

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, March 14, 1973

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. BENOIT:

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Member for Fort Macleod and myself I would like to introduce three guests in your gallery. I say this because the school district which they represent, the Willow Creek School Division, is partly in the hon. member's constituency and partly in mine. His has the larger part, mine has the more contentious part. I am introducing to you Mr. Agner Johnson, who is the chairman of the Willow Creek School Division, Mr. A. R. MacLeod, who is the superintendent of the school division, and Mr. Raymond Congdon, who is secretary-treasurer. I would ask these gentlemen to please rise and be recognized.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and to the members of this House 55 students, or shall I say young citizens, from Hardisty Junior High School in the constituency of Gold Bar. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Al Purkess and they have come to witness the Legislature in combat. I haven't had an opportunity to speak to them personally, but my assistant has, and if they bring one message it's to the Minister of Education. And that is, they wish he would find a new word for the word "Junior". They don't feel very junior at all.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure that I introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly 39 beautiful young girls and handsome boys from Grade 6 of Avonmore School in the Avonmore constituency. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Woodrow and Miss Hodgkinson. And may I take this opportunity to congratulate the principal, teachers and students on the excellent concert and displays they had during Education Week. And just looking at the bright students up there, I am sure that they are a most promising investment and trust for the future of this great province. I would ask them now to rise and be recognized.

FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture for 1972.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Craig Case

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I have two brief questions. The first I would like to address to the Premier. I wonder if he could advise the House as to whether he has had

an opportunity to read the report on the Craig Case prepared by the Alberta Human Rights and Civil Liberties Association?

MR. LOUGHEED:

No, Mr. Speaker, I haven't.

Commercial Insurance Company

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, the second question I would like to address to the Attorney General. I wonder if the Attorney General can advise the House as to whether the Commercial Insurance Corporation has been or is in the process of liquidation. I should have said "Company", not "Corporation", Mr. Speaker.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, that name certainly isn't familiar to me, and I have no knowledge about it. I'll take the hon. member's question as notice and look into it.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Date of Civil Service Agreement

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour. Why does the new agreement with the Civil Service not commence from the date of the termination of the last agreement?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, the ratification of the agreement is yet to be completed by both parties. It's being studied by the Civil Service Association of Alberta. We got our full copy only yesterday afternoon, so that the date of ratification could be one of several items being considered by the Civil Service Association, at least.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary. Then April 1, 1973 is not final at this time?

DR. HOHOL:

That's correct, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, followed by the hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation.

Housing Corporations

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs. Can the minister advise the House if it is true that Mr. John Bury, formerly of Zaradic Prefabricated Home Building Company, a company which recently went bankrupt, is now involved in a new corporation called Suburban Construction Limited?

MR. DOWLING:

No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of this situation, but I will look into it, most certainly, and follow it up and give an answer to the hon. member tomorrow.

MR. NOTLEY:

One supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister advise what steps, if any, beyond education, his department proposes to take in order to

protect the consuming public from contractors who take down payments and fail to complete the projects?

MR. DOWLING:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can. We are in the process of establishing a department that will look after all that.

MR. NOTLEY:

Does the hon. minister propose to present any legislation at this session, dealing with this problem?

MR. DOWLING:

No, Mr. Speaker, not at the spring session. We won't be prepared by that time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

DDT Analogues

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Is the government aware of new materials resembling DDT and called DDT analogues? They are bio-degradable, which would provide a solution for farmers wishing to discourage pests, while not hurting other living things.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I'm aware of the analogue of DDT. The question of cost and the availability on the market is one we will be looking into to see whether or not it can, in fact, be used economically in Alberta.

MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary to the minister. Would you report back to the House when you come to these findings?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I try and report to the House at all occasions on a great variety of things.

MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary to the Minister of the Environment. Is the Department of the Environment carrying on any tests on DDT analogues to determine whether they can be safely used?

MR. YURKO:

My colleague suggested that I rebut with a 'prologue' and an epilogue'. However, Mr. Speaker, I can't answer that question at this time. I'll take it under advisement and report back to the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Vegreville, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary McCall.

Accreditation In Schools

MR. BATIUK:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the hon. Minister of Education. Mr. Minister, since accreditation has crept into our school system, could you tell me whether all the schools under one jurisdiction would have the same classification, or would they be classified into different groups?

MR. HYNDMAN:

This would certainly be the case, Mr. Speaker, initially, but as we move into the development of bench mark and achievement measuring tests, we would then be in a position to assess the standards at various individual schools.

MR. BATHUK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In case the classifications would be different, do you suspect that the revision of grants would be necessary so those schools with a lower classification would be able to thrive?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Out of order. Out of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's question is evidently hypothetical. The hon. Member for Calgary McCall, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

Consumer Action Group

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister responsible for Consumer Affairs. Will the minister be attending a public meeting called by the Consumers Action Group on March 24 to protest the increase in prices in Calgary chain food stores?

MR. DOWLING:

I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to hear back here at times. Would the hon. member repeat the question?

MR. HO LEM:

Will the minister be attending a public meeting called by the Consumers Action Group on March 24 to protest increases of food prices in Calgary chain food stores?

MR. DOWLING:

I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, I haven't been invited.

MR. HO LEM:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In that you know now and inasmuch as it is a public meeting, do you plan to go?

MR. DOWLING:

Well, we will certainly consider it, Mr. Speaker. At the moment I can't just say what my timetable is but I have yet to refuse to attend a meeting when my schedule is free.

MR. HO LEM:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are you prepared to receive a delegation from this group?

MR. DOWLING:

I would welcome them, Mr. Speaker, at any time on any subject.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican, followed by the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

Meeting in Red Deer

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, my question today is directed to the hon. the Premier. It is regarding the meeting that was held with the mayor and delegation from Red Deer.

My question is, did you make any commitment or suggestion that some further government offices would be moved to the Red Deer area?

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier could outline to the members some of the solutions that they offered regarding the complaints of the City of Red Deer.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please. The first question would appear to be in order. The second question is not really a supplementary and there is some doubt as to whether it is the kind of question, since it covers a general matter of policy rather than a detailed policy, which should be asked in the question period.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question in the general area, we had an excellent meeting last night with the Mayor of the City of Red Deer and a number of their councilmen, together with other representatives from the city. There were a variety of subjects raised. Needless to say, as is the usual procedure, the government was not in a position, having received their brief, to respond affirmatively to any particular aspect except two that I might mention.

From memory my recollection of the brief is that the first item raised was the concern by the City of Red Deer with regard to DREE grants. We explained to them the position and policy of this government, because it is quite clear, I think, from the facts and the argument made by the City of Red Deer, that they have in fact suffered from the previous federal government policy regarding DREE relative to communities of a similar size in this province. We told them we were supporting a policy with which all hon. members are familiar -- that the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs has presented to the House -- that we don't favour physical isolation of any particular parts of the province, geographically, for DREE support, and that we think the projects should be looked at on their own merit.

We then got involved with the second issue which was the matter of water flow, and told them we would be giving them further advice in that regard when we visited with them again in late May.

My recollection was that the third item had to deal with the matter of decentralization of both industrial development and government services, Mr. Speaker, which I think brings in, in part, the supplementary question of the hon. member. We made no undertaking whatsoever with regard to government operations. We did tell them we certainly recognized that our Alberta Opportunity Company policy indicates the reflection of emphasis towards the smaller centres in the province.

We then went on extensively with regard to the matter of the David Thompson Highway. I am sure during the course of the Estimates on highways the Minister of Highways will be happy to expand upon it, but the City of Red Deer was delighted with the high priority we have given to that particular road construction. They added to it, of course, very desirably, the request that some effort be made on our part as a government to expand that road -- as the hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House and the hon. Member for Red Deer pointed out to us -- through the Howse Pass to tie in through British Columbia.

A further item had to do with advanced education facilities. We discussed that at some length and told them about our plans with regard to the Red Deer College. We also dealt with the matter of some items regarding municipal tax exemption and the final item, from memory, had to do with community activity centres. Those are basically the items. It was an excellent meeting and we, of course, will have a follow-up meeting with them toward the end of May.

Relocating Government Departments

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a further supplementary question. It has to do with relocating government departments. What is your government's policy on commuting? Can a civil servant still live in Edmonton and drive back and forth to Camrose or is it going to be laid down that he must live in the area where the government has decided to put the new department?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer the question to the Minister of Manpower and Labour who is responsible for that aspect of government administration.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, this would depend on the level of service that the person was involved in. If he was the key administrator of an enterprise located in a particular locale in Alberta then clearly he would have to be there on the lot and part of the community. If a person were in the wage circumstance and had to perform from a certain time in the morning to a certain time in the afternoon, unlike an executive who is on duty seven days a week or at least six, then commuting would not be outside the frame of reference for the rotation of the placement of staff.

MR. DIXON:

One final supplementary question on the subject, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. What arrangements is the government going to make with workers who, for example, may have a house in Edmonton where the mortgage is 5 or 6 per cent, when they are forced to move to another area where the mortgage is probably nine or ten per cent? Are we allowing for that type of thing by way of an extra grant or something?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, the question is the kind that would be well placed and well dealt with in the questions because it does call for some detail. We have a policy in that area. However to answer for the interim, while there are guidelines, each circumstance will be looked at on the merits of those circumstances in which the person is involved, for example, the time of the year. If a person has a family of three or four children going to school this becomes a factor -- the matter of family housing in rentals and sales and the moving -- all of these are considered in the rotation policy of the civil service, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake, followed by the hon. Member for Highwood.

NADC

MR. BARTON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Northern Development. When was the last meeting held by the NADC council, the Northern Alberta Development Council?

MR. ADAIR:

Would you repeat that again? You got it a little bit mumbled up.

MR. BARTON:

Sorry, I will clarify it. When was the last meeting held by the Northern Alberta Development Council?

MR. ADAIR:

I am not really sure. We have not held any since I came into office and I believe there was one held in the year previous to that and then they were before that. You were on that board at that time, sir.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Highwood, followed by the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking.

New Expropriation Legislation

MR. BENOIT:

I have a question, Mr. Speaker, addressed to the Attorney General. Will the hon. Attorney General be able to tell us whether there is any intention on

the part of the government to introduce any amendments or new legislation with regard to The Expropriation Procedures Act this session?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is no if we are referring to the spring session. We have been waiting for some time for a very comprehensive report to be completed by the Institute of Law Research and Reform. I had been in touch with them several times last year at which times they assured me they would be able to deliver it by the end of the year. In light of those assurances I thought we might be able to introduce legislation by the spring. However they ran into more difficulty than they had anticipated and the report has not yet been delivered. I understand that it is in the printing stage and that it ought to be over very soon. I expect the report to be a lengthy report; it will contain a number of recommendations and will need some time to be studied, and accordingly I would expect legislation flowing from it to be introduced at the earliest in the fall.

MR. BENOIT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the contents of the report be made available to members of the Legislature?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, as far as I am aware all the reports of the Institute of Law Research and Reform are made public.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking, followed by the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury.

Grants for Underdeveloped Countries

MR. COOPER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Premier. Mr. Premier, has your government approved an Order-in-Council allowing dollar for dollar matching grants for money raised by Albertans to help the world's poor, as requested by representatives of five Canadian churches this morning?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, we met with them at breakfast this morning and they made a presentation to us. This being Wednesday, we haven't had a cabinet meeting or an opportunity to assess it. I could say that we were most impressed with the presentation that was made to us.

One of the statements we made in response -- and I'm sure all hon. members would agree -- is that we think it's the responsibility of the people of Alberta to consider the problems. We said that we felt very definitely, though, that our priorities had to be with the Indian and Metis people and other people within our own province who needed some significant support in terms of government services. But we were prepared to endorse the basic thinking of the group with regard to the problems and, as they described, the 'third world'.

The suggestion that we made -- and I believe the previous government also followed to some extent this policy, and we intend to expand upon it -- is to increase the numbers of our public servants that might be available to go, say, on a one or two year contract to various parts of the world. We think that is in the public interest both in terms of the contribution by the people of Alberta as a prosperous province, but equally so, I think a member of the public service in a position of a management nature who has the broadening experience of working in some other country during the course of his working time, can bring back to this province a broader experience. That too in itself, in our view, is to the public benefit.

So we left it with the representatives this morning that they would send us, at any time they felt they had a specific they wanted to deal with, the name of a country and the qualifications of a person who might be useful to help them. They mentioned a couple of areas, for example in the communication situation that they had run into. So it was one way of responding.

They did say, and I thought all members would be interested -- I wasn't aware -- that the per capita contributions by Alberta citizens in matters of

international aid were the highest of any province in Canada, which I was pleased to hear.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

Family Life Education

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Education and ask if he has had any submissions or briefs from the manufacturers of contraceptives regarding a lobby in the field of family life education in the Province of Alberta?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Not personally, Mr. Speaker. I don't know whether the gentleman was suggesting whether I received submissions or whether I received submissions suggesting there is a lobby. But I haven't, to my personal knowledge, received briefs of such a nature as could be construed as being a lobby, although briefs have come. I imagine I've received some from groups from time to time, but I haven't recently, to my knowledge, received any.

MR. CLARK:

Have you received any briefs from firms that would be involved in the production of contraceptives, encouraging the government to become more actively involved in family life education in Alberta?

MR. HYNDMAN:

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, but I will check into it at once and get back to the hon. member.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister also check and see if any of the material supplied to school boards or to family life education groups in the province is sponsored by similar organizations?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't be in the position to ascertain what materials are sent to school boards insofar as on the basis of local autonomy they do not report to me or request permission as to what material they get. However, I think if the hon. gentleman wishes to write to the ASTA or individual school boards they could advise as to what had been received. There are no provincial regulations with regard to the extent to which boards may or may not receive certain documents.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, we will have another run at it. The question to the minister deals with information that comes out from the curriculum branch of the Department of Education. Would you check to see if any information coming from that branch is sponsored by such organizations?

MR. HYNDMAN:

I am not sure now, Mr. Speaker. I will certainly do that and report back.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, to be clearest of the clear, has the Minister of Education received a request regarding the impeachment of the President of the Alberta School Trustees' Association of Alberta concerning recent statements he has made alleging that organizations producing contraceptives are lobbying for an increase in family life education, more specifically sex education courses, in this province?

MR. HYNDMAN:

I am aware of the statement made by the gentleman referred to, Mr. Speaker, but I am not aware of any proceedings for impeachment. Indeed I am not sure how that would occur or whether there is any statutory or constitutional authority for that course of action.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lethbridge West, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

Southern Alberta Teachers' Strike

MR. GRUENWALD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Manpower and Labour. Have the school boards and teachers in southern Alberta returned to the bargaining table in an effort to settle the teachers' strike near Lethbridge?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, at my invitation the Southern Alberta School Authorities Association negotiators and those of the Alberta Teachers' Association began meeting this afternoon at 2:00 o'clock. When I reported on Monday, I did not wish to discuss detail because I felt that in all honesty that should come from the two sides involved. They have made their positions clear and I should like to review them very briefly for the benefit of the Assembly.

There are three major issues involved. One is a matter of pay. While the teachers' association is asking for 7.5 per cent in the way of pay raise, the school trustees have offered 6.2 per cent increase over last year's agreement.

The second difference is one of a health package which the Alberta Teachers' Association locals put together in the amount of \$90,000. This amount the school trustees are not accepting, and is a point of contention in the present negotiations.

The third one, Mr. Speaker, is a matter of time. The negotiations have been conducted really without a time frame, and so the understanding was that it might be 12 months, it could be 24, with the necessary adjustments made as to the amounts in one case or the other.

At the present time the teachers have requested a one-year agreement and the school trustees are asking for a 16 month agreement.

Those three differences, Mr. Speaker, and members of the Assembly, separate the two groups.

I spent a good deal of time yesterday and today to be in touch personally with the leadership of both the Alberta School Trustees' Association, and the Alberta Teachers' Association, in the locals involved and at the provincial level, assisting in every way that I can personally, and through our mediators to effect a conclusion. The negotiations from 2:00 o'clock this afternoon are assisted by one of our chief mediation people from Calgary.

MR. GRUENWALD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In the interests of the good of the public, do you have a policy -- you or your department -- as to the length of time the groups may stay apart, and teachers may stay on strike, before you would feel that it is absolutely necessary that you intervene?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, the nature of collective bargaining is such that this government would not view a fixed number of days as being consistent with that nature. Because as soon as a fixed date was set, then it in fact involves the government rather directly, as it ought not to, in the process of collective bargaining.

The strike -- one can regret it, is a process of collective bargaining. If during the strike period the negotiations are fruitful and move the two parties closer together, then that's one thing. Should a judgment be clear beyond any

doubt that there is no intent to settle an agreement, then that would describe the time frame in which the government would intercede more directly.

MR. GRUENWALD:

One more supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Because there appears to be much confusion in the contracts between the various school boards and teachers in the province, relative particularly to the length of the contract which could be 12, 16 or 24 months as you have pointed out, have you given consideration to setting out guidelines that contracts should all be of a uniform length?

DR. HOHOL:

That's an excellent question, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact it is a matter of record that the Southern Alberta School Authorities Association is the only one at the present time on a school year, that is to say, an agreement begins on the first of September and ends at the end of August. All other zones in the Province of Alberta are on the calendar year, whether it is on a one-year agreement or a two-year agreement. They begin on the first of January and end at the end of December.

MR. ANDERSON:

Supplementary to the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker. Is the department prepared to make grants available to school divisions to defray the cost of supervisors and tutors hired to help high school students during this strike?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, my recollection of the Act and regulations is that such grants would not be provided for.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Bottle Return Depots

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. What are you going to do about yesterday's closure of two provincial government appointed Calgary bottle return depots because of a poor pick-up system in collected bottles and cans?

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of closures since we began the universal depot operation on the first of January of this year. I have indicated there is expected to be an evolution of secondary types of depots, which are, in fact, going to be more businesslike and will offer a much better service to the public, and I anticipated that several would close in Calgary. So this evolution of a secondary type of depot is now occurring, and will be continuing for some time.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Do you intend to compensate depots that have closed down or gone bankrupt because of the delays in backup by government contracted transport firms?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I don't understand the reference to government contracted transport firms at all. Perhaps the hon. member might explain that term.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Does the government contract trucking firms to haul the bottles and cans away from the depots?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Liquor Control Board has a contract with Contain-A-Way so that Contain-A-Way in fact looks after the pick-up from the various

depots of liquor and wine bottles. The pick-up of refillable returnable bottles is done by the various manufacturers. The pick-up of cans and non-refillable bottles is done by Contain-A-Way, but the government doesn't have any part or any control over that aspect. It is a manufacturer's responsibility in that regard.

So the government is only involved in regard to the contract it has with Contain-A-Way to pick up the liquor and wine bottles. The rest of the entire system is on a private enterprise basis.

MR. WILSON:

One further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, are you aware of 'a bottleneck' in the pick-up?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that there have been some delays in pick-up since January 1, but again as I have indicated, the whole system has been in operation only for some ten weeks. There is some rationalization of the pick-up system. As a matter of fact I think this has been improved very substantially in the last several weeks, and I expect continuing improvement in this regard.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Would you loan your good offices to help members of the public who are turned away from government depots without being able to turn in their bottles and cans?

MR. DOWLING:

Well, Mr. Speaker, we haven't reached the point in our developing of a department so we are able to say exactly what we will be able to do. But you can rest assured, all members can rest assured, that we will do everything we can to support and protect the consumer.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of the Environment. Would the minister now allow Project Recycle to recycle the liquor and wine bottles which are piled up in government-contracted depots in Calgary?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, we have been negotiating with a private company in this regard, to re-cycle the glass from non-refillable and returnable bottles as well as liquor and wine bottles. I have been advised this negotiation is going on very well. As a matter of fact, a group of industrialists, I have been advised have finalized plans for a glass works of some sort in Edmonton. They are willing to take all the glass we can give them. They expect to be employing about 50 people and I understand we will be stockpiling glass before very long.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Because the existing Calgary depots are closing because they are plugged, would it not be --

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order, order.

MR. WILSON:

Would you not consider, in the interim emergency period, allowing Project Recycle to have the liquor and wine bottles?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I thought I answered that question very adequately and fully in the past question period.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Apparently not.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Highway Signs

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Highways and Transport and this is regarding the policy for highway signs. I understand at the fall sitting that you indicated that would be available at this session. When can we expect the same?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, since becoming Minister of Highways I have elaborated to a very large degree on the signing policies throughout the province.

As you know, or maybe don't know, we have allowed farmers to put signs on their farms up to as large as four by eight, which is the size of a piece of plywood. These signs, of course, have to be set back from the road in order that they will not obstruct the view of the motorists and make travelling on the roads dangerous.

At the same time, we also require that the signs be of such a nature that they are attractive to the people driving on the road, that the spelling is correct, et cetera.

Also, Mr. Speaker, as you've noticed, or maybe haven't noticed, if you have driven on the rural roads, the growth roads throughout Alberta, we have now got them all marked with secondary road signs with the attractive rose on the top of the sign. Starting at the bottom side of the province, we have the 500 and 600 roads and going in a north and south direction across the province, we have them numbered from 700 to 800. The 900 sign roads throughout the province will ultimately become major market roads -- will become market roads -- which will ultimately become primary highways. This is going to be a very great aid to people who are travelling throughout the province; they will be able to find their way around on roads which are not primary highways.

Also Mr. Speaker, I might draw to the attention of the House that we are taking particular notice of areas where there are problems in people getting lost, such as the Mackenzie Highway and the Alaska Highway. We are putting up special signs and bringing to the attention of the motorist that junctions are ahead.

All these new policies in signing will help the motorist considerably. I might also add, Mr. Speaker, we will have a very comprehensive map coming out next year that will have all secondary roads marked on it as well as complete diagrams for most cities in the Province of Alberta.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister, then. Do I take it, Mr. Minister, that this is the policy you indicated when you answered my question at the fall sitting as follows, "Yes, Mr. Speaker, it won't be ready until sometime in the coming session in the spring?"

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, I've elaborated fairly clearly today on the signing policy of Alberta.

MR. ZANDER:

Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Minister of Highways. I was told that the the engineer at the Edson division of the Department of Highways has asked the gas companies to remove their very attractive signs from the gas plant situated on Highway 57. Is this true?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure about that, but I'll check into it and report to the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Law Faculty for Calgary

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Advanced Education. Has he received an invitation or any communication from the students of the University of Calgary for a meeting to deal with the establishment of a law faculty in Calgary?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, I haven't received an invitation from the students of the University of Calgary specifically. I have an invitation from the chairman of the Committee for a Law School, which I have with me in the House. The request by this student, whom I know well and have talked to many times about the question of a law school is that I meet with him and the members of his committee some time following the conclusion of the Universities Commission.

MR. LUDWIG:

I had intended to refer to this specific invitation. Is it your intention to accept the invitation to attend the meeting?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, of course I am very willing at all times to meet with groups or individuals to exchange views and to hear representations on new faculties or programs. My concern at the present time is that, as I've already said and have said consistently throughout, we will look again at the question of a law school.

I suspect that there are a great many interest groups and organizations which have opinions on the question of a law school. I would like the time to assess the masses of information that is already available on the question of a law faculty. And that's not to suggest or imply, Mr. Speaker, that I'm not willing to meet with people, but I think there is a good deal of work to be done. I'm doing some of it right now, as a matter of fact, and I'll certainly endeavour to meet with as many groups or individuals as are interested in meeting with me.

MR. LUDWIG:

Can I assume from the minister's answer that he will make every effort to meet with this group that has asked him to meet with them?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could add some information to the hon. minister's response. Last Saturday I had the opportunity to attend and participate in the Open House at the University of Calgary. I had an excellent visit with many of the members of the administration and the faculty, and during the course of a very delightful walk through the campus with the President of the University of Calgary we had an extensive discussion about the possibilities of a law faculty at the University of Calgary. I made that report to the hon. minister. And as he said, when the appropriate time comes -- he isn't fully charged with that matter -- we will be discussing it further.

Community Program Volunteers

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, may I address a question to the hon. Minister Without Portfolio, the hon. Ms. Hunley? Is there a serious decline in female volunteer assistants in community programs?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I really don't know whether I'm in a position to answer that adequately or not, but we are attempting to assess it by having a small survey done, which we think might be helpful in giving us some direction on the future of volunteers and also the availability and recruitment of them.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the \$4,000 study that has been announced designed to find out why the volunteers are declining their services or withdrawing their services?

MISS HUNLEY:

Partly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff, followed by the hon. Member for Cypress.

Water Level In Gull Lake

MR. WYSE:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. Some months ago your government postponed an agreed plan by the previous government to raise the water level in Gull Lake. Has the study been completed and will the plan advance this year?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if it was apparent to the hon. member, but there is in the budget this year, \$550,000 for stabilizing the level of Gull Lake.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Cypress, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

Northern Development Council

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister without Portfolio in charge of Northern Development. I wonder if you could tell the House when we can expect the report to be tabled from the Northern Development Council as required by Statute?

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Speaker, I might point out that the Northern Development Advisory Committee has been inactive since we took office, and as a result we are making a report right now of what we have been doing within the office. We will be tabling that some time in the very near future.

The actual advisory committee, if I can just further state, has not been active and as stated in the Statute. Therefore we have really nothing to report from that particular end.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question then to the hon. minister. Is it the intention of the government to phase out the council, and will you be so advising the members of the council or have you advised them already?

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Speaker, at this particular time we are assessing just exactly what we are going to do. If you remember, a year ago we added two members to it to locate geographically the members within the northern region, but we also have placed now before cabinet and got the approval of cabinet for a northern development group. We are just getting the group together, and once we have them together we are going to assess the need to use the people in the field.

We think we are still going to have to use the people in the field but we haven't fully assessed it as yet.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question. Is it the intention of the government to bring in any amendments to the Northern Development Council Act, or will you be repealing this Act and bringing in a new one?

MR. ADAIR:

At the moment we have no intention of bringing in any amendments to this session.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In reassessing the role, was it not considered reasonable and prudent to have the advisory committee meet during the last year to help you with your reassessment?

MR. ADAIR:

Not necessarily. They hadn't met for quite some time, Mr. Speaker. The group as it was set up involved some fellows from all across the northern part of the province. We have been in touch with them individually but we haven't called the group together.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. What steps has your department taken to get an input from local people in the north country as to changes in the role of your department, and also the development of this northern Alberta group that you talk about?

MR. ADAIR:

We have had quite a number of discussions over the past 18 months, Mr. Speaker, with the councils and with some of the people in the various communities.

MR. BARTON:

A supplementary to the hon. Minister in charge of Northern Development. I may have misunderstood the question, but he said just a little while ago there were no meetings.

MR. ADAIR:

There were no meetings and I will get that very clear. There were no meetings of the Northern Development Council Advisory Committee.

MR. BARTON:

A supplementary question then. When did you appoint the two members to the group as you just stated?

MR. ADAIR:

I just stated that we passed an amendment to allow for the appointment of two additional members.

MR. BARTON:

Supplementary. Are those two members appointed?

MR. ADAIR:

No they are not, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

Motorcycle Insurance

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the hon. the Attorney General. Has the automobile insurance industry been circulated and made aware of your statement and decision that liability passenger hazard is not compulsory on motor bikes?

MR. LEITCH:

That, Mr. Speaker, came up in the House almost a year ago. As I recall it then there was general publicity about it. As to a circular going to the industry, I can't answer that.

MR. GRUENWALD:

I didn't catch the last part of that answer.

MR. LEITCH:

I said, Mr. Speaker, as to a circular being sent to the industry, I am not aware of one.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Is it your intention to make sure that they are aware that the liability insurance for passenger hazard is not mandatory? They are still charging it and insisting that it be bought.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is talking about passenger hazard generally that is on all automobiles, the statement is not quite accurate.

MR. GRUENWALD:

No.

MR. LEITCH:

But if he is referring only to motor bikes then his statement is accurate and it is contained in the Order of the Automobile Insurance Board, which as I understand it, was circulated to all of the auto writers in the province. So that order has gone to the industry. I took it from his earlier question that he was referring to a circular of some time ago or the possibility of one, and there wasn't one, but the order has gone out.

MR. GRUENWALD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Then is it the prerogative of the insurance companies to make it mandatory on their own? They won't sell liability insurance at all unless it includes passenger hazard?

MR. LEITCH:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the insurance company is like anyone else doing business. I assume they can agree or disagree on the type of contract they are to sell. What we are talking about is their legal position, and the legal position is such that the passenger hazard is not under the compulsory provisions required -- such a requirement is not composed by the Legislature. With respect to automobiles there has been no endorsement issued by the superintendent, which is necessary to permit the endorsing out of passenger hazard coverage, but there has been such an endorsement approved by the superintendent with respect to motorcycles and similar vehicles. As to whether any individual company is agreeable to endorsing it out is something over which we have no control because there is no legislative provision for that.

MR. GRUENWALD:

One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I am concerned about the clarification. Insurance companies still say that they will not sell motor bike liability insurance without passenger hazard because the government, the Attorney General's Department, says they must sell it.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I would be certainly pleased if the hon. member would give me particulars of that, and if there is that belief within the industry I would like to know about it because it is certainly, as far as I am concerned, based on a misunderstanding which we would want to clear up as quickly as we could.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is there a penalty that may be invoked on companies who continue to disobey this instruction from the superintendent of insurance? It has been going on for a year now.

MR. LEITCH:

I wonder what instruction the hon. member is referring to, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I am referring to the instruction that people must buy passenger hazard, and this is the instruction of the Attorney General. I brought it to your attention a year ago and agents are still telling people this, and they accept the word from their agents. I thought there should be some type of penalty for people who deliberately try to misrepresent the policy of the government.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is leaping again to these conclusions that I am not at all sure are justified. I don't know that I can do more than repeat what I have already said and that I am sure isn't going to be of any assistance to the hon. member. But if he will call to my attention the particulars of the situation to which he refers, we will look into it and do what we can to see that it is cleared up.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MINISTERIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to make an announcement that I am sure all hon. members will conclude will be of great benefit to every citizen in this province.

The Government of Alberta -- as all members know -- has been making an assessment of all natural resource policies and all natural resources in the province since taking office in September, 1971.

Early during our assessment it became obvious that a unique and challenging potential for gas resource development had been ignored -- left idle and completely unevaluated in southern Alberta for some time. I refer now, Mr. Speaker, to that part of our province known as the Suffield Block or British Block, consisting of some 600,000 acres -- 1,000 square miles -- situated 30 miles north of Medicine Hat. The Suffield Block is presently virtually surrounded by existing gas production.

The Government of Alberta has now identified the Suffield Block as a major potential undeveloped natural gas reserve. Preliminary geological mapping indicates the possibility of over four trillion cubic feet of natural gas, or enough natural gas to supply every home in the City of Edmonton or the City of Calgary for the next 200 years at the present consumption rate of 20 billion cubic feet per year. The assessment of the tremendous potential of the Suffield Block is contained in a report entitled A Resource Evaluation Suffield Block - December 1972 prepared for the Government of Alberta, which I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to table today and to provide a copy for the other side of the House.

This report, I might add, is the result of a remarkable cooperative effort between certain dedicated citizens of our province and the government itself. The people of the province, I know, would want me to express our appreciation to these Alberta citizens.

The surface rights to the Suffield Block are owned by the federal government. In 1941 the federal government, with the concurrence of the then provincial government, expropriated the Suffield Block acreage with the province

retaining the sub-surface rights. Nothing has been done by the provincial government with these sub-surface rights -- until now -- for over 30 years. The surface area is used primarily as a military training facility. British armoured units presently utilize approximately 65 per cent of the Block for annual spring-through-fall training manoeuvres.

As a result of this report here, and other considerations of our government, negotiations between the government of the Province of Alberta and the federal government in Ottawa for the development of the non-renewable resources of the Suffield Block are progressing most favourably through the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. The federal government is cooperating in every way and it appears there will be no significant problems in obtaining access for the purpose of exploration and production.

A concern to this government, Mr. Speaker, is that the citizens of Alberta own the sub-surface assets of the Suffield Block but have until now derived no benefit from this ownership. In fact, because of competitive operations being conducted adjacent to the Block, Alberta citizens are experiencing a loss due to drainage, the lateral flow through the residue. By 1975 the total drainage losses, in terms of natural gas, will have reached \$3.5 million with annual losses thereafter totalling \$2.2 million. This loss can be curtailed by fully developing Block production adjacent to the presently producing natural gas properties.

Mr. Speaker, upon finalization of negotiations with the federal government, the government of the Province of Alberta itself will launch a two-phase petroleum and natural gas reserves evaluation drilling program on the Suffield Block. Phase one will consist of 23 reserves evaluation wells, and will be drilled this summer, and another 54 will commence in the late fall of 1973.

The surface area of the Block also represents a valuable renewable asset. This resource, currently owned by the federal government, is deteriorating due to the form of military training currently being carried out. Uses more in the Alberta public interest such as agriculture, wilderness, recreation and parks are also of concern to this government. Our departments of environment and lands and forests will be making a separate analysis of these aspects of the report and of the surface area potential for Albertans.

As the government of Alberta, we are discussing a means of returning ownership of the Suffield Block surface to the people of the province. And we, as the government, intend to develop a permanent management plan for both the renewable and the non-renewable resources of the area in the best interests of the people of Alberta.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this plan of action, if the drilling verifies the reserve estimates -- and we are very optimistic about that -- should create a new Alberta government asset of substantial value for the people of this province. It could materially assist the successful implementation of the new natural gas policies for Alberta I announced last November.

This plan of action by this government represents an asset capable of generating over its productive life, in excess of \$1 billion of benefits to its owners, the people of Alberta.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

1. Dr. Horner proposed the following motion to the Assembly, seconded by Mr. Topolnisky:

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;
- (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. R. Speaker proposed the following amendment to the Assembly, seconded by Mr. Benoit.

That the resolution be amended by adding the following words after Item 9:

Be it further resolved that the committee direct its initial efforts towards examination of Clause 6 and report thereon, inclusive of recommendation, to the government by not later than September 1, 1973.

Adjourned debate: Mr. Clark.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, in rising to make a few comments about the amendment, let me say at the outset, Mr. Speaker, that I have some more lengthy comments which I hope to have the opportunity of making later on in the afternoon when we get back to the motion itself.

Last day when I adjourned the debate, Mr. Speaker, I tried to make two points:

First of all, that since the communal properties legislation had been repealed, there had been virtually no action taken by the present administration to come to grips with the problem of the communal colonies.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I tried to make the point that the Advisory Committee on Hutterites, headed by Dr. Platt, and the Land Use Forum, which we are now discussing here on this particular Motion, Mr. Speaker, and the amendment, that if these two groups go about their work over the next number of months, and there is no deadline placed as to when the government and the Legislature can expect recommendations dealing with the problems of communal living, then regrettably there are a number of people who will use both these organizations as platforms to spout out their biases and their very narrow point of view as far as this particular problem is concerned.

The last point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, is that I hope the government has had the opportunity to give some serious consideration to the question of either agreeing to the date of September of this year as a deadline for the recommendations in the particular area, or, if the September deadline is

not reasonable, Mr. Speaker, then certainly I would welcome the government defeating that particular amendment and giving us a deadline which they think would be reasonable.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that would go some distance towards carrying the judgment of a number of people, not only in southern Alberta but in a number of other areas of the province, who are really concerned about this particular issue.

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the amendment. It is not my intention to take very much time. I feel it is an urgent matter. I think it is a matter that has been brought to the attention of this Assembly and the people of the province.

I well recall the committee set up to deal with communal property was passed by resolution in this Assembly on May 19. And on checking Hansard I find this committee, according to their terms of reference, was to report on October 20. So when the very important Committee on Communal Property was established, there was certainly a time limit on the time they would be reporting back.

Incidentally, from May 19 to October 20, is just about five months. Looking at the amendment before the Legislature today, the amendment states September 1, which is just about another five months.

As previous speakers have indicated, if the September 1 amendment is not acceptable to the government, then naturally we would like to have at least another date suggested.

I well recall having served as a member on the committee that reported on communal property that the deadline was October 20. The committee was well aware of the deadline and they made a particular effort during the last few weeks of the time they were meeting to be sure their report was in on the deadline time.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I well recall the report of the Communal Property Report, and I will refer to page 37 of that report where it states, reading from the report,

In view of the possibility that such operations may result in potential problems for the family farm and for rural Alberta generally, the committee feels strongly obliged to the Legislature and the people of the province to suggest that, as an item of priority, the government should consider the whole matter of rural land use, and in particular the potential impact created by large land holdings or large scale agricultural operations.

You will note in the recommendation of the committee that they state this is an item of priority. It is correct to say that rural land use was not in the terms of reference of the committee, and they didn't feel that they could report on this matter in their Act report, although they did see fit to mention it in the postscript report.

I also want to say that when I spoke in the Legislature on November 16, I stated:

Mention was made earlier tonight of the large corporate farms. Incidentally when we were in Montana we were told by some of the farm organizations in Montana that one of the problems facing the people there today is the introduction of corporate farming. They referred to two large organizations that have gone into corporate farming quite recently in Montana, and we feel that as time goes on we will feel the impact of corporate farming in Alberta. So we feel that as corporate farming increases in the province it certainly is going to be a threat to the very existence of rural life, and we recommend that an in-depth study be made into this whole area. This is the reason for our recommendation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I brought this to the attention of the Legislature on November 16. The report of the Communal Property Committee was made in this Assembly at least five months ago, and here we are five months later having a resolution before the Assembly to establish a public forum. I think, in all fairness, to make this resolution meaningful we should have a date that the report should be made available to the Assembly. And as I mentioned earlier, if the date is September 1 is not acceptable, I feel the government should take steps to amend it and make it more suitable according to their wishes.

But this is a very important matter. We have dragged our feet now for some five months. We've taken no action whatsoever, and it is true -- this is another point that I am coming to -- the government did appoint the advisory committee and in the terms of reference for the advisory committee -- this is the advisory committee headed by Dr. Platt -- it states,

"Review from time to time the functions of the special advisory committee with regard to recommending broad procedures selective to rural land use, large land holdings and corporate farms."

I think this strengthens, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we should have a date to report. Here we have a situation where we are going to have public forums in the province, I expect they will commence very shortly. They'll be going into the matter of land use in general. We also have the advisory committee headed by Dr. Platt, which is going to be looking at rural land use.

We have two committees -- I presume we'll have the two committees established by this Legislature indirectly. Looking at rural land use, I'm sure there will be some conflict of how people are going to present their views. I'm not quarrelling with the matter, I think it is very important, but in view of the fact that there is no time limit established on the resolution, I certainly feel it would be more acceptable if we had a time limit so we would know when this important matter would be coming back in the form of a report to the Legislature.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, in rising to support the amendment, I do so on the basis of the discussion we had on the repeal of The Communal Property Act late last fall. At that time I stressed the point that in repealing it at the time the government had chosen to do so a void would be left which would create difficulties. And I think we are faced with these difficulties at this time.

Certainly when we see the duplication of the forum, the advisory committee, the legislative committee, to me it indicates that it's the inability of the government to make a decision. And I think the time that has gone on since the first decision was made by government, even before The Communal Property Act was brought in to repeal it, indicates their haste to do something without realizing the consequences. And for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I believe there should be a definite termination date, a date for this report to be in, so we won't go on, and on and on.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are you ready for the question on the amendment?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[The amendment was defeated.]

[Interjections]

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I was going to speak on the motion but you haven't called it yet.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion, without the amendment, is now ready for the completion of the debate.

MR. GRUENWALD:

I guess I was right the first time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to become involved in this debate on the motion for land use. I believe I could support the motion if I were really sure of the intent. I hope this motion goes far beyond what seems to be stated in the motion. At least it seems to me the emphasis seems to be on agriculture and on land use in rural areas. I think it is important to remember, Mr. Speaker, that what is rural or agricultural land today, just may be urban property in the future.

I realize the motion makes some reference to land studies in relationship to urban property, but in my mind it's not completely clear. So I think it is important we clarify this.

I am also glad to see the motion -- and the deputy minister when he introduced the motion made no mention of land freeze in this province at this particular time. As he has mentioned, many of the old-timers came to this province, including people like my own dad who came here and staked out homesteads in the year of 1907 and the first furrows they turned on those homesteads were behind a walking plow. It is strange to think that within a generation we would become involved in a situation that would appear to be as serious as this. It would be almost unbelievable to those people, as a matter of fact. The big thing that interested them in coming to this country was the fact that they could own land and by and large do with it what they wanted.

Now I am concerned about land use for agriculture, but more importantly the cost of land as it affects the cost of housing in this province. Because actually that aspect of farm use -- of land use -- really affects more people and more families in this province than the farming or rural aspect does. I think there are a few points that should be remembered in discussing this motion, Mr. Speaker.

Number one -- the use of land to a very great extent determines the value of land. And I think that is very important to note. The use of land to a great extent determines the value of land. I believe that land use for residential purposes is really far too expensive. I think it is inflated. I think it is out of reach and I think it is out of proportion beyond what is realistic. The cost of servicing building lots is excessive and I think this should be investigated as well. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that land development and land use for residential and housing and for other purposes should come about in a free way as much as possible. Now by free, I mean not from a monetary point of view, but free from unnecessary interference and restrictions as much as possible.

I believe in planning. Most of us have become accustomed to planning, particularly for building purposes. But I am inclined to think planners are becoming over-restrictive. They are causing undue and excessive costs to buildings and building sites in this province. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that planners control the use of land to a much greater extent than the owners of land.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. GRUENWALD:

And I think this is something we have to be concerned about. Planning commissions across this province give me cause for concern. Because when a farmer must get permission to erect even minor buildings on his farm, I become concerned about the independence that he once had as a farmer.

Now I believe, too, Mr. Speaker, that the feasibility and the advisability of continued expansion of certain urban areas as it affects the cost of land and the servicing of land with various necessary utilities should also be studied. Mr. Speaker, these are only a few of the examples of how I think this motion can be broadened so as to be meaningful. It can be meaningful to the rural Albertan, it can be meaningful to farmers, and it can be meaningful to all Albertans. I think this has to be the intent. The debate so far has centred around agricultural use, the communal properties, and I submit and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that that is only a very small part of the job this forum would have to do if set up when this motion is passed.

So in looking at the motion, I'd say that all is not lost if we simply look at it from a broader point of view and be more specific in the terms of reference. In this regard, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move an amendment, seconded by Mr. Drain:

That this motion be amended by:

(a) striking out the word "agriculture" wherever it appears in the third paragraph of the original motion.

It appears twice.

(b) that we would strike out Item 4 and replace it with the following words: "Land use in and adjacent to urban areas as it affects the cost of housing."

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to second this worthwhile -- oh.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Go ahead. It's all right.

MR. DRAIN:

Do I speak now or not?

MR. SPEAKER:

Does the House wish the amendment read? If not, the amendment is now open for debate.

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to second this very worthwhile amendment moved by my colleague from Lethbridge West. The amendment will possibly bring something worthwhile out of what appears to be a rather obscure motion, and which has been dealt with rather fearlessly by a lot of members in this Legislature.

I think possibly one thing that we in all of Canada must consider is the fantastic cost directly bearing on the cost of living of the Canadian people in a manner far greater than any other country other than the United States, of which I have knowledge. I refer to Holland, where the maximum cost of living considered as permissible for housing is ten per cent. There is a comparable figure for Sweden as well as for England. So, Mr. Speaker, in the interest of strengthening the case, with your permission I wish to read some excerpts from *The Future of Canadian Cities* by Bryce Richardson, New Press, Toronto, 1972. What I wish to deal with specifically, Mr. Speaker, is the role that land speculators deal with in relation to accelerating the costs of housing, and therefore, the costs of living. Much ado has been made of saving the family farm by this government, and rightfully so. No one has given thought to that great Canadian institution, the family home. And I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that this should be given equal priority in the interest of all Albertans. For this reason, Mr. Speaker, to cast some light on this subject and to enlarge my thinking in relation to this particular motion which I consider very worthwhile, herein is a succulent analysis of what comprises a land speculator:

A land speculator is a man who has enough money to buy up a piece of land and hold on to it in the hope that the land will be developed, and that he will be able to resell it to a developer for a good profit.

DR. HORNER:

Point of order. I wonder if I could get some clarification from the mover and the seconder of the amendment in relation to what they consider is paragraph 3. Item 3?

MR. GRUENWALD:

There are only two paragraphs in the motion, Mr. Speaker --

MR. HENDERSON:

Point of order. The original motion started out "Whereas there are major economic and social factors ..." I am talking about the original motion as presented, Mr. Speaker, not as presented on the Order Paper. So the word 'three' if you wish to relate it to the motion on the Order Paper, is the first paragraph, the main body of the resolution and reads "Therefore ..." That's the particular paragraph, but the reason it is three -- the original motion in its complete form was preceded by two 'whereas's'.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, the word 'agriculture' doesn't appear there.

[Interjections]

DR. HORNER:

I beg your pardon, sir, it's "agricultural" not "agriculture".

MR. SPEAKER:

The point of order by the hon. Deputy Premier would seem to be sound. The motion has to be taken as it appears on the Order Paper. The motion as originally presented contained a preamble which is contrary to our Rule 38, and for that reason the preamble was struck out. We are now debating the motion on the Order Paper and not the one that circulated before it came on to the Order Paper.

Under the circumstances, perhaps the House would allow the hon. Member for Lethbridge West the indulgence of a few moments or a moment to correct the references in the amendment.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I could either do that or amend the amendment, either to strike out the word "agriculture" as pointed out by the Deputy Premier and replace it with "agricultural", whichever the House permits. We can amend it to suit the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER:

If the hon. member has the indulgence of the House then it will be up to the hon. member to amend the amendment in the way he sees fit.

MR. RUSTE:

Point of order. Was the original notice of motion presented to us out of order then in having the two "whereas's"?

MR. SPEAKER:

The original Notice of Motion had preambles in it and when the Speaker discovered the preambles and realized they were contrary to Rule 38 they were expunged.

MR. HENDERSON:

I think the technicality is -- I have before me the original motion as was originally presented that had the "whereas's" in it, so that gives rise to the fact that we quoted paragraph 3. The Deputy Premier is, however, quite correct that the motion is in error. It should read "agricultural" instead of "agriculture".

MR. GRUENWALD:

I would agree, and would request that we change the amendment in that way with the permission of the House.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, with deference, I would like then to know whether the hon. member is talking about the resolution clause or the further clause? If he wants to strike out "agriculture" and call it an Alberta Land Use Forum and to make recommendations regarding land use instead of agricultural. Is that the intent of the amendment?

MR. GRUENWALD:

The answer is that there would be a total land use study and not specifically an agricultural one as the "Be it resolved ..." states on the Order Paper, Mr. Speaker. If it were amended to delete those words "agricultural" as they appear on the Order Paper then I believe the amendment could stand.

[Interjections]

In the resolved section, yes. If you would like it rewritten we would be glad to do it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I think the proper way to be certain about it so that we don't lose the time of the House would be to amend the amendment in writing and let the Chair have it and the other side of the House.

Perhaps the House would agree that the debate might continue while the text is being ironed out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. HORNER:

A point, Mr. Speaker, if I could get some clarification of the amendment we might be able to accept it.

MR. HENDERSON:

Speaking on the point of order then, I think the basic intention of the amendment was simply not to restrict the forum entirely to the question of agriculture. Therefore to make it obvious that the purpose or the intent of the forum is to deal with the broader issues of land use in general, as specifically opposed to agriculture in particular, the intent was to strike out the word "agricultural" in the main body of the resolution. Also, to be more specific then, instead of just "the use of agricultural land for urban expansion" to amend item 4 to place more emphasis on the question of urban land costs that relate to housing thereby, as I say, broadening the basic scope of the land forum somewhat beyond the specific matter of agriculture.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, in my view it doesn't broaden it any, but if it makes the other side feel happier about the motion we would be willing to accept that amendment. Because I think that having regard to the fact that land is tied to agriculture, we don't have to designate agriculture as the important use of land in a province like Alberta.

We will accept the amendment.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, speaking on the point of order, since the Deputy Premier is hair-splitting, we realize the question of urban expansion is in here but there are parts of the province where the community is expanding that don't have a relation strictly to agriculture. The minister is well aware of that, and so I am pleased to hear that he is going to accept the amendment after all this particular debate over what the exact words are.

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Would the sponsors of the amendment wish to state whether they would also wish to remove the word "agricultural" from the title or name of the forum?

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing and the rewording would be "by striking out the word 'agricultural' wherever it appears in paragraph 1 of the main motion". I think this would clarify the matter.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair still isn't clear whether or not you wish to strike it out in the name of the forum. It is now down as the Alberta Agricultural Land Use Forum, and is that word also to disappear under the terms of the amendment. If so, might the amendment say so, so that we don't have a further...

MR. GRUENWALD:

Yes, that would be included, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Apparently the government is prepared to agree to the amendment. There would appear to be general agreement. As soon as the amendment is clear the Chair...

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, we would like the amendment read before we can make a decision.

MR. SPEAKER:

As soon as the text of the amendment is complete the Chair proposes to put it without further debate and then we will be ready to revert to the debate on the motion as amended.

The amendment moved by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West and seconded by the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest is that:

Motion No. 1 on today's Order Paper be amended by

(a) striking out the word "agricultural" wherever it appears in the main motion, and

(b) striking item 4 and replacing it with the following words: "land use in and adjacent to urban areas as it affects the cost of housing."

Having heard the amendment read is there any further discussion on the amendment?

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to at least make a few remarks on this particular motion. With all respect to the hon. Minister of Agriculture and the expression he assumes, and I have watched this over a period of years -- I refer to this expression mentally, Mr. Speaker, as: 'I have now eaten the canary and to hell with the feathers.'

However, Mr. Speaker, when I say this I do not want it construed that the intent of the amendment is in any way intended to weaken the intentions as outlined in this particular motion; rather to expand it to encompass an area of considerable importance which is very vital to more than 60 per cent of the population of Alberta insofar as land costs are escalating in a manner that cannot be accepted properly if such a procedure continues in the future.

I wish to mention the CMHC study of urban land that shows between 1951 and 1967 the cost of land for housing in Canada rose by 206.3 per cent, while the cost of construction per square foot rose by 42.7 per cent. Land costs as a proportion of total housing costs rose from 10 per cent to 17 per cent, and 18 per cent by 1970. It's no secret that in Toronto land costs have become so high they now represent as much as 30, 40 and sometimes 50 per cent of the total cost of a home. Between 1961 and 1970, while the Canadian consumer index rose by 30 per cent, the price of land rose by 64 per cent. So someone is beating the system, and obviously it is not the wage earner or the customer.

So, Mr. Speaker, the intent of bringing to light this particular situation has resulted in this amendment to the particular motion. Therefore, in the Legislature accepting this particular resolution they will have, in fact, not permitted a false pregnancy but in fact the birthing of a new idea.

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to this amendment, if I may.

Mr. Speaker, I must applaud the opposition for their concern about urban land use, and the many concerns we all have with respect to the development of our urban areas -- the need for land on an orderly basis. I have many areas I think should be dealt with by this Land Forum Committee.

However, I find it somewhat incredible that we can deal with this amendment by the opposition after hearing their hue and cry on the first amendment which they proposed to this Legislature, and their concern that this matter be dealt with post-haste. We have just finished disposing of an amendment proposed by the opposition due to their alarming concern that this matter be dealt with at the earliest possible moment, and suggesting that by September 1, 1973, we

should have a report in with the recommendations to the government expressing their great concern over land use.

Now what do we hear from the loyal members of the opposition? Instead of the urgency to get the report in, they have expanded it so, possibly with a break, the report might be out by 1978. I wonder if the loyal opposition realizes the complexities of the amendments which they proposed in this motion -- a motion I heartily support, a motion I think must have great concern. But the inconsistencies and the tweedle-dum, tweedle-dee approach of the opposition in the amendments that are supposed to be credible to this Legislature are indeed suprising.

However, Mr. Speaker, in supporting this amendment, I think there are some very vital areas we must be concerned with, and it is my hope that the Minister of Municipal Affairs, when the new planning act is submitted to this Legislature, will have the new planning act addressed to some of these concerns.

I note, for example, that the great demand in the City of Calgary for building lots is at an acute stage now. I note also that one of the main reasons for this is the inability of our municipalities to bring forward their main trunk line services to the new land which is ready for development. If ever there were need for support to our municipalities, it is in the area of bringing forward of these main trunk lines to new land and, hopefully, even assistance from the provincial government so this could occur.

This is something of a very urgent nature. The cost of land isn't so much the great profits that some of our developers are making. The cost of land is due to a large extent to the high servicing costs that are entertained by our municipalities, and the difficulties in bringing these servicing costs to these new developing areas.

In Calgary, I understand, there is a need probably for 4,000 building lots a year for new homes. It locks -- in the future projects, and I know that HUDAC presently is looking into this area -- that unless we do something very rapidly, there will not be adequate lots available for development of single family dwelling units.

The result is obvious. The price of the land goes up because of the pressures imposed upon it. The city only develops in one way, as is occurring in Calgary, as it progresses in an easterly direction. Yet the southern end of the city is hamstrung by bureaucratic procedures and the lack of building lots. I think these are vital areas, and these are areas that this Land Use Forum Committee must well consider, and things that we must also look at.

Another area I would like to see this Land Use Forum Committee look to is that of the profits made on rezoning applications. Surely, the developer who comes before a municipality and asks for his land to be rezoned, not by way of right or prior zoning but by way of the permission of the citizens of an area, and says to the city, "I would like my land rezoned from R2 to a DC control" -- for a hotel or whatever it might be -- is receiving an increased value of that land, not by the immediate use of the land at that time but because the representatives of the people have decided that land can be used for another use.

Now that increased value of land should, if not, be taxed from the point of view of the increased value, so the citizens appreciate and receive some of that increased value that has been decreed upon that land by the municipality. The people should receive by way of taxation some form of enjoyment of the appreciation to that land by decree. If not that, the planning people should require, by way of parks and other material requirements, certain advantages to the citizens who are using it. This is what is happening, I notice, in the City of Vancouver -- by compelling the people who are taking great advantages by way of zoning and get great appreciation on their land, that the citizens shall receive some benefit from this.

These are very tricky areas, but these are areas with which we must be concerned. These are critical matters to our urban areas, and I think any study relating to land use, urban or rural, will be beneficial both to this Legislature and to the municipalities involved.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it might take a long time, and I think the result of this amendment will be to stretch out the responsibilities of this Land Use Forum for a considerable length of time. However, I welcome it and I think the concern of the hon. members on the other side to land use throughout this province is indeed the concern of this side of the House as well. I certainly

look forward to seeing a report of this Land Use Committee as a rather exciting challenge. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to become involved in the debate. I rise only to keep the record straight.

[Interjections]

The hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo -- I don't know whether he used the words 'all wet' as unparliamentary or not, but if it is unparliamentary it's close to being all wet. Certainly, so far as the previous amendments, Mr. Speaker, none of them have dealt with the basic issue of the broader implications of the motion, and I don't think this side of the House has gone on record as saying they opposed the land forum. As a matter of fact, I think if the hon. member would examine Hansard he would find I said that I thought when it comes to trying to whitewash the issue and bury it forever the land forum is a good idea. The Minister of Agriculture, I believe, anticipated that it might never report, and I thought that might just be a good idea too, because of some of the recommendations that might be forthcoming that would end up in action such as that which took place in British Columbia recently and which was completely contrary to our democratic process and principles in this country.

And also so far as broadening the issue, Mr. Speaker, and the words from the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo indicated that by accepting the amendment the question of reports will be put some place out in never never land. I distinctly heard the Deputy Premier say from the chair that the motion had already made provision to examine the matter, and the amendment really wasn't necessary but we'd go along with it as a matter of clarification.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I say, I don't wish to prolong the debate on it, but I thought it desirable to keep the record straight with regard to the prologue from the Member from Calgary Buffalo. I must confess that he got into the meat of his remarks; he got down to some rather intelligent presentations of a number of aspects of this problem.

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Rather than clear the record, I think the hon. member has only confused it greatly.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's point of order is not a point of order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question, question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are you ready for the question on the amendment?

MR. R. SPEAKER:

I want to speak to the amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in favour of the amendment that is just before us and make one or two comments. I would like to once again stress the urgency to deal with part 6 of this motion. I feel that was one of the points we were attempting to make by our earlier amendments to this resolution. Along with stressing its urgency, I'd have to say that I support the idea of the Land Use Forum, and feel that it is certainly a good idea at this point in our history.

A number of different problems have been enumerated, a number of the different concerns have certainly been expressed in this Assembly. The ones that my constituents are very interested in are outlined in the various points, but they do want urgent action with regard to corporate farms, foreign ownership of land, absentee ownership, and certainly, that of communal living. And I think that it is my responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to emphasize that to the minister and emphasize that to the government -- that an early report, even if it is interim from the committee, should be brought to the government so that they can make some decisions. These decisions, we hope, would be available to us at least by the fall sitting of this House.

One of the other requests that my constituents have is that any interim report or report that is made should be made public so that they can examine it, discuss it, and certainly bring more information to the government or to the members of this Assembly so that the best decision-making can be done when we must make those decisions. I'd certainly make that request and recommendation to the minister and the government at this time.

The third thing that I would like to comment on -- and I feel it is in line in supporting this amendment -- is that the citizens of Alberta should be given some opportunity to make recommendations as to names of people who could sit on this Alberta Land Use Forum. I would first of all like to ask that an opportunity be given to the Vulcan Chamber of Commerce, who made a presentation to the members of this Legislature and made a presentation to government. They certainly feel that they have some great concerns, and would like to recommend some very responsible people in the Province of Alberta to work on the forum.

Mr. Speaker, I can only conclude again that I urge the government to act quickly and have the committee work on all forms of land use, but certainly put a priority on that of agricultural land use in the province of Alberta.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, in rising to make some comments on this particular amendment, there are basically three things I would like to say.

First of all, I support the amendment, Mr. Speaker. In saying I support the amendment I believe all of us in this Assembly can reflect back to people, perhaps our parents or grandparents, who came to this province or this country and were involved in that pioneering experience that the Minister of Agriculture referred to and several other members have also referred to. But let me say, Mr. Speaker, all of us as members of this Legislature should recognize, and I hope we do, that whether we call it "land-use regulation" or "land-use legislation" we have a great deal of that in this province at this particular time.

It isn't the responsibility of the present government, nor totally the responsibility of the former government. We've had land-use legislation on the statute books of this province for a number of years. If any of the hon. members want to go back and check that, they can go back and check the Statutes of the province and the present Planning Act, which came into effect in 1963. And I quote from Section 3:

The purpose of this Act is to provide means whereby plans and related measures may be prepared and adopted to achieve the orderly and economical development of land within the Province without infringing on the rights of individuals except to the extent that is necessary for the greater public interest.

And that is Section 3 and really the whole purpose of the planning legislation that came into effect in 1963 in this province. And even before that, going back to 1950, we had planning legislation in one form or another, Mr. Speaker. So we have had, and I suspect will continue to have, a considerable amount of land-use control or land-use legislation in the province.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at The Planning Act today, it deals with subdivisions and transfer regulations which in many jurisdictions, especially rural jurisdictions, have a real impact on what farmers, people involved in agriculture, can do with the land they want to sell or, in fact, transfer.

As far as urban dwellers are concerned, Mr. Speaker, in The Municipal Government Act, in the development permits which are involved there -- it was a development permit, the hon. members will recall, that was very much responsible for what happened with the Agri-mart in Calgary and the zoning by-laws involved therein.

As far as a person involved in agriculture is concerned, Mr. Speaker -- the local service boards have responsibility as far as weed control is concerned and they can, in fact, take a farm away from a farmer under the most extreme circumstances. In special areas in this province, there are strict regulations as far as grazing is concerned, and well there should be.

I know, Mr. Speaker, a number of individuals in my own constituency have had to recognize to their disappointment on some occasions, that they are really not masters of their own situations as far as agricultural land is concerned -- that there are many people outside agriculture who have a very direct impact on what they can do with their land. There is at least one main transmission line

from Calgary Power that goes across my particular constituency. And a lot of the farmers involved there certainly did not want that land to be used for that purpose or they didn't want the land to be acquired. But nevertheless it was done.

A number of people in my riding also have the problem of pipelines and oil and gas wells. While we all enjoy the benefits from that, nevertheless those people involved in agriculture don't have the final say and they are subject to land-use regulations and land-use control which is far out of their hands as to what they do with their own agricultural land.

The Department of Highways has already been mentioned by the Minister of Agriculture -- has the opportunity to take land, if necessary, in some cases it has to actually take land out of agricultural production. And once again the farmer involved has in the end really no say as far as that is concerned.

And I am sure all hon. members in the Assembly are familiar with the various regional planning groups in the province. All of them now have a preliminary plan. And this preliminary plan as it affects the local jurisdiction involved then results in zoning regulations there.

Speaking once again from a particular situation in my own constituency, I can recall on a number of occasions where people involved in agriculture have wanted to sell a portion of their land, to subdivide a quarter section and have an acreage involved. And they have certainly come to the realization that they don't have control of what they do with that particular quarter section, or that particular subdivision.

In fact, the Red Deer Regional Planning Commission has done a survey in the very southwestern corner of the County of Mountain View. That survey, which was done in Township 29 and Township 30, Range 5 west to 5th, indicates that of the privately owned land in the County of Mountain View, approximately 55 per cent of that land is owned by residents of County of Mountain View, approximately 20 per cent of that land is owned by the citizens of Calgary, over 4 per cent of it is owned by people outside the province, and over 3 per cent of it is owned by people who are not Canadians.

It's my hope, Mr. Speaker, that this land forum we are establishing will look at this question on a much broader basis than the agricultural implications.

I have also a farmer in the Olds area who, just recently, has felt the effects of annexation by the town of Olds. Once again, his hands were tied when it came to making the kind of use he wanted to of his particular land. The Department of the Environment is also involved in preventing people, on a legitimate basis, but preventing people from doing what they may choose to do with their agricultural land.

I emphasize that the restrictions are legitimate, but when we are talking about this question of land use, let's not get carried away and talk in terms of all the freedoms we have, because whether we want to admit it or not, whether we want to admit we've been a part of it or not, we have a lot of restrictions in this province when it comes to actual farm use. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we are going to have more of these kinds of restrictions in the period of time that lies ahead.

The second point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, deals with the large mass of information already available, that I had hoped the land forum would make use of. Various regional planning commissions in this province have a great deal of information, and certainly there is no need to duplicate the information they have. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, over the past number of years, various departments of government have been funded by ARDA to do a lot of land studies in this province.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, we now have the Environmental Conservation Authority, to be holding hearings before long on the question of land use in the eastern slopes area. Then we have the regional planning commissions; we have the Environmental Conservation Authority; now we're going to have the land forum having hearings in this particular area. The point I want to make here, Mr. Speaker, is simply this: we don't need an entire new study. What we do need is to pull together the information that is available in the various government departments, and also pull together the information available through local governments across the province.

The third point, Mr. Speaker, is that it seems to me that it's essential that either the government, or this Legislature, makes it very clear to those

people who are going to be doing the land study and holding the land forum that we spell out to those people very clearly what the priorities of the government and the Legislature are.

I think all members in this Legislature are prepared to commit themselves to the continuance of the family farm, and if that's true, then the Land Use Forum is going to have to take that into consideration when it makes recommendations back to the government.

I hope most members in the Legislature are prepared to commit themselves to rural development and to the need for decentralization. If that's true, Mr. Speaker, then it is essential that the members on the land forum keep that uppermost in their minds when they are making recommendations back to the government.

We have heard the Premier and a number of members from both sides of the House talk about the need to control the growth of the large urban cities. If that is the direction we are going to go, Mr. Speaker, then that says some very definite things to the people on this land forum, and best they keep that in mind from the outset.

Fourthly, and perhaps most important of all, included in the Speech from the Throne -- and this has been mentioned by several members in the House -- is that we want to do what we can in this province to make it possible for people to own their own homes, and if that is true, then that says something very very definite as far as the direction that this land forum has to move.

The third point, Mr. Speaker, I want to make is to urge the government, in setting up this land forum, to make it very clear to the members of the forum the priorities which this Legislature and the government have made clear to the people of this province, so that their recommendations dealing with land use in this province reflect the priorities that have been set aside.

There are just four points I would like to make in conclusion, Mr. Speaker. One, we all have to remember, we don't have the kinds of freedoms as far as land use is concerned that a lot of us think we do, and I predict we are going to have a lot more restrictions in the time that lies ahead.

Secondly, there is a great ream of information available, and we should make use of that.

Thirdly, the priorities that the Legislature and the government have set out must be the guidelines which this committee is going to use.

Fourthly, and frankly, Mr. Speaker -- as I said earlier -- we are going to have to live with more regulations in these areas, and one of the areas that we are going to have to live with before long, I think, is some restriction on the sale of land to people who are non-Canadians. This may be very distasteful to a lot of us right now, but before very long we are going to have to look very seriously at that kind of restriction.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is for those reasons that I hope we will accept the broadening of the land use study, at the same time recognizing the problems and the real challenge that this group is going to have to face.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are you ready for the question on the amendment?

[The amendment was carried.]

MR. SPEAKER:

Is there any further debate on the motion as amended?

MR. BENOIT:

[Inaudible] just for a moment, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury made most of the comments I intended to make. I simply wanted to fortify this one thought, the reason for haste. I feel that so far as the study is concerned it is either overdue or else the repeal of The Communal Property Act should have been withheld until the study had been made. Because I feel there is a definite vacuum here which is going to create some problems. I hope they won't be too great, but it appears now, if rumours have any foundation, that they may already have created problems. So I hope we will be able to

hasten this study and complete it in the very near future. I think it's imperative, it's urgent.

The Planning Act, as the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury so aptly pointed out, gives local authorities a great deal of control over land use and development; probably more could be given where it was necessary by some amendments to The Planning Act. I understand that the government's intention is to bring in another Planning Act and I have no idea of what is intended in the new Act at the present time -- I hope that it will fill in the gaps that are apparent in some areas of the existing Act. The Planning Act as we have it now, as it has been pointed out by hon. members, is just as restrictive as The Communal Property Act was. If the incoming Planning Act is going to have anything of the same restrictions as the existing Planning Act has -- and it probably will have it if it is going to do its job in planning -- then I feel very strongly it will be necessary to put in the 'notwithstanding' clause that is required by the Bill of Rights. Because certainly the Planning Act does interfere with people's rights. Even though it is for the general good of the public it does interfere with the private members' rights.

So I suggest the route I suggested once before, that we could either have kept The Communal Property Act in by putting in the 'notwithstanding' clause until something was done in this regard, or we will have to put in the 'notwithstanding' clause in The Planning Act in order to make it work effectively and do the job that is necessary.

I want to draw to hon. members' attention the real conflict that is being experienced by the Municipal District of Foothills which is on the edge of the City of Calgary, where in this past year, according to the annual report on Saturday, something in excess of 8,000 acres of land was subdivided into 20-acre parcels on the edge of the city. The subdivisions are coming into effect because farmers have a right to sell land and they are wanting the money they can get for subdivisions instead of selling it as agricultural land.

While it is true that some portions of this area are not suitable agricultural land, there are large portions of this amount that are very acceptable for agricultural land, in fact some of it is prime agricultural land. And in such a situation we find that here are people who are wanting to sell to subdividers, which takes the land out of agricultural use, in all probability for time and eternity. So the result is that there is a great complaint because the land is being taken out of agricultural use.

To the south end of a municipal district there are two Hutterite colonies. These colonies have paid more for the land than it was possible to receive from other buyers, and so they sold. As one of the men at the meeting plainly pointed out, "We have a conflict here. Here are people who are willing and ready to pay more money for the land to put it into agricultural use, probably forever, if the statements are right about how long Hutterites hold land."

On the other hand, people are selling it for larger amounts of money for subdivisions to be taken out of agriculture for an indefinite or probably a permanent period of time. And so the result is: "Where do we go?" We don't want the Hutterians, we don't want the subdividers for obvious reasons in both situations. And yet we are in between the two.

So certainly the time for more information and legislation with regard to land use and land ownership has come and probably gone by.

I think the people are now in a position -- even though admittedly they may not have solutions to the problems to offer -- they are in a position where they want action and not studies and reports that gather dust. I don't know how we will avoid this. I only hope that if it is going to take more than three or four months the government would be able to give some type of consideration to some kind of dealing freeze with land until the study could be completed, at least to keep the situation from going farther than it has gone, before it is too late.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like, first of all, just to reaffirm my statement on Monday that I hope that the land forum will be able to report soon on Section 6. It may well be that September 1 would be premature but I very seriously asked the Minister of Agriculture to give pretty high priority to setting a timetable for a report on this matter, whether it is November or January 1, but there should be some definite date established when the forum is formally set up and the three people are appointed.

The second observation I would make, Mr. Speaker, is that regardless of what happens as a result of the forum, the recommendations are bound to create a good deal of controversy. I look at Section 4, for example, the section which has created all the controversy in British Columbia. I am rather interested to learn by reading the paper that Premier Davis of Ontario indicated the other day that his government plans to introduce some pretty stringent land-use regulations in Ontario that will prohibit farms in the Niagara Peninsula being gobbled up by urban sprawl. Now that is going to create the same kind of controversy in Ontario that is now facing the government of British Columbia.

Because, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, if a farmer has hung on to an acreage for many, many years with the hope of subdividing it and selling it for perhaps \$1,000 an acre or \$2,000 an acre instead of \$200 an acre, that individual is not going to look kindly on any kind of legislation which is going to stop him from selling his agricultural land for housing purposes, whether it's by a Tory government in Ontario, a New Democratic government in British Columbia or a Tory government in Alberta. The fact of the matter is, it is likely that as a result of reviewing this matter the land forum may well come in with some recommendations that will restrict the sale of prime agricultural land for urban development. I would just simply warn the government that that sort of recommendation is going to create a good deal of controversy, and simply appointing a land forum -- although I intend to vote for the resolution -- is not going to create a set of conditions which will find a solution that will please everybody, because we are talking about a very complicated matter. There is no way you are going to keep everybody happy, and I'm sure the government realizes that in any event.

Even in British Columbia, I would like to remind the hon. members opposite, we find the National Farmers Union supporting the government's position in principle, yet we find the B.C. Federation of Agriculture opposing it. I should also point out for the record, Mr. Speaker, that all the poor little farmers financing the campaign against the land use bill in British Columbia are certainly scratching up the dollars, because the poverty stricken individuals are able to take out full page ads in the daily newspapers and they have 26 offices set up throughout the Province of British Columbia. One almost wonders if perhaps a few of the speculators and land developers are giving them a boost.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to get into a discussion on that particular matter, because I want to make one further observation before I close and that deals with No. 6, the question of corporate farms.

I received this information after I introduced my private members bill last fall, Mr. Speaker. It's from the North Dakota Farmer's Union, and I think the members would be rather interested if I read parts of it into the record. It concerns a study prepared for the 79th Congress of the United States and it studied the family farm and its relationship to free enterprise.

And what it did, Mr. Speaker, was take two communities in California of approximately the same size and in the same kind of soil zone. In one community the farms around that town were small family farms, and in the other community you had the growth of corporate farming, so most of the land was held by a very small number of highly integrated corporate farms. The analysis of business conditions in the two communities is quite interesting. I think we should keep it in mind, especially in view of the concern in southern and central Alberta.

The small-farm community supported 62 separate business establishments, to but 35 in the large-farm community: a ratio in favour of the small-farm community was nearly 2-1.

The volume of retail trade in the small-farm community during the 12 month period analyzed was \$4,383,000 as against only \$2,535,000 in the large-farm community. Retail trade in the small-farm community was greater by some 61 per cent.

The expenditure for household supplies and building equipment was over three times as great in the small-farm community as it was in the large-farm community

--three times as great.

The investigation disclosed other vast differences in the economic and social life of the two communities. It found that the small-farm supports in the local community a larger number of people per dollar volume agricultural production than the area devoted to larger-farm enterprises. In favour of the small-farm enterprises there was a differential of about 20 per cent.

Notwithstanding their greater numbers, people in the small farm communities have a better average standard of living than those living in the community of large scale farms.

Over one-half of the breadwinners in the small-farm communities are independently employed businessmen, persons in white-collar employment, or farmers; in the large-farm community the proportion is less than one-fifth.

Less than one-third of the breadwinners in the small-farm community are agricultural wage labourers, characteristically landless and with low and insecure incomes, while the proportion of persons in this position reaches the astonishing figure of nearly two-thirds of all persons gainfully employed in the large-farm [or corporate farm] community.

Physical facilities for community living -- paved streets, sidewalks, garbage disposal, sewage disposal, and other public services -- are far greater in the small-farm community [than in the industrial farm community].

Schools are more plentiful -- in the small-farm community four elementary schools and one high school, while the large-farm community had but one elementary school.

On the question of parks -- the small-farm community had three parks, the other had a single park, and that one loaned to the community by one of the corporations involved.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I could go on, but I think the point is well made even in the case of churches. Churches bear a ratio of nearly two to one between the communities with the greater number of churches and church-goers in the small-farm community.

I think the point this study makes, Mr. Speaker, is simply that if we are going to preserve our rural way of life, we have to make sure we preserve the family farm operation and stop the wholesale takeover of agricultural land in this province by large corporations.

I am not suggesting today that the evidence indicates the corporations are buying up large amounts, although certainly there is at least some evidence that corporate ownership of land is growing. Even in my own constituency, a northern constituency, it was brought to my attention over the weekend that a German firm had an option on some six sections of land south of Fairview to establish a large corporate farm enterprise.

But the point I think I do want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that as you look at North America, as you look at the trends in agriculture today on this continent, there is certainly considerable evidence to indicate that corporate control is gaining momentum.

Therefore, we are going to have to take steps to protect the family farm operation in Alberta. I would hope the land-use commission, when it examines the situation throughout the province, will make some recommendations which, perhaps our friends across the way will find a little difficult to live with, but I suspect they will nevertheless do a great deal to give some sort of guarantee to the preservation of rural life in this province.

May I finally just close, Mr. Speaker, by saying that the concern I expressed on Monday still exists. The land-use forums are going to tend to deal, as a result of the public submissions, with the Hutterian question. I think that would be rather unfortunate. I submit we have, as I mentioned before, an extremely delicate situation and one which necessitates the greatest goodwill on the part of everybody, Mr. Speaker.

It would be wrong for some people, especially those in the two urban areas or northern communities, to suggest the people who are concerned about the Hutterian Brethren are irresponsible bigots and people who have no concern for the rights of others.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, I suppose our commitment to civil liberties only really becomes obvious when it strikes home. There are certain parts of the province where this is a real problem today, where there is a great deal of concern. And while I disagree with many of the attitudes that are prevalent in these regions of the province, I nevertheless respect the fact that these views are held honestly. Therefore, I hope and I trust that as we deal with this important public issue, we will all attempt to take a responsible attitude and one which recognizes that honest people can differ honestly.

MR. COOKSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a word or two. I found the discussion quite interesting, although the member for Highwood rather disturbed me in his remarks that we would have to include in any legislation a 'notwithstanding' clause. I was rather disappointed in this remark because I usually expect more from him. The fact of putting a 'notwithstanding' clause in any type of legislation on land use is a rather ridiculous statement. I think we could have solved the communal property thing by simply removing the words "Hutterian Brethren" from the Act, and left it as such.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. COOKSON:

But the fact of the matter is it is being repealed and this doesn't exempt writing up land legislation.

It's quite common throughout the world that you can legislate the use of land. The power is given to the provinces to legislate the use of land. Certainly if the cities, for example, didn't have power to zone use of their property and hadn't had power in the past, we would certainly have a chaotic situation in our province. I don't think the logic of the argument is really there.

I understand the concerns of the Member for Spirit River-Fairview in suggesting that this is a delicate situation in view of what has happened in Saskatchewan and at the present time in British Columbia, I can support his concern about the fact that it's a pretty delicate situation.

The thing that I couldn't quite understand, and perhaps the hon. member of the opposition will try to wade his way out of this dilemma that he is in, was the original amendment to limit the study to a limited time. When we drafted this resolution we tried to restrict it to agricultural land with the problem of the Hutterian Brethren and other types of land use in mind. We tried to restrict it with the thought in mind of limiting as much as possible the time required to initiate legislation. But the second amendment which eliminated the word "agricultural"...

MR. TAYLOR:

The third.

MR. COOPER:

...or third amendment, I'm sorry, has simply confused the thing.

I'm just wondering what the reaction of the people from Vulcan will be when they find, in fact, that the members of the opposition have, by their very amendments to the resolution, lengthened and prolonged the time it will take to bring forth any type of legislation which is effective. I feel sorry actually for the Leader of the Opposition at this time. I know he'll try to wade himself through this dilemma, I hope he can find a solution to it. But certainly the amendment which they have just supported is going to lengthen out the whole procedure, and we're not talking now about months. I think we're talking about years before this legislation will be in effect.

MR. LUDWIG:

Would the hon. member permit a question? How have his remarks contributed to shortening the procedure we are dealing with?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The Chair should say again that questions put to members in the course of debate must relate only to clarification and not further debate.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words in connection with the motion as amended. I want to make it abundantly clear, the way I understand the position on this side of the House, that firstly, we realize that land is an important asset and resource. As a matter of fact, land in my view is more important than oil -- a depleting asset, and more important than gas, a depleting

asset. It ranks with water, some of the vital requirements for life. And so we recognize the importance of the use of land. We recognize there have to be some regulations in connection with the use of land.

Secondly, there are situations existing in the province today that call for urgent action and it is very disturbing to us when we hear hon. members talking about spans of three years, and five years, before there is going to be a decision made in connection with some reasonable regulations concerning the use of land. We consider that the matter of the communal land holdings particularly is so urgent right now that they should be dealt with immediately. And if the hon. members listen to the voice of the people outside, and I am sure every hon. member does, they are hearing, if they are hearing what I am hearing, some pretty ugly rumours.

I don't know first-hand whether there has been considerable land purchased and the date projected after March 1 or not, but this is certainly being talked freely in a great number of communities in the province today. There are a great number of farmers who are very concerned about their own land and their own children's and their own heritage. And there are a great number of Hutterian Brethren who are concerned too about the situation as it's going to actually be.

This is an urgent matter. And what we have been trying to do without too much apparent success, is to impress upon the hon. Minister of Agriculture, if it is necessary to impress upon him, the importance of dealing with this matter now, not some time next year, or two or three years hence.

So I say it is very disturbing when I hear hon. members talking about plans of three years and five years. It was most disturbing to hear the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood the other day talking about when the study was even going to start. Everybody on this side assumed it would start almost immediately, but apparently some members on that side aren't even aware that there is any plan to start the motion after the motion passes.

The third point I want to mention is that the people of this province are sick and tired of commissions. I say sick and tired of commissions, and using the word "forum" isn't going to remove that distaste of commissions. It is actually another commission. And that is why I said I wouldn't mind if somebody struck out the whole resolution, not that I don't want something done about land, but because I think this is going to be a very awkward way of doing it.

I suppose if this is the final decision of the government who have the muscle to back up whatever it says and we never see anybody dissenting from the back benches on the other side, then it's the best we can do, the best we can have. If it's the best we can have, well, I am prepared to accept it, but reluctantly and with protest, because I think there is a better way of doing this. And I want to suggest a better way now.

The government has some knowledgeable ministers and the government has some knowledgeable people in their various departments who have a great deal of knowledge and experience in regard to the use of land. I think of the Department of Lands and Forests, I think of the Department of Municipal Affairs, I think of the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Highways just to say a few. There are men in these departments who have vast experience, with probably more experience than anybody outside the government in connection with the use of land. And what I would like to see, even now, is the government to withdraw this motion as amended and say, "We will select top men in our departments, knowledgeable men, and let them have these hearings and bring recommendations to us."

The government presented a paper on oil, a position paper. And I think that they should be commended for taking a position, but land is even more important than oil. Oil, as I said before, is a depleting asset, land will be with us as long as mankind is here. And so I cannot understand why the government would not want to establish a position paper on land and land-use. That would be something that could be commended from one end of this province to the other.

I don't think it is necessary to go outside of government ranks to find men who are knowledgeable enough to bring in the very best of recommendations. And in my view, the government would be much wiser to forget about the commissions and forums and use some of the knowledgeable people that they already have on their staff -- knowledgeable people who have tremendous experience in the use of land in this province. Well, that's what I would like to see the government do. And if the government is not prepared to do that, then I suppose we have to

accept the forum as the next best thing. I believe the people of this province are expecting the government to present a position paper on land.

Now let me elaborate from there -- or go on from there. I think the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs went part way, when he announced there would be a planning act in this province, and certainly we needed a new planning act. The planning -- long range planning is most essential. Some of our difficulties in our cities today and throughout the province, and certainly in our large urban areas, are due to the fact there has been not enough -- I shouldn't say none but not enough-long range planning.

When the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo speaks about zoning and rezoning I have great sympathy for what he says. There isn't too much difficulty with zoning in the first place, when zoning is done before people have established their homes there, before businesses are established. But too often our planning commissions and our local governments wait until people have built to establish a zone. And then people spend a great amount of their money building an expensive home, suddenly finding the zoning is being changed. This is the part to which people take violent exception, and I think properly so. This is probably the root of some of the problems in the Agrimart in Calgary. Different type of use of land is suddenly coming in, and it disturbs people who have invested their life's savings, in that particular area. I realize the importance of agriculture the same as anyone else, but this is a big province. Why it has to be shoved right into a residential area, or close to a residential area, is difficult for people to understand. And I suggest that if we had our homes there, we might find it difficult to understand too.

Well, rezoning is the part, I think, that has to be given pretty careful attention. This rezoning after people have spent their money, I think, calls for a pretty careful consideration in regard to compensation if that use of land is suddenly changed and the person's investment is lost.

Now I'd like to deal with some other points in connection with The Planning Act. I think I've had as much experience as most hon. members of this Legislature in connection with the use of land for highway and road purposes. But I find there is little objection taken -- relatively little objection taken, to the acquiring of land for highways and roads, because highways and roads belong to everybody.

I've stood in scores of farmyards to discuss the concern of people over the loss of some of their land. I don't know of -- I can't even recall one who said we don't need highways and roads. They know you can't build them on sky hooks. You have to build them on land, and somebody's land is going to be used. Most people will accept that but they want it kept down to a minimum. And so, I don't think the real problem is in that type of land use. I would hope the hon. Minister of Highways would agree, that while you want to do as little damage as possible with the use of highways, nevertheless, most people recognize them as an important item in the communication and transportation systems of the country.

I remember back about 20 or 25 years ago when the late Mr. Gardiner was Minister of Agriculture in the federal House, and he made a visit to this province with the then Minister of Agriculture of this province, the late Dave Ure. He then wrote to Mr. Ure expressing concern over the fact that we were taking 200 feet of right-of-way for highway purposes. He was referring specifically to the Olds-Didstury area where we were establishing a divided highway. Though 200 feet of right-of-way was the minimum that could be acquired, 300 feet would have been far more sensible and since then it was moved to 300 feet. But he was concerned because we were going through an area of good, black soil. But again, even he, when we wrote to him and explained the situation, had no alternative to suggest. There is no way of putting the thing up on sky-hooks or elevating it above the ground or going down below the ground, and so it was necessary to go through that area. But most people will accept it for highway purposes.

Now when you come to some other purposes, people aren't quite as ready to accept it. They're not quite as ready to accept it for pipelines, they're not quite as ready to accept it for poles through their property, and they're not quite as ready to accept zoning that is going to interfere with the value of their homes. And there are certainly very few people who are prepared to accept the fact that outsiders, sometimes foreigners to our country, come in and buy up a lot of real good recreational land. This is of great concern, far greater concern than the use of land for roads.

Some of the eastern provinces have seen this thing carried out to the point where they are even starting to prohibit the sale of recreational lands to

people who don't live in this country, who aren't citizens of this country. There is a trend already in western Canada. You can see it in British Columbia, and it is starting in the province of Alberta where people from other countries -- and particularly from the country south of us -- want to acquire some of the choice recreational lands in this province. Once that choice recreational land is in the hands of others then it is no longer -- well, it might be under the control, but certainly then it is in the hands of people who aren't citizens of this country. And that is a matter of concern.

I believe the people of this province today are not happy with what has been going on in The Planning Act. Whatever The Planning Act does, it is going to have to intrude to some degree into the use of private land, but that should be kept to a minimum. But the thing that many people object to, and have objected to, is that the planners are far too arbitrary. They know all the answers and they are not even prepared to discuss them with the layman, the farmer, the labourer. They know the answers and they just don't want any discussion about it, and that is nauseating to most people of this province. Also, they are too far removed from the people. They don't know what is going on, they are too far removed from reality, and this is objectionable to the rank and file of our people.

Now planning is essential, but when a planning body starts to plan for the sake of planning and prevents an area from having an industry simply because somebody in the planning commission thinks this shouldn't be done, or objects to somebody buying the land, which is agreed to by governments and then objected to by somebody in the planning commission, the planning commission today appears to have more authority than the provincial government at times, more authority than the city government. Our planning commissions are supposed to be advisory.

Mr. Speaker, when we require approval from the planning commission before we can even transfer land, this goes far beyond the advisory position and is not satisfactory at all to the people. I am hoping that change will certainly be made when the new act comes in, where planning bodies will not have the authority to overrule elected representatives who are responsible to the people.

We also have areas in this province where people are denied a road because they want to build a house on their own land. Well, what is wrong with building a house on their own land if it is not going to interfere with some future, good public work for all of the people. I know an area west of Calgary -- and I think the hon. Minister of Highways knows the area too -- where an oil company has built a road off the road allowance, and because the oil company puts a restriction on that the people who must get to their own land have no access. The topography on the road allowance is not good, but why, in a case like that, shouldn't the road be built in lieu of the road allowance, and why shouldn't anybody have the right to use it? Certainly it isn't sensible to say to these people, "You own your land but you can't build your homes there because there is no access to your land," when there is access via what is now a private road.

Well, planning has to take on a new look if it is going to be satisfactory, and planning of course is just making use of land. The people who are in planning commissions shouldn't be thought to have a monopoly of wisdom greater than that of all other people. If there is a decision to be made it should be made by the elected representatives of the various governments of this country, not by planning commissions. Planning commissions should return to the advisory capacity, advising those who are elected. If we get even that point in the new Act clearly defined and clearly enunciated, then we are going a long way toward solving some of our land-use problems.

When we come to the use of land for homes, probably the main reason why many young couples in our major cities and in the rest of the province can't build a home is because they can't buy the land. The land is the...[Inaudible]...and this study or forum isn't going to change that any. But things should be brought in to change that and make land more accessible to the people -- not used only by the rich. The rank and file should have the right to land, and the right to build a home too, the same as anybody else.

Now the only other item that I want to mention, Mr. Speaker, is to emphasize again the time element. We recognize the wise use of land, we recognize there have to be regulations, and we recognize that long-range planning and short-term planning is essential. We say that those planners should be responsible to elected representatives, and not be a law unto themselves as in many cases they are today.

Secondly, that planning, whether it is done by this forum or by a planning commission, should take some cognizance of what the rank and file of the people of this province think, particularly with regard to the area where the work is

being done. The people who are placed on planning commissions don't have any monopoly of wisdom and they should recognize that. They have been far too arbitrary, far too demanding and far too inconsiderate of the needs of other people and the use of land belonging to other people. And this, I hope, will certainly change.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would prefer to have the government use the highly knowledgeable men in its own departments and bring in a position paper at the earliest possible time, even if it isn't at all exhaustive in the use of land. If the government is not prepared to do that, then I will support the motion as amended. I support it reluctantly and as a second choice.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the motion as amended, there are three points I would like to raise at this time. I would like to have the minister possibly when he concludes the debate, advise the members of this Assembly where the Special Advisory Committee on communal property office fits into this whole picture and what they might do in line with the recommendations that may come out of this.

Secondly, I have had representation made to me that a moratorium be placed on further land acquisitions until such time as a policy is determined. This comes from organizations that are pretty concerned about some of the large land holdings.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Do you agree with that?

MR. RUSTE:

This is representation made to me as a representative.

Thirdly, I would like to have the assurance of the minister that everything will be done to expedite this so a report can come in as soon as possible.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, I long ago discovered that if you sit long enough and listen long enough, that most of the arguments that maybe you would like to advance will have been made for you. However, today I rise to take part in the debate on the motion as amended because there are some points I would like to make.

I have listened very carefully to the arguments that have been advanced by the various members who have spoken thus far, particularly to some of the members on the government side. I must say I find it difficult to understand why they cannot understand the reasons for the amendments that were moved by this side of the House.

I want to make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, at the outset, that I do not object to a land forum being set up. I think there is a real need for a study of land use, although I have to say that at the same time we are using the term "land use" I rather suspect there is a greater concern or equal concern with land ownership. In fact when we are discussing land use we are maybe thinking a great deal about land ownership.

I think it is very clear that the motion as amended, and the motion that was originally placed on the Order Paper, does not in any way come to grips with the problem that we are facing at the present moment. This is a matter that is disturbing to me at this time.

I would very much like to have seen the government go along with the original suggestion that we remove No. 6 and that they take some immediate action in the area of concern that is mentioned in that particular section. They have decided they do not want to go along with it and that decision, of course, has been made. Following that, of course, there was a second attempt made to get action, and action in a hurry, on the problem that we are facing, by a further amendment that was passed.

When the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo rose to his feet and spoke about that amendment, I rose in my place. But, of course, the hon. Leader of the Opposition was able to get the floor at that time and he made the remarks that I would have liked to have made in regard to the points made by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo. But I was more disturbed when I heard the hon. Member for

Lacombe rise in his place and suggest that we were now impeding the forum and its work.

Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to see where, in any way, the motion itself, the amendment that has been presented -- the last amendment that has been presented -- in any way places any road blocks before the government in taking action as quickly as they want to on any section that is included within the resolution itself.

I do not see anything in the resolution that places the government under any obligation to handle all of them at one time, or to, in fact, deal with all of them if they don't want to. The instructions are merely to set up a land forum so the study can get underway. But, Mr. Speaker, the government is free to take any action they want to, at any time they want to, on any section or any part that is related to land use.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, after listening very carefully to all of the arguments that have been advanced, to all of the statements that have been made to the government side of the House that I now have to come to the conclusion that they are really not concerned about taking action in a hurry. If the hon. Member for Lacombe were really interested in seeing immediate action taken, or if he felt in any way that the amendment which was proposed would slow the action, all he had to do was to indicate it by voting against it. I didn't hear a single government voice raised in opposition to the amendment which was proposed. This indicates to me that there is no concern as to whether or not it drags out or whether it will be done in a hurry.

All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that I hope the hon. Deputy Premier, when he rises in his place to close the debate, will give some indication to the House as to how long he thinks the study ought to take. Because I believe it is important. And, Mr. Speaker, before I conclude, I am going to give my reasons as to why I think it is important. It is of much greater concern to me, I think, than it is to many other hon. members within this Legislature. When I give the reasons you will understand why.

Mr. Speaker, in the question period I asked the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs if he was aware of any land transactions that had taken place between individual land owners and the Hutterian Brethren. I recall his answer very well. He suggested that to the best of his knowledge he was not aware of any transaction that had taken place. I take it this is the answer he wanted to convey to me, and I accept it. I am not suggesting the hon. minister knows.

But I want to make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that a number of members from our side of the House have indicated time, and time again, that there is a serious situation exists at the present time, that it can indeed be explosive. And for that reason it is most important that the government review its position very carefully and indicate clearly to the people as to where we are going.

At the time that we were discussing the repeal of The Communal Property Act, I asked the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs if it was his understanding that the advisory committee would be following the recommendations laid down by the committee that had studied the situation. If I got his answer correct, and I certainly stand to be corrected if I do not quote him correctly, his answer to me at that time was that he felt they would be carrying out the recommendations as made by the committee which had been studying communal property.

Now my understanding of that, Mr. Speaker, was that the advisory committee would, in fact, be a liaison between the Hutterian Brethren and any community in which there may be land sales consummated, and that they would also try to carry out the wishes of the committee which had suggested that by a voluntary agreement the Hutterian Brethren would roughly follow the same rules as had applied while the Act was in effect.

Now I think it is rather important to understand that. And I want to make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that I certainly appreciate there cannot be any enforced regulation, but I did understand that the committee would attempt to ensure that the same situation would roughly exist as had existed prior to the repeal of the Act.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think I suggested in discussing the repeal of the Act that there was another group of people who were certainly not without responsibility in the problems that arise from time to time within certain communities. And I referred to the real estate people and suggested that maybe they were as much to blame for the problems that arose within certain areas as the Hutterian Brethren themselves, and I still think that this is right.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make is that it was brought to my attention that a land deal has been made with Hutterian Brethren in my constituency, that the deal was made prior to March 1, 1973, prior to the repeal of the Act. What I am saying now to the government is, is it their intention to check the matter? Are they concerned about whether or not the Act was not followed? Because certainly as I understand it, the Act was in force until March 1, 1973. And as far as I'm concerned it is very clear, in that it states that they cannot make any arrangements whatsoever for leasing, sale, or otherwise, or enter into any transaction that will finally provide for a completed transaction. Therefore, I think that it is incumbent upon the government to check the matter and to report as to whether or not there has, in fact, been a breach of the Act itself.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I come back to the resolution again, and I have to express my very, very great concern in that I cannot sense -- and as I said, I've sat here and very carefully listened to the arguments that have been made by the members on the government side -- and I cannot sense that they feel that there is any degree of urgency to get on with the job.

I've listened very carefully, and I'm going to be very interested in hearing the hon. Deputy Premier, when he closes the debate, tell us whether or not they feel that there is any urgency on them to give us some definite statement that will indicate that there is meaning to what they say if they feel there is an urgency. And I suggest that the only way it can be done, Mr. Speaker, is to put an end-time as to when the committee will have to report.

Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that if we do not get that kind of commitment we are going to be in trouble. Mr. Speaker, when I voted for the repeal of The Communal Property Act, I did so because I certainly understood that it was in conflict with The Human Rights Act. I could not go along with those who suggested that a mistake had been made when the Act was first passed, because certainly it is my view that it was as much of a protection to the Hutterian Brethren as it was a hindrance. And I think that those of us who were around at that point in time who lived in that part of the province, understand the situation as it was.

Mr. Speaker, I would have to say, however, as I said earlier, that I did have an understanding that by mutual agreement there would still be an attempt to create the climate within an area that would ensure that no difficulties arose. And this is what really concerns me because as I think about the situation that has developed within my own constituency, I can only conclude, Mr. Speaker, that there has been no attempt at liaison with the municipal district; there has been no attempt to have any liaison with the community, and I have to be quite frank and say I'm not aware of any attempt to liaison with any one who would be involved in any way, shape, or form. And I think that is disturbing.

I want to say too, Mr. Speaker, that I think in setting up the committee we have been misleading the people, because here we have an example of where there has actually not been any liaison. And I say to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs that I would hope he would look at this very carefully and give very serious consideration as to how he might instruct the committee so that their work will be clearly understood and they will get under way with the problem that faces them.

I have the greatest respect for Dr. Platt. I think that it's only fair to say, too, that he is a man who appreciates land use maybe as no other Albertan does. And for this reason I see him as being a very valuable man on the committee. I see him as a man who can give considerable meaning to the work that they are going to do. But, Mr. Speaker, at this point in time I can only say that his job must be rather untenable because I cannot find that there has been any direction whatsoever given to him.

Mr. Speaker, there are two or three other points that I want to make in summing up, but I see the clock is running out. I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. member adjourn the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, just before I move adjournment I would like to advise that the House will meet tomorrow night at 8:00 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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