to state that the contents of the bill indicate what the purpose of the bill is, but primarily it is to protect newsmen, reporters, and journalists from having to disclose the source of the information of their news.

I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that this is an historical occasion because I have it on good authority that the Conservatives will unanimously support the principle of this bill. So I beg leave to introduce the bill, Mr. Speaker.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 208 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. 16 The Students Loan Guarantee Amendment Act, 1973

MR. POSTER:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Students Loan Guarantee Amendment Act, 1973. The purpose of this Bill is to raise the level of guarantee to \$35 million from \$25 million and to provide for the consolidation of student loans.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 16 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. 20 The County Amendment Act, 1973

MR. PURDY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, Bill No. 20, An Act to Amend The County Act. The primary amendment in this Act is to allow summer villages which are not represented on school boards, with a permanent population of 150, to have a vote or elect a trustee for school matters.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 20 was introduced and read a first time.]

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Telephones and Utilities, that Bill No. 20, The County Amendment Act, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[The motion was carried.]

Bill No. 22 The Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 1973

MR. APPLEBY:

I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act. This bill is not very extensive. It deals mainly with clarification of sections of the existing act.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 22 was introduced and read a first time.]

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, that Bill No. 22, An Act Amending The Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 1973, be transferred to Government Bills and Orders.

[The motion was carried.]

FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to file two reports. One is the annual report for the year 1972 by the Alberta Police Commission. The other is the Annual Report for the year 1972 by the Alberta Automobile Insurance Board. I endeavoured, Mr. Speaker, to have copies available for all members of the House, but they are not yet available. As soon as they have been made I will see that they are distributed.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table Information Bulletin No. 1 of the Environment Conservation Authority in regard to public hearings on land use and resource development on the eastern slopes. This bulletin was circulated to all the MLAs, but because of the import and the nature of the hearings it is advisable that the bulletin be tabled so that it might form a part of actual proceedings of the House.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition, followed by the hon. Member for Cypress.

Administration of Justice

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I have two questions I'd like to direct to the government. The first one is to the Premier, as to whether he could advise the House if they will be proceeding to establish a royal commission to look into the administration of justice in the lower courts of the province in accordance with the request of The Alberta Human Rights and Civil Liberties Association?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to refer that question to the hon. Attorney General.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. In the report which gave rise to the question are two recommendations. One deals with The Coroners Act and the holding of inquests. There is a recommendation that it be referred to The Institute of Law Research and Reform for review. Then there is also the recommendation that there be a royal commission set up. I'd like to respond to both of those recommendations as a result of the question by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

In the first instance, Mr. Speaker, with respect to The Coroners Act, The Institute of Law Research and Reform is now dealing with a number of items in which there was a very high priority, and in fact, they are a bit behind on their scheduling, in particular with the report on expropriation principles and procedure.

Turning now, Mr. Speaker, to the question on the royal commission, the matter it refers to -- that is, the judicial system as it affects the lower courts -- is in part, at least that part dealing with the criminal procedure, a matter that is wholly within the federal jurisdiction. In addition, the reference there to looking into human rights perhaps overlooks the fact that there will be established within the next few months, a commission under The Individual's Rights Protection Act, and I expect the work of that commission will overlap, to some extent at least, the recommendation contained in the report.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, since coming to office there has been a continuing discussion and review within the department on the inquest procedures, The Coroners Act, and the procedures in the lower courts. I may say that with respect to The Coroners Act, it is not an archaic or badly outdated piece of legislation, in fact my information is that Ontario, which recently introduced some new legislation governing coroners, closely followed the Alberta legislation.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that there is a need for reform in both of those areas. We have been conscious of that, as I say, from the time of coming into office and we have been doing considerable work in those areas. For example, I have been examining the question of whether coroners' juries ought to make comments about either civil or criminal liability, and if they shouldn't, whether that ought to be contained in the Statute.

There are a number of other things of that nature. It is my feeling, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to have a departmental review of those two areas and I would think it would take at least some weeks for it to be completed. Thereafter, Mr. Speaker, depending on the results of that review, I think there should be further consideration given as to whether there shouldn't be some input into those areas from persons or bodies external to the government.

Alberta Medical Association Inquiries

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary to the Attorney General. Is it the government's intention to introduce legislation in the course of this session that would make information given at Alberta Medical Association inquiries privileged?

MR. LEITCH:

I assume, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is talking about proceedings within the profession itself in the nature perhaps of disciplinary proceedings?

Certainly I don't have any information about any intention to introduce that kind of legislation, but perhaps the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development might have some additional information.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I don't mind responding to that. The Alberta Medical Association has current suggestions for amendments to the legislation before the government at the present time. Whether or not it is in the first or the latter stages of this session that any amendments are brought in in regard to The Medical Profession Act is something that is not certain at the moment. Whether or not they have specifically asked for legislation providing for the holding of inquiries of their own in camera, I would rather not say. I would rather give my own reaction to it, and that is that very often it is not in the interests of the profession or the parties involved to have disciplinary hearings within a profession conducted in public, at least in the first instance. For example, the disciplinary proceedings of the legal profession are public at the time that an appeal is made and it goes to the courts.

Craig Case

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. the Attorney General. In the absence of a judicial inquiry, is the government planning any action to clear the name of Dr. Craig?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I think the response to that question ought to be to point out that I have, as I have said before, talked to all of the people that I am aware

of within the department that were involved in this matter. I certainly looked at some of the documents and I expect the majority of them that came into existence connection with this matter, and at no time, either in conversation or by reviewing those documents, have I found the slightest indication of any improper motive on the part of any of the people within the department.

In light of that, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that there can be no alternative on the government's part but to leave the matter as it is, and if there is a contrary opinion held by Dr. Craig, he is, of course, free to pursue his remedies through the judicial route.

MR. SPEAKER:

Might the supplementary by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview be the last one on this topic? There is some considerable doubt in the mind of the Chair as to whether a topic of this scope is suitable for the question period. There are at least three eminent parliamentary authorities who say otherwise. We could, of course, amend our rules in relation to the question period to broaden its scope but we are on many occasions going into topics which are of such a scope that they should be dealt with either in debate or in announcements on Orders of the Day.

Human Rights Commission

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the Attorney General. In the hopes of clarifying an answer he gave to the Leader of the Opposition, do I take it from his answer that The Human Rights Commission set up under Bill No. 2 would have the authority to investigate the general area of human rights, that the government proposes that this would be the first priority for The Human Rights Commission once it is established?

MR. LEITCH:

No, Mr. Speaker, that isn't quite an accurate interpretation of what I said. I said I anticipated that there would be some overlapping of the area referred to in the report and the work of that commission.

Distribution of Psychiatric Reports

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Health and Social Development. I wonder if he could advise the House as to what action he has taken regarding the apparent practice of social workers in guidance clinics giving wide distribution of psychiatric reports to teachers, school principals, guidance counsellors, social workers, and even ministers of the Crown?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the question is a very generalized one in that it refers to a widespread practice. I would have to say that I am not aware of any widespread practice in that regard, and if the hon. member would like either to pursue the matter with a supplementary or directly with me I will do my best to get information and ascertain the situation.

MR. HENDERSON:

I am referring, Mr. Speaker, to a report coming out of Banff within the medical profession that this practice has come into being as a result of the new mental health programs within the province, and that social workers are making information available on specific reports relating to patients, giving them to school teachers, school counsellors, other people apparently that the social worker thinks have a relevant interest in the matter, and this is the context which I raised. If the minister isn't aware of it, maybe he could take notice of it with a view to looking into the matter.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I just want to assure the hon. member that I will indeed look into that. I am presuming from the additional information he gave me that the report came out of the conference of The Western Canadian Psychiatric Association which has wound up in Banff as of last Friday, and I don't have a report on it yet. But I would be glad to pursue the matter.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister Without Portfolio --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. If this is really supplementary to the point which has just been mentioned, the hon. minister has agreed to accept the question as notice, and perhaps once the answer comes the hon. Member from Calgary Bow might see whether a supplementary is required in relation to that answer.

MR. WILSON:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the previous question was general and I have a specific question arising out of that general question to the hon. Minister Without Portfolio in charge of the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission.

MR. SPEAKER:

If it's a supplemental in that nature perhaps the hon. member might proceed with it.

MR. WILSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the hon. minister, have you or your office received psychiatric reports from the social worker directing the Red Deer Guidance Centre?

MISS HUNLEY:

I'm not aware of any at the present time, but I would be glad to check my correspondence and see. My correspondence isn't up to date.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Cypress, followed by --

MR. HENDERSON:

I wonder if I could put another matter on this issue to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development and he might also take it under advisement. It is the question of whether there are psychiatrists in charge of the guidance clinics at Red Deer and Calgary in full-time attendance.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Land Purchases by Hutterites

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. Does the minister have knowledge of any purchases of land that have been made by the Hutterian Brethren since the repeal of The Communal Property Act? Also while I am on feet I am wondering: is the minister aware of any arrangements that have been made for land purchases during the freeze period from some time last year until the repeal?

MR. RUSSELL:

No, Mr. Speaker, I don't have any direct or accurate knowledge of either of the items which the hon. member referred to. As you know, at March 1 those responsibilities were turned over to Dr. Platt and his committee. We realize it's a very sensitive time with respect to the development of rural Alberta, and for that reason we are purposely being very careful to let the committee proceed to work with our municipalities and rural residents and the Hutterian Brethren.

I sense that the hon. member is probably disturbed by some rumours he has heard, but to my knowledge there is no basis for those. We are trying to proceed very carefully, and with understanding at this time.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, may I ask another supplementary just for further clarification? Will the minister be made aware of any purchases that are made very shortly after the committee gets the report, or will they only be making monthly or biannual reports, or what are the arrangements made with the committee?

MR. RUSSELL:

It's difficult to answer that question in an absolute sense, Mr. Speaker. I expect that the ad hoc committee of three ministers, with whom Dr. Platt will be keeping in touch, will be receiving reports shortly because of the newness of the committee. But what "shortly" means I really couldn't say. Presumably when he has something substantial to report he will communicate with us, but for now that is the only commitment I can give.

MR. STROM:

One last supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, if I may. Would it be possible for me, as an MLA, to contact Dr. Platt and get verification as to whether or not a certain deal has been consummated?

MR. RUSSELL:

I would hope that all citizens of Alberta, within the Legislature or without, Mr. Speaker, would feel free, confident and comfortable to communicate with Dr. Platt.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the registrar of the Land Titles Offices now free to register transfers of land of the Hutterian Brethren or is the document required to carry the approval of this committee?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The duties and powers of the registrar are very much a matter of statute so what the hon. member is asking is a legal opinion as to the effect of the repeal of The Communal Property Act.

MR. TAYLOR:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. That really wasn't my point. My point was to ascertain whether or not there must be something else stamped on that transfer that is not now covered by Statute.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, as of March 1 all citizens within the province are now treated absolutely equally with respect to land sales or purchases.

MR. TAYLOR:

So they need not refer to the committee if they don't wish to, is that the context?

MR. RUSSELL:

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is an advisory committee. As I emphasized to the members earlier, or tried to, we are working in a time which I think is very sensitive, and if it is successful it will show substantial benefits to the province. In the meantime there are certainly no special considerations or requirements for anyone.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Sturgeon Lake Seismic Tests

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. Has he received any report recently from the seismic

operation in the Sturgeon Lake area and the impact of these operations on the fish life in the lake?

DR. WARRACK:

Yes I have, Mr. Speaker. The House will recall that this was a question posed by the hon. Member for Smoky River last week. This evaluation is before us and we are at the present time appraising this evaluation.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Has the minister been advised that their tests have shown that a great number of fish are being killed in the lake?

DR. WARRACK:

I have been advised, Mr. Speaker, that there were two separate tests, and they were done separately with a separate kind of seismic system in order to get a comparison of the two kinds of tests. In one instance there was not a large, but a small degree of upset with respect to the fish population. In the second instance there was none whatever. So it appears possible, although we have not fully assessed it, Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to go under the second kind of test and have no impairment whatever.

MR. LUDWIG:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In the meantime has the minister considered putting a hold on all seismic operations until these tests are completed?

DR. WARRACK:

That is the status at this time.

MR. HENDERSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. From the fact that there were supposedly 150 fish taken out of the lake around the test site last Friday, which test did this relate to that the minister referred to? The first test or the second test?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. minister has already answered that he is going to be evaluating the reports, and possibly supplementary questions might be postponed until after the reports have been assessed.

MR. HENDERSON:

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is not a matter of evaluation. I just simply asked which test did this particular piece of evidence relate to? I was aware of only one test until the minister spoke of two. One test, I understand, took place on Friday and there were 150 dead fish recovered after the test. Now, was this the first test or the second test?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, both tests were conducted on Friday. I won't, at the moment, attest to the figure 150, but in any case there were two separate tests, both conducted on Friday.

If I might take the liberty of distinguishing between the two tests, the difference was this: in one test the hole used for the two and one-half pound unit for detonation was drilled the day before. In the second test the hole had been drilled several days before, so a much higher degree of compaction was possible in the intervening period of time. So that is the essential difference in the experiment between the first and the second tests that were conducted on Friday. In the second test where the compaction had occurred there was no damage at all to the fish life.

MR. LUDWIG:

I may have misunderstood the minister, Mr. Speaker. Did he advise the House that he has ordered stop to further seismic activities until the assessment of the tests is completed?

DR. WARRACK:

In response to that question asked just a few minutes ago, I had said that was the status at this time. There will not be further seismic activity in the interval until we have a chance to give a detailed examination to these two tests results.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is it the government's intention to permit drilling on Sturgeon Lake if the seismic tests prove successful?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's question is clearly hypothetical. The hon. Member for Calgary Millican, followed by the hon. Member for Smoky River.

Rapeseed Processing Plant

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, my question today is directed to the Minister of Agriculture, and it is a follow-up to his statement on Friday on the \$5 million rapeseed processing plant to be built at Sexsmith. Is it the government's intention, Mr. Minister, to also support the second plant that has been requested at High Prairie, Alberta?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, as I have said on several occasions, in my view the Peace River country can support the establishment of at least two rapeseed crushing plants. As a matter of fact I have a breakdown of the acreage that would be involved in both the West Peace country and the East Peace country, and there are substantial amounts of rapeseed grown in both those areas. The announcement with regard to Sexsmith has nothing to do at all with whether or not one will be built in the High Prairie or McLennan area and, as I understand it, they are waiting for confirmation from DREE before they move ahead in that area. I've had some discussion with the principals, and they will be treated in a manner similar to any other people interested in the processing industry in Alberta.

MR. DIXON:

A supplementary question, Mr. Minister. In view of the fact that the High Prairie area had been asking for this plant at least years and months ahead of the Sexsmith plant, what was the motive of the department in okaying the Sexsmith plant first?

DR. HORNER:

There were no motives in the department at all, Mr. Speaker. We are a free enterprise province, and the motivation came from the businessmen in the community and the farmers who were interested and had their financing ready to go. I find it rather strange that the question of the High Prairie plant has revolved around whether or not they would get DREE assistance, and as I pointed out on Friday, the principals in regard to the Sexsmith plant had not asked for any government assistance other than our assistance to the individual farmer in the co-op.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister advise the House whether or not the co-operative, which is to have a 30 per cent interest in the plant, has been formed?

DR. HORNER:

As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, it's in the process of being formed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Smoky River's question apparently has been answered.

The hon. Member for Lethbridge West, followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Southern Alberta Teachers' Strike

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Education. Now that the teachers' strike in Southern Alberta is a reality, will you be withholding instructional grants from those school boards that were involved in that strike?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, strictly speaking that is a matter of law, insofar as the amendment to The School Act last year to Section 129 provided that up to 60 per cent of all monies paid under the School Foundation Program for the instructional portion are automatically withheld.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Is the 60 per cent considered the instructional portion of the operational grant then?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, the Statute says up to 60 per cent, and requires a computation to be made by the department so that the equivalent of the teachers' salary portion is what would not be remitted to boards during the strike.

MR. GRUENWALD:

A supplementary to the strike then, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister intend to take any action in any way against teachers who will be going back to work in those areas or who want to go back to teaching on a voluntary basis in the area where there is a teacher strike?

MR. HYNDMAN:

That, Mr. Speaker, I think is a matter in respect of which the teachers involved should seek legal advice from their appropriate solicitors.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member --

MR. CLARK:

One further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Mr. Minister, will the services of The Correspondence School Branch be available to students who are affected by this strike?

MR. HYNDMAN:

New regulations under the correspondence branch came out last year, Mr. Speaker, and generally speaking the correspondence branch is not available for a situation such as this. The historical and continuing purpose of the correspondence branch is to provide services to people who cannot go to the school for an education -- people in hospitals and people in remote areas. That is the basis on which the correspondence branch works, and regulations passed last year -- I believe it was in September or October -- which are public documents, set forth the matter in detail.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, followed by the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury.

Continental Trucking

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to either the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce, or the hon. Provincial Treasurer.

Can the minister advise the House whether or not a new company has been formed to take over Continental Trucking, and if so, what the name of the company is?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, to our knowledge no such company has been formed, and we have no further knowledge at this time.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary McCall.

Closing of Rural Elevators

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture, and ask him to report on the negotiations between the Province of Alberta, the Canada Grains Council and the federal government regarding the report from the Canada Grains Council on the consolidation and the proposed close-down of a number of elevators in rural Alberta.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member appreciates, our Grain Commission and also an individual producer the Grains Council asked us to nominate to the council have been dealing with this matter to some extent. The latest information that I have is that the council is not yet ready to make any recommendations in regard to the whole matter of rationalization. The problem at the moment with regard to closure of elevators relates more specifically to the companies themselves which are closing what they call "non-economic elevators." I have on my agenda a meeting with the president and executive of the Alberta Wheat Pool. One of the problems we are going to be discussing is the problem of the closure of these elevators in various locations in Alberta.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Has the province made any formal presentation to the federal government or to the Canada Grains Council regarding the specific recommendation which would result in a lot of rural elevators being closed down?

DR. HORNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can't say that we made a formal presentation to the council. Informally I have had some discussions with Dr. Dever, the head of the council, and made it very clear to him we wouldn't accept a rationalization that didn't take into consideration a number of matters. One of them was the question of road construction, one of them was the matter of the impact of any closure or rationalization or abandonment of rail lines and the effect on the rural communities.

We feel very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that we should take the present grain handling structure and build on it rather than tear something down and not know exactly where you are going once you have torn it down. It is my very strong view that we require all the storage facilities that we can possibly have to become a really effective wholesaler of grain and processed grain products from the Province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary McCall, followed by the hon. Member for Bow Valley.

Passenger Train Service

MR. HO LEM:

My question today is directed to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. Has the government made any submissions to the Canadian Transport Commission regarding suggestions for improvement to passenger train service within Alberta in view of the invitation by the commission for such proposals?

MR. PEACOCK:

We haven't as yet, but we are taking it under consideration and we anticipate we will.

MR. HO LEM:

A supplementary to the minister. Have you or officials of your department encouraged any Alberta organizations or groups to make independent submissions to the Canadian Transport Commission?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, as I have suggested, we are taking it under advisement and we haven't reviewed that matter yet.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member --

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, from the information you do have on hand now, do you anticipate any changes being implemented in the near future for the improvement of passenger services in Alberta?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I have already said that it is under advisement and when we have had the chance to review it again, we will be making our presentation.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Bow Valley, followed by the hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation.

Southern Alberta Teachers' Strike (Cont.)

MR. MANDEVILLE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour. Do you have anything to report to the House on salary negotiations on the teachers' strike in the southern part of the province?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, that all depends on how much time you want to give me. However, to give basic information, 1,300 teachers affecting about 30,000 students in the Southern Alberta School Authorities Association, comprising 28 school districts are struck as of one minute past midnight this morning.

Negotiations began last May, May of 1972, and moved effectively for the period of May and June and slowed down in July and August and in September. We got them together again in October and there were periods of time when we were optimistic and hoped that we would have a settlement. This did not turn out to be the case. But our mediation staff and the chairman of the board were there most of the previous week. I spent eight hours in personal negotiations with the two sides yesterday. And the chairmen of both negotiation groups are in their hotels at Lethbridge today, and I would anticipate that within a short time, a day or two, they will be back and ready at the negotiation table with the assistance of the mediation staff. If they are not back in a short time, I will invite them on behalf of the government to return to the negotiation table forthwith.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister of Labour tell us in a sentence or two, how far apart are the teachers and the trustees in their negotiations, from the last offer the trustees have made, and what the teachers are prepared to accept?

DR. HOHOL:

I'll take the first part of the question -- Can the minister do that? Mr. Speaker, I really wish I could, because it is of public interest and I'm sure the teachers and school board members of the negotiation teams will present the case to the public and it is a public concern.

However, the fact is that negotiations did not break down in the sense that although the strike began this morning, we are in the circumstance of collective bargaining, and we hope that by Wednesday morning the negotiators will be back

at the table. In view of that, it would be of some prejudice and risk to successful negotiation to discuss the particulars that separate the two parties. Let me only be quietly optimistic that there will be a conclusion to the problem sooner than later.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Pollution

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of the Environment. Last fall you indicated to the House that you would be tabling the study reviewing feed lot pollution to be done by some high school students. When will this study be tabled at this session?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, during the present sitting.

MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary. Does the Department of the Environment regularly test all major rivers and streams in the province for pollutants? If so, does your department publish these findings on a regular basis?

MR. YURKO:

The answer is yes to both questions, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. How many miles of polluted streams do we have in Alberta?

MR. SPEAKER:

Clearly that's the type of question which should be placed on the Order Paper.

MR. HENDERSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What action has the minister taken relative to the recent reports of high mercury contamination in the North Saskatchewan?

MR. YURKO:

I'll be examining the reports. The reports have been put forth, not by the department, but by the Fish and Game Association, I believe, in Edmonton. We'll be examining the report as well as whether or not we can support the organization with respect to doing additional work in this regard.

MR. HENDERSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In the meantime, is the minister not putting out any public notices about the hazards of public consumption of any of the fish out of this river?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, the data is very preliminary, indeed, and before we put out any notices we'll have to get much greater substantiation than the information now available to us from that report.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow, followed by the hon. Member for Athabasca.

Mental Health Treatment Facilities

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Is the government closing out the Wood's Home experimental mental health treatment program in Calgary?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, if I am not mistaken, there is a contract with Wood's Home which still has some considerable period of time to run -- at least another year, if I'm not mistaken. That being the case, a decision would be made some time prior to expiry of that time about the future role for that institution.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Were funds cut back from the original contract amount for last year, and are they budgeted to be cut back for this year?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I'd be glad to get that information to be sure, but my offhand recollection would be that there has not been any cut back in contracted amounts.

MR. HENDERSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. While the minister is checking it, he might also inquire and report to the House as to whether the board of Wood's Christian Home is considering withdrawing from the program because of the inadequacy of public funds, regardless of the amount?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I've had some discussion with the board over the last several months in that regard, and I can bring the House fully up-to-date on it when I have the other information asked for.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the government planning to cut back out-reach and out-patient treatment services at the Hull Home in Calgary?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, this raises a question that I think comes up from time to time with various institutions, and that is that sometimes they are on a certain per-day rate, and with the very best of intentions, they expand the type of program they had originally contracted for into something which, of itself, may be useful enough but is not part of what they had originally budgeted allocations for. Of course, looking for further monies, if it happens that the negotiations end up so that they don't actually get the additional monies, then they feel there has been a cut-back whereas in fact there may not have been.

In answer to the hon. member, I think that is the case in this particular institution. And I think it is very timely, as we did last year about this time, to review the operation of that particular institution in the course of the Estimates or in the House for hon. members.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What alternate services are you providing or recommending for these out-reach and out-patient treatment requirements?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, we undertake as many services of that type as possible. I don't think for a minute that any such existing program has been cut back as a result of any policy of the department. All I can say is, to repeat -- and it runs in my memory that this may be an institution where that could have occurred -- that occasionally programs are expanded beyond the original intent, with the very best of intentions, into areas that are not budgeted for. It is perhaps a matter of time in some cases, too. If you have a good, properly-operating out-reach type of service, nobody would deny that in a lot of ways additional services of that type are more effective from a cost point of view - per patient

or per person treated or helped in some way, and may be more effective than the original program if the original program is solely based on the institution itself without the out-reach.

There are certainly ways, through volunteers and through the use of other agencies and so on, that you can expand usefully into some of those areas. But I think the boards of these institutions know that when the expansions do come, they have to determine on their own, within the budgets that are available to them, whether they prefer those particular expanded parts of their program to some other part of their program. Because there is a limit to how fast institutions and various programs can be allowed to grow when they are at the high per day cost such as ones like the Wood's Home. It is a very high per day cost.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please. I wonder if we might go to another subject. We are nearly out of time and we have five members who still want to ask questions.

The hon. Member for Athabasca.

Schoolboys' Curling Championships

MR. APPLEBY:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation. I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you are aware that the Canadian Schoolboys' Curling Championships are being --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please. The hon. member is making an announcement.

MR. APPLEBY:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Alberta Government has sent any message of encouragement to the Boyle rink from the Athabasca constituency which is representing Alberta this week?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, the following wire has been sent and I am quite sure you would like to hear it.

On behalf of the citizens and Government of Alberta, we wish each of you the best of luck and good curling in the Canadian Schoolboys' Curling Championships. We are proud to have you represent our province at this national event.

Jaycees' Nominee

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation. Has the government sent a letter of congratulations from the Alberta Legislature to Alberta's outstanding young Canadian Jaycees' nominee, Mr. Harold Cardinal?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, not as yet.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker to the hon. minister. Will you see that it is done?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, most certainly so.

MR. SPEAKER:

We have time for one further question by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

Lethbridge Gaol Sentence and Latta Case

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Attorney General. Before I ask him a question, maybe while he is on his feet, he could also tell the House whether or not he has read the report yet of the Latta case?

This is a case regarding the man in Lethbridge who was just acquitted of a murder charge and 20 hours later he was put back in gaol. My question is, seeing that he served 8 months waiting for his trial to come up, is any investigation going to be made as to whether that couldn't be considered the 8 month parole that he still had to serve from a previous charge?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge at all of the matter the hon. member is referring to. If he will give me some additional information I will take the matter as notice and look into it.

In connection with the other matter that he raised, I have read the reports and am currently waiting on some work that is being done by the department on legal matters.

MR. DIXON:

As a supplementary, and for the information of the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker, the man just acquitted in Lethbridge is David William Threinen of Lethbridge.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to revert to Introduction of Visitors if the House concurs.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister revert to Introduction of Visitors?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to introduce to you and through you to the House, 80 senior citizens from the Calgary North Hill riding. They come from four different parishes in the riding, Anglican, Catholic and United Church. They are led by Mr. Alf Godwin who for many years was the federal returning officer in Calgary North. They have had a very arduous and difficult journey and a rough time getting here. The Premier and I had intended to have lunch with them but because of their late arrival, we have to apologize, we couldn't stay and couldn't make it.

But we are now delighted to see them in the House, Mr. Speaker because they are representative of the pioneers and old-timers who contributed so much to make Alberta the wonderful place it is today. Would they please rise and be recognized?

ORDERS OF THE DAYGOVERNMENT MOTIONS

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by hon. Mr. Topolnisky, the following resolution that deals with a very contentious matter. It deals with the question of land-use control in the Province of Alberta.

Be it resolved that, the Legislature require the government to set up an Alberta Agricultural Land Use Forum consisting of three Albertans and appropriate staff to hold public hearings and report to the government thereon and to make recommendations regarding agricultural land use.

Further, that the Forum consider, but not be limited to the following matters:

- (1) The family farm;
- (2) Multi-use of agricultural land;
- (3) The use of agricultural land for recreational purposes;
- (4) The use of agricultural land for urban expansion;
- (5) Future land needs of Alberta agriculture;
- (6) Corporate farms, foreign ownership of land, absentee ownership and communal farming;

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. With great respect and with apologies to the hon. Deputy Premier, I believe the hon. Minister of Telephones and Utilities would like to interject.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS (Cont.)

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, I am terribly sorry. I omitted one group, one parish from the senior citizens, and you yourself noticed that there was a look on some faces. I meant Anglican, Catholic, United Church and Presbyterian.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS (Cont.)

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, for that interruption, I don't mind at all. As I was saying:

- (7) The common ownership of land, agricultural processing and marketing facilities;
- (8) Land-use as it influences population distribution in Alberta;
- (9) The extent, if any, to which the historical right of a land owner to determine the use and disposition of agricultural property ought to be restricted.

Mr. Speaker, there are many that will say this is just an additional way of passing the buck, that you can have additional studies on these matters, and so on and so forth. Of course, that is the easy road for an opposition to take.

I want to suggest to them immediately that this is a very difficult problem and a very complex one; the question in relation to the very traditional and very historic rights that individuals in Alberta and Canada have in relation to land use; the question in The Canadian Bill of Rights as to the right of the individual to the use of his property; the question that all governments are facing with regard to the question of looking after their resources to the best of their ability. The question of all of these things are current.

We hear, of course, of happenings in other provinces. We hear of the Ontario government talking about the Niagara Peninsula, that very fine land and the extensive fruit growing that goes on there and the land gradually being eroded by urban expansion and this kind of thing.

We see in our neighbouring province to the west of us some pretty radical legislation which has been brought in which brings out headlines like "dictatorial" and "devastating". I suggest to hon. members that when they brush aside our motion to set up a forum which will hear and have an open discussion between land owners and others who are interested in this deal they should think very seriously as to the kind of legislation that is coming forward in other jurisdictions. I can certainly make available to them the bill which has been introduced in the British Columbia Legislature.

I point out to you, Mr. Speaker, and to them that Section 16 of that bill is worth while reading to the House because it says: land shall be deemed not to be taken or injuriously affected by reason of the designation by the commission

of that land as "an agricultural land reserve, a green belt land reserve, a land bank land reserve or park land reserve."

In other words, there is no right to compensation with regard to how this commission designates your land. It's pretty serious, Mr. Speaker, with a pretty far-reaching effect, particularly in a province and in an area where our forefathers came to western Canada because they could own their own land, and because they had some freedom to do with that land as they wished.

As I said to the group from Vulcan when they came here, it is easy to say land use. They are two short words, but I think not everybody has really appreciated the effect of what happens when you start bringing in legislation like this Bill No. 42 of the British Columbia Government. Because in fact, Mr. Speaker, what happens then is that the farmers involved are the ones who become very concerned.

I have a cutting here from The Globe and Mail in which the farmers are urged to battle the curbs with regard to the curbing of the ability or the right of a farmer to dispose of his land as he may see fit. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I understand from the press that there is going to be a substantial march of farmers on the British Columbia Legislature in the next day or two in regard to their bill.

In regard to that, there is a recent editorial in The Globe and Mail which I think sums up the question, and they talk about what Ontario is doing or hasn't done in regard to land-use legislation. It says this: "Some of the ways in which Ontario should not proceed are now being demonstrated in British Columbia." An additional part of that editorial goes on: "The arbitrary powers proposed for the Provincial Land Commission are of a nature to be compatible only with an authoritarian state."

So, Mr. Speaker, these are some of the problems we face in land-use legislation. I have had senior people in my department looking at this whole matter for the past year-and-a-half, as a matter of fact. The deeper they delve into it, the deeper they look at the ramifications of this kind of legislation, the more concerned they become.

To suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is a matter that hasn't been looked at before is just not true. We have had a minor sort of land-use regulation in regard to certain functions of government right along. The functions in The Department of Highways Act, which restrict a certain amount of what one can do in regard to the land adjoining highways, is a very pertinent case in point. I don't think that anything can be more contentious or upsetting for people or farmers than either the Minister of Highways or some provincial planning commission telling them that they can't do that because it is in the Department of Highways Act. I am sure that the hon. Member for Drumheller is very conscious of the effect that land-use regulations in the Department of Highways Act have had upon our farmers.

In suggesting that this might be a rehashing of The Communal Property Repeal Act, I would hope that all hon. members would have enough insight into the question to appreciate that that is only a minor portion of what we are talking about when we are talking about land-use regulations. I have a series of petitions from a number of ranchers in the Calgary area on my desk at the moment, Mr. Speaker, outlining their very grave concern about the continual subdivision of land in the area, and whether or not they are going to be able, in fact, to sustain a viable cattle operation in that area if additional land is allowed to be subdivided and taken out of the traditional form of agriculture.

I don't think there has been a western stock growers' convention in the past several years at which they haven't talked about the question of the trespass not only on private land but on leased land, and the question of whether or not they shouldn't be paid for raising wild animals that others could hunt. These are matters that are current and very complex, and they come right down to the individual and affect his rights.

As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, the people in Alberta generally came here because of the freedom that they enjoy and their ability to own land. Do we want to go back to a tenant system or a peasant system in which the government owns the land and we lease it out if everybody does exactly what they are told, or do we have some freedom and some ability to go ahead and expand our agricultural system in that ...[Inaudible]...

There is no doubt that we will have demands on land in Alberta as leisure time becomes greater and as we develop more sophisticated or faster

transportation facilities. I think that nobody who appreciates good agricultural land doesn't weep a little bit when we see them tearing it up to build a highway. Maybe we will have to look at where we build our highways in relation to agricultural land. We are going to have to consider the question of subdivisions around the metropolitan areas particularly, but the whole question of subdivisions relates to other urban centres and smaller urban centres throughout the province as well. At the moment the question is, do you have to have a 20 acre parcel? And maybe we should be looking at our regulations in that area, and suggesting that if people do want to live in the country we should make some allowance and allow them to subdivide into smaller parcels so that we don't waste so much agricultural land.

The question, as I have said, with regard to other recreational pursuits and the question of whether or not we can't have a multiple use of agricultural land in a compatible way: I think we can, and I think that these are the things that have to be looked at, Mr. Speaker. It is not good enough, in my view, to suggest that only government has the answers. I think the idea of having a land-use forum is one in which we would hope there would be a continual and widespread discussion of all of these problems and a feedback from the people who are going to be primarily involved, the individual landowners in Alberta.

The question in regard to timing, Mr. Speaker: I would think the matter is so complex that if they are going to have a look at all of these things, it will take some time for them to do that and then come back to us with the proper recommendations. I would invite all of the people of Alberta who are interested in this matter to make themselves available to the land-use forum. We as a government certainly will give them whatever assistance might be required in the way of an expenditure that they may require for research staff, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this resolution to members of the House, and not as an easy solution to a very complex problem, but as a first step in trying to reach some solution to this very complex problem which will be acceptable to the people of Alberta. I think that's the important thing.

MR. TOPOLNISKY:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to second the motion to set up an Alberta Agricultural Land Use Forum.

Since the government of Alberta is committed to preserve the family farm and to preserve rural life styles, therefore, we must find ways and means to increase the incomes of farmers on their farms, and in their own communities.

Our intent, therefore, is to improve the quality of life in rural Alberta. The opportunity now exists, Mr. Speaker, because there is such a great demand for all Alberta agricultural products. It is important, therefore, to maintain and improve the natural resource base, that is land, as well as to maintain and to encourage a viable community structure. Since we are dedicated to promote growth in rural areas, this brings up, Mr. Speaker, our great concern about future land needs and future land use for Alberta agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to second the motion to set up the Alberta Agricultural Land Use Forum.

MR. BUCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to take part in this debate on the resolution that the government has brought forward. I would like to commend the Minister of Agriculture for his remarks. He said right off that he knew that we were going to be against it, so that he wasn't surprised if we did hit against it.

But I would say, Mr. Speaker, that he is right that this is a very contentious issue at this particular time. The study of land use is probably going to be one of the most -- this resolution could if passed -- be one of the most historic moments maybe in Alberta history because it strikes at the very basis of our fundamental freedoms.

As the minister has mentioned this country is less than 100 years old and it is because of free land and because of the land ownership that we had such an influx of people, particularly from Europe, that this was the first time in their lives, or in their future that they would be able to own land and call it their own. It is also in many respects, as he has mentioned, a very radical situation because if not handled properly, if not understood by the general population, this is the first edge of what you might call the socialism of land.

When we talk about asking for a land-use study, it all depends on who asks for it. The minister who was speaking to the people on the steps of the Legislature the other day asked for land use because it affected the Hutterian Brethren. But it is probable, as the minister also told them, that if it affects the Hutterian Brethren, it is also going to affect you. It is something like Paddy's pig, he is willing to share everything until he finds he has to share his pig. Then he is not quite so interested in land use or sharing anymore.

It is rather unfortunate. As the minister said, he has been thinking of a land-use study for over a year-and-a-half, and communal property was only one small part of it. But it had to be on that very day that he said -- or two days after -- because of 400 irate farmers standing on the steps -- the government had to announce they were going to have a land-use study.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this motion as it now stands, I'm not really opposed to it totally, but I cannot support it the way it is. And I question the advisability of proceeding with this forum under the present terms of reference.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that this government is in the position that when in doubt of how to make a decision, let's appoint a committee.

I ask the government why they would appoint another committee of three members, probably \$20,000 a year and supporting staff, so possibly the money isn't that important. But why appoint another committee? If they are to do their job properly, it is going to take a number of years, I would say at least three years, to come up with a proper land-use study in all its aspects, never mind particularly the agricultural end of it because there are other land-use studies that have to be made.

We already are funding, throughout certain portions of the province, planning commissions who have all this information and have all these studies in the various areas throughout the province. Could this not all be correlated into one report? We also have the Select Committee on Foreign Ownership. We have the report of The Committee on Communal Property.

I just wonder, could some aspects on land-use of these things have been made into the form of a white paper or a position paper by the government and this position paper become the talking point throughout the province rather than, say, having a land forum as such?

But, Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about item No. 6. Item No. 6 deals with communal property, it deals with foreign ownership, and it deals with the absentee and corporate farms.

Now last year, the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview introduced a bill on corporate farms, but one could hardly be sane in this House and say this government is going to support a motion from their only socialist member. But at least it was on corporate farming. It didn't get a very good response from either side of the House, except for the Member for Spirit River.

We also had a Select Committee on Foreign Ownership, which I believe is still in existence -- excepting it hasn't made its final report to the House -- and this committee is dealing primarily with foreign ownership of land. We need action now, not in the future. Already in the southern part of the province French interests are considering buying large tracts of land, and if we are going to wait until this forum reports, maybe half the countryside will have already been sold to these French interests.

We also have the Communal Property Committee that was set up last year to study the use of communal property throughout the province and make a report to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I am speaking primarily on communal property, not because I feel that however the committee reported was the final end as far as the Hutterian Brethren and land use was concerned. But I do feel that the committee has done a wonderful job, not primarily because I was on it, but primarily because our chairman, the hon. Bob Dowling and his committee and staff left no stone unturned to collect as much information within the time limits available to put into this report as much factual information as we possibly could.

Secondly, in this information that was presented, we did not have public hearings as such, primarily because of the history of The Communal Property Act. We realized that this is a very contentious and very sensitive area throughout the province and that there was no point in having public meetings. If you go back in the history of The Communal Property Act, many of these committee and

public meetings were merely a forum for all the biased and bigoted people throughout the province to come for miles around, really just to vilify the Hutterites. Actually there was no fact brought forward either for or against the Hutterites, but merely a sounding board for those -- as the hon. minister has mentioned -- those who wanted land use as long as it didn't affect them.

I don't want to go into all the unfortunate things that happened in the removal of The Communal Property Board. It began with the suspension of The Communal Property Board by the Minister of Municipal Affairs on December 8, 1971 and the indecision that happened from then on even until the Act itself was repealed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in bringing this motion forward, dealing with Item No. 6 in the resolution, the government at no time mentioned in the Speech from the Throne that we were going to have a land use study. They mentioned everything else that had happened in the past year in that speech, but they never mentioned land-use study. There was no notice of motion, other than the government took the motion, that we'd even discuss land-use study at this session of the Legislature. There was no government motion on the subject prior to February 23.

Mr. Speaker, it seemed rather curious that we had prior knowledge that these protesters were coming on February 23. I quite admired the Premier as he stood on the steps and said that The Communal Property Act was repealed, period. The hon. Minister of Agriculture, in referring to his speech, in essence said, "Well, if you want land use, you are going to have to put up with the pros and the cons of it." But we had to wait, Mr. Speaker, until we had 400 people on the steps of this Legislature Building before the hon. Minister of Education, or the hon. House Leader, brought in an oral motion at 10:30 on a Tuesday night. They couldn't even wait to get it on the Order Paper in its proper written form. Then I was rather surprised, Mr. Speaker, to have the minister get up and say, "Well, we've looked at this thing for a year and a half."

I realize -- let's be quite frank about it -- this is a very contentious issue, and the government is going to have to deal with it. But I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the government was pressured to implement this vague and inept motion by over-reaction. The public forums on any subject have merit, but with item No. 6, are these public forums? The minister can say The Communal Property Act deals with only a small portion of total land use. I realize that. But let us make no mistake, Mr. Speaker. After having had 400 farmers on the steps of this Legislature, whenever a public forum is held where there is antipathy to the Hutterite Brethren, the public forum is going to centre on The Communal Property Act. This, Mr. Speaker, is going to make the job of Dr. Platt and his committee very, very untenable.

I state, emphatically, Mr. Speaker, right here and now that I am not against the hearing of individuals or groups on this subject. In fact, we would welcome an input, either pro or con, but the liaison committee has been appointed for this special purpose. The sooner we can look objectively at this very touchy subject without having land forums on the one hand stirring up the people and the Communal Property Liaison Committee on the other hand trying to pacify the people, and the sooner we can look at the facts and try to settle the people down on this very touchy subject, the better.

To me, Mr. Speaker, this land forum -- and the minister has mentioned it is going to take time, and he does not know when they are going to report -- is merely a stalling tactic on behalf of the government. The government, having made the stand to repeal The Communal Property Act, has the responsibility now to measure up and take the full brunt of its responsibility rather than slough it off on a committee or turn it over to the Communal Property Board and put them almost in jeopardy.

So, Mr. Speaker, to sum it up I would say that much of this information on land use is already filed and is readily available to the government. Public forums on item No. 6 will only add emotional pressure to a very critical situation in some areas of the province. The liaison officer and the committee are already, within their terms of reference, a sounding board for public opinion on these subjects and would welcome input from the general public. The government has over-reacted in a vain attempt to keep its image untarnished rather than basing its decision on the realities of the immediate situation. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation, Mr. Sorenson, that all of Item No. 6 be struck out.

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, in seconding the amendment, I must say that land use is certainly one of a series of grave issues that is facing the 17th Legislature. There is little doubt that as fewer and fewer gain control of agriculture and land, competition will lessen, efficiency will lessen and the cost of food and fibre will increase. With this increase poorer people will increase in numbers and their ability to fight back will decrease.

The small operator and his family are dependent upon the community for church, entertainment, recreation, food, feed, equipment and supply. If you remove the farm -- and certainly corporate farms, foreign ownership, absentee ownership or communal farming will do that -- remove the farm you eliminate the business and you destroy the community. No small town can exist without people on the land, and no matter how grand, splendid and productive or vast the corporate farm may be, this will happen. This troubles me very much, and has over the past couple of years.

The hon. Member for Cardston has mentioned the firing of the board and the repeal of the Act and the committee, but there has been no homework done, there has been no follow-through. The Edmonton Journal of Wednesday, February 28, referred to the setting up of a forum as a surprise move. Even The Journal is surprised. Well, the action or inaction of this government doesn't surprise me too much. Stopping at third adds no more to the score than striking out, and the Progressive Conservatives of Alberta have a fine record going of popping up and striking out.

One busy morning it took some time for the doctor to make all the calls in his waiting room. He apologized to an elderly man for the long delay. "Oh, that's OK Doc", the old fellow said, "but I thought perhaps you would prefer to treat the ailment in the earlier stage."

Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Alberta are developing ulcers over waiting for the government to act on the communal property issue. I get a little tired of the agricultural blow in this Legislature and it reminds me of a young fellow taking over a master farm. There have been lots of things going on in the past. We have four seed-cleaning plants in my county - I'm within 30 minutes drive of any one of them. This happened years ago, not within the last year and a half.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm not here to tell you all this. I would like to say it is not five minutes to midnight; it's past the hour when we should be acting on this issue; it's later than you think.

To set up a forum at this hour is a steps-of-the-Legislature decision. When the Premier and the Deputy Premier went out on the steps and met with a most courteous and orderly delegation they certainly appeared to me to be very pale and shaken. And there is no doubt they remembered at that time that they had not remembered the backbone of this country, the farmers, the men who came at the turn of the century then set aside their ploughs to go to war and came back, many of them. They have not remembered their concerns or their interests in the matter. The Vulcan delegation should have started their trek months before, but they expected better things of this government, and many people did.

Well, better yet, the government should have listened to the good advice of the Social Credit members on this side. I can't for the life of me understand what many of those Progressive Conservatives across the way have been doing or what they are doing. The Progressive Conservative record in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, in their short term of office, has been a record of bungling.

You know it reminds me of the mighty bungler of the New York Mets, Marvellous Marvin Throneberry. They wrote a whole volume on his stupid mistakes. They called the book Marvellous Marv. Well, the Progressive Conservative book for the past 18 months is an hilarious and not so hilarious account of bungling, juggling, passing the buck, let George do it, or let Arnold do it, or let Bill do it. They could well write a book on how to get out of doing it yourself.

I say let the Minister of Agriculture and his empire do it. We are coming up with a committee a day -- a committee a day to keep the problems away. And this problem is being ringed with problems. I agree that we need a land use policy but I am not satisfied that the Minister of Agriculture has been doing his part. I find this government guilty for lots of things it has not done.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, speaking to the amendment, we, I am afraid, have to reject the amendment.

I would like to say just one or two things in regard to the amendment. If my hon. friends will review the Speech from the Throne, on page 6 of Votes and Proceedings, at the bottom of that page, it says: "New approaches to the growing concern over land use in Alberta, particularly from an agricultural point of view, are in the process of review and evaluation." That is No. 1, Mr. Speaker. The question was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. Insofar as the concern that the hon. Member from Macleod has, I must say I appreciated his remarks and the sincerity in which he made them. I wish I could say the same thing for the Member for Sedgewick-Coronation.

But I do have some regard for the remarks of the hon. Member for Macleod. I want to suggest to him that I think we don't have to have a complete and emotional concern over The Communal Property Act situation, and I would hope that Dr. Platt's committee, if they felt it advisable, might appear before the forum to provide their experiences over the coming months. Certainly I can't accept the fact that a forum shouldn't consider the question of corporate farming, the question of absentee land holdings, and for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, we cannot accept the amendment.

The harangue that my friend from Sedgewick-Coronation gave, Mr. Speaker, was just that, an harangue that had no substance. He hasn't been talking to many of his farmers lately or he would be much more aware of what this government has done with regard to a whole bunch of areas of government procedure.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a word or two on the amendment, and I support the striking out of Clause 6. As a matter of fact, if somebody made a motion to strike out the entire resolution I would support that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh!

MR. TAYLOR:

Well, I would and I will give you the reasons why.

Mr. Speaker, I agree generally with everything the hon. Minister of Agriculture said when he was introducing this resolution. It is a difficult problem, but when we are setting up a forum I have to look away down the road and wonder what the recommendations are going to be. It seems to me we are inviting the intrusion onto private land. We are accepting it when we pass this resolution that this is a must in our day and age and in our country. I don't accept that at all.

I realize that there are going to be some restrictions, but I think we have to keep restrictions on private land to a very minimum and only where absolutely required in the public interest. That is the reason why I support the striking out of this section, and the entire resolution for that matter.

I don't think -- I am dealing with the amendment so I'll have to mention the other things later -- but in connection with the amendment, we already have a legislative committee studying foreign ownership of land and I would expect that that committee will be making some recommendations to this Legislature. Why we now want to repeat it, or have another committee studying the same thing in duplication, I would like someone on the government side to explain.

Have we no confidence in this particular committee? Is it different terms of reference? Why are we going to have a second committee studying the same item of foreign ownership of land? I think that is a serious weakness of Clause 6 because surely to goodness we are not so flush with money in this province, in spite of the new revenues that have been found, that we want to start throwing it away unnecessarily by duplicating committees.

In connection with communal farming I think it's unfortunate that the Hutterian Brethren conflict or item is thrown into this resolution at all. That is something this Legislature has been dealing with now for several months.

The Communal Property Act was repealed, an advisory committee has been set up, but there is now a void. The advisory committee has no legislative authority. I can't understand how it's going to act. In the questioning today I thought possibly there was some arrangement whereby the registrar of land would have to have the approval of any transfer of land to communal form of life signed by this committee, which would be a reasonable thing to expect, but the hon. minister said, no, there is no such intention.

So we have a committee now without any legislative authority, without any teeth to act, without any authority to act in regard to the sale or non-sale of land to communal farms. Consequently, we are left in a complete void in our various communities. This committee is going to take several months to bring in a report but the harm then will be done.

I'm sure the hon. Minister of Agriculture and the hon. Premier, and undoubtedly the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, have had a great deal of information from various communities in this province where a communal form of life is taking options on land. These options are worrying municipal authorities and other people who have lived on that land since the days of their grandfathers or great-grandfathers and now see the possibility of losing their identity as a viable community. Irrespective of what anybody says, and irrespective of what the whitewash report said in connection with this matter, a person who lives adjoining a Hutterian colony or communal form of life has a very difficult time to continue to live there -- a very, very difficult time. It's not because the Hutterian people are not good people, but they have their own way of life.

As a matter of fact, when we are talking about communal ownership of land, we introduce a system that is completely contrary to our way of living, to the private ownership of land -- completely foreign. Consequently, there are bound to be conflicts. Not because it is Hutterian Brethren; if it were any other group it would be the same thing because communal form of living is not identifiable with private individual farms. When there are special concessions given to the communal form of life it aggravates that position.

However, this is not going to solve communal farming. I think as long as we try to handle this type of thing from the federal or provincial level we are going to have continual multiplication of problems because we are too far away from the problem.

I would like to see this matter of communal farming handled at the local level where the people who are handling it live there, know the problem, know the ins and outs and the whys and wherefores, the good and the bad about both communal and private ownership of land and are much better able to deal with it.

The municipalities also have a direct hand in the education that is required of the boys and girls, both in the communal form of life and in the private ownership of life. As long as we have a conflict between the two there will never be very kindly feelings generated. As long as boys and girls on a communal form of farming are going to be denied the right to have an education that other boys and girls are entitled to in this country, there are going to be difficulties.

Whether the hon. members of this House believe it or not, a vast majority of the people who are concerned about the Hutterian ownership of land or the communal farming by Hutterian Brethren is based on that very fact, but the boys and girls in those communal forms of life are not having their rights, under the Bill of Rights, to get an education. They spend their time until they are 15 and they generally get to Grade 6. There is no thought of those boys and girls having the opportunity to go through high school, to go to university, to become doctors or lawyers and play their part in the professional side of life as well as in agriculture. Consequently there is concern there, and because of that concern the people of the various areas are worried.

There is concern by the people outside, too, on the communal form of living of the status of women within the communes. Talk about Women's Lib outside, if Women's Lib knows the restrictions placed on women within the communes, -- well I don't know what they would do -- they would go straight up the wall. Undoubtedly they would go straight up the wall because they don't have the rights of men, and they don't have the rights of men within the commune, let alone the rights of women who are outside.

Well there is a Bill of Rights which should be applicable to these people who live on communal farms too. We are in Canada. We are not in Russia. We are in Alberta. We are not in Moscow. I think that if we in the democratic countries go the second mile, to even favour the very foreign type of living

that we don't espouse, and a communal form of living is part of that -- not to the extreme of the communistic ones in Russia, but nevertheless getting close to it in many instances -- so as long as we have that problem there, we are not going to have a kindly feeling, and putting it into a forum isn't going to solve the matter at all.

We have already paid \$16,000 to a committee that did nothing toward solving this problem of better feeling between those who live on communal farms and those who don't. Perhaps it can't be solved, I don't know. Perhaps it won't be solved until the women and the boys and girls within that communal form of living have equal rights with those outside, and I think this then would probably go a long way towards solving the concern of many of our people. But the problem is there. We can't wave a wand, and say, "Go away." It's there. Putting it into another form, in my view, is simply going to aggravate the problem.

I said I would like to see this handled at the local level. I think if there is any place where it can be handled well, it is at the local level. Our municipal councillors know the situation there, and since we are going to condone a way of life foreign to that which most of our people want, the way of life for which most of our people came to this country, for the opportunity to live, to own land, to be able to have their children get an education, to contribute to the growth of this great country, then we are going to have to look at some of these problems.

If we are going to condone this type of ownership of land which is foreign to what most of us believe, then I think we should at least limit the amount that can take place in any particular municipality. Surely that is not being unreasonable. I am doubtful if the Russian government would be nearly as favourable to a private enterprise if you wanted to live and farm in a private enterprise way in Russia. They wouldn't get the consideration. But we in democratic countries go to the nth degree. We go the second mile to try to accommodate those who would even destroy our way of life. We even permit a communist party in our country which would really destroy our very way of life. And communal farming, as I say again, is not the whole way, but it is part way towards that objective, and that is why most Communists support that type of thing whole-heartedly.

Well, if the local councillors had the say and there was a limit put on the number of communes or the acreages of communes in any one municipality, I can see this thing resolving itself as far as it can be resolved until the youngsters and the women in the communes have equal rights with youngsters and women outside the communes. And that would go a long way. I suggested before that 4 per cent of the land was a reasonable amount to dedicate to communal living. And surely that is not out of the way. If somebody wants it at 5 per cent or 3 per cent, I wouldn't argue too strongly, but it should be within that vicinity. And if it were done that way, you'd find that this matter would resolve itself pretty quickly. Because it is the concentration of communal forms of life that gives the concern; not the way of life so much as the concentration of that way of life. And the more colonies that develop in one area, the greater the problem becomes. If you could just limit the number of colonies, as I've told many of the Hutterian Brethren themselves -- if they would just undertake to limit their colonies in any one municipality, they would not find very much opposition.

I don't know of five people in my particular riding who are violently opposed to communal forms of living or who have anything against the Hutterian Brethren personally. They want them to have the right to live --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. We could be running into difficulty if we don't follow the rules with regard to debates on amendments. Technically speaking the hon. Member for Drumheller is now speaking to the amendment. After the amendment is dealt with, technically speaking he'll have the right to speak another 40 minutes on the motion as amended or as not amended. And I would respectfully draw the attention of all hon. members to Rule 42(b) subsection (b).

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, am I not on the rule when I'm speaking about communal farming, which you are striking out?

MR. SPEAKER:

The question is whether this part of the motion should be struck out -- that's the question. I suppose it does bring up some topics that we have brought up before in the House.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I am endeavouring to do that. I'm sorry if I have gone beyond the limit. But I'm trying to show why I'm supporting the striking out of Clause 6, and by striking it out, then of course there has to be some alternative. I'm suggesting that the alternative is to bring in legislation putting the responsibility on the local government, with some percentage based on the communal type of living.

Well, I think I've developed it far enough, and that is the reason why I think this should be struck out -- the two reasons why.

There is just one other thing I'd like to say in connection with the striking out of Clause 6, and that is, corporate farms really haven't been defined. I know corporate farms that are simply a family that has turned itself into a corporation, but it farms as individually as any other farmer in the community. We certainly wouldn't have any objection to that type of farming. If we're talking about large corporations that are going to control a vast amount of land and endeavour to do away with the competition of the family farm, then of course that is a different matter entirely. And of course, with no definition of the term 'corporate farms' we run into that type of problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, at this time I favour striking out Clause 6.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the comments of the hon. Minister of Agriculture when he introduced the main motion, I intend to vote with the government, and oppose the amendment.

I will speak on the motion later, but in first of all, just dealing with the amendment it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that we really can't strike out Clause 6 -- "Corporate farms, foreign ownership of land, absentee ownership and communal farming" -- and then permit the land-use forums any meaningful discussion of No. 7, "The common ownership of land, agricultural processing and marketing facilities"; No. 8, "Land use as it influences population distribution in Alberta"; and No. 9, perhaps more important than the others, "The extent, if any, to which the historical right of a land owner to determine the use and disposition of agricultural property ought to be restricted."

Mr. Speaker, if the land-use forums are going to deal with 7, 8, and 9, inevitably they are going to get into the discussion of No. 6. There is no way you can eliminate in practical terms, 7, 8, and 9 from the discussion of No. 6. As a consequence, from a very technical point of view, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me if this land use forum is to have any value at all, it has to have sufficient scope that it can discuss the question in the largest degree possible. That means it is going to have to look at the question of corporate farming, foreign ownership land, absentee ownership, and communal farming.

As I said a moment ago, we surely are not going to be serious in the discussion of population distribution in the province unless we look at the impact of corporate farming, and communal property. We can't talk about the question of the common ownership of land, for example. This strikes right at the issue of communal farming. And certainly No. 9, as I mentioned before, the extent, if any, of the historical right of the land owner to determine the use and disposition of agricultural property, is completely intertwined with the discussion of corporate farms, foreign ownership of land, the right of an individual property holder in this province, for example, to determine to whom he sells his land, whether it's going to be to a corporation, or whether it's going to be to an American, or someone from another part of Canada or what have you.

So therefore Mr. Speaker, with great respect to the mover and seconder of the amendment, it seems to me that they have proposed an amendment out of which it just isn't structurally possible to make sense. If it is going to be workable at all, they should have stricken out 6, 7, 8, and 9. This, of course, would have meant that the land use forum would have been a completely impotent waste of time. I have my comments on the minister's comments and I'll speak on that when I make my comments on the main motion, but I certainly feel that to pass this amendment at this stage, Mr. Speaker, would be a very serious mistake.

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, speaking on the amendment, I wish to remind the Legislature that a year ago we had approved the selection of the legislative select committee to study the question of foreign land ownership in this province. The findings of this committee in the interim report have been that the problem of foreign ownership of land in Alberta is indeed very minimal. The committee realizes that while it's very minimal at this time, we should look into the future and see what the future holds in regard to this problem.

To be more specific when I say minimal, the committee had found through various research that the actual percentage of foreign-owned land, as follows, occupied by absentee land owners is only .002 per cent. And when you consider the vast amount of land in Alberta, this percentage is very, very small. It is really not a serious problem at this time, but the committee is certainly looking into the future.

I think the question of foreign ownership of land becomes oftentimes very emotional. It's a visual thing when someone buys a piece of land in a certain area and if he happens to be a foreigner, certainly the land itself is visual and the ownership and, of course, the owner is very visual, in fact. Let me give you an example of an area in Calgary where I live. I live on an acreage and there are many, many small acreage holders in that area. Three years ago an American came and bought a very small acreage -- ten acres of land. Immediately following that, there was a petition circulated around to all the balance of the people who lived in that area asking us not to sell our land to anyone but Canadians. These are the things that become very, very emotional, and as I say, it seems to get out of hand.

Another example is the 320 acres that was purchased in the area of Castor, about three years ago, which now has been reverted to Canadian ownership. I think at that time the owners had purchased this 320 acres for the purpose of hunting, and every hunting season, you could hear the hue and cry of all the neighbours that these people hadn't the right to go on to this land for recreational purposes, nor did they have access to other pieces of land adjoining it. So this again becomes a very emotional thing. It's not a real problem that's going on from time to time, but it does come up during the hunting season in this area.

I think we should consider some of the effects of foreign ownership of land, particularly those where people are coming in to do a bit of speculating. This has pretty serious consequences, because it increases the price of land for farming and I agree with the hon. Minister of Agriculture that we do have to watch the prices of land, because really, the productivity of the land itself must be compared to the cost to make it economic and be related to the cost of the land. We find that in some cases the foreign owners are in a position to buy land and hold it. This has quite an effect on the surrounding municipalities because, in effect, the store owners and the restaurants, the hotels, depend upon activities on the surrounding area. So this has quite an effect on the development on the surrounding area and the development of the municipality itself.

I feel that we should give some consideration to several points. I believe that the responsibility for our natural resources, be they exhaustible or non-exhaustible, are vested with the province by The BNA Act. I'm talking about some of the findings of the select committee which really deal with the subject of foreign ownership.

Number two, I believe that the people of the Province of Alberta therefore, because of this vested right, have a tenure right over all natural reserves, whether they are called land or reserves, we consider them as natural resources.

The crux of the whole matter then centres around the following: the rational and efficient allocation of these natural resources for now and for the future, and two; to whom the tenure rights to these lands are granted. I think this is a responsibility of the people of Alberta. Three, if the Government of Alberta, acting as a responsible trustee for the people of Alberta is ensuring that optimal return on our natural resources to which tenure rights have been given -- I think this is a very important part of the responsibility of the government of Alberta.

These considerations apply to all natural resources, be they public, Crown lands, or private lands, or other such, forestry, oil or gas reserves, et cetera.

As I mentioned, the Select Committee on Foreign Investment has been struck well over a year now, and it comprised members of both sides of the House. We have had very many meetings, both internal and public, since that time. We've sent some 93 letters out to these groups and we contacted them by mail and by phone. As a result of this, we had a public hearing which was held in October, 1972. At this time, 25 briefs were presented on the concern of foreign ownership of land in Alberta. In the following month, November, we heard an additional 36 briefs, a total of 61 briefs which was a result of direct mailing and contacts. We had also advertised in the weeklies and the dailies throughout the province inviting submissions to this committee. Out of the advertisements, only 16 had responded to the overall submission by the weeklies and by the newspapers so it shows you, Mr. Speaker, certainly it is more effective to contact these people directly.

As I have said, many hours of work have been done and many concerns have been expressed by the people of Alberta on the question of foreign ownership of land. On March 16 we will be meeting with representatives of the Bank of Montreal and also a committee called the Science Council of Canada to again discuss the matter of foreign ownership and foreign investment.

The question I would like to ask now is, that with all the work that has been done -- and my file on this particular committee is not by any means small, it is one of the major files which I have had since coming into the House -- I am wondering with all the work that has been done, what is going to happen? Will the decisions of this forum supersede the decisions of the present select committee? Is it a duplication of it? These are the questions, and because of that, and because of my involvement in the committee I support the amendment of striking out No. 6.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, in making some remarks to the amendment I believe that I have to support the amendment for a very basic reason. The reason is that the number of people who have made representation to the government, to the Minister of Agriculture, to the Premier and other ministers, had in it a concern, and a concern for urgency.

As of yesterday, in talking with a number of those people they certainly supported the concept of the overall resolution and the establishment of a forum. They certainly want information on corporate farms, foreign ownership, absentee ownership and communal farming, and particularly communal farming. They feel that the best information must be available, but they are very concerned with the delay. They feel that after the repeal of The Communal Property Act, its relationship to The Bill of Rights, that at that point of time government should have had some answer or some indication of the direction that they wanted to go. But as people in my constituency, and certainly we in this legislature, we don't know that at this time. We don't know whether the government really intends to go in the direction of some type of land ownership or land use legislation, or that they want to leave it totally open in the market place as it is at the present time.

I understand and recognize very well that philosophically those are some great considerations and some very difficult decisions. But it is the responsibility of government. I feel, as my colleagues do, there has been a lot of information presented to the government in the last 18 months and I would have to say we commend them for those actions to start collecting some of that information early. My colleagues have outlined some of those reports that are available. But I don't think that we can continually put off the matter by another study, by another delay and move it off for an indefinite period, because that is what this resolution says; it's report to government and governments seems to go on and on -- some of them.

[Interjections]

We may have to deal with the question later, so I hope they'll deal with it earlier.

Mr. Speaker, one of the items in the presentation of the people from my constituency was to examine this matter, but they felt along with that there should be some type of moratorium or freeze or some type of action by government to maintain some of the land ownership as it is today, because they are very concerned with corporate growth, foreign interest growth, and certainly the growth of communal lands and areas in the Province of Alberta.

I support this amendment on that basis, on the urgency of it. We can't move at this time by just supporting this area and allowing the decision to be

put off down the road, because too many things can happen during that time which we can't turn back and can't reverse in any manner or order. Mr. Speaker, I support it on that basis.

I would like to make two other comments while I am on my feet. The Minister of Agriculture, speaking with regard to some remarks by our hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation, likened his remarks to a harangue. I am sure if the hon. minister takes a little time from his busy schedule in his office and walks amongst the rural people of Alberta and listens to what they say, he will find that they are making a lot of the remarks and statements that the hon. member made in this Legislature.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hah.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

They feel very concerned about the things that he has raised, and I would have to say that the minister should take a little time and do that. Possibly, since he has been elevated to a lofty office, that of a deputy premier, he hasn't had time to go out and talk to the people on that personal basis. Maybe what he will have to do, Mr. Speaker, is ensure that in a few short months he does return back to the 'grass roots' and takes the time to hear what these people are saying. Mr. Speaker, I only want to make that point because, though I don't mind the hon. member being attacked on the basis of policy or the items he raised to say that he is haranguing and that it isn't the voice of the people, is not correct.

The other item is with regard to the Member for Spirit River-Fairview. I certainly feel that he can criticize the amendment on a technical basis. But the way to change that or deal with that matter is to move a sub-amendment and indicate whether he really feels that this government should act today in an urgent manner or should delay the decision down the road. That is the question we are talking about at the present time, not whether the amendment is technically correct or not.

MR. HENDERSON:

As I listen to the debate, particularly the contributions from the Deputy Premier, and the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, I am reminded of a story that I related in this House before about a chap who didn't have an axe. He had to chop some wood, so he went to his neighbour to borrow his axe. He had a habit of doing this, and the chap who owned the axe, when asked for it, told his neighbour that no, he had to go to town this afternoon to shave with it. After he left, the man's wife lit into him for saying such a foolish thing. The neighbour would know full well that he just didn't want to loan his axe. He said, "You are absolutely right. When you don't want to do something it doesn't matter what excuse you use."

Now, on the part of the government, obviously they have a bit of a problem of their own creation and they don't know what to do about it. They have arrived at that conclusion, so it doesn't matter how ridiculous the approach they come up with as long as they arrived at that conclusion. So they came up with the proposition of a land forum to deal basically with a problem of their own creation. Very obviously they are hoping the committee will never report, that the issue will go away and not bother them in the future as it is bothering them in the present. I am not too certain that my sentiments really don't lie with the government in that regard and if that is the case I don't know why they would bother bringing a motion in or why they didn't stand up and say it, because I have the same fears, as many or perhaps more, that the Deputy Premier has upon the issue of land control, its utilization, its ownership and so forth. And so if they are going to whitewash it, why bother with a resolution like this at all, because it is simply going to add heat in certain areas of our society which other members have already commented on.

And, of course, the member for Spirit River-Fairview is hoping that the committee will come up with something that recommends measures like those his cousins in British Columbia have proposed which clearly are not in keeping with the democratic concepts on which this country was built and, I hope, is still based.

But really, Mr. Speaker, the question of the amendment -- in spite of the fact the Deputy Premier has got the troops whipped into line so that they are not going to support the amendment -- is to bring to the floor the fact that the

government has created this situation they are now in and have continually ignored it.

I feel very strongly that one of the reasons they have ignored it is based on their conviction that the only people who have any brains in Alberta or in this Assembly are the 49 people seated opposite. They have failed from the outset to listen to warnings that came from members on this side of the House when we first raised the question of the kicking out of the board on The Communal Property Act. But oh no, they had all the answers.

One of the troubles, Mr. Speaker, is that of the gentlemen seated opposite. None of them are from Southern Alberta where this problem is concentrated. They think there isn't a problem. But there is, and one that isn't going to wait for ever and a day while the Deputy Premier and his 47 colleagues opposite and this public forum come up with some answers, because they will never come up with them. The whole exercise is nothing but than a complete whitewash. The Deputy Premier himself said as much in his remarks, the way I interpreted it. If that were the case, why bother having the motion if they are not going to do anything?

This whole exercise isn't really going to accomplish a single thing. They are simply trying to sweep the matter under the rug. They have seriously overlooked the implications of the fact that just because they don't hold any seats in Southern Alberta, where this problem is concentrated, they conclude there is no problem.

I suggest that the remarks of the Member for Little Bow are well taken that the Deputy Premier and a number of these 48 brilliant gentlemen seated opposite get out to the grass roots of Southern Alberta and find out what a lot of people do think on this issue. Because they don't represent all of the people of the Province of Alberta. And I can understand this as far as the back benchers on the other side are concerned because it's not their responsibility to represent all of Alberta, it's their responsibility only to represent their constituents.

But the gentlemen of the Executive Council in this Legislature have responsibilities to represent all the citizens of Alberta. They failed miserably in that responsibility to the people that saw fit, a week ago, to march on the Legislature, and as a consequence at 10:30 at night the government came in with this brainwave. I think it's one they should have kept buried in their pockets because in the way they are approaching it, it's going to do more harm than good.

They bungled the thing from the start by throwing out the Communal Property Board; then they follow that by setting up a Legislative Committee to look into the issue. The committee in its wisdom decide they shouldn't hold public hearings because it will generate too much emotionalism and heat, and I think the decision was well taken. Then before the committee reports to the House they bring in the bill to repeal The Communal Property Act -- democracy in action. Then they also come in with a hastily-conceived piece of legislation in foreign ownership of land. They have second thoughts about that and set up another legislative committee to look into that matter. Its final report is still out and I suspect it will probably be out. Because when you look at the function of that committee and then you look at this exercise, it's obvious that the government has no intention of doing anything with the foreign ownership of land. So what on earth is it in this resolution for?

Why on earth have they wasted the time of the members of this Assembly by bringing in a bill a year ago which they thought was a tremendous idea -- lots of popular approach to it -- surely the people of Alberta would support it. Then they set up the committee and now as a final brilliant stroke they are going to set up a public forum.

Then I come back to the question of the decision of the committee of the Legislature not to hold public hearings on the particular matter of the repeal of The Communal Property Act. Now the government in its wisdom -- and I think that decision was well taken -- comes in on this particular motion and is going to open the whole issue on the question of communal farming.

Another area in which the government is negligent -- and the Executive Council is negligent in its responsibilities to all the people of Alberta -- not just the ones who have Conservative MPs, but all the people of Alberta -- is very clearly on its failure to act expeditiously on the recommendation of the legislative committee. It stated that a liaison committee should be set up and get functioning and so forth.

As I understand it the committee has just now been struck, the chairman of the liaison committee has been appointed and they haven't done a thing. Nonetheless they proceed to bring in legislation repealing the Act.

The majority of us on this side of the House supported the legislation after a great deal of soul searching. In some cases we supported the legislation to repeal the Act. Some of our members did not support it after a great deal of thought, consideration and checking with the views of their constituents. The government should have been fully aware at that time that the issue was simply not going to go away and not bother them. It was there then; it started back the day the Minister of Municipal Affairs decided he knew more than the Communal Property Board did. It started when he decided to bring in the Act to Repeal The Communal Property Act before he bothered waiting on the minor technicality of the legislative committee reporting. Now we are off on the same kick again here, where before we get the legislative committee's final report on ownership of land they refer the issue to a forum on foreign ownership.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's not only a case of negligence on the part of the government. It's basically a case -- their whole actions and their whole exercise not only demonstrate on the part of the Executive Council the fact that they don't represent the people of southern Alberta, but also a basic disrespect for this Legislature. Why on earth waste all this time and go through all these exercises just to have the whole thing forgotten, and a piece of legislation come forth such as this which is simply nothing but a whitewash?

Mr. Speaker, I think it is quite in order, notwithstanding the fact that some of the comments on the part of the hon. member for Spirit River-Fairview, in a technical sense, are probably correct. But since the whole exercise is simply a whitewash -- the government is hoping the matter will go away and quit bothering them -- the question of technicalities really becomes somewhat academic. The issue is critical in certain areas of the province -- and the Minister of Agriculture can shake his head -- but I am surprised at the number of people who have come to me in the last two weeks, and I am surprised at some of the people it came from, who have nothing to do with farming and get so strongly worked up about this emotionalism. I hear statements, "Well you know they didn't fight for their country in the war, so why should they be allowed to do all this?" and this type of thing. I don't agree with them, but the emotionalism is there.

The Minister sitting in his air-conditioned ivory tower with his frequencies to southern Alberta turned off, isn't going to change it. It just isn't the attitude in southern Alberta. I haven't even been talking to people from the south in that regard. It's people around the country, some of them in my own constituency, and I quite frankly have to say when I am talking to them, in all fairness, that I voted to repeal The Communal Property Act. I did so with the full expectation that this government would have enough intelligence to realize the delicacy of the situation and get this liaison board functioning and in the field, and we could have avoided some of the difficulties they now find themselves in.

So, Mr. Speaker, the government has had more than adequate time to deal with the matter, and when one looks back he realizes that it is a problem of its own creation. And now to see them bring in a motion which is going to confine the issue, they hope, to never-never land, I suggest is a complete abdication of responsibility, particularly on the part of the Executive Council of this Legislature to the people of southern Alberta, the people of southern Alberta that this government apparently doesn't really have any interest in.

I suggest that in presenting this amendment, we do so with a view of bringing these facts to the fore, to the attention of the government, in the hopes that they don't continue to blunder along this particular road. Because if they do, it's a disease that is going to spread north and affect the people in the northern seats, and they won't be seated on the opposite side after the next election. So some of my comments, you could say, Mr. Speaker, are indirectly aimed at keeping them in office, and I suggest that they pay attention to them. Every member of the House with his wits about him, will support this particular amendment to get this government on the road to doing something in these areas which are of critical concern to a considerable number of people in the Province of Alberta, whether they are represented by Conservative MLAs or otherwise.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are you ready for the question on the amendment?

[The amendment to the motion was defeated.]

MR. SPEAKER:

Are you ready for the question on the motion as amended? Oh, I'm sorry!

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few remarks on the general --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. I said the motion as amended -- the motion as it stood originally.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

I feel that this matter is very urgent and certainly would like to refer to one of the remarks made by the hon. Minister of Agriculture. In his very humble way, he indicated that this may look like a stall, being a study as it is, but possibly he didn't really mean to say that because I feel that being a sincere man really, that is what he believes. And we certainly need a little more action than just a study and just a stall at this point in time.

I think the people of Vulcan and other people from Southern Alberta and all over the province want to know just exactly what action the government will take and when they are going to take that action. They've had 18 months to do something. The government has unilaterally over-ruled The Communal Property Act. There was the study on foreign ownership, and some other actions, but still we have no decision today, Mr. Speaker, and no answer to the problem before the people of Alberta at this time. The people of Alberta need a date, at least at this point in time, if the House hasn't been prepared to accept the amendment that was moved a few moments ago. We need some deadlines so that the people in Alberta will know when some decisions will be made. And those deadlines have to be very clearly outlined to them.

I think, not only for the people of Alberta, if we pass this resolution the form that is established certainly needs some guidelines; one of those guidelines must be a date when their report is brought back to the government, a date that will be possibly far enough ahead of the next session so the government has time to make some decisions and to take the problem in hand.

I think the urgency of this matter cannot be overstressed. Many rural residents are very concerned with the fleeting pursuit of land options by real estate agents on behalf of various groups in the Province of Alberta, and particularly the Hutterian Brethren.

A recent visit to one of the towns in my constituency finds real estate agents not only from Alberta, but from Saskatchewan. Two of my towns have been caused a lot of concern. The greater the delay, the greater the problem is going to be over two matters that are certainly before us, that of land ownership and, secondly, that of the relationship of community members with each other and those community members in their relationship to these particular groups.

I'd have to stress very strongly that action is necessary, not just political footwork or deception or any kind of delay at this point in time. The people of Alberta, Mr. Speaker, expected an alternative following the removal of earlier acts. They are questioning whether the government really thought out their actions when they made some of their decisions in presenting legislation before this Assembly. They are saying, does The Bill of Rights really say what it is supposed to say? Did the government really know what it was going to do? And does it understand how it may affect some of our rights in our community with respect to land use and land ownership? They are very concerned at this point in time. And I'd have to say that The Bill of Rights, thought to be a political plus, is certainly not becoming a political plus for the government in many centres in the Province of Alberta.

In the ideal sense I certainly support, and I'm sure everybody in Alberta supports, the concept behind The Bill of Rights. But in the implementation and in the actions of government, as I said in an earlier speech, that will prove the meaningfulness and the benefit of that Act.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that there is much urgency to deal with these problems. And in light of that, I would like to move an amendment to this resolution, so that if the government cannot take action today, certainly there

will be some deadlines established with regard to this committee so that we do get action on behalf of the people of Alberta.

I would like to move as follows, Mr. Speaker, seconded by Mr. Benoit, the Member from Highwood; that the resolution be amended by adding the following words after item nine:

Be it further resolved that the committee direct its initial efforts towards examination of Item 6 and report thereon, inclusive of recommendation, to the government no later than September 1, 1973.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, if I could speak briefly to this amendment. My friend from Little Bow is really confused today in a number of matters. First of all he supported an amendment to wipe out clause 6, and now he is putting an amendment in that says we must deal with it immediately on some kind of time period. I appreciate his problem with regard to the area of concern, the question of land use. Some of the statements that have been made, though, don't really deserve any answer whatsoever, because "harangue" was a proper word for some of them from Sedgewick-Coronation. And if I had a better word than harangue to apply to the Leader of the Opposition --

MR. SPEAKER:

Is the hon. Deputy Premier debating the amendment or reviving a debate on the previous question?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I am dealing with this foolish amendment by my friend from Little Bow. There is no way we can support this. This is a complex problem. We are sincerely trying to do something with this problem that will be in the best interests of the land owners of Alberta. I rather question the sincerity of those opposite in their attempts so far to not bring forward any meaningful amendments at all. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, we reject this amendment.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the amendment and on the question of sincerity. I can also question sincerity --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Order please. The amendment does not raise the question of sincerity.

MR. HENDERSON:

Well, the Deputy Premier did, Mr. Speaker, and surely if he can --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The debate which was out of order, if there was any, on either side of the House does not necessarily, unless it proceeds for some length, lead to debate, or should not lead to debate, which is out of order on the other side.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Deputy Premier stood there and said he questioned the sincerity on the amendment being presented, and the Chair didn't say a word.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It's not up to you to question the Chair.

MR. HENDERSON:

Now to understand that we're out of order in simply responding to that point, I find, Mr. Speaker, extremely difficult to follow.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair must confess having missed that on the other side of the House. I shouldn't have missed it. But in any event, now that it has been referred to on both sides of the House, might we leave this subject of sincerity and get back to the question of the amendment.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, if my comments are to be struck out and the same is to apply to the Deputy Premier, I have no objection to letting it go at that.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier is somewhat confused apparently as to the amendment. I was going to say I couldn't quite get the right adverb, and the one I wanted to use was unparliamentary. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the amendment is in keeping with the previous one when the government was asked to do something now. Now, in view of the importance we attached to getting some action on this matter as quickly as possible, and in spite of the fact that we would have preferred to have something done 'now' two or three months ago, we still feel it is of sufficient importance that this particular item which is of major concern in certain parts of the province be examined on a priority basis and that a report be submitted by September 1 to this House. The suggestion of the Deputy Premier, that he can't take the amendment seriously, indicates, I suggest, how unseriously the Deputy Premier took this whole issue in the first place. It's a very serious issue.

I suggest to the hon. members opposite that they would be well advised to place a priority on the consideration by the committee at this particular date. If the government thinks September 1 is too soon, bring in a sub-amendment and change it to October 1 or November 1, but there has to be a finite date this House understands on which the committee is to report and deal with this thing. Because the forum is going to raise all sorts of emotionalism in the first place, and the longer the issue is left, the greater the problem is going to be when it comes to dealing realistically with finding some meaningful way of alleviating fears of a sizeable percentage of the people of the province of Alberta on the question of communal property rights in particular.

I suggest that if this government is acting seriously at all in trying to deal realistically with the concerns of these people, it would accept the amendment. You heard the Deputy Premier stand up and make a big joke out of it, and this simply re-confirmed my impressions when I saw the first motion, that they had no intention of doing anything on this particular issue. I have said and will say again, this is of considerable importance to a considerable number of people in the southern part of the province of Alberta. The big laugh on the part of the Deputy Premier once again simply brings to the fore that the Executive Council of this Legislature does not seem to believe that it has a responsibility to represent all of the people of the province of Alberta.

I can go along with the Deputy Premier's levity on some occasions, but not on this one, Mr. Speaker. The issue is too important to be treated as lightly as the Deputy Premier and his backbenchers seem to think it is.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, after listening to the Deputy Premier accusing us of an harangue, he got up and said that one harangue deserves another --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Order please. We disposed of the "harangue" question before we reached this amendment.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, then I therefore will not harangue the government; I will state the facts as I see them. First of all, I think the opposition would be remiss in not urging the government to tie this matter down to some deadline. We can go on indefinitely. I'm sure they don't want to string this along forever. They want to settle it, but they are fighting the stand of the opposition that we want to have some deadline on it -- a commitment to the people of this province. I suppose they can laugh at this, but it is our responsibility, and I support the amendment for that reason. We ought to be able to deal with this problem.

I am also of the opinion that we need a forum. After the speeches from the opposite side, from the government and particularly from the Deputy Premier,

admitting that neither the government combined nor its staff, nor all the committees that have been appointed, are competent to deal with the problem -- they are not competent to deal with it because they are admitting they are not -- we should not try to block their way in setting up some other body to deal with this. I think we have to be realistic -- they are admitting they can't do it. The brain power on the government side isn't enough, so let's do something else. We should go along with them doing something else, but we should not let them pass the buck or postpone this thing indefinitely.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we on this side are discharging our responsibility in insisting "Let's get this thing done somehow." Notwithstanding the admitted incompetence of the government, we'll go along that they should be able to find somebody who can do this, but let's not stall this thing forever. I support the amendment that we should get some commitment from the Deputy Premier. When is this thing going to be done? Because the way the government is doing things now, it appears that it is just another road from now to nowhere for this government.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I support the principle of the amendment and I would hope that the government would seriously consider outlining some termination date for this initial report.

It seems to me we are sitting on a time bomb in this province and that if the government suggests that a never-ending forum which may go on for six months, or nine months, or twelve months, or two years, or three years, or whatever the case may be, if you think this is going to satisfy the people in the areas concerned, I suspect that that is really overly optimistic.

I suspect, Mr. Speaker, we are going to have a very serious problem in parts of southern and central Alberta, one which will bring out many traits in people which I think we would like to discourage and which would, I think, frighten us about the problems that are presently all too close to the surface in that part of the province.

I think that in handling this whole issue, The Communal Property Act, Mr. Speaker, it is an extremely delicate issue, an issue that has to be handled with tremendous care and in handling it with care, in my judgment, it would be a mistake if the people of southern and central Alberta were given the impression that this forum was just a measure to shelve the issue indefinitely. And therefore what would happen -- the public forums would become rowdy meetings where you would have people submitting rather frightening types of briefs and submissions and in the process we would be -- in my judgment anyway -- fanning the whole fire of injustice and intolerance in our province.

Therefore, I genuinely feel that it is very important that the government set some termination date. It may well be, as the Leader of the Opposition suggested, that the first of September is premature. It may well be that it might take until the end of the year, but if there is some date so that the people can look forward to a report from this land use forum and as a consequence of that, some probable legislation being forthcoming, then it seems to me we will have at least a better chance of going through this very difficult time in rural Alberta without a genuine explosion in southern and central Alberta.

I think, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about civil liberties, when we talk about a Bill of Rights, it is very important that we think through what the results of our actions will be. The decision to repeal The Communal Property Act, a decision which I supported, nevertheless has created a good deal of concern in a large number of areas in southern and central Alberta. I must say, that even though I represent a northern riding I have received many letters from people in that part of the province who are genuinely concerned about what happens next.

Now at the present time it seems to me there is a good chance that we can generate a debate on the land use issue in such a way that we can discuss the many facets of it intelligently and rationally. Mr. Speaker, if people feel that this is just a dodge to delay action by the government, we are going to have the most irresponsible elements in that part of the province taking advantage of it. They are going to be, as I said before, fuelling the fires of mistrust and, in my view, that would be a great tragedy for this province. It would be something that we would all regret and I suspect, Mr. Speaker, no one would regret it more in the government than the Minister of Agriculture. So again, perhaps the suggestion that September 1 is not reasonable, perhaps that is too early, but let's at least nail down some date. Because, I say, Mr.

Speaker, that if we don't do that, we are asking for an awful lot of unnecessary trouble.

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker --

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood followed by the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that I have the Floor in preference to the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest although I know he would have gladly given it up anyway.

In this matter of time, I would like to speak to the amendment. There are allegations flowing back and forth about our delay, our stalling tactics, and our time. Let's just look at some of the matters of time. The amendment moved a closing date for such a report. But we just have to look back at this whole issue, the whole problem of the many years it has existed and has never been taken by the horns of the dilemma to be dealt with. It has taken this government to have the courage to bring in a bill with respect to the rights of Albertans, to finally end or at least put into some perspective where discrimination must end and our rights as individuals and as human beings must begin.

The matter of Hutterites has been discriminated for many years because the attention has always been on our Hutterite Brethern, but not on the corporate farming that has been developing, growing and extending. Really, is the whole issue only the Hutterites or is it the issue of corporate farming and the disappearance of small families into urban areas? So that when we talk about time putting an end to a completion of a study of this magnitude, can we say that in a matter of a few months this should be concluded when it has carried on for years and years, or is it because no one previously has had the courage to tackle the problem, the very serious problem.

When the hon. member opposite talks about a 'time bomb' -- I think that maybe this is what they would like to set off for us by bringing in such an amendment -- not to properly assess this whole issue -- and that when a decision is brought in that it applies and can apply to all Albertans without discrimination. When we look at the magnitude of the whole area can we really say that by September or within six months we can fairly assess the effects that this would have, not only on the Hutterian Brethern, but on corporate farming and on Albertans as a whole?

And let us not kid ourselves. Any decision we make in this area will not only affect the people in the rural areas of Alberta but most definitely will also affect those in the urban areas.

We talk about the abuse of The Bill of Rights. We have had the courage to acknowledge that there will be difficulties but that we will work these out and we will accept the challenges. Who else has taken up that challenge?

To say that we don't have any concern for people of southern Alberta -- there are members on this side of the House who have just as great a problem with regard to this whole issue, and they don't necessarily need to reside in southern Alberta, and who have every concern for southern Albertans because what affects them also affects Albertans in other areas.

And I would like to say that had the hon. member opposite brought in an amendment that there be a starting time when the forum must be functional, that might have been something within reason and that might have been something that could have been considered. And it certainly will be considered by the action that this government will take. But to bring in a closing date on matters of this magnitude, certainly I can't possibly agree to it and I can't see that any of the members can support such an amendment. Of course, I have to say no to this amendment. Thank you.

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, I have listened with interest to the remarks of the hon. Deputy Premier and I keep relating this in my mind to the story of the mice that gathered together to bell the cat. Because certainly when you talk about land

and the land issues that are outlined in the sum total of this resolution, Mr. Speaker, --

[Interjections]

I'm talking about the amendment.

You'll find that this is a very, very warm potato and I can understand the hon. Deputy Premier when he juggles it from hand to hand and behaves in the same manner as the convention of the mice that said: "There's something we have to do with this cat because it's eating our members one by one," and someone said, "Let's bell it." This is what we want you to do hon. Deputy Premier with this amendment. We want to see the cat belled. We want to see action here. We want you to get up and show leadership for the people of Alberta because this problem is coasting over us like a dark cloud obscuring the pleasant sun in southern Alberta. Day by day the solution becomes more murky, and day by day we look with supplication toward the government side and expect you to come forth with a resolution of these problems.

So when I say that this amendment which specifies September 1 realizing the seriousness of the problem we are confronted with, being aware of the encroachment we now have in southern Alberta of foreign landholdings, I think this is ample to draft the basics of some form of policy.

So then, let not the cat weaken, get out there with the bell and hang it on the -- let not the mice weaken, get out there with the bell and hang it on the cat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make just two or three comments on the amendment. I find difficult to follow the reasoning of the hon. Deputy Premier when he can't see any similarity between the two amendments. The point about this amendment, and the previous one, is that we consider these items so important that we want them dealt with now. Not six months, not a year, not three years hence, but now. If the hon. Deputy Premier and his backbenchers missed that point they were not listening to the arguments on this side. We didn't want it struck out because it wasn't important, we wanted it struck out because it was urgently important and we wanted something done about it now, not at some indefinite time in the future.

And if I were a little confused with what the hon. Deputy Premier said, I am even more confused with what the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood said, if I heard her right. Did she suggest that we should bring in a resolution or an amendment for a starting time on this forum? We assumed that it was going to start as soon as it is passed, and according to what is happening over there it is going to be passed irrespective of the facts. Because it appears that the hon. members on that side of the House are determined to pass it whether there are arguments against it or not.

But we assumed that it would start right away. When does the hon. member think it's going to start, next year, the following year? This simply adds weight to what some of the hon. members have said, that it's a shell. I'm surprised the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood coming out and saying that she intends to shelve it. Is this part of the caucus reasoning? It's pretty serious. What did the hon. member mean when she said, when is the forum going to start? I don't know, I hope she knows.

There are two points I want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker. First, this matter is important, urgently important and should be dealt with now. Since the government turned down the first amendment of wanting it dealt with right now, the second one says, "Well let's deal with it at a time as early as possible," and we've said September 1 this year. Now that gives a few months. Surely that isn't out of reason to say we want a termination date on the urgent matters of this resolution. That's all it's asking, that we put some termination date so that some report is brought in this fall. That isn't unreasonable. In my view, that is sensible. Both amendments are in keeping with each other. We couldn't get the first, so we are now prepared to settle for second best to get something on this important matter, at least by September 1 of this year.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say a few words on the amendment of which I am in favour because we do have some legitimate concerns of the feelings and the lifestyles and livelihoods of some Albertans who are most affected by Clause 6. I think it is incumbent upon us to assume that whatever is going to be done

to resolve the problems and fears will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible.

We have many people in small towns and on farms who are very jealous of their lifestyles. They are very concerned that their rights are going to be affected adversely. They want to know what the government is doing constructively to solve these problems to protect their way of life, as well as protecting the way of life of communal liveries, people who live on communes. They want to be assured that they will have continued livelihood if they are merchants in small towns, and so on.

Now it appears, as has been mentioned earlier, that the government does not know what to do or what they are going to do. But, Mr. Speaker, this seems vastly different from the situation last year when the government members were talking about the repeal of The Communal Property Act. I voted for the repeal of The Communal Property Act because I recollect the government saying many things that they were going to do, to try and encourage both classes of citizens to integrate and understand each other.

Mr. Speaker, emotionalism is running very high among these concerned Albertans. I would like to suggest that we sure don't want to see situations arise in Alberta that have arisen in places like Northern Ireland, and Watts, and the Regina depression riots, and so on. They started small. What do you tell the housewife, government members, when she says, "I'm scared. I've got two little kids, and when in town last week shopping I heard talk about burnings, about taking the law into certain citizens' own hands," and things of this nature. What do you tell them today to reassure them?

Mr. Speaker, I think there is real need for the government to take constructive steps. For example, is the government, and if not, why not, monitoring the situation to assure that there is ethical conduct carried out by those who are acquiring options on land, and who are acquiring options on the correct ethical basis and not on rumours that are untrue. I think that the government should assure the residents that they are doing this. I think that the government should be monitoring the land transactions and caveats at the Land Titles Office, and providing a service of factual information to the residents of Alberta so they do not have to deal with rumour. It would be a simple matter for the Land Titles Office to record caveats and land transactions involving acquisitions for communal properties and whether or not there were going to be communes from existing Alberta residents or by people moving into Alberta from other areas.

As I recall, Mr. Speaker, last year there were all kinds of situations discussed in this Legislature whether it would be a constructive effort made to integrate as much as possible by education and friendly help and assistance of the Hutterite Brethren and to integrate schooling, rather than having segregated schooling and things of this nature.

I wonder how many applications of the Future Farmers have been sent to the Hutterian Brethren for example, to get their participation and all kinds of other government programs which are in existence. Has the government investigated such things as a land trust for example? In corporations we have voting trusts where legitimate shareholders can band together for legal reasons to protect their interest. Has the government investigated land trusts and advised the people as to whether or not they would be --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Is the hon. member addressing himself to the amendment? It's difficult to follow the connection thus far.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, it's the time limit to do these sort of things that we are concerned about before it gets too late, and it seems to me that these are the sort of things that the government should be encouraged to do as quickly as possible. That is why I am in favour of the amendment of the time limit to do something.

It seems to me that a public education system of advice is in order to the farmers who are concerned as to what they can do, within a limited time, to protect their interests and their way of life and their livelihoods.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the government is elected to serve the people, and I think now is the time to do something constructive to serve those residents of Alberta who do have legitimate complaints and concerns and fears.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the second amendment, dealing with the date of September of this year as a deadline for recommendations in this area there are, I think, four comments I would like to make.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to reflect back for just a moment, and recall the evening that we debated the repeal of The Communal Property Act in this particular Legislature. And make no mistake about it, I voted for the repeal of that legislation. But at the same time when I voted for the repeal of that legislation, or prior to voting for that legislation, I stood in my place and indicated that by repealing the communal property legislation, the problem wasn't going to go away. But in fact the government had to look at whether some sort of land use legislation, regulation, or whether some different approaches in the planning area -- but whatever route was taken, there was need for action, and that action to be done quickly.

But for that reason, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the reasons that I have no difficulty at all in strongly supporting this particular amendment. Because what we found here this afternoon, and suspected before this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, is virtually that little has been done in this particular area since the last session of the Legislature in the fall, when we voted to repeal the communal property legislation -- that very, very little has been done during that period of time. In fact I get the impression that nothing has been done. And that really very little or nothing is going to be done, Mr. Speaker -- until the delegation met on the front steps of the Legislative Buildings. Now it's all well and good for hon. members on both sides of the House who may feel that this isn't a serious issue. But on the weekend I attended a function in the constituency of the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests and the people -- the minister I'm sure would agree -- that the people in that particular area aren't the kind of people who get upset over a matter easily. And those people discussed with me -- in Lyndon -- if the minister would like to know where -- some of their very real and legitimate concerns about what was going to happen during this period of time, when as they see it, there are really no guidelines for the game to be played by. The sort of game of acquisition of additional land by members of the Hutterian Brethren.

And very fairly, Mr. Speaker, I say to you and to members of the Assembly, that I have had over the course of this weekend representatives of two of the town councils in my own particular constituency come to me and talk in terms of approaches that they might be able to use which they feel could protect the area surrounding their towns. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, as surely as I know I am standing in my place, that in both incidences of these discussions I did not raise the matter in any shape or form with these particular people. And so for members on either side of the House to talk in terms of some members trying to fan the flames and make this into a very, very distasteful issue, I think, indicates that they really don't know the very deep and very genuine feelings that many people have on this particular matter.

The second point, Mr. Speaker, that I wanted to touch upon deals with the committee that Dr. Platt has the responsibility of heading up, and the land use forums themselves. If the advisory committee is going to be functioning during the same period of time that the land use forum is going to be holding public hearings and getting input from people in many areas across the province, if both these organizations, if both these agencies are operating during this period of time, there are people who have very strong points of view who regrettably are going to use these two opportunities, the advisory committee and the forum; people will use that, regrettably so, to fan the flames on the question of communal living. And if the government could see its way clear to set some deadline when the forum would report back to the government and the government in turn to the Legislature, I really believe that this would take a great deal of the heat out of the discussions that Dr. Platt and his advisory committee are going to be involved in, and certainly a lot of the heat that will be generated by the land-use forum.

Mr. Speaker, I would agree that maybe the date of September 1 is not ideal, maybe it should be later on in the year, maybe it should be earlier. I don't know. But what we are trying to do --

MR. SPEAKER:

Does the hon. member wish to adjourn the debate?

MR. CLARK:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. May I adjourn the debate?

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. member adjourn the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, before we adjourn the House until tomorrow at 2:30, perhaps I could outline House business as it is seen for the next few days. We would see as the government adjourning the House at 5:30 today and tomorrow until the following day, thereby leaving tonight and tomorrow night free for the Estimates Subcommittees to meet, depending on the decisions of the subcommittees which were reached last Friday and which is reached tonight. On Thursday night, the Assembly will not be sitting and, at the moment, I don't know whether there would be availability of time there for the subcommittees.

The subcommittees will meet, just as a final reminder, subcommittee A in Room 312, subcommittee B in Room 311, (and that is a change from the carillon room), subcommittee C in Room 208, and subcommittee D in Room 316, at 8:00 o'clock or as the committees have decided through their chairman, Mr. Speaker.

I move that the House do now adjourn until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

This evening at five minutes to eight it is expected there will be a bell ringing. In case the hon. members are wondering for whom the bell tolls, it will indicate five minutes to the starting time for the meetings of the committees.

[The House rose at 5:31 o'clock.]