

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Friday, March 30, 1973

[The House met at 1:00 o'clock.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to report on Petitions for Private Bills as follows:

With respect to the Petition of the Society of Industrial Accountants of Alberta for an Act being The Society of Industrial Accountants of Alberta Act, 1973;

With respect to the Petition of E. J. Bethell, L. F. Csabay, D. H. Hildebrant, Charles Brown, G. D. Meades, J. D. Scott, R. J. Leonard and D. H. Parson for An Act to Incorporate The Certified General Accountants Association of Alberta;

With respect to the Petition of Doug Clark, President of the Institute of Accredited Public Accountants, Alberta Chapter, for An Act to Incorporate the Institute of Accredited Public Accountants of Alberta;

With respect to the Petition of O. Paul Thomas, F. R. Erick Mulder, Dr. Phillip J. Kendal, Andrew C. Gunning, Fredrick J. Hand, and Edward C. Glover for An Act to Incorporate The Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Alberta;

With respect to the Petition of Ronald Henry Jenkins and Stanley Bradshaw Laing for An Act to amend The Calgary Community Foundation Act;

With respect to the Petition of Canadian Union College for An Act to amend The Canadian Union College Act;

With respect to the Petition of Irene McDougall for An Act to Incorporate The Grand Chapter of Alberta, Order of The Eastern Star;

With respect to the Petition of the Knights of Columbus Club for An Act to amend The Knights of Columbus Club Act;

With respect to the Petition of Sister Gabrielle Fortier, F. J., Sister Pauline Magnan, F. J., and Sister Ellen Martin, F. J., for An Act to Incorporate St. Vincent's Hospital;

With respect to the Petition of Edward E. Bishop, Kenneth A. McKenzie, Thomas Jackson, James E. Redmond and Patrick M. Bentley for An Act to Incorporate Westbank Golf and Country Club;

With respect to the Petition of The Alberta Wheat Pool for An Act to amend The Alberta Wheat Pool Act, 1970;

With respect to the Petition of Ted Breitreitz, Marjorie Thompson, Harvey Amthor, Barbara Amthor, Fred Kluin and Nellie Gilbertson for An Act to Incorporate the Fort Assiniboine Agricultural Association; and

With respect to the Petition of the United Missionary Church for An Act to amend An Act to Incorporate The Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church;

I find that the Rules of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the payment of fees and the advertising in local newspapers and the Alberta Gazette have been duly complied with and recommend that leave be granted to introduce said bills.

MR. SPEAKER:

Does the House agree that the report of the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Private Bills, Standing Orders, and Printing be received and concurred in?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. Pr. 9 An Act to Incorporate St. Vincent's Hospital

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being An Act to Incorporate St. Vincent's Hospital.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 9 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. 24

The Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Amendment Act, 1973

MR. CHAMBERS:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Amendment Act, 1973. This Act amends the Incorporating Act of the Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Limited so that the company will have powers to make gas exchange available to all users of its services. The result will be that anyone wishing to obtain natural gas produced in Alberta will be able to contract for gas supply in any field connected to the Alberta Gas Trunk system, knowing that deliveries of equivalent quantities can then be taken at any other point in the system, subject to local design limitations and to regulatory review.

These amendments were recommended in the Energy Resources Conservation Board Report on field pricing of gas of August, 1972. It is expected that the proposed amendments will add further convenience and economy of gas marketing.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 24 was introduced and read a first time.]

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests that Bill No. 24, being The Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Amendment Act, 1973, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[The motion was carried.]

Bill No. 30 The Municipal Government Amendment Act, 1973

MR. ZANDER:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Municipal Government Amendment Act, 1973. These amendments, Mr. Speaker, have been brought about by the urban and rural associations that are a request of the government. There are various amendments to the Act, but I will not go into them now; I will just merely introduce it.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 30 was introduced and read a first time.]

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Public Works, that Bill No. 30, The Municipal Government Amendment Act, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[The motion was carried.]

Bill No. Pr. 1
The Society of Industrial Accountants of Alberta Act, 1973

MR. JAMISON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, Bill No. Pr. 1, being The Society of Industrial Accountants of Alberta Act, 1973.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 1 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 2
An Act to Incorporate
The Certified General Accountants Association of Alberta

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. Pr. 2, being An Act to Incorporate the Certified General Accountants Association of Alberta.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 2 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 3
An Act to Incorporate the Institute
of Accredited Public Accountants of Alberta

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. Pr. 3, An Act to Incorporate the Institute of Accredited Public Accountants of Alberta.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 3 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 4
An Act to Incorporate
the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Alberta

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being An Act to Incorporate the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Alberta.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 4 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 5 An Act to amend The Calgary Foundation Act

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. Pr. 5, being An Act to Amend the Calgary Foundation Act.

[Bill No. Pr. 5 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 6 An Act to amend The Canadian Union College Act

MR. COOKSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. Pr. 6, being an Act to amend The Canadian Union College Act.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 6 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 7
An Act to Incorporate
the Grand Chapter of Alberta, Order of the Eastern Star

MR. TRYNCHY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. Pr. 7, being an Act to Incorporate the Grand Chapter of Alberta, Order of the Eastern Star.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 7 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 8 An Act to amend The Knights of Columbus Club Act

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. Pr. 8, being an Act to amend The Knights of Columbus Club Act.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 8 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 10
An Act to Incorporate Westbank Golf & Country Club

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. Pr. 10, being an Act to Incorporate Westbank Golf and Country Club.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 10 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. Pr. 12
An Act to Incorporate
the Fort Assiniboine Agricultural Association

MR. TRYNCHY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. Pr. 12, being An Act to Incorporate the Fort Assiniboine Agricultural Association.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. Pr. 12 was introduced and read a first time.]

MR. SPEAKER:

With regard to Bill No. Pr. 5 I omitted to ask whether the House consented to its first reading. Do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Legislature, 41 Grade 7 and 8 students from the Thomas B. Riley Junior High School in Calgary Bow. They are accompanied today by teachers Leonard Quan, Helen Kingsmith, Don Atherton, and Ian Hutton. These enthusiastic Albertans visited the Museum and Archives this morning and are looking forward to their tour of the Legislature Building this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, they are seated in the public gallery and I ask that they rise and be recognized by the members of the Legislature.

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly, some 36 members of the 47th Guide Company from the constituency of the late hon. Len Werry, Calgary Foothills.

Calgary Foothills is in the area generally known as the North Hill in Calgary and borders upon my own riding of Calgary North Hill. These bright-eyed members of the world's biggest youth movement are typical of the young people from Calgary, and you can understand why we are so proud of them and why so much of the government's attention centres on youth.

They are accompanied today by four leaders, Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Dublenko, Mrs. Robinson and Mrs. Lawson, and they all had their pictures taken by the newspaper I used to own before they left Calgary. They are seated in the members gallery and I ask them to rise and be recognized.

MR. APPLEBY:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, 30 some students from the Boyle

School in the Athabasca constituency. These students travelled a considerable number of miles today to visit the Legislature and the Museum and Archives, and they are stopping at other points of interest in the city as well.

With them this afternoon is one of their teachers, Mr. George Opryshko and their driver, Mr. Alex Harmato. They are in the members gallery and I would ask them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. TOPOLNISKY:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly, 56 Grade 8 and 9 students from the Willingdon Junior High School. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Huculak, Mr. Harasym. Mr. Kotyischyn the bus driver is with them. I commend them for their interest in observing the session in action. They are in the public gallery. I would ask them to rise and be recognized at this time.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you a delegation of farmers that made a presentation to our Minister of Agriculture today. They are from my constituency and I would like to introduce them: Mr. Don Johnston, Mr. Bob Clemens, Ken Rozander, Ted Percival, Pete Groenvald and Bruce Gateman. I would appreciate it very much if they would stand.

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, today is a very special event for me. I would like to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly, several people from the Camrose Progressive Conservative Association. They are responsible for my desk being very neat and my office being very tidy. I would ask them to stand and be recognized.

FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table several reports today, the first being an Inventory of Air Pollution Sources and Emissions in the City of Calgary, the second being an Inventory of Air Pollution Sources and Emissions in the City of Edmonton, and the third being the Alberta Resources Railway, Smoky River Study which was promised a week or so ago.

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table three Returns requested by the Assembly, Return 107 on a motion, by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, Return No. 197 on a motion by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican and Return No. 115 on a motion by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 61st Annual Report, 1972 of Alberta Government Telephones.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Administration of Justice

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Attorney General. In light of the public expressions of concern by the Alberta Federation of Labour is the minister reconsidering the numerous requests for a royal commission into the administration of justice in the Province of Alberta?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I have nothing more to say on that point at this time than I said when it was first in the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Anchor Pipelines Ltd.

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Telephones and Utilities. Would he advise this House if any action is forthcoming to stop Anchor Pipelines charging the people in the Camrose constituency 72 per cent interest on overdue gas accounts?

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, Anchor Pipelines is in receivership. There was an order of the Public Utilities Board late last month which declared that these interest rates on overdue utility accounts were illegal and they should be repaid. I believe the hon. Minister of Agriculture could inform the House of the current state of negotiations for the gas co-ops to take over the assets of Anchor Pipelines now in receivership. I don't know what standing money was taken illegally in the list of creditors. But I suggest that perhaps the people who purchase the assets might pay short.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I could add that at present there are negotiations under way for the five co-ops that are dependent upon Anchor Pipelines for a supply of gas to buy out each of them their share and we expect that finalization of this arrangement will take place next week. Prior to finalization we will have a look at the question that has been raised by the hon. Member for Camrose.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Teachers' Strike Negotiations

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Manpower and Labour. Is it true, Mr. Minister, that the schools in southern Alberta that are presently on strike are going to resume classroom work on Monday whether the strike is settled or not?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, that's a hypothetical question. If I may, while I'm on my feet, report that the negotiations are in progress and both parties, with the help of mediation staff of four people from the Department of Manpower and Labour, are currently working strenuously in attempting to conclude an agreement.

And while I am on my feet, if you would permit me, sir, to say to the principals and negotiators of the teachers and school trustees to use every moment to the best possible advantage to examine the outstanding differences between them; to resolve them as soon as possible to the best possible advantage of the teachers and the trustees and to the general good of the people of Alberta -- particularly in the interests of the boys and girls who are the students in that particular zone.

MR. GRUENWALD:

A supplementary question to the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister tell us approximately how much money has gone into those school districts that are on strike during the past three weeks in the way of grants and so on, of which there has been no educational value derived?

MR. HYNDMAN:

No, Mr. Speaker, I think that is a question to put on the Order Paper. In addition I think the hon. gentleman has drawn a conclusion in the last part of his question which I would not endorse.

MR. GRUENWALD:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The amount of money that has been withheld from school districts according to legislation -- instructional grants -- since the strike began, would any portion of that money be made available to

students who have not been able to get to school and who could use it for tutoring and any other method that might be of help for them to catch up on their school work?

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly the hon. member could add that also to the question which is being put on the Order Paper since it involves the amount of money that is going to be involved in the answer.

The hon. Member for --

MR. COOKSON:

Could I ask a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the first question? To the Minister of Labour, in view of the deep concerns of so many parents in southern Alberta, what provision is there for certified teachers to go into the classroom and instruct voluntarily?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, this is outside the scope of concern that I personally have. I can offer the opinion that there is no provision for that kind of move by certificated teachers. The regrettable but very pointed and real fact is that the teachers of the area are on strike.

MR. NOTLEY:

I wonder if I might put the supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour that I posed on Monday, but time didn't permit him to answer. That is, is it true that certain divisions have laid off support personnel?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I would have to qualify the answer by reference to a particular support personnel that I think the hon. member did in fact mention when he asked the question two days ago, and that had to do with bus drivers. There are 18 school districts in the zone. Some of them have hired and used their own bus drivers. Other school districts have contracted bus services from companies. The contract companies are apparently maintaining their relationship with respect to getting paid for their contracts whether they are driving or not. Some of the school districts which have their own drivers have apparently withheld payment, but this is the information which I have received as part of much information that I have. I wouldn't corroborate it one way or another.

MR. NOTLEY:

One supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Education. In view of the school districts that are not paying their bus drivers, is that portion of the grants for school busing being withheld?

MR. HYNDMAN:

No, it is not, Mr. Speaker ...[not recorded]

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Education. Have there been any applications received for correspondence courses from the students in the striking area?

MR. HYNDMAN:

I don't know personally, Mr. Speaker. I believe there may have been but the correspondence school resources are not available with respect to any students in an area where the strike is on.

MR. STROM:

A supplementary to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour. If a settlement is not reached by, say, tonight, is it the minister's intention to go south to assist in negotiations?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's question is hypothetical, but perhaps the hon. minister might be permitted to answer it briefly.

[Laughter]

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I am keeping every possible option open and if it is my judgment at any time that my personal involvement would assist, I would go at that very moment. I have, as you know, sir and members of the Assembly, been there twice two weeks apart. Should I feel that today or tomorrow -- I feel the members of the Assembly would excuse me even from this august body if we could, through my presence, end the strike. The answer would be yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Road Allowances

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is with regard to the report on public access to the Bow, Jumpingpound Creek and Highwood Rivers which report is in the possession of the Minister of Highways. Has the minister got any recent report from his own constituency as to closed road allowances -- either legally or illegally closed road allowances?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, again the hon. member is using his professional lingo to cloud the issue. He has told me he has information that I didn't have or that I didn't know was available. There are studies that were completed on the streams he is talking about in 1969. I have not requested from the municipalities to see what the state of those road allowances in that area is because actually the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View has clouded again the issue of the road allowances --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Would the hon. minister just deal with the point of substance in the question with regard to there being recent reports.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, I have not contacted the municipalities to see what the state of the road allowances in that area is at the present time.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Is the minister in favour of opening up all the illegally closed road allowances in his constituency?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Out of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

This is a matter of opinion, but if the hon. member wishes to frame it in the context of government policy the question might be in order.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, is the government going to open up the illegally closed road allowances which are indicated on the maps which the Minister of Highways has? And I am dealing in particular with regard to the illegally closed road allowances.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Speaker, you know it's hard for me to answer that question because, first of all, I can't find in the statutes anywhere the words

'illegally closed road allowances'. You know, I'm not a lawyer, Mr. Speaker, and it's hard for me to cope with some of the ways and terminologies that the hon. member uses.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary, I'm referring to the terminology used in the report which the minister admitted that he has and in the maps which the minister admits he has. And I'm dealing in particular with his constituency area, the Jumping Pound and the Bow River. So if the minister states, Mr. Speaker, --

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Out of order.

MR. LUDWIG:

No, but I'd like to finish --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Would the hon. member come directly to the question please.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, will the minister attempt to obtain a record of all illegally closed road allowances in his constituency for the information of the hon. members here?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, again, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that there are illegally closed road allowances in the municipality of Rocky View, and I would have to confer with them if there is such an item.

MR. LUDWIG:

Well, Mr. Speaker, is the minister indicating that he will check to see if there are illegally closed road allowances in his constituency?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Again my hon. friend is talking about constituency matters which may not be the responsibility of a minister of the Crown. It should be clearly distinguished between constituency matters and the question of the minister's responsibility in his department.

MR. SPEAKER:

With great respect for the hon. Deputy Premier, the geographic indication of an area of the province as a constituency doesn't necessarily take it out of the realm of public affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. HORNER:

With respect, Mr. Speaker, a minister of the Crown can only be responsible as a minister with regard to the affairs of the department he happens to head. And he can not be responsible for the affairs of his particular constituency in someone else's department, or in a matter which may be under the jurisdiction of the local government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

As the Chair understood the question, it related to a particular geographical area and matters which may or may not be within the purview of the hon. minister's department. If they are not, of course the hon. minister is

entitled to say so and as a matter of fact, as hon. members know, he isn't obliged to deal with the question at all if he doesn't so choose.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, there are occasions when the different municipalities, not only in my constituency but in the constituency of every member in rural Alberta, apply to this House for certain road allowances to be closed for certain reasons. And there are many of the towns throughout Alberta which apply for certain streets in those areas to be closed for certain reasons; or in some of the hamlets that have been surveyed out. Then it is the purview of my office to issue them the right, if there are no public objections after advertising in the newspapers, whether the road allowances can be closed.

And I might also make it very clear at this time, Mr. Speaker, that this privilege, or this inconvenience to local government is not the case in the urban centres. You know, it might be construed as discrimination of rural Alberta versus urban Alberta. And this is something else that the Assembly should take into consideration in this particular topic.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, mine was a supplementary that I've already asked. Thanks.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Drug Trafficking

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the hon. the Attorney General. Has the minister received reports of any trafficking of the new illegal drug called 4-Methoxyamphetamine in Calgary, Edmonton, or elsewhere in Alberta?

MR. LEITCH:

No, I haven't, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Attorney General. Is it the custom of the federal government to notify you of new illegal drugs that are being trafficked in Canada?

MR. LEITCH:

Not directly by government to government communication, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Education of the Visually Impaired

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Education. Can you advise the House, Mr. Minister, what the present status is of the Advisory Committee for the Visually Impaired?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I had a long and comprehensive meeting with the members of that association just a few days ago. And what we agreed at the end of the meeting, as I recall, was that we would have meetings twice a year with the executive of the organization which was doing a very capable job.

The question of an advisory committee for that particular handicap is one which I am still considering in a sense that it may well be wiser for the government to be advised by a committee which would provide advice in regard to all problems of all handicapped children, rather than having one committee for each group of particular handicaps. But we did agree that we would meet twice yearly and had a most useful and informative meeting a few days ago.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for the sake of clarification. Does the minister mean that he is going to meet with the association of the visually handicapped or is he going to reconstitute the advisory committee, which I understand had a number of members not only from the association, but other groups as well?

MR. HYNDMAN:

We have no plans to reconstitute the advisory committee right at this moment, Mr. Speaker. But we will be meeting with the association, with representative executive members of the association, on a twice-yearly basis following the one we had a few days ago.

MR. NOTLEY:

One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. What, in the light of the government's concern for the handicapped, is the government doing with the recommendation of the advisory committee made in 1971, I believe, that initiative be undertaken in the province to provide facilities for the instruction of children who are visually handicapped in this province?

MR. HYNDMAN:

That's a recommendation which we discussed at the meeting, Mr. Speaker, and we have under study at the moment -- I believe there are 16 youngsters who are visually impaired who are either at Brantford, Ontario, or in British Columbia. And using the basic guideline of parental consent, we are looking at whether alternatives could be followed up which would mean faster integration of these youngsters into the regular school systems, especially of Edmonton and Calgary.

It would not be possible to have such sophisticated facilities all over the province at once, but that's one area in which we may be moving and in which we can, I think, more profitably go into in greater detail in the Estimates.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

U.S. Meat Price Freeze

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the minister assessed the implications of the U.S. price freeze on red meats on our markets, and if so, would he report to the House?

DR. HORNBER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, undoubtedly the price freeze that the President of the United States has placed on red meats in the United States is going to have an effect in Canada. As I have said in this House before, we are on a North American price mechanism in regard to red meat in Canada and Alberta.

I would hope that the president also will do as our federal government has done and remove the tariff structure on cattle going into the United States, as well as the removal by the Canadian government of the tariff on cattle coming into the United States. We made that recommendation to our Minister of Agriculture, and I would hope that the Americans will follow up the suggestion that I understand was in the President's text last night.

Additionally to that, I'd like to say very clearly, Mr. Speaker, we feel strongly that our farmers are entitled to a fair return, and that sometimes the exercise of over-zealous people in the media who promote boycotts and/or consumer agitation, without having regard to some other factors, reflects improperly on our producers.

I want to say very clearly that in the present situation of inflation they deserve a fair return for their efforts. We'll be watching very closely in relation to the price freeze that has been applied in the United States to red meats, the question of the cost of inputs that go into farming and livestock production, because it is absolutely essential that that balance be maintained.

MR. BUCKWELL:

Supplementary question to the minister. I realize it only came last night, but do you feel the market will hold?

DR. HORNER:

My own personal view, Mr. Speaker, and that is all I can give the member in that regard, is that the market will hold. One of the disadvantages of putting on price freezes is that it is likely that prices will be maintained close to the ceiling, and therefore should hold at the present range.

MR. SPEAKER:

It is to be hoped that the hon. member's desire for the hon. ministers to make market prognostications will be limited.

The hon. Member for Stony Plain, followed by the hon. Member for Camrose.

Lake Wabamun Ice

MR. PURDY:

Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Lands and Forests. Because of the large holes left in the ice on Lake Wabamun, will the minister be requesting the commercial fisherman to place buoys or markers on these holes?

DR. WARRACK:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are looking at that matter. The commercial fishing on Lake Wabamun ends in 17 minutes. It has been going on through the week and the are holes left there are of concern. I have asked the department already, Mr. Speaker, to look into the matter of the safety problems that might be arising.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Drop a few opposition members in them.

MR. PURDY:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will there be any consideration given to closing Lake Wabamun to winter fishing and only having it for summer commercial fishing?

DR. WARRACK:

This would only be based on the fish population that is there, Mr. Speaker, and would not be based on this particular issue.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Camrose, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge East.

Driedmeat Lake Pollution

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Lands and Forests. Do you have anything further to add to the fish die-off in Driedmeat Lake, and to the threat of pollution to the City of Camrose water supply?

DR. WARRACK:

The hon. member did raise that question recently and I have had an opportunity to get a report. What has occurred is a depletion of oxygen in Driedmeat Lake, and the fish have tried to avoid that depletion by going to the inlet stream, thereby depleting the oxygen there and dying. So there is, in this particular year, a large number of fish that have died and are there at

this time. My information is, though, that there is no serious danger to the water supply in Camrose.

MR. STROMBERG:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will you be instructing our local health officer to check into the situation under the Board of Health regulations which prohibit any dead animals, et cetera, in a pond, river, stream or lake?

DR. WARRACK:

As a matter of fact, in my brevity, Mr. Speaker, I did not deal with that particular matter. The Health of Animals Act deals with the flesh of mammals and technically does not include fish other than whales and dolphins which are not in Driedmeat Lake.

But there are two questions here, Mr. Speaker. There is a possibility of this being useful for hog feed for farmers in the area, but there is also the possibility that we should re-examine the matter of coverage of The Animal Health Act in order to see whether there would be some danger in using these fish for that purpose.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Lethbridge Native Friendship Society

MR. ANDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Manpower and Labour. Has the Human Rights Branch of your department received a formal or informal complaint from the Lethbridge Native Friendship Society regarding their charges of discrimination levelled against them by the City of Lethbridge residents in the leasing of a new centre?

DR. HOHOL:

I have not that specific information, Mr. Speaker, but I would be happy to obtain it and to give it to the hon. member.

MR. ANDERSON:

A supplementary. In case you get this information, would you direct the officers of your branch to investigate the following three charges?

Townsppeople have used political influence to prevent --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please. Possibly the hon. member could save the hypothetical question until after the information has been obtained and given.

The hon. Member for Medicine hat-Redcliff, followed by the hon. Member for Little Bow.

Provincial Parks Entrance Fee

MR. WYSE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. It relates back to two similar questions I asked the hon. minister on two occasions with two slightly different answers. One was "I don't know" and the other one was "No."

The question is, has the provincial government, or your department, considered enacting an entrance fee in provincial parks?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a matter of spelling rather than misunderstanding the difference between no and know, "k-n-o-w". We have looked at this -- how do you like them apples -- matter and decided that we will not be imposing a day use charge in the provincial parks of Alberta in 1973. That is the same answer I had given before. No.

MR. WYSE:

Can I ask a supplementary question to the arrogant minister? Has your department considered the eventual phasing-out of the Elk Water subdivision? This would involve buying out the homes and cottages?

DR. WARRACK:

I understand that prior to the last provincial election that matter had been considered.

University Student Fees

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, my question -- I'd love to ask a supplementary, I'll tell you -- is to the Minister of Advanced Education. In a recent meeting with the Academic Staff Association at the university you indicated that a change in student financing would mean an increase of student fees. Would you advise the House as to the changes that will take place in student financing?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid the hon. gentleman is not very well informed. I noted he was not at the meeting so I have to assume that someone was talking with him. I did not make that statement at all.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Is the minister considering then that university fees will not be increased for the fiscal year 1973-74?

MR. FOSTER:

I indicated to the meeting, Mr. Speaker, that I was not anxious to see a change in the structure of university fees in the forthcoming year. Nor for that matter, did I feel any institution or the department should deal with the question of fees until such time as we have had a look at the proposals which we expect to be forthcoming from the federal government in respect to student finance.

I also felt that regardless of those proposals we should possibly rethink some of the problems we foresee in student finance. I expressed the concern that by simply increasing the fees it may at the same time be forcing a large majority of students to simply increase their borrowings from the students' finance people.

MR. CLARK:

A question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Does that mean there will be no increase in student fees in post-secondary educational institutions in the next academic year?

MR. FOSTER:

Starting in the fall of 1973 I don't expect there will be any substantial change in fees. I recognize there may be \$5, \$10 or \$15 one way or the other within the institution but not any significant change, no.

MR. CLARK:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Mr. Minister, have you asked the Universities Commission to pass this along to the universities in the province and also the Colleges Commission to make the information known to the colleges? That is, the general philosophy that you indicated of no increase in student fees?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, when I wrote to both commissions advising them of the level of support the government would be providing in this coming year, I indicated to them that I was assuming there would be no significant change in fees in the next year.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Mr. Minister, under the present student financing program, have any students been kept away from the university or the institutions because of a lack of funds that you are aware of?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, undoubtedly there have been some students in the province who felt that because of the cost of their advanced education they were not prepared to go. But that is a very difficult thing to assess. You have got to go and find some students and those who didn't show, interview them and discover why it was they didn't come. And I am sure one of the reasons they might cite is that the expenses involved were somewhat higher than they had anticipated. To what extent financing is a major consideration with the student who didn't show up, however, is a very difficult thing to determine.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking followed by the hon. Member for Wainwright.

Fish and Wildlife Prosecutions

MR. COOPER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. Mr. Minister, what are the circumstances surrounding the prosecutions and investigations carried out by the fish and wildlife officers under The Criminal Code, The Vehicle and Highway Traffic Act and The Alberta Liquor Control Act, as reported in the 1972 Annual Report of the Lands and Forests Department?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, this is certainly a very detailed kind of question and I confess I am not exactly sure what the member is driving at. I would certainly be prepared to discuss it with him.

MR. SPEAKER:

Perhaps the hon. member might put it on the Order Paper.

MR. COOPER:

A simplified question then that covers it, if I may, to the hon. minister. Could these matters not be turned over to the proper policing bodies for investigation and prosecution instead of being carried out by the fish and wildlife officers?

DR. WARRACK:

Oh, I see. Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact the other policing bodies that we have in our society, including of course the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, have the same powers with respect to the enforcement of The Wildlife Act as do the fish and wildlife officers. So, in fact, I think the hon. member's objective is already met.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Wainwright followed by the hon. Member for Calgary McCall.

Alberta Opportunity Company

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Industry and Commerce, I would like to direct my question to the Deputy Premier. What salary will Mr. Edward Clark be paid in his position as the managing director of the Alberta Opportunity Company?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, it will be in the salary range as set out by my hon. colleague, the Minister of Manpower and Labour, and relates to the salary schedule set up by the Civil Service Commission.

MR. RUSTE:

Supplementary question. Could I have that range just roughly for the figures, please?

MR. SPEAKER:

It is a matter of public knowledge, I believe.

MR. RUSTE:

Well, I just wanted to know.

MR. BARTON:

Supplementary question to the Deputy Premier. Has the board of directors changed or increased?

DR. HORNER:

Well, if my hon. friend had been here when the minister made his announcement, the board of directors was announced.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ARSON

MR. HO LEM:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have a question directed to the hon. Attorney General. Have you received a report from the Alberta Fire Marshal recommending RCMP assistance to municipalities to combat the increased incidence of arson?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is referring to a report of recent date, I am sure I haven't. If he is referring to one that occurred some time ago I don't have any memory of it although I do recall some communications from the fire marshal's office but can't specifically remember today what they were about. I don't think they touched on this point.

MR. HO LEM:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister or his department assisted Calgary in investigating reported or suspected cases of arson?

MR. LEITCH:

Not as a department, Mr. Speaker. As I recall it there were some communications with the City of Calgary a number of months ago about arson cases which were then, of course, under investigation by both the City of Calgary Police Force and the Provincial Fire Marshal's office.

MR. HO LEM:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister read a report of the City of Calgary Fire Department that suggests the cost of possible arson to Calgarians could be as high as \$2,500,000 made up by the following figures --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is using the question as an opportunity to make a statement.

MR. HO LEM:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister read the report of the City of Calgary Fire Department recently?

MR. LEITCH:

No I haven't, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HO LEM:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister prepared to look into the problem of arson through discussions with the Alberta Fire Marshal as well as with the municipal fire chiefs?

MR. LEITCH:

Well certainly, Mr. Speaker, I am quite happy to meet with anyone in the Province of Alberta who feels there is a problem with which this government or my department could be of any assistance.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Crude Oil Exports

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Mines and Minerals and ask the minister -- ask the minister -- that may be closer to the point.

I would like to ask the minister if he has had recent discussions with his federal counterpart after Mr. Macdonald indicated that there may well be federal limits on export of crude oil from Canada, especially from Alberta. And in making the comment in the House of Commons Mr. Macdonald indicated that the matter would be dealt with very quickly by the National Energy Board.

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, we met with the hon. Don Macdonald last Friday. I believe I recall his comment was made this week so we haven't had subsequent discussions with him since that time. I think he was referring to the fact that there will be hearings on how the controls will be implemented.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Relating to the fact that the reserves for Alberta have declined for the last three years -- that was the basis for Mr. Macdonald's comment -- does the minister plan to see that Alberta has representation at those specific hearings of the National Energy Board and the province make representation?

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, the actual way of the Alberta government making this representation on the question of controls hasn't been determined yet, but I can assure the hon. members that we are vitally concerned about exactly how the controls will be implemented and what approach will be used because it would affect the statement that was made that the hon. member referred to. So we will be making those representations, but we haven't resolved the manner in which those representations will be made.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

Calgary School Board Taxes

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, my question today is directed to the hon. Minister of Education. Some days ago the Mayor of the City of Calgary, Mr. Sykes, corresponded with you and your department regarding overtaxation by the Calgary School Board in the amount of over \$2 million. I wondered if your department had a chance to look into the situation and would be replying to the mayor?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Certainly I will be replying to the mayor, Mr. Speaker. I received that letter a few days ago and my recollection is that His Worship stated that he felt the citizens of Calgary had been deliberately overtaxed by the board by something in the order of \$2.5 million.

Certainly, I think it should be noted that the City Council of Calgary agreed to levy the requisition request made last year by the Calgary School Board. There is no authority to reduce the supplementary requisition for the foundation fund monies by any amount. Certainly the provincial government does not set school board budgets, nor does it set municipal council budgets.

One thing which might be explored in Calgary would be the option of having separate tax notices sent out by each of the two governing bodies. Basically I think, Mr. Speaker, it should be remembered that in 1971 the electors of the school board in Calgary gave their confidence to seven trustees, and when the election happens again in 1974 that verdict will either be reaffirmed or changed with regard to the financial decisions made by the Calgary School Board.

In conclusion I just might add that I have received no request as yet from the Calgary School Board suggesting that the City Council of Calgary overtaxed their citizens by \$2.5 million.

Power Employees Hearings

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, with your permission I would like to give the second part to a question asked yesterday by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPEAKER:

Has the hon. minister leave to supplement this question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. HOHOL:

The question, sir, was: will four Edmonton Power employees be tried for union offence by members of their union who are Albertans, or by others?

The answer is as follows: the by-laws of the union local and of the International Union -- in this case Local 1007 -- have provisions for the setting up of an executive board composed of the members of the local to conduct a trial of union members for a union offence. There would not be any involvement by union members outside the local unless an appeal was made of the findings of the board to the International Union headquarters. The Board of Industrial Relations is not normally aware of the actions of this kind as it is an internal union matter.

Spring Water Runoff

MR. YURKO:

If the House will permit me, I would like to answer a question asked by the hon. Member for Wainwright, either now or on Orders of the Day. I believe he asked a question yesterday with regard to runoff and flooding conditions.

MR. SPEAKER:

As to whether the question is given in the question period or Orders of the Day, I would ask the hon. minister to judge whether it may be a brief answer or a statement of the kind that should be made on Orders of the Day.

MR. YURKO:

I think now is as good a time as any, Mr. Speaker. The Department of the Environment is involved in four major activities to effect better control of runoff and above normal precipitation. These include weather forecasting, precipitation monitoring, hydrometric data gathering and a warning system to Alberta municipalities. The hydro branch of the technical services division of the department has primary responsibility for these services.

Basically the situation is as follows: up to March 15, 1973 there has been below average snow cover over most of Alberta. And unless there is additional precipitation, the snow melt runoff for 1973 can be briefly described as follows.

In area 1, which is the southern part of the province including the Bow and the Elbow, little or no runoff is expected.

In area 2, which is the Red Deer - North Saskatchewan area, below average runoff is expected.

In area 3, which is the Athabasca River basin, average runoff is expected.

In area 4, which is the Peace River area, slightly above average runoff is expected.

In area 5, which is the mountainous area including some of the foothills, below average runoff from snow melt can be expected.

It should be emphasized that this is only a very general runoff outlook based on prevailing snow cover. It is common knowledge that the situation can be quickly changed by the meteorological events over the next few weeks, and these cannot be predicted. Up to March 30, 1973, there has been no significant precipitation added to the above conditions. I have some copies of this statement which I can table, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RUSTE:

...[inaudible] ... question to that?

MR. SPEAKER:

We have gone considerably beyond the question period. Possibly the hon. member could raise the point on Monday.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER:

May I draw the attention of the House to Bill No. Pr. 5. I have received a memorandum that the name originally given me was not quite correct since it omitted the word "Community". Would the House be prepared to order that the Votes and Proceedings be amended to change the name of that Act to read: An Act to amend The Calgary Community Foundation Act?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

1. Moved by Mr. Miniely, seconded by Mr. Dowling:

That this House approves in general the fiscal policies of the government.

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Eatiuk]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

MR. BATIUK:

Mr. Speaker, approximately a month ago I participated in the Throne Speech Debate, and at that time I had no intentions of speaking on this debate. However, as I listen to the members from both sides, I felt that if I wouldn't express a few of my observations at this time maybe the members of this House, particularly on the opposite side, would be missing something.

I would like to compliment the hon. Provincial Treasurer for the fine manner in which he presented his budget, and I would want to compliment him even more for that which he brought down in his budget. I am sure it made many members think of Christmas --

AN HON. MEMBER:

There is no Santa Claus.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You're too old for that.

MR. BATIUK:

Sixteen pages of goodies.

[Laughter]

Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the many other members in congratulating my two colleagues on their recent appointments. I am sure most of the members will agree with me that the hon. Member for Edson, after his display in this Legislature, has not only been appointed but he has earned his portfolio.

Much the same may be said about the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill. I've had the opportunity of being a member on the Municipal Finance Task Force which he chaired and when we were given a deadline that we must make our recommendations, he made sure that the work was done in time. I think that both of these appointments are going to be an asset to our government and I want to wish them well in their endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to see that agriculture still stands as one of the high priorities of our government. The 88 per cent increase in expenditure for that department is surely a good and obvious showing that agriculture stands very high. True enough that this amount is not going to go immediately and directly into the pockets of the farmers; however, it is going to improve the farming industry.

The Agricultural Development Act is going to allow many younger people to establish themselves in farming and will also assist those who are already in agriculture to expand their operations to be able to be more viable. This program is also going to provide initiatives for programs which will make the agriculture industry in this province more effective and efficient.

It has been brought up by some of the members on the opposite side that maybe this agricultural development fund is going to allow many people to get into debt up to their ears, and I do not believe that getting into debt is any disgrace. It will give these young people a chance to choose an occupation that they would like, have almost a whole lifetime to repay the debt in reasonable annual instalments, and when the time to retire comes they will have something to rely on. I think this will be far better, when they are able to provide a livelihood for themselves and their families rather than look for social assistance as so many of the people do.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition just recently stressed that the expenditures in the Department of Agriculture have almost doubled. And if this was all that had materialized, I would have been also quite concerned. But when we realize that over the past two years, the expectations of farmers to exist has much more than doubled and if this is the case I feel very sorry that that expenditure was not more than doubled this year.

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, I feel sorry he is not here today -- I would have had an earful for him. But he always seems to use the term 'inadequate' for any programs, saying that they are no good. And this is the term he referred to a while ago when there was the announcement of assistance to farmers, particularly in the northern part of the province, for unharvested grain.

Now I believe any amount of assistance would have been adequate, even if it had been doubled to \$8, or only \$2. This is a direct assistance costing every resident of the province of Alberta.

I know for a fact, one of my neighbours had a quarter section of oats and just because of the cold dry spring the crop wasn't the best. But then later in the spring when the rains came, the warm weather, and that grain really grew, I thought he was going to have a bumper crop. But just a few days before harvesting, a wind came with a little bit of hail and it shelled every kernel. He didn't thresh it or anything and he got no assistance. So regardless, maybe the Member for Spirit River-Fairview does not appreciate this assistance, but I am well aware that many people of that area do.

The tax reduction plan has been quite an issue in this House and I am glad to say that \$50 million of new money is going to be given to the people of this province. And I am glad to see that a good portion of it is going to go to the home-owner's grant, home-owners of this province, without any increase in taxation. We just recall that when the home-owner's grant was raised to \$75 from \$55 there was an additional tax levied to provide for these funds. However, this is not the case, this is going to come from the natural resource revenue of the province.

The hon. Member for Olds-Edsby has stated that there is nothing in this program for the municipalities. And I would like to remind him that \$10 million has been added to the Municipal Assistance Grant since our government's tenure

in office, which is approximately 26 per cent, the largest increase in the history of this province. I would also like to remind him that it was his government that had frozen the Municipal Assistance Grant at \$38 million. And when eight bus loads of people waited by the Chateau Lacombe to see the premier of that day, the premier refused to see them and sent a couple of his ministers to speak with them.

Now it is very fortunate that our Minister of Municipal Affairs has told all the municipalities that in case they feel this plan in any way is going to make them suffer, he will want to hear about it.

I would like to say that it was my first experience, since I have been a member of this Legislature, when the delegation from the Vulcan Chamber of Commerce came here a short while ago. I did appreciate the way they came, and the favourable and gentle manner in which they presented themselves. However, I would like to say also, that I do regret that this same group of people didn't come five years ago, ten years ago, or fifteen years ago -- the time when the people from the Vulcan area, and I mean the farmers, were leaving one by one just because they were forced from their farms because they weren't getting a reasonable return for their produce. However, now they realize where their bread was coming from. However, it is rather late.

But, I would not want to condemn that delegation either. Maybe they would have come. But if they would have received the same response as those municipal officials who came here a couple of years ago, they would have had no reason to come here.

I would even refer to the time approximately three years ago, when 500 farmers came to this Legislative Assembly to demand that the provincial government look at what they were getting for their poultry products. They couldn't sell them. They were getting from 12 to 17 cents a pound for their quart. Here again, the 'then' premier instead of going out to see them, just like the premier did to the Vulcan delegation, probably instead of that he got a load of dogs to patrol the Legislature grounds, maybe got himself into a cubbyhole and almost froze from fright.

MR. BUCKWELL:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is not stating the facts. The premier did meet the farmers at the front doors of this Legislature.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That's true.

MR. BATIUK:

Mr. Speaker, I am well aware that some of those farmers --

DR. BUCK:

Your apology is accepted. Tell the truth.

MR. BATIUK:

Well, the only thing I will say: the truth is that here is an obvious example of the comparison of two leaders of two political parties.

It was, however Mr. Speaker, a pleasure to hear some of the members opposite participate in this debate. And I am referring in particular to the hon. Member for Lethbridge West. Even though, I didn't agree with all his statements and criticisms, I feel that his criticisms were sincere.

And only constructive criticism makes good government. It's only destructive criticism which is a detriment to any government, particularly the criticism that we are getting continuously from Mountain View.

What I cited when the hon. Member for Lethbridge stated he had hoped the 7.5 per cent maybe should have not been there -- I just didn't understand him completely -- or whether it was too little. But I have served as a chairman on negotiation for a school authorities association at the time when the hon. member was the president of the Alberta School Association, and it was their government that had set guidelines at 6 per cent. I recall plainly advising him that in our negotiations we should stick with 6 per cent. In my negotiations, when it was 6 per cent the teachers wanted 6.5 per cent, and now the guidelines are 7.5 per cent, they want 9 per cent. I guess it is human nature.

Regardless, I sure would like to find out some time whether the hon. member figured that 7.5 per cent isn't enough or whether it should be taken off completely.

Mr. Speaker, I have served as a reeve on the county council for a good number of years, and for the past five years of my time as a reeve of a county we were able to formulate a budget with no tax increase. Actually, during the five years we had reduced our mill rate by five. So I am bewildered when the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview claimed that the County of Flagstaff was not able to formulate a budget within 7.5 per cent. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have here the Hansard of March 8 in which the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview says:

I have been advised by the school committee chairman in Flagstaff County, which is in the constituency of the hon. Member for Camrose, that as a result of the new grant structure in that area, the school committee will have no choice but to close down the rural high school.

Mr. Speaker, I have here a copy of a letter from the secretary of the County of Flagstaff, and it is quite a lengthy letter but I would just like to read out a couple of lines. It says:

Re: The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Plan

We are enclosing herewith a photostatic copy of the letter, dated March 8, 1973, forwarded to you by Mr. Ralph Brown, President of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties.

It says:

The letter was considered by Council at a meeting held on Tuesday, March 13, 1973, and this will advise you that Council agrees in principle with the remarks contained in the letter.

This letter comes from the Secretary of the County of Flagstaff.

I somehow or other wondered, when the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview referred to the chairman of the school committee of the County of Flagstaff. I have at least half a dozen chairmen of school committees in my constituency and I think -- at least I hope -- that he should have at least one in his constituency. And none of them approached him; he referred to the chairman of the school committee in Flagstaff. It made me wonder why. But after a little thinking I found that this chairman was an unsuccessful CCF candidate some years ago. So it is very obvious where his information comes from and where his sympathy lies.

DR. BUCK:

What category is Zander in?

MR. BATIUK:

The same hon. member just recently remarked, again what with the term 'inadequate,' about the \$216 rebate, arguing that in Saskatchewan you can get up to \$216. If it is as good in Saskatchewan, many times I wonder why both Saskatchewan and Manitoba are slated to lose one federal seat each in the next upcoming election? Is it because people are leaving the paradise province? If we wait a little longer I am sure that the neighbours to the west will also be leaving. Not only are the people leaving these provinces, but the rats are also trying very hard to leave Saskatchewan.

MR. COOKSON:

It's even hard on the rats.

MR. BATIUK:

Mr. Speaker, I have very recently had the opportunity of attending the Leadership Prayer Breakfast. This is my third annual one. I attended two as a member of this Legislature and the first one as a reeve of the County of Lamont. I only regret, and regret very much, that the hon. Member for Spirit River wasn't there.

The reason I wanted to go so badly was because I knew who the guest speaker was going to be. It was not just because I was going to get a scoop of eggs, two strips of bacon and some Portland Oregon butter, honey or jam. But I knew

who the speaker was. I had associations with him when he was the superintendent of the Edmonton School Board. So I knew, regardless of what he was going to tell us, it was going to be good. And I really appreciated what he said in his address and that is why I say I feel very sorry that the hon. Member for Spirit River wasn't there.

He stressed the item that he and his parents risked their lives coming from a country, from the Ukraine, a place when they went to sleep every night they wondered when the knock was going to come on the door and one of the family was going to be taken out and nobody else would ever see them again. He came from a country where, on their small acreage only a couple of acres -- they had to give the government 40 bushels off each acre. And they had only two acres. And just in case -- well, they usually kept the rest if there was anything to keep -- but if any of these peasants, or farmers, could not produce the 40 bushels for the government which exercised state control, then they were taken to Siberia and given a few lessons in agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, when I heard this great Albertan, this great Canadian speak, I thought how pitiful, how very pitiful that there are still politicians who are trying to persuade and convince the people of this province that it would be to their benefit to make hell out of paradise by simply putting an "X" on a certain place on the ballot paper.

Mr. Speaker, the 50 millions of dollars that were coming from this program, from the natural resources, have received a lot of criticism. It was stated by several, and particularly the Leader of the Opposition last spring -- during the debates and also during The Mineral Tax Amendment Act last fall -- that the 'now' government is going to destroy the goose that laid the golden egg.

When I heard that term, 'the goose that laid the golden egg' it just made me think of the chicken and egg industry in this province about the same time as Social Credit came into Alberta.

At that time I was a small boy and the people were not able to order chicks from a hatchery daily, by several hundred or several thousand on a particular day, a particular breed, sex and so forth. The custom was to set a clucking hen on about 14 or 15 eggs and that hen would sit for about three weeks and if more than half of the eggs hatched, it was considered a good hatch.

Well, then, after that has happened, that hen would have a whole summer's job. She would lead those chicks around the farm yard until they grew up, and sometimes those chicks grew bigger than the hen itself. When winter came along they were housed and those chickens stayed for another 5 or 6 months; they almost totally hibernated until towards the latter part of March when the sun came, the warm weather, and the first egg dropped. That is when every member of the family observed this egg as if it was something sacred.

However, Mr. Speaker, due to good management now anybody can look after pullets that at 16 weeks of age will produce to 80 per cent. But the goose that laid the golden egg in the late 30's, along with its government, was stagnant and almost 40 years later it still laid one egg a day.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to say that since our government has taken office that goose is not destroyed, it is already laying two golden eggs a day. And I believe that by the time the 17th Legislative Assembly prorogues that goose will lay a whole nest of golden eggs.

One thing that I was always wondering -- and it doesn't bother me very much. The hon. Leader of the Opposition used to stand in defence of the oil companies, but as the old saying goes "Pat the hand that feeds the mouth." When I learned that he was an employee of one of the big oil industries I didn't pay any more attention to it.

Mr. Speaker, turning to the subject of highways, I would like to commend the Provincial Treasurer for allocating an additional 90 per cent expenditure for the primary highway system. I am indeed glad to learn that a little portion of it is going to go to my constituency. It is particularly noteworthy that the little piece of 10 miles of narrow road between Vegreville and Mundare which has been neglected for so many years is going to be upgraded. Some of you may have heard me mentioning this piece of highway before, but it is not only for my wishes -- I was really glad when the hon. Member for Lloydminster mentioned it in his debate just recently. So as I say, it is an interest to all the people who use the road, not only me.

I am also glad that there is more money for the secondary road system. This way there will be portions of money put in several areas of my constituency

and there will be more local traffic and more people will be able to use their road.

In the matter of education I would just like to reiterate a remark or two that I had made in my Throne Speech debate. Here again I am very glad that there is almost \$5 million being allocated for early childhood education. I believe this is a necessity. When we realize, even though it is hard to believe, that almost one-fifth of our children entering school today have some learning disabilities, I think that these disabilities would be able to be detected and treated much earlier.

Mr. Speaker, I am also glad that our government is going to take over the entire costs of hospitals. As we realize, the costs of hospitals have been continuously escalating and no doubt will be that way in the future, so I can see that our government will have to take an increasing amount of costs, which is going to be a benefit to the people. Furthermore, I think that the current problems that have arisen by determining the boundaries for taxation purposes -- that is the hospital boundaries -- I think that this problem is going to be completely eliminated.

Mr. Speaker, I would have been glad had there been more money allocated for senior citizens' accommodation. When I hear the members on both sides of the House, I really feel that there is a real need for more accommodation. Lucky are those who are already in those homes, but there are many more senior citizens who would like to get into some of these homes. Some of them no doubt will; some may not live to it.

However, I would like to bring to the attention of the members -- and in case anybody wants to know, there are records to testify to this -- but back in 1956 the first senior citizens' lodge in this province had been announced for the town of Mundare which is my home town. However, unfortunately very shortly after that announcement there was a provincial election and the people chose a CCF candidate from the town of Mundare to represent them in the Vegreville constituency. And that home never materialized.

Now, Mr. Speaker, four years later maybe the people realized that if they had had their own representative of the government, maybe they would have got the home, maybe it would have happened, and I think it would have. However they did re-elect a person to the Social Credit government who was still there 12 years after and still nothing materialized.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that if our government took the same attitude of the previous one, and took all that money that is being allocated this coming year for the constituencies which are not represented by Conservatives and put it into the 49 other constituencies, every Progressive Conservative representative could have another six to eight senior citizens' lodges in his constituency. However, Mr. Speaker, I am glad even though not entirely, that our government is doing that. But I think it is in the right direction.

And I would like to say, even after 1956 the people did not give up hope of getting a senior citizens' lodge and they made preparations for the allocation of some land. They went and planted spruce trees around it. And in case anybody should ever be driving through Mundare, on the north end of the main street you would see a plot of about eight to ten acres of land with spruce trees almost big enough to be cut for lumber, yet the plot inside stands empty.

Mr. Speaker, it was much the same with the piece of highway between Vegreville and Mundare. Also if you go on Highway 15 from Mundare to Lamont, a stretch of 21 miles, some years ago a portion had been upgraded and paved just up to the Vegreville constituency. However, after the redistribution and revision of boundaries two years ago I have a couple of miles of pavement in my constituency.

However, Mr. Speaker, I still hope, regardless of what has happened in the past, that our government sees fit to put enough money so that within not too long a time the town of Mundare will have a senior citizens' lodge which I feel they honestly deserve.

Mr. Speaker, for some reason or other I felt there was one issue during this session -- and even the people in my constituency are fed up with seeing it on the news all the time -- and that is the issue of Slave Lake. If it was brought up continuously by the hon. member who represents that area, again I wouldn't show much concern. But it seems to be brought up continuously by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. Here again I wondered much the same about his concern as I did about the County of Flagstaff. It didn't take me

long to find out that one of those who had been investigated plays a very prominent role on the constituency level, and the provincial level in the New Democratic Party.

Mr. Speaker, in reading one of the papers recently, the local weekly paper, and I also heard it brought up by this member about a week ago and this is referred to in one of the daily papers as the most irresponsible heckler in this Assembly -- that he had visited the Saskatchewan Legislature to study their programs. When I look at the cooperation between the two opposition parties, the collusion between them, sometimes I wonder why they don't join and form one new party that could call themselves the New Social Democrats or even the Socialistic Free Enterprisers.

[Interjections]

Mr. Speaker, over the last little while if I have heard it once I have heard it 20 times, the opposition so concerned about the future election in this province. Now to me it seems rather irregular. There was an election barely more than a year and half ago. There is so much work to do yet before the next election. I think we should all be considering the work that has to be done and not the election. But as they continuously bring it up, wondering what is going to happen on this side of the House, I really have come to the conclusion that they have a real big concern.

When we look at what happened in August of 1971, and we look at what happened at the beginning of February this year when one of the hon. members who has held a cabinet post, has been a member for a good number of years, could not gain the confidence of the membership to lead the party. I would refer to one other one whom we could term as a pioneer of the Social Credit party. He has held many portfolios and he, too, did not gain the confidence of the membership. That confidence was given to a person who was unable to win an election.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, a point of order. How does the leadership race relate to the Estimates of this Legislature?

AN HON. MEMBER:

You'd be absolutely surprised.

MR. HENDERSON:

I realize the member has a tremendous imagination, but even that is stretching --

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I am confident that the hon. Member for Vegreville will consider the comments of the hon. Leader of the Opposition and continue his debate.

MR. BATIUK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really feel that members on the opposite have a real concern. Now if this is the feeling, Mr. Speaker, I think maybe this would be a good time to conclude --

MR. HENDERSON:

Agreed.

MR. BATIUK:

Mr. Speaker, last year's budget, when it was brought down was a good budget. This year's is considerably better, so I am very optimistic that we have many good things to look forward to in the future. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. HYNDMAN:

The parliamentary tradition in the Commonwealth, Mr. Speaker, holds that the Government House Leader speaks very little. I know that has caused a problem on the other side because in the last couple of weeks some gentlemen opposite have felt they didn't talk enough in the Assembly. Certainly we have heard that from the voice of moderation, the hon. Opposition House Leader who, I think, before entering the session said he was going to be a voice of

moderation. He demonstrated that today insofar as we had a very quiet House until 30 seconds after he arrived. We had a voice but no moderation.

This afternoon I am not going to read over an annual report from the Department of Education. I think we had that exercise in the Assembly before 1971 with questionable results. I am not going to go into a recycling of statements or press releases. I am not going to deal with matters of detail which might be covered by the Estimates. However, in accordance with the tradition, I will be brief, I think, and to the point on this warm and sunny Friday afternoon, and deal with essentially three items.

Firstly, to state the government position on the main themes of the report of the Commission on Educational Planning. Secondly, to set forth the highlights of the new Educational Finance Plan in their broadest sense, remembering that that plan over the next three years will distribute about \$.75 billion to school districts throughout the province. Thirdly, to set forth some of the elements which as yet have not been stated of the Education Opportunity Fund of some \$4.5 million.

However, before doing that, Mr. Speaker, I thought I might be permitted to make some observations concerning the posture of the hon. gentlemen opposite, insofar as over the last two or three weeks in this debate they have been generously heaping remarks in this direction. I think they do feel I have ignored them in not commenting and pointing out the place or position they have been carrying forth.

In this Budget Debate, we are dealing essentially with the budget and whether it should be supported by the House. I think that if you look at the budget -- essentially a balanced document directed basically towards helping people -- if you look at almost every vote of that budget this is the approach that is found there.

DR. BUCK:

...[Inaudible] ...

MR. HYNDMAN:

Well I see we have heard from the gentleman from Clover Bar there who invariably separates the wheat from the chaff and gives us the chaff.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I think that the test of the budget -- the document -- which was read by my colleague the Provincial Treasurer, is whether or not it has successfully stood up to criticism on its substantial parts in terms of the programs suggested, the priorities suggested.

How does it stand up? Well in my view, Mr. Speaker, there is no question that it passes with flying colours. No member of the opposite side has seriously suggested any cuts in major programs. No member of the opposition has suggested seriously that there should be any major change in the priorities set forth in the budget. Because of that, Mr. Speaker, it is perhaps clear to all of us why the opposition seems to have been left with an alternative which they have exploited fully over the last couple of weeks, of in effect dragging very large and very red herrings continuously across the floor of the Legislature. Indeed, if they were all laid end to end they would probably be longer than the Alberta Resources Railway. That is what they have really been left with doing.

Now I wouldn't want to be hard on the opposition though, Mr. Speaker, because I think they have a place to play. Some people have said they are a poor opposition but I would disagree with that. I think they are a good opposition and that they should stay exactly in that position for about 35 years. They are doing a good job -- in opposition.

MR. LUDWIG:

Not with a government like you've got.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Well I see the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View is commenting. You know I didn't think I would be able to get up and say, Mr. Speaker, that the increased price of wine is really the responsibility of the opposition, because one of the basic reasons for that increase, especially in certain wines, is the fact that the grapes went sour, and most of the sour grapes are found right over there.

MR. HENDERSON:

Order, Mr. Speaker. If that were true I should get a volume discount.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. Opposition House Leader should not only get a volume discount, but several free cases would be in order when we talk about sour grapes.

MR. HENDERSON:

In that case I'll give you my home address.

MR. HYNDMAN:

The word 'opposition' suits them, of course, Mr. Speaker, and I think even if they had invented the word themselves nothing could be better used to describe them, because they are essentially against everything. They are opposed to suggestions. They want to criticize, to tear down, to knock, to nit pick, and I must say I have been waiting excitedly on four or five occasions for a constructive idea, an --

AN HON. MEMBER:

Next year.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Next year I've heard. Occasionally I've seen just a glimmer of a new idea coming and then it disappears like a wet match on a camping trip. That's happened three or four times, but essentially the opposition -- it's a good name -- they're opposed, they want to tear down, they want to criticize, but we've heard no policies.

Now, the Member for Calgary Mountain View is finding this sunny and warm Friday afternoon not to his liking. Certainly he should perhaps consider that maybe he is not entirely in touch with what the people of Alberta think, sitting there in his air-conditioned office in his ivory tower surrounded by his self-appointed experts. And I think that is a record which we have heard from the other side, a repeating record that is heard far too often. A new vocabulary from that side would have indeed been appreciated.

The position of the government on the Choice of Futures. Mr. Speaker, I think that all the hon. members have over the past many months reviewed the board or Commission on Educational Planning, hopefully most of the document itself and certainly the small digest which was sent around the province. Basically the government accepts the position in the report that we should act on a set of goals, principles and ideals so as to influence where possible the future.

Secondly the government recognizes the tentative nature of future forecasting which is a fairly large part of the document. But nevertheless it appreciates the efforts of the commission and finds its forecast valuable as a source of both warning, but also of opportunity.

Thirdly, the government chooses neither the report's second phase industrial society, nor its people centered society. Because while the government has no particular model in mind, we do find that this model construction approach is probably too simplistic as a procedure for setting goals, bearing in mind the fact that we're in a democratic environment where you can only really set forth a particular society if you are in an authoritarian organization where you can set goals and then reach them by controlling all the economy. If we're in a democratic situation where there is local autonomy, we find this goal setting somewhat simplistic, and certainly wouldn't accept either of the two models. Our position would be somewhere between these two alternatives.

Fourthly, the government finds the commission's concepts of life-long recurrent education and its work on aims and objectives being especially important. And we certainly could state that we endorse in principle the four ideals of education set forth in the report with some qualifications of each. We endorse in general the ten principles set forth in the Worth Report, recognizing however, in many instances especially when we're dealing with the principles of efficiency and equity in personalization and quality, it's not

always possible to fully implement those principles but they must be strived for.

The government endorses in principle the six goals of education set forth in the report, but not necessarily to the exclusion of other goals.

Now there are in the Worth Report, the Report of the Commission on Educational Planning, Mr. Speaker, some 400 specific proposals and recommendations. Over the weeks ahead the Minister of Advanced Education and I will be tabling in this Legislature and establishing the position of the government on each specific recommendation.

Some of the recommendations will be endorsed in principle; others will be rejected in principle. Some are still being studied; some have been implemented in whole or in part. Some are not in our jurisdiction as they relate to activities of the federal government, local school boards, parents, schools, teachers. Some we are prepared to implement depending on the results of consultations and assignment of priorities. Some we accept at this time and some we reject at this time.

To complete the remarks I have concerning the Worth Report, I'd simply set forth the government's position on those of the top ten recommendations which members will recall is on page 300 of the report and is a summary of ten urgent and emergent suggestions. The positions of the Department of Education on those recommendations which are pertinent to that department, of which there are six, is as follows:

Recommendation No. 1 -- the provision of universal opportunity and selective experience in early education -- implemented in part through the new early childhood services plan.

Recommendation No. 2 -- abolition of Grade 12 departmental examinations -- implemented, with new achievement measuring tests being developed.

Recommendation No. 5 -- modification in certification requirements for teachers of early and basic education -- implemented in part.

Recommendation No. 6 -- reorganization of the Department of Education -- implemented in part.

Recommendation No. 8 -- modification of the school year -- premature now.

Recommendation No. 10 -- preparation of an integrated provincial development plan -- rejected at this time.

In coming weeks, the Minister of Advanced Education and I will be tabling the government's position in respect of each of the other 400 specific recommendations in the report.

Turning secondly to the new educational finance plan, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to get into statistical details before the Assembly. I think that is something properly done in Estimates.

However, I think it is important to note that the plan at the moment is providing provincial support for some 420,000 students, a teaching force of about 22,000 teachers, about 1,500 school trustees in the province, approximately 1,000 schools.

Some of the highlights. Firstly, through the educational tax refund plan, some \$52 million new from resource revenues going to the people of Alberta will provide for tax relief on the 30 mill equalized assessment.

One of the advantages to this plan for education but apart from the monies which will go to the property owner and renter in the province -- an average of \$216 for the average property owner -- one of the advantages here for the total educational scene is that this will remove what has been one of the abrasive and worrying aspects of the property tax form that is received by people in Alberta. They receive their property tax form in the mail, they see that the 30 mill education tax is 50 per cent or more of the total taxes. And this has encouraged electors and rate payers all over the province to say, "Well now, that's just too much. We've got to cut back." And this has resulted, I think, in a great deal of backlash against school boards. So by removing this from the concern, from the worry of the average Alberta tax payer, I think we will have a better balanced approach by the public to education financing generally and to school boards and what they do.

Secondly, the new educational plan will increase local autonomy to school boards. The plebiscite is gone. The plebiscite was a rigid and very inflexible kind of a meat axe approach to controlling costs of education financing. Certainly there are going to remain controls with regard to school board spending. But instead of the plebiscite control, which almost dealt a fatal blow to the school systems of this province in terms of local autonomy, almost caused permanent damage to our school trustees and teachers, instead of that sort of hard control there will be a soft control, which is the referendum procedure.

MR. BARTON:

How is it handled?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Very different -- if the hon. gentleman will read, for example, the method by which school buildings were constructed. The referendum procedure, which allows a school board to pass a by-law and proceed unless the public -- the onus being on the public to suggest a referendum -- unless that is done, you will see that the situation is quite different. The plebiscite was an absolute, total roadblock to the school board. Even if 98 per cent of an entire school electorate came into the board and said, "Well, we want to go beyond this ceiling," they couldn't do it without a plebiscite.

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

And what did that mean? I meant that they had to have a plebiscite. They had to have that extra cost. And also the plebiscite got into the question of discussion not of factual issues in education, but emotional issues in education, quite often led to the real issues being submerged.

So admittedly there are still controls on school boards. Those will remain until the quality of the link between electors and their school boards is improved. But the control is now a soft control, rather than a plebiscite.

Other areas in which local autonomy has been increased, for example, are that the two larger school boards in the province now have almost full autonomy to make decisions with regard to the school buildings and the design of school buildings they want. It used to be that the school buildings board had to approve the size of every closet and virtually everything the Edmonton and Calgary and larger school boards sent to them. We felt there was no need for that. They have adequate planning staff, so in those areas where there are adequate architectural and planning staffs, boards can make those decisions themselves -- a return of power to the school boards.

In addition, local autonomy has been increased by the Early Childhood Services Program and the Educational Opportunity Fund, both of which are not prescribed programs by the government with an 85-page book of regulations. Rather they are run under the principle that local communities and parents suggest what they think is best for their area and submit them to the department.

The third highlight of this new educational plan is that it is in more clear and more understandable language for the average layman. I think we would all have to concede that in previous years the appellations of 'a classroom unit', the 'staff support grant' and 'truncation' -- all these, in effect, left the tax-paying public wondering what this finance plan was all about. They became suspicious of it, and so naturally they would have less inclination to support it, because human nature generally won't be supportive of something it is suspicious about.

So in addition to that, by going to a simple per pupil grant which is clear, simple and understandable, we hope the public can understand it, because it is their \$.75 billion, essentially, that is going into the educational system, so they can understand and be partners in educational decision-making.

Program budgeting will assist this as well. For example, there is no way now that we can cost-out in a given school system -- what the elementary portion costs, or what the junior high portion costs, or what the vocational side costs, or what the business education side costs, or what the language side costs.

All we have are figures about the total cost of chalk and the total cost of lights and the total cost of salaries. I think this will enable us, probably not to save vast amounts of money, but to make more intelligent planning decisions in the future.

In addition, I think a clearer understanding of the plan was given to school boards, because the advance information to school boards -- and I realize it still probably wasn't soon enough for them -- of this new plan was given to them four months sooner than was the case in 1970 when the previous three-year plan came in.

The fourth element of the plan which, I think, should be underlined is that it provides special attention to rural areas and definitely should have the effect of slowing centralization. More money than ever before -- a greater increase than ever before in the monies going to school boards generally, of course, has occurred with the 7.5 per cent increase. But in addition to that, some \$2.4 million will be funnelled almost entirely into the rural areas when the per pupil grant formula was introduced.

The previous plan, for example, caused great difficulties in a rural jurisdiction where if there were, say 38 students the government only paid for 26 students, because unless you could get a cluster of 26 students or one and one half clusters, you didn't get paid by the school foundation program. So that will assist the smaller rural boards who had loose ends of students around whom they had to support but for whom they got no provincial money.

Vocational pupils, and there are many in the rural areas who need this assistance, will have special, increased grants of \$15 per pupil. We are engaged in the second phase of a program to remove the incentives to centralization which, I think, were built into the previous plan. One of those was the 'classroom unit cluster', which we have abolished and replaced by a 'per pupil'. Another one was the policy on school buildings.

Members probably realize that there is not exactly frenzied school building construction going on in the province at this time --

DR. BUCK:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

--and we have, in effect, felt that with enrolments dropping, there is no reason to build schools at the rate they were being built. In fact, in my view, at least four years ago there should have been a slow-down in school building. We are going to be saddled with debenture debt for many more years which we are paying for, of course, right now. But this was an incentive to centralize, because the school board could say, well, the province pays for the building. Let's build a great, big, new, beautiful school. That had to be filled, and that meant smaller communities had to move into the central community. So in our view, there are many cases where smaller rural schools and classrooms can be maintained.

The third incentive to centralization, which we haven't yet been able to do anything about, but we will be looking into, is transportation. I am not at all sure that perhaps in the formula for transportation support which in this province is the most generous in Canada, whether or not that has been providing an incentive to bus because that is an incentive to centralization. We now have an in-depth study going on starting at square one, assessing the bus transportation formula and costs in jurisdictions, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Montana and South Dakota, seeing if we can come up with some kind of system of transportation financing which will be balanced.

I think we should kill the myth that the provincial government can order a stop in centralization. It would, in effect, be the end of local autonomy if we conceded that local elected school boards should have the authority to decide how their children are to be educated in what schools, through what assortments of transportation and what patterns and what grades. If you have the provincial government saying there will be no more centralization you are, in effect, saying that is the end of local autonomy and the end of school board discretion. Anyone who suggests that the provincial government should step in and order a stop to centralization in a particular area is doing a very real disservice to the people in his area.

Certainly there is going to be a problem and a difficult choice to be made by school boards with the dropping population. We haven't seen this since the end of the war. It may mean, though, if we look at it as an opportunity, that we will be able to concentrate more on quality instead of quantity.

As I have said to school boards, the first step should not be coming to the provincial government in effect saying, you make the decision, we don't want our

local autonomy. There are any number of alternatives, for example: if it is a special situation, the rate base could be changed by application to the provincial government; although as I mentioned in the regulations, if the school board applies for extra relief, they also may get less money and have their budgets cut. They take a risk, it is just like going to an appeal, if you are sentenced to a certain fine, a certain number of days in gaol by a lower court and you appeal, you may have it wiped out or you may have it doubled.

There are many alternatives open to school boards. They should not simply think in terms of whether or not the high school grades should be moved from one centre to another. What about Grade 10 in one place, Grade 11 as a phased operation and Grade 12 being the only centralized operation? What about some kind of voluntary centralization?

As I have said to school boards, there is no question they have the power and authority to simply sit down in a board meeting and say this school is closed. But what I expect school boards in this province to do is to use a little public relations emphasis and to talk to the parents and talk to the people in the area when they want to close a school and try to persuade them, bring them into an open house at the nearby school. It is one thing to have local power and authority to close a school, but, in my view, there is a higher obligation of school boards than simply doing it in that way.

The fifth element of the plan is priority for handicapped and disadvantaged children. There has been a sharp increase in support there. Per pupil grants to retarded schools are up 26 per cent, opportunity classes up 50 per cent in two years. The major commitment: a continuing priority of the government.

Another highlight is the increase in the quality of education across the province generally. I think this plan, if it is matched with others, may possibly be the most generous in Canada in terms of the financing available to school boards from the provincial government.

Over three years there will be a total of at least 22.5 per cent in an increase available each year. It may not sound like much except if you base it on a \$.25 billion base you can see that it is a large amount of money.

The quality of education has been increased by a new requirement which will be effective in a few years of 4 years of teacher education and more importantly, one full semester or 12, or 14 or 16 weeks of practical training by that teacher in front of a class during the time he or she is at university, not simply putting the teacher through an academic cerebral course for 3 years and then dropping him or her in front of a class.

In addition, the weighting factor for elementary education, for every \$1.80 that went into high school it used to be \$1.00 for the elementary students. That has been changed. The elementary weighting factor is being moved up over the next three years. It will move from \$1.00 to \$1.50 ratio and that is in addition to the Educational Opportunity Fund which will be pouring monies into the Grades 1 to 6.

The lowest pupil-teacher ratio in Canada is what we have ascertained is the case in Alberta, of 20.8 to 1, and that is lower than any other jurisdiction in Canada at this time.

It should be remembered though, again, there is a myth that the province sets pupil-teacher ratios in school districts. It does not. These are set by the local school division which can use any mix it wants depending on the nature of the teacher, the nature of the youngsters being taught and the type of course. But that is the overall provincial factor if you divide pupils by the number of teaching personnel.

Perhaps lastly, in terms of the plan, it should be mentioned that there is an element of provincial leadership in the plan. If one wanted to totally decentralize and give all authority and all local jurisdiction to school boards that would be very fine, but it would leave no room for leadership, no room for the provincial government setting the themes or setting directions in education.

This we have done by the Early Childhood Services plan, the plan to pump \$4 million into Grades 1 to 6 for basic quality, increasing in youngsters such things as learning to read better, to spell better, to do arithmetic better, to listen better, to develop those kinds of basic skills which I think we should go back to and which we are going back to, to the tune of \$4 million over the next three years, each of those years.

So in conclusion, the new plan, Mr. Speaker, I think could be characterized certainly as generous, one which not only preserves but increases local autonomy, removes some of the incentives to centralization, helps rural areas and most certainly increases the quality of education in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I will not continue with too many of the other subjects I was going to speak on, bearing in the mind the fact that I think that other members do want to speak. These I will bring up in the Estimates.

I could perhaps say in conclusion that certainly, as I have stated and as you can see, there have been and will be changes in the educational system. But they are not going to be changes on the basis of catching every fad which happens to fly by. And there are hundreds of them in education just about every week from all sorts of jurisdictions. They are going to be changes which will be done after thoughtful consideration. Some changes may be moving back to basic concepts in education that we had some years ago but that is a change. Certainly everything will be done with the widest possible consultation.

The broad aim, I think, is a quality educational system and a fair shake for every student in the province, irrespective of where he or she lives. We have an obligation to find and to develop a new generation, one that is coming along as thoughtful, knowledgeable trustees for the great future that is Alberta's.

MR. TOPOLNISKY:

Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to participate in the Budget Debate. I wish to congratulate all the hon. members who have thus far contributed to this debate.

Mr. Speaker, after spending an observant, thought-provoking and informative year under the dome I find this work increasingly challenging. I have observed closely and listened carefully to what the hon. members have had to say in the past 18 months and I must confess that I have learnt a great deal from each and every one, be it good or bad.

Last summer I combined work with pleasure, and as a family unit we camped in our trailer at 36 rural points from Edmonton as far south as Cypress Hills, and back by Highway 41 through Medicine Hat, Consort, Gooseberry Lake, Cold Lake, Lac La Biche, and Fort McMurray. I talked to many people and listened to their problems and realized that the movement to country living was evident.

Mr. Speaker, there is considerable interest in rural redevelopment. The total community system from the original structure of the pioneer community, where towns and villages are strung about along the railroads eight to ten miles apart, was basic to commercial agriculture. The depression of the 30's, World War II, sifted this social system and eliminated a great deal of the original structure which could not survive the tightened economic situation. After that came the hard-surfaced roads, the automobile, the machine-powered farming and the domination of the countryside by cities and bigger towns.

There is a new community system now developing with the more active villages and towns -- 25 to 30 miles apart, instead of the 8 to 10 miles as formerly. Many of these smaller towns and villages are still with us and they still show that persistent and old pioneering spirit.

The particular concerns of rural Alberta are the economic and social problems that are arising from the increasing urbanization of the province, particularly the concentration of an increasing proportion of the population of the province in the major cities of Edmonton and Calgary.

Statistics reflect the most significant element that for the first time the census figures show that while greater Edmonton and Calgary population increased by 285,000, there was an absolute decline in the Alberta population residing in rural Alberta of only 120,000 persons. Therefore, the growth of these two cities, particularly in the last year or so, has been contributed to by depopulation of Alberta rural areas by 120,000 people and by immigration into the province and natural increases by 165,000. Obviously the rural population does not exist within the province with which to feed metropolitan growth on the scale that has been experienced in the recent past. The province is now coming to a point where growth of metropolitan population will either have to come from outside the province or will not take place at all.

Mr. Speaker, we have been saying for the last 18 months that our intent is to revitalize small rural areas that are struggling to slow down and, in fact,

reverse the trend of urbanization of rural Alberta. That, Mr. Speaker, is already happening.

We know that in a rural setting the burden of higher taxes and higher residential costs are removed. Many cultural, educational and sporting facilities are becoming more readily available. An increased demand for recreational, residential and business property outside the city by city dwellers indicates the great desire of many of these people to get away from the pressures of urban living if economically possible.

Recreational demands in rural Alberta are being met, first by a job well done by the Department of Youth, Culture and Recreation, and secondly by the Department of Agriculture through the agricultural societies throughout the province. The multi-purpose building not only assisted the unemployment situation but there was a dire need for such buildings in most smaller communities, with emphasis, of course, on agriculture during the summer and for use as an arena for sports in the winter.

The provision of a capital grant from the Department of Agriculture, from a rural development standpoint, in serving the needs of the people and communities is certainly great. The agricultural societies have done a tremendous job and they are a good vehicle to use because they represent a wider spectrum of the population than any other single agency. It accents agriculture and minimizes the town-country differences. Reports indicate, Mr. Speaker, that this building put more life into community spirit in these rural areas than has been observed in the past.

As far as residential demands in rural Alberta are concerned, more small towns and villages saw more homes built last year than they have in the past number of years. There is a greater demand for business properties and industry locations outside the large cities. The Alberta government has taken steps to encourage appropriate types of small industries to establish themselves in rural areas. The appropriate types will be to give employment to the local population, particularly the types which would serve agricultural production.

Processing facilities of agricultural products would discourage the export of raw materials and provide a greater income to the farmer as well as other employment opportunities. The basic problem seems to be with the growing efficiency in agriculture. The number of people required per square mile for efficient farming is steadily declining and with them the number of people who can engage in occupations, earning their living through serving the farming community, is bound also to decline. The answer to the problem of rural depopulation, therefore, appears to be associated with opportunities for rural residents to acquire an income from some source other than direct dependence upon agriculture within their local area.

Some of the potentials in the next few years in Alberta would appear to be the following. With a very aggressive marketing program, the efficient beef producer will find an increasing demand for his product. There is a strong market potential for feed grains. With dairy products, cheese production in Alberta offers a potential for expansion. Both the vegetable and greenhouse industry can capture more of the domestic market. Dehydrated alfalfa looks good in the market place. Alberta now has five forage dehydrating plants with a total capacity of 45,000 tons per year. With an increasing livestock base in Alberta and the possibility of expanding exports to Japan and British Columbia, this industry offers a potential for growth.

A very interesting industry in Alberta is honey production. I had the opportunity to attend the annual convention of The Alberta Beekeepers' Association and we know that Falher and the Peace River area is the honey capital of Canada. There are about 110,000 colonies of bees and about 1,200 beekeepers in the Province of Alberta. Several hundred of these beekeepers derive all or most of their income from their beekeeping operations. Many of these beekeepers can only have five or six acres of land, but there is a considerable acreage of clover, alfalfa and rape for miles around from which to provide the honey.

It is interesting to note that honey production in Alberta in 1972 accounted for about 40 per cent of the total Canadian production and was more than twice that of any other province. Current prices have more than doubled and there is a wide market and unusual world shortage.

It is commendable, Mr. Speaker, that action has already been taken towards decentralizing of government offices and moving some parts of the provincial administration away from the two major cities. This is in keeping with the philosophy to bring government services closer to the people.

The Alberta Opportunity Company and The Agricultural Development Corporation are specifically designed for use in rural areas of this province. Rural people should be made more aware of them and at the same time must be in a position to utilize their services in order for them to be effective. These are two very important pieces of legislation for rural areas and therefore there is urgent need for extensive public awareness and interpretation. Even a small move to a small town or village will have quite a noticeable effect on the rural economy and will stabilize what otherwise might be a declining rural community.

I am confident that the government operations are going to be just as efficient by such a move and certainly will serve better the people it ought to serve. This brings up, Mr. Speaker, the fact that the citizen must be able to have quick and efficient communication with all government departments, no matter where they are located. And for this purpose the AGT has made significant changes to provide toll-free service in many communities with the extended area service program.

It is important that government offices can be contacted at minimal expense by Albertans regardless of location. This would have an immediate effect in cutting down on rural isolation and making rural areas more attractive ones from which to do business.

Also on decentralization, representation should be made to the federal government, this being the opportune time, since western Canada was rediscovered, to obtain a change in federal policy in connection with decentralization of their own operations within the province as the provincial government is beginning to do. For example, the Farm Credit Corporation head office is in Edmonton and there isn't a single loan to a resident of Edmonton.

Another place of decentralization may be NAIT and SAIT. To move a section such as automotive mechanics, for example to a vocational high school such as Thorhild or Vegreville, or St. Paul or to an agricultural school, to use the existing facilities in rural Alberta that are under-utilized by 40 to 50 per cent, coordination of the existing facilities throughout the province would be a step in the right direction.

Another major concern is the transportation and communication problems of the rural areas. This involves consideration of adequate provision for radio and television facilities. When I met at Viking with representatives of the town council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, and Agricultural Society, one of their concerns was the very poor TV reception. Another was improvement of Highway 36 -- and incidentally they are still recovering from the disaster a few years ago.

Abandonment of railroad branch lines and removal of dayliners, closure of grain elevators places a great economic burden on the persons affected by it. The entire problem of railway lines and grain elevator closures should be looked at from the point of view of all the citizens in the community and particularly from the standpoint of the smaller business man and the farmer. Possibly the tax position of railroad lines that would otherwise be closed should be reviewed since the economic benefit to the farmer, and indeed to the whole community, of maintaining such lines in service may well justify a lower tax burden on railroad facilities.

We have taken active steps to promote appreciation of rural life throughout the province. Over the past two years there has been much material written in newspapers and magazines and radio and TV to the effect that the rural areas are dying. Because of this we feel that many people in urban Alberta have an exaggerated view of the decline of rural Alberta and this discourages rural development.

In order to counter this feeling, we have taken a positive approach, for instance, by encouraging a suitable program on radio to give adequate publicity to the life styles of rural Alberta. The radio program, Alberta Roads, heard on CBX Radio every Saturday at 9:15 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. features small towns and villages, to aid rural points, get specific advertising, to project and encourage development opportunities in these areas. Programming is set up to the end of this month which will be a total of 30 communities heard on the air since the first Saturday in October, 1972. A more than usual amount of interest is shown in this program. Many people from cities make inquiries about certain towns, about their housing or business potential. People now have a much more enlightened view of life in rural Alberta.

These programs allow for community involvement as they try to sell its livability and advertise their needs. As a follow-up, there will be a publication, which would be a permanent message of and about the community, and

copies of the Alberta Roads publication and tapes will be left in the Provincial Archives. The cost of publication will be borne by the communities.

Another project is the regional resource project in the Drumheller region. That involves nine communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that there will be continued attention to priorities outlined a year ago. For the senior citizens, there will be a unique new policy designed to allow private, volunteer, and non-profit groups in partnership with government to provide a wider range of alternatives to assist in the improvement of our pioneers' quality of life. That is highly commendable.

The family farm will continue to be a high priority. Other programs for rural Alberta: Alberta Future Farmers for young people, a new crop insurance, rural utilities, secondary industry, highways, rural housing, a new disaster act. And for all Albertans a property tax-reduction plan, new natural gas policies and a two-price gas system. Programs of environmental management and long-term education financing, early childhood education.

The provincial government will attempt to make available professional services for the purpose of improving the standard of dental -- and hopefully other professional services to facilitate -- and the facilities to the rural population. It would be desirable to see at least minimum standards of such services in all parts of the province.

Another serious concern is that of facilities for serving farm machinery which have deteriorated markedly over the past two years in the province. I am happy about the recent creation by the provincial government of a farm machinery appeal board. The sale of farm machinery at such high prices should carry with it the obligation to provide for servicing during its useful life.

Mr. Speaker, I have a list of some concerns of my constituency. The hospitals are over-utilized, a centrally located senior citizens' home is a great need, and more parks and campsites are required, a provincial building is needed. There is room for secondary industry, more highways, and certainly improved highway signs, and a new STEP program should be extended this summer to include villages as well.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I am surprised to hear that some of the MLAs express concern -- some of the city MLAs express concern -- that they do not get telephone calls from their constituents or meet delegations and so forth. Well, I think that I can speak for the majority of the rural MLAs. I am swamped with a long list of names, and telephone calls and people dropping in every weekend, including correspondence. People have concerns and we are glad to assist them in every way possible.

Mr. Speaker, there is certainly a fine air of optimism in rural Alberta, where there has been more help to more people in less time than ever before. Thank you.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker --

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I almost hesitate to rise to disturb the tranquility of this place.

I had given the government some sound advice here a few days ago to quit at Friday noon, but they said they were not going to do it during this session. But I think they actually did quit Friday noon, only some of the members didn't stop talking. I believe that after that late Monday night sitting, or Tuesday morning sitting, they ran out of steam and they don't show that they've regained it to this date --

AN HON. MEMBER:

You've got to be kidding!

MR. LUDWIG:

Some of the interesting observations today, at least the second one, was by the hon. member who just spoke and who said he was getting a lot of complaints by phone calls and letter. This seems to be a trend. I believe the hon. member, Mr. Trynchy, said he handled 1,500 complaints last year, and I am under the impression that he will probably have to handle a few more than that next year. There seems to be a trend developing in this province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I would suggest the hon. member check Hansard. It wasn't complaints -- it was letters.

MR. LUDWIG:

I can't imagine, Mr. Speaker, why anybody else would write a letter to the hon. member except to complain, but I stand corrected.

Now that the hon. members are beginning to come to life -- we talked about the government running out of steam, and every indication is that it is a tranquil kind of day. Nobody seems to be concerned. Problems, if there are any, will go away by themselves, or perhaps if they wait long enough people might forget about them.

But there are developing in this province a tremendous number of conflicts, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not referring to political conflicts but the conflicts that are developing in this province between different people. The point I want to make is the one that concerns most consumers today. I see the hon. Minister for Consumer Affairs is in his place. Perhaps he can comment on what I say later on.

But I believe that the hon. Minister of Agriculture has made it very plain that he favours greater revenue for agriculture, that he favours better prices. He'll do everything possible so they do get these better prices, including prices for meat for the ranchers and farmers. This is, indeed, a very noble and a very nice thing to say when he is making speeches to the farmers out in the country. But another problem has developed in this province, and perhaps in the whole country --

MR. ZANDER:

Would the hon. member permit a question?

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes.

MR. ZANDER:

Did you find any farmers in the cities, sir?

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I probably have more retired farmers in my constituency than some of the hon. members have farmers in their constituencies out in the rural areas. No supplementaries on that?

So when I talk about a conflict developing in this province, the housewives, the people who have to buy meat are beginning to show signs of rebelling against what is happening. I'm wondering whether the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs and the hon. Minister of Agriculture could get together to determine which one is going to prevail -- whether we are going to fight for more income and higher prices for the farmers, and therefore higher cost to the consumer, or vice versa. So far they have sort of rolled with the punches and have not taken a stand on anything. I believe that there will be no suggestions, no ideas forthcoming from the hon. ministers this session -- at least not in the spring portion of this session. But by then it might be too late.

The costs are rising daily and the housewife in the city is very disturbed. In fact, organizations are forming throughout the country to boycott the purchase of meat. This is in a province -- probably the most affluent province in Canada, and perhaps the most affluent area in North America, taking the whole province as a whole. So there is one conflict that the hon. members on both sides of the House have to resolve. It is a conflict of interest and it is up

to the government to try to resolve these things and mediate them in such a manner that will, perhaps, not make everybody happy, but will make everybody a little less unhappy.

There are other conflicts developing in this province which should be obvious to all members in the House. That is the conflict of demands for higher wages, higher salaries, particularly at the government levels, provincially and municipally, while the taxpayer is resisting these increases.

Certainly the government provided an additional tax discount to the taxpayers, but everybody knows that this is sort of a lull before the storm. Costs are overtaking any benefits that had been given by this government to the taxpayer. The taxpayer is sitting very uneasily because he knows that the increased built-in expenses, and the example that this government set for increases is something that affects the whole society and they can't seem to stop the inflation that is on the rampage in North America and in this province which is affecting many people.

When we talk about taxes I believe that many people who spend money to buy things will perhaps agree that inflation is one of the most vicious forms of taxation in this country. It doesn't matter whether the government takes it away from you directly, or whether government action makes it more difficult for you to get your dollars worth when you buy something. The result is that inflation is taxing the purchasing power out of the people of this province.

I note that the hon. minister, the Provincial Treasurer, is not in his seat. Nevertheless that is a conflict he has to attempt to resolve. It isn't enough to say we have all the revenues that we possibly can get, we are simply bulging with revenue this year. There is no indication that it will continue to be so. Three or four years down the line we may find out that revenues will drop, while our built-in expenses -- expenses that we cannot pull away from, we cannot back off from -- will continue. And they are forcing this province perhaps into a position where it will be no better off than other provinces that have less revenues, because we will have to borrow heavily to maintain some of the programs that perhaps tight budgeting and responsible government might have eliminated.

It is easy to be generous and it is easy to be all things to all people but I do believe that responsibility in budgeting has to be a factor. You can't be popular with everybody and at the same time run what they call a tight ship financially.

When I hear the hon. members opposite pay tribute to their ministers one after another, and the ministers bow and accept those tributes, I often wonder if we were the same as the government is now when we were on the other side. Because Mr. Speaker, if we were, we should have been kicked out long ago. And the same will happen to the hon. members because they seem to be placing accent on some of the less desirable characteristics of Social Credit but they have not got the courage to run a tight ship, and perhaps in a cycle of years to lay some money away just in case revenues might slow down.

Does the hon. minister want to get up, or were you up?

MR. YURKIC:

When they got you in the front bench they tossed you out. They had to wait until they got you on the front bench.

MR. LUDWIG:

Does the hon. minister want to stand up and talk, or should he sit down and be quiet? Sure they tossed us out, but we were in there 36 years. You've hardly been in 36 months and the roof is caving in, Mr. Minister.

You know, Mr. Speaker, that during this session the hon. members opposite have had little to rejoice about, in fact much to be disappointed about. And the only time there is any kind of a flare-up of rejoicing is when they can go back about 35 years and find out that Social Credit did something that was unacceptable. I agree with them that perhaps we did at times, but it is strange how they still quarrel with Social Credit 35 years ago while we are in 1973. I am quarrelling with a lot of things they are doing now, and that is what we have to deal with. They can't talk about what their ministers are doing because it doesn't make for interesting talk, so they go back a few decades and they rejoice for a few minutes and then come back to life and realize that there are problems unsolved, problems growing, the MLAs are getting more and more complaints and I believe next year will be no better.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the people's party -- at least the party that calls itself the people's party -- when there was a major debate yesterday in this House on the rapeseed problem, an economic problem that affects a great number of people in this province, that there were the mover and the seconder on that other side plus 14 other members, and it shows a very rapid decline in the interest by the government in the problems of the people of this province. I believe that perhaps now the Deputy Premier has learned his lesson about sitting until 4:00 o'clock in the morning. I suppose they won't try it again because if anything the Opposition did grind them down and I thought --

[Interjections]

-- they would bounce back in two days but they are still as sleepy as ever.

I mentioned a couple of conflicts that are developing in this province and there appears to be no indication that anyone is even thinking about resolving these problems.

I will state that I am very serious about the one of inflation, higher prices for produce, but higher prices to the consumer. I think that the government has to come up with some answers and not in the fall. It may be too late and I am urging the hon. members opposite to come up with some suggestions and take some bold steps. But this is not the kind of problem about which you can please everybody -- when you solve it. But you do have to listen to the people who have to buy the food and notwithstanding increased incomes, in some instances they are losing the benefit of any increase that they have got. This is a most serious problem in this province at the present time.

I believe another serious problem that we have in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, is a conflict between the two different sides of the House.

I believe that it is recognized in all parliaments that the opposition is entitled to seek certain kinds of information. They are entitled to probe and seek information on any matters which are within the responsibilities of all members. We do that. We try to do it as effectively as possible but lately, when you ask a question of a minister that may be embarrassing, there are points of order raised, there are objections, there is abuse and that does not solve anything, Mr. Speaker.

We are entitled to proceed and it appears that the more they resist answering questions, the more we are determined to pursue these matters. This is a problem. It is a public interest problem, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it is a matter that is properly the business of this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is not entitled to categorize the answers of all the ministers as constituting abuse. If the hon. member feels that the hon. ministers are making statements which are contrary to the rules of the House, the time to raise those points is at the times when the statements are made.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I will accept your ruling. I was merely commenting on the difficulty of the members in obtaining information.

I now want to mention briefly the Department of Highways. First of all it isn't all bad. I could say, Mr. Speaker, that I have never in the time that I have been in the Legislature heard a minister make as many miles as has the Minister of Highways after he ran out of steam in his speech.

It appeared to me that he started on a road to Kananaskis. He came back and he circled the roundabout, the traffic circle in Banff, and he travelled all over the province, but he forgot to tell us something I wanted to hear very much, and that is what is going on in his constituency. Is he building anything? Is he doing anything for his people? I am under the impression that perhaps when his budget comes up we will be able to quiz him on this, but he avoided mentioning those things that the hon. members wanted to hear.

I have mentioned budgeting, Mr. Speaker. One can look at the last 14 or 15 budgets of the Social Credit government and we did come up with a surplus within a span of 14 or 15 years. I call this good business, good budgeting and good foresight. At a time when revenues were greater than we felt we needed to spend, we saved money. When we required more capital spending because the population grew we had cash money. I believe that those days are gone for

always. This is not the kind of government that will lay by anything for the future, even if the revenue should increase by another \$150 million.

One problem this government hasn't got that every government perhaps in North America has, and that is difficulty in obtaining revenues, revenues other than through the taxpayer. Yes, Mr. Speaker, they are getting more revenues from resources. I recall how they criticized us for spending too much resource revenue. Now they have increased it by a tremendous margin. It's good policy now, but two years ago this was terrible. We were criticized for relying too much on mines and now minerals and they place their whole reliance on this.

When you talk about mines and minerals, Mr. Speaker, the increases that this government is obtaining from those revenues, some of these increases will be paid by the people of this province. They are not passing on the direct benefits to the people by way of tax reduction in the income tax field. We are paying as much income tax, if not more, than other provinces and it appears it will stay that way. If not, it may even go up.

MR. HYNDMAN:

[Inaudible]

MR. LUDWIG:

Is that the tail end of your speech that you were supposed to give this afternoon?

Mr. Speaker, I can't help but make a couple of comments in regard to the Minister of Education. I remember when we were on that side the drug problem was a very serious problem in schools. We had to do something, and they were screaming for leadership and action.

I understand that since they got into office the drug problem in schools has increased tremendously and not a word from the hon. ministers about any educational programs or any kind of leadership in this area. Let it go on, something will break eventually and maybe by then they won't be in office.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, they forgot so quickly the very keen necessity for reform in this field. I would like to hear something about it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Why don't you tell us, Albert?

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, well you people had the answers here just a few months ago and now you've been silent on the issue. They had all sorts of suggestions, but since they got into office, Mr. Speaker, they have been very quiet about this matter of drugs in this province.

I believe it is admitted there is an increase. It has been admitted that some of the educational programs in schools were having a beneficial impact on students. But there has been no incentive and no initiative taken by the government in this area. I believe it is a reflection on the lack of foresight and the lack of serious concern of the hon. ministers in this government.

One other problem that was rather serious in this province in 1971 and very much was said, a lot of haranguing in this House, almost every member in the opposition in the spring session of 1971 made a major address on the problems of unemployment. There was a bill produced by the hon. Minister of Education to accelerate every form of capital works program in the government and in all agencies, and to encourage everyone to place emphasis on moving ahead all construction.

I don't believe unemployment in Alberta at that time was nearly as high as it is now, or was in the last few months.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh. Oh.

MR. LUDWIG:

But the budget indicates, Mr. Speaker, that there is a decline, particularly in the Public Works Department, in capital construction. I assess

it to be roughly about a 13 or 14 per cent decrease in spending in that department, although the budget shows only 5.5 per cent. I believe it is admitted by the Minister of Public Works and the construction industry generally that costs this year will be at least 8 per cent higher. So it means that the Public Works budget will buy 13.5 per cent or 14 per cent less construction this year than it did last year.

This is a sad reflection on the hon. ministers who made such tremendously long and appealing speeches to the people that, "we are not concerned about unemployment." I believe if you review the capital works program of the previous government that we had a tremendously large program. We were pushing construction to help reduce unemployment. Since the hon. members got in here -- how many ministers spoke about unemployment this year with a view to doing something about it? They mentioned it casually and they are not as interested now that somebody else is. It has now become primarily a federal government issue, but when we were, in office inflation, drugs, unemployment -- these were all provincial government issues and they made tremendous mileage on these issues. But now they are quiet.

MR. FOSTER:

Albert, we only have ten minutes.

MR. LUDWIG:

Are you the official timekeeper?

[Interjections]

You know one thing, the only thing that remark proves is that the hon. Minister of Advanced Education can tell time, if nothing else.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if I could comment on something about the department of the Minister of Advanced Education, but if I had to comment on his past performance I think I could make it short and sweet.

He is still mired down in the Worth Report. He hasn't figured out what it is all about and I believe he would like us to forget about it. He mentioned in the last session that he might have a few ideas coming out of it. If he has, he hasn't told us anything about it and I believe that he is not too proud to discuss this program. If he is, he certainly isn't in a position to do so during the spring session.

One other point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, before I close, and that is the matter of government advertising. This has been about the greatest expansion of the publicity bureau of any government in Canada. As I mentioned yesterday in another talk, we are touching very closely on a government-controlled news distribution.

I know that during the war in Europe I used to listen to all kinds of programs over the air. It was all government controlled. No matter what the government did they so brainwashed the people with propaganda that the people began to believe what they heard. So there is an indication of a similar trend here. We are flooded with news from the government.

Every department has a budget to spend and they are going to tell the taxpayer all about the good things they are doing, but they are not levelling with the taxpayer. They are not telling the taxpayer in every letter they send to us that this news item, this expense is paid for by the taxpayer. It would require more magnanimous people than we are dealing with opposite to admit when they advertise in the paper or over the air to wind up by saying, "This has been an Alberta taxpayer sponsored announcement." It would be a little more honest than the way they are doing it now. In fact, at times, Mr. Speaker, in the House of Commons --

[Interjections]

Mr. Speaker, you know I appreciate all these interruptions because I like to do that to them too, and I hope you will be as lenient with me when I happen to mention some remark to the side opposite as you are when the ministers heckle me. I think it --

MR. COOKSON:

The hon. member is challenging the Speaker's authority.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Oh no.

DR. BUCK:

Now go back to sleep.

[Interjections]

MR. LUDWIG:

You know, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about advertising I wish to state that when the Executive Council budget comes up we ought to have and demand a thorough review of the budget for advertising and publicity.

As I was saying, in the House of Commons questions have been raised lately on points of privilege that semi-political advertising is not proper. It isn't honest. It is not honest for a government to show a picture of a minister -- a long picture in the paper -- advertising he is going to be some place for a day or two, spending \$70 or \$80 for an ad that no matter how you describe that ad, when the government pays for such an ad, it is really dishonest spending. They are paying for political advertising rather than for announcing something that is going to be taking place.

I can dig up several of these ads where the proportion and the size of the picture was far beyond what is necessary to make a proper announcement. This is, Mr. Speaker, an abuse of the use of public funds. And I believe the hon. members opposite want to challenge that they can produce the material from the publicity bureau and show us --

MR. FOSTER:

Are you making a charge?

MR. LUDWIG:

Well not specifically, Mr. Speaker, but generally --

MR. FOSTER:

Well, put up or sit down. Either it's a charge or isn't it?

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, but I am saying that when you have an ad in the paper, particularly of the hon. Minister of the Environment, where it shows an ad of about 12 or 14 inches long, and about 6 inches of that ad is the heading and the signature -- well I am saying this is misusing public funds. It's wasting public funds, and that is the kind of ad that should have under it an endorsement that this ad is paid for by the taxpayer of Alberta.

And whether I'm levying a charge or not -- you can draw your own conclusions -- I believe I can substantiate the facts and that is all that matters.

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. LUDWIG:

You know, Mr. Speaker, when we talk of the attitude of the government and the arrogance of this government, one of the finest examples of this arrogance is reflected in a statement made by the hon. Minister of the Environment in Edmonton. The headline "Government, not People to decide." This is a complete reversal of what they were saying a couple of years ago.

[Mr. Yurko rose to his feet.]

MR. LUDWIG:

What's the hon. minister standing up for if he is not going to say anything?

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly the hon. minister has a point of order or a point of privilege.

MR. YURKO:

It's all right.

MR. LUDWIG:

One of his sounder decisions, he changed his mind.

But this is an indication of the kind of attitude that is developing in this government and I believe it is the kind of thing that the opposition ought to expose at every turn, and fight and let the people know that now that they got in, the 'now' government is going to decide. They are going to get the government not people to decide --

MR. YURKO:

Why didn't you question me? I didn't write the headline.

MR. LUDWIG:

I thought that meeting worked you over well enough for a couple of days, we should leave you alone.

MR. YURKO:

...[Inaudible]...journalism. I have never seen --

MR. FOSTER:

You mean to tell me you have sympathy and compassion?

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, for a minister who likes to talk about everything that happens in his department, he's asking me why I didn't quiz him on that meeting. I'm surprised, why didn't he get up and make a major address over that meeting? Why didn't he tell us all about it? After all it was a people's meeting. But I suppose that he preferred to keep quiet about it.

But we don't need to question you on this, Mr. Minister. I believe the press indicated what position you took and it's deplorable.

MR. FOSTER:

Four minutes Albert.

MR. LUDWIG:

When we talk about performance of ministers in this House, Mr. Speaker, you've probably witnessed the government at its finest hour when they showed us that they would like to use the weight of their numbers in forcing issues in this House, and I'm referring to what happened here two or three days ago when we sat until 4:00 o'clock in the morning. I believe that was a deplorable display of the kind of leadership that this province can do without. The only people who suffered by it, and perhaps learned something by it, I hope, is the government.

One more point that I wish to make, Mr. Speaker, concerning conflicts developing in this province, government created conflicts, is the question of government spending in building certain businesses and certain industries which is competing with businesses that are having difficulty in remaining solvent. I've asked the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce to advise us whether this is happening and he said that was a good point to raise and that he will come back with information at a later time.

I state that he has not done so but I believe I am right in saying that some of the businesses which are suffering in this province from competition are suffering from government-created competition.

DR. HORNER:

Nonsense.

MR. LUDWIG:

The hon. minister says nonsense. The Minister of Agriculture says nonsense. I wonder if he would like to give us a good dissertation on the problems that are faced today with poultry and egg marketing bodies. Yes. And I happen to know about it personally, that they are suffering from competition and regulations and policy of the government.

MR. FCSTER:

Albert, you've got another second.

DR. HCRNER:

All imposed by the Social Credit government.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes. And I thought that the hon. minister reversed or repealed everything we've done. It's all his now. It's interesting how when things are good, they are jumping up and down saying that it was their policy, and if there should be any criticism, they stand up and say it was Social Credit. That's par for the operation of the government and particularly the Minister of Agriculture.

And he shouldn't believe everything he hears from the hon. members behind him because none of them displayed courage enough to tell him perhaps what they really think of him. But some people are saying it.

[Interjections]

Some people are saying it. One lady down south told me that, "Mr. Ludwig, if talk will keep farmers happy, Hcrner is the man to do it." Yes. And so there it is. But when I talk about poultry and egg marketing, that the chickens are already coming home to roost, the minister hasn't been in long enough to really create too many problems.

Also, he wasn't in here, Mr. Speaker, when I mentioned that he ought to get together with the Minister of Consumer Affairs to determine whether he is going to fight for higher meat prices or whether he is going to talk it over with the hon. Minister, Mr. Dowling, to see if a compromise can be arrived at, so that the consumers in this province do not have to pay such exorbitant prices for agricultural products. There is a --

MR. SPEAKER:

The time for the adjournment of the House has come.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. member adjourn the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

[The House rose at 4:00 o'clock.]