

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, April 11, 1973

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES

MR. FURDY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the report of the Select Committee established to review The Election Act, And on a point of privilege, I'd like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that a small error occurred on one of the pages, and we've added an additional page on the inside cover to indicate this to all hon. members.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order I'd like to ask unanimous leave of the Assembly for the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour to introduce an important new bill, notwithstanding the fact that the formal one day's notice on the Order Paper has not been given.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

Bill No. 35. The Alberta Labour Act, 1973

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill No. 35, The Alberta Labour Act, 1973. This is a major revision of the Act. The main principle of this important legislation, Mr. Speaker, is the nature of labour relations in Alberta, outlining within those relations, the responsibilities and relationships of labour, management and government.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 35 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. 31. The Alberta Housing Amendment Act, 1973

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Alberta Housing Amendment Act, 1973. Briefly, Mr. Speaker, this bill contains 16 amendments. The most significant of these removes the restriction on the Alberta Housing Corporation, which confines agreements for the purpose of capital assistance and development of senior citizen housing projects to non-profit organizations or senior citizens' foundations. By authority of the amendment in this bill, Mr. Speaker, a corporation is enabled to enter into agreements with municipalities and housing authorities as well as non-profit organizations and senior citizens' foundations.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 31 was introduced and read a first time.]

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move, seconded by the hon. Provincial Treasurer, that Bill No. 31, The Alberta Housing Amendment Act, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion by the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[The motion was carried.]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, some 70 students, their teachers and bus drivers from my constituency. They are the Grade 9 class from Rocky Mountain House. They are in the public gallery and I would like them to stand and be recognized by this House.

FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, last year the government asked the Environment Conservation Authority to conduct public hearings on the environmental effects of the operation of sulphur-extraction gas plants. These hearings were held in November, and the Authority has since published the proceedings of these hearings, which have been distributed or are being distributed to each member. They are very extensive in scope, and really are a compilation of an amazing amount of information. I beg leave to table them.

I would also like to table a second report done by the Authority in connection with these hearings. It was a public opinion survey on the environmental effects of sulphur-extraction gas plants in Alberta.

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table returns to Sessional Papers Nos. 214 and 240.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Motions for a Return Nos. 212 and 195.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table Motion for a Return No. 109, as ordered by the Assembly.

CRAI QUESTION PERIOD

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Ombudsman's Annual Report for 1972

MR. HARLE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the hon. the Premier. Does the Premier intend to take any action on the findings in the Ombudsman's report, filed yesterday?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I have had an opportunity, as I'm sure other hon. members have, to have a cursory review of the Ombudsman's Annual Report for 1972. We have noted that the number of justified complaints have been reduced. We have noted that the number of justified complaints, in particular with regard to the Attorney General's Department, have significantly reduced, even though there is a very large number of them.

We note further that no major confrontations have occurred with any department or agency of government by the Ombudsman. However, the Ombudsman has raised an important matter regarding the employee performance rating form, and I'd like to call upon the Minister of Manpower and Labour, who is responsible for matters of this nature, to elaborate on the government's reaction to the report.

MR. SPEAKER:

This is a statement which perhaps might be more appropriately made on Motions, since it will involve, perhaps, an analysis of the problem.

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

Interim Utilities Tax Rebate

MR. MOORE:

I have a question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Could the minister advise the House if there have been any recent changes with respect to the interim utility tax rebate, the rebate which comes from Ottawa to the provincial government?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, there has been a change, and a change that will probably be of interest to most Albertans. That is that presently, under The Public Utilities Income Tax Transfer Act, there is a rebate to the government spread over a two-year time lag. What has happened now is that the two-year time lag will be removed so that a major portion of the funds will come immediately, and then there will be a final accounting at the end of the two year period involved.

There are some implications, Mr. Speaker, some happy implications, I would suspect, for utilities and utilities consumers in Alberta. I would ask the hon. Minister of Telephones and Utilities if he might advise the House in that regard.

MR. FARRAN:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the announcement does have special significance in the light of the current hearings into an application for a rate increase by Calgary Power, which resume on Monday, April 16. This is why it is of considerable importance to the interveners in that hearing.

Without wanting to contribute anything to one side or another in this particular hearing before a non-political body such as the Public Utilities Board, I could say that the effect of the income taxes on a current basis rather than after a two-year delay would be that tax rebates can be more equitably distributed to customers.

One of the snags in the old system was that the customers who received the refund were not necessarily those who originally paid the tax because of the two-year delay. And the other point of significance is that the consumer is not deprived of his money for so great a time and the cost to him is therefore less -- the expected interest over the two years. So, it is of special significance to the interveners in the case who have proposed several alternatives for the method of treating income tax by Calgary Power.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. In view of the fact that Calgary Power has deferred taxes of some \$33 million, has the government made any representation to Ottawa with respect to the question of deferred taxes?

MR. GETTY:

I have ..[Inaudible].. talked to Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, it is a matter that is, I am sure, discussed and dealt with before the Public Utilities Board.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Employees - Continental Express Lines

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour. Can the minister advise the House whether he has received any representation from employees of the now-defunct Continental Express Lines with respect to severance pay?

DR. HOHOL:

I can't at the moment say, but I can find out from the department and inform the hon. member.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. When the minister is investigating this matter, can he determine whether or not it is true that the severance pay was given to the salaried employees but not to the hourly employees with five or more years experience? It is my understanding these people did not receive severance pay.

DR. HOHOL:

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Thermal Springs Discovery

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. the Premier. Will the government take immediate steps to determine the exact location of the springs recently discovered by Underwood, McLellan and Associates and the lake adjacent to Mount Lougheed for preservation as a natural wilderness park?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that I might start with some bias on that particular question but I would refer it to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests.

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, this very interesting discovery was made in an important and scenic area of Alberta, and I have the write-up of that by the Calgary Herald which is extremely interesting. Certainly we will be very interested in learning as much as we can about it, not only in terms of [how] what appears to be a unique feature fits into the natural ecology of Alberta but also in terms of any possible use of it such as the member suggests, for example.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. Would the government consider naming the lake after Mr. Harry Connolly the man who found it?

DR. WARRACK:

There might be a number of suggestions of which I would be pleased to take that as one. I don't know whether I have much to do with naming it or not, but I am sure I could find out whether it already has a name.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. In view of the fact it is well rumoured that a tremendous volume of hot air emanates from that area, I wonder if you would consider naming this spot after the Premier?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please. Possibly we might get cut of the hot water and the hot air and hear from the hon. Member for Camrose.

[Laughter]

Import of Muskoxen

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Are you prepared to make strong representation to Mr. Stewart Hodgson, the Territorial Commissioner of the Northwest Territories for the purpose of importing muskox into Alberta on behalf of a group of Provost ranchers.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, my department has already been involved with regard to the interests of the ranchers in that area and their interest in muskox. There are one or two minor questions with regard to animal health that have to be resolved, but I am sure that our department will help in any way we can in establishing this interesting sideline in agriculture for Alberta.

MR. STROMBERG:

Supplementary, is it true that the federal government and the Northwest Territories Council have agreed to export muskox?

DR. HORNER:

My understanding is that there is a surplus population in the North at the present time, Mr. Speaker, and that these might be available for our farmers.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Rehabilitation of Drug Users

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister of Industry. To the hon. Minister's knowledge, do any Alberta industries or companies have a policy to rehabilitate or assist employees who are discovered users of drugs for a non-medical purpose?

MR. PEACOCK:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Has the hon. minister considered proposing guidelines and suggestions for company management to follow in case such situations arise?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, that is the sort of suggestion we would certainly be very pleased to take under advisement. I might say that in general consideration of the subject up to the present time, I have suggested that the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission -- I find increasing evidence day by day it is undertaking its responsibilities with an energy and to an extent that hadn't previously existed -- that it consider the area of rehabilitation, actually right from preventive education through to rehabilitation as a source of particular interest to industry in Alberta. And therefore, I think we can consider that subject as being under consideration. I will certainly be glad to pursue it.

Government Offer to ALCB Employees

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to either the hon. the Attorney General, or the hon. the Minister of Manpower and Labour. What was the basis of the government offer of 14.2 per cent to Alberta Liquor Control Board employees?

MR. SPEAKER:

This is not the type of question that would ordinarily be handled on the question period. It may involve a fairly lengthy statement of policy. If the hon. minister wishes to answer briefly, perhaps we could deal with it. Otherwise, perhaps the question might be put on the Order Paper.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, the answer is simply that they are still in a stage of negotiation.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary question. Is the government prepared to give the Alberta Liquor Control Board employees a fair share of the increased profits arising out of the increased prices?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member's question is obviously in the nature of debate.

MR. TAYLOR:

I just asked the question.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MINISTERIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my statement with regard to TransCanada Pipelines, I referred to the contractible surplus. The Chairman of the Energy Resources Conservation Board has called me this morning, and he wanted to be assured that the Hansard record note that the report of the Board in the matter of the application of TransCanada Pipelines Limited dated March 1973 had an arithmetic miscalculation on page 7-4, and that the contractible surplus should be shown as 2.8 trillion cubic feet, rather than 3.8 trillion cubic feet, and that subsequent resultant calculations should be altered accordingly -- and a similar alteration should be made in the record to my statement of yesterday re TransCanada Pipelines.

The Chairman of the Board has asked me to assure the members of the Legislature that this change in no way alters the basic findings and conclusions of the Board that substantial contractible surplus exists in Alberta without affecting the 30 year requirement for the province.

He asked me to further bring to the attention of the members the important notation on page 7 of the 1972 Report of the Energy Resources Conservation Board which has been tabled in the House, that 1972 year-end remaining recoverable reserves estimates for natural gas do not reflect increases in the recovery factor for existing gas reserves due to the expectation of much higher gas prices at the time of abandonment than had previously been anticipated and that the Board is making a special study in this regard.

When this study has been completed I will table it in the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

May I respectfully suggest that possibly the earlier part of the hon. Premier's announcement might be put into an appropriate memo to Hansard so that yesterday's copy of Hansard will show the amendment for those who may not read on into today's copy.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Agreed.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair.]

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COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Committee of Supply will now come to order.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (CONT.)

TOURISM (CONT.)

Appropriation 1414 Travel Alberta (Cont.)

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, unfortunately I just got the return I asked for about two minutes ago and I'm going over it. I'm a bit disappointed because it really doesn't give me what I'm looking for. Instead of breaking it down into legal descriptions, it's broken down into zones so it's going to be difficult to go into it very thoroughly.

Maybe the hon. Minister of Tourism -- I spoke to him last night and I am concerned about the amount of money they are loaning to people who are already in business and well able to look after the financing of their business. It's a going concern.

I'm wondering if it isn't an indictment, then, if this is going through into such a great extent, on our banking system in Alberta that they do not want to loan money to a tourist-oriented facility in Alberta.

I believe that a lot of these mortgages, apparently, are just additions to a lot of businesses already established. I think if the government is having difficulty -- or I should put it the other way -- if the people in the tourist-oriented businesses, such as motels and restaurants, are having difficulty getting finances from the regular financial sources in Alberta this should be disclosed by the government. And I'm sure the head offices of the banks and other credit institutions would probably take a second look at it.

I'm wondering too on the loans -- and I'm sorry Mr. Chairman I haven't had time to go through them all, but there isn't anything here that is going to help me very much at the present time until I have more time to go over it. At first glance there is not too much information here that I really wanted.

But I would like the minister to enlarge on what is the problem in Alberta? Is it that the banks and financial lending institutions do not want to loan money in areas outside the two major cities? What is behind all the loaning of money to businesses which are already well established? They must be doing a good business or they wouldn't want to add on. So I'm wondering why the other financial institutions aren't picking it up, rather than public money.

MR. DOWLING:

Well, Mr. Chairman, many of the financial institutions are doing an excellent job. As a matter of fact, we now have in Alberta something in the order of 23,000 units in the motel-hotel industry, and something in the order of 17,450 units in other tourist accommodation facilities.

For the hon. member's information, we have had discussions, not with the presidents of the banking institutions, but with some of the people involved in the major banks in Alberta with regard to tourist loans and with some success I believe. That was one part of the question.

The other one I wanted to answer briefly concerned two questions that the hon. member asked last night. One of them had to do with the number of projects that have been financed by the Alberta Opportunity Company and are now in arrears. There are three of them that are in arrears in their payments. Other arrangements have been made for financing beyond the terms that were originally agreed to. The total amount of money involved in those three loans is \$42,410.

The other question was, how many new projects are there as opposed to additions or improvements to facilities? Improvements to facilities, of course, means improvements to camp sites, improvements to restaurants, and things like this as well as motel units. Sixty per cent, approximately, of the total loans approved have been for brand new facilities -- have never been built before -- or are not being upgraded.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, one other question. Maybe the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce might care to answer this, because during the debate when this Order for a Return was before the House, the hon. minister said that the terms weren't too attractive. They were above the ordinary terms.

Now I see that most of the loans, regardless of the length of time they are loaned for, are at 8 per cent. There is no difference. It doesn't matter whether you are loaning the money for five years, ten years or fifteen years. They are all at 8 per cent. If my recollection of the financial institutions is correct, I think the going rate today is about 9 per cent. The hon. minister in his remarks earlier said they were 1 per cent over the usual rate. But it looks to me like they are all 1 per cent under the going rate.

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Chairman, yes, I think that at the time of my discussion on the Opportunity Fund I stated that the 8 per cent was not all that attractive. Basically I was relating that to industrial loans. However, I would like to add in regard to the tourist facilities and the expansion of same that there are many reasons -- as I am sure my hon. colleague has mentioned to this House before -- for the Opportunity Fund making these kinds of loans available to expand their facilities and upgrade them in the Province of Alberta.

We are all well aware of the importance of the tourist industry, of course. Secondly, we are aware that mortgage funds, as the hon. Member for Drumheller has mentioned many times, are not as likely to be available in rural communities as in urban communities. This might be because of collection; it might be because of return of money; it might be for many reasons. Consequently in establishing an interest rate we struck on a fixed figure.

I am not sure that we couldn't consider what has been suggested, and we have mentioned in this House before, that in reviewing these interest rates we won't look at (a) the location, (b) the risk, in identifying rates. However, we did start with a firm rate at 8 per cent and applied that as a blanket across the board.

MR. DIXON:

I was wondering, Mr. Minister, too, on the appraisers that you use -- I notice they are not all completed because they are going to be appraised when they are completed -- but at an early glance at this return it looks like there are only one or two people who seem to be preferred to do the appraisal.

Are you giving all Alberta appraisers an opportunity to service these loans by way of appraisal? There are one or two who seem to be doing the bulk of the work. What is your policy on that?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Chairman, I think that is also an excellent point which you have drawn up. As far as we are concerned, as you know, the program is now floated in its full concept. As a matter of fact the first meeting of the new board and the new director will be held on Friday. Certainly this is one of the considerations that we will be putting forth to the new director -- that he look at the availability of the appraisers in the location in which the loan is going to be struck.

MR. DIXON:

Well, Mr. Chairman, one of my final questions is, how many objections have you had either from people already in business where the government has set up competition practically next door to them, or from people who have been turned down for loans either for new construction or for additions? Have you been faced with a lot of complaints from the public regarding that? I've had one or two and I just wondered if the department had.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Chairman, there have been loans refused. As I said at the beginning, Travel Alberta involvement in the Alberta Opportunity Company is strictly an involvement to indicate to the Alberta Opportunity Company whether the facility is needed or not. It has nothing to do with the viability of the operation at all.

And in establishing the need for that facility, the Travel Alberta people take into account the facilities that are presently in existence in the area where the unit is proposed; take into consideration what type of competition this would result in as a result of a new facility being put where one perhaps already exists. All of these things are taken into account in establishing need. Again from the standpoint of viability, there is no input from Travel Alberta in this regard.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I noticed in a quick review of the return that this deals with the applications that were accepted. I notice there was one in zone 3, The Big Country zone. Has the hon. minister any idea offhand of the number of applications that were rejected or the number that are still pending from The Big Country zone?

MR. DOWLING:

No, Mr. Speaker, I have no idea of that. I do know that there are a number pending and these were pending as a result of the reorganization of the Alberta Opportunity Company or the establishing of a new chairman and the executive.

I would suggest that within the next few weeks, it would move ahead a great deal faster than it has in the last little while, only because of the reorganization of the structure of the operation.

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Just one further question. Is there some attempt to apportion the money among the various zones or does it depend entirely on the applications that come in?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Chairman, it does depend entirely on the applications. However, we are looking at it very carefully and I have had some recommendations from Travel Alberta, many of them regarding the further promotion of particular areas of the province where Travel Alberta feels facilities are required. And my hon. colleague, the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce, has indicated that perhaps preferential interest rates would be considered and other things of this nature.

I'm anxious that facilities be built and provided in every area of the province and there are areas which are decidedly lacking in them. We are looking very closely at this and I would suggest that within the year we will have something fairly firm on it.

MR. TAYLOR:

Just one further question, Mr. Chairman. I'm wondering if the Department of Tourism or the Department of Industry and Commerce are carrying out any research in regard to tourist needs in the various zones, or if the zone people themselves are doing this.

It seems to me that here is an excellent opportunity where a need appears and possibly people aren't aware of it, where there would be a good return if the motel or whatever service it happened to be was carried out. So many people are looking for areas in which they can invest their own money and probably also borrow to invest.

I'm wondering if there is any of this type of research carried out by the department.

MR. DOWLING:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say. I mentioned this last night, perhaps it was misunderstood. We have a joint program between Travel Alberta and the Planning and Intelligence branch of the Department of Industry and Commerce under PEP auspices.

The program or this research project is a study, a travel overview study and policy study for the entire province. This study is to provide us with a cursory look at where facilities are required, where park development should take place, where roads should be built, all of these things.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I have here the return that was filed by the minister today and I think it's rather amusing that a minister can try to get away --

MR. HENDERSON:

[Inaudible]

AN HON. MEMBER:

You tell him.

MR. LUDWIG:

No, I have the motion here.

MR. HENDERSON:

And the amendment?

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I am rather amused that the hon. minister can try to get away with giving us the actual location of the projects: "actual location" does not mean somewhere on 2,500,000 acres in north-western Alberta. That is not actual location, that is in the general direction of the province.

I think that the motion was amended to read:

the amount of each Alberta Opportunity Company tourist-oriented loan granted, including the actual location of such projects and the terms under which each loan was made.

I don't think he can say it was in zone 1 or zone 14, and that this is actual location. I think it is an affront to this Legislature to think that you can get away with that kind of nonsense.

When you see this Return, you have to suspect immediately that the minister really does not want to give away the location of the project on which the money was loaned, when the order requires "actual location". When you give me the actual location, I can find that place. I know exactly where to go and find it, but nothing in the return gives me that information. And I wonder why the minister was so vague in describing actual location.

What is the reason, Mr. Minister, that you do not wish to give the actual location when the Order of the House requires that? This is utter and complete nonsense to say that it's -- there is one zone here, zone 14 or zone 8 -- I'd like the minister to tell me how many million acres are in zone 8? You'd fly and never find this thing you are talking about, "actual location". Why didn't you just say, and be funnier than you are, that it's in Alberta? That's close enough.

Yes, I think, Mr. Chairman, we ought to take this thing back and do a sensible job and a credible job. This, in my opinion, is an affront to the hon. members on both sides of the House. From the information that we got, there is not one single actual description that one can possibly find where these things are. And frankly, Mr. Chairman, the hon. minister ducked the question for reasons best known to him and I am not going to make any allegation until he explains why and whether he can comply with the Order, because he had seven weeks.

I believe this would take only about one day's preparation if he's got anybody working for him. In fact, the record of the actual location had been compiled before the loan was made. A good clerk could have dug all this information up in one hour. And seven weeks later, I suppose the minister was contemplating how to give the information and at the same time to give you nothing.

We want the actual location. And unless he can give us some better definition of "actual location" than this, I believe the hon. members here have a really legitimate complaint about the manner in which the hon. minister discharged his duties.

One of his first responsibilities to the House was to comply with an order. And I am saying that this is nothing short of contempt of the order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DOWLING:

That's pure nonsense, as the hon. member should know. He's had the regulations read to him several times. The rationale in providing this return in the way that it was provided was to locate loans geographically in terms of the tourist zones, which is truly the way we operate Travel Alberta. Everything relates to the 14 zones in the province. And the regulations governing the tabling of this return are as follows:

All information pertaining to the individual applications, loans, guarantees of loans and all other matters of the Company's business shall be deemed to be confidential as between the parties concerned and may be divulged by the Company to third parties, other than those legally entitled to such information, only with prior consent of the commercial enterprise concerned.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I don't think the matter can be left to rest at this. We debated this return at length when it came before the House. And the big argument then was that they couldn't give us the names. That's what the specific Motion for a Return called for in the first place and that was rejected by the House and the motion was amended by the government.

And the minister who has just spoken moved the amendment. The amendment that he introduced included the amount of each Alberta Opportunity Company tourist-oriented loan granted, the actual location of such projects and the terms under which each loan was made. Obviously, somebody is playing games. Here is the minister's own motion, and he has it in Votes and Proceedings if anybody wants to read it, dated February 22. It is his own motion, including the actual location of such projects.

I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that when the minister now stands up and says zones denote actual locations, that was his intention at the time when he moved the amendment, he misled the House, because that was not what he indicated when he introduced the amendment.

Now either he is playing games with the return, or he was playing games with the motion he introduced amending the original motion in the first place. So when he stands up and says that the words of the Member for Calgary Mountain View are complete nonsense -- the remarks of the Member for Calgary Mountain View are in keeping with the amendment that the minister, himself, introduced to the House.

And I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the minister either deliberately misled the House with Motion No. 109, the amendment he brought in, or he is deliberately misleading it now. Because the return he has produced does not comply with the motion which this House approved.

And we went along with the amendment on the understanding that it was the names that were being deleted, but the actual location of such projects remained in the motion in the minister's own amendment. And so I think, Mr. Chairman, the minister has to give us a little better accounting on Return No. 109 than he has done thus far. If he wanted to waive the sanctity of the particular clause of the regulation he quoted, he should have quoted it earlier at the time of the debate.

MR. DOWLING:

I did.

MR. HENDERSON:

The actual location of the projects and using the word "zone", I suggest, is absolute hogwash, when he says he did, particularly when the regulation in question was not written by the Legislature but was written by the Executive Council of the Government of Alberta, otherwise known as the Conservative party.

So when he stands up and hides behind a regulation which they have written themselves and says "zone" has some relevancy to what the actual location is, I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the minister is acting completely irresponsibly.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, there is another point I'd like to discuss with the hon. minister --

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I was not finished with this particular matter. Mr. Chairman, I believe that when the minister comes up now and says that he is complying with the regulations -- I think this House can make any order it wishes, and it made that order. It was, I believe, a unanimous order -- a unanimous Order for a Return. Now the minister is going to set up something that he did, and the Executive Council did. I believe that the Legislative Assembly is superior to the Executive Council. It always is every place else, except, perhaps, here. I believe that this goes to the very root of contempt and arrogance of the Order of the House.

I believe that the hon. members of the opposition have one more clear-cut case where they have to dig and have to go through an awful lot of work and perseverance, a lot of searching, to find out the information the House ordered to be tabled. We are entitled to this by the order of the Legislature and the Legislature is supreme, as far as I am concerned. Neither the Executive Council, nor the Deputy Premier, nor the Minister of Tourism is superior, nor can they in any way flaunt the order of the House.

I think if this is going -- this is one more indication that they are not too concerned about what is right and what is wrong. They are concerned about having their own way in the final analysis. I think when you show contempt of an order of the House, you are not merely ignoring the hon. member, Mr. Dixon, or someone else, you are ignoring the people of this province. The laws of the land and the power of the Legislature are supreme, but they are not in this Legislature.

We had one minister suspend legislation, we had another minister violate the legislation and we have one more minister thumbing his nose at an order of the House by saying he is complying with regulations. We are not concerned about the regulations, we're concerned about the order of the House.

This is not something that was an oversight. This is something that was debated at length, and the minister proposed an amendment and we went along with this. I believe that when he says that the actual location of such projects is good enough within three millicre acres, then I believe he is not only showing contempt for the House, but he is showing contempt for the people of this province.

Now we have a job to do on this side -- to somehow smoke all this stuff out. The reputation of this government is, when they want to tell you something you can't turn them off, they'll just keep on and on and on; it's like a commercial, a paid commercial. They'll keep on, and be enthusiastic, say it over and over again and use the taxpayers' money to tell you all about it. When they don't want to give you something -- an Order of the Legislature, which is the highest order you can get in this province -- it is ignored. I am saying it is deliberately ignored and it requires some magnanimity on behalf of some other senior ministers to stand up and say "You'll get what you want."

But I can say this. If it takes us a year, we will find out; it will cost us, but we will find out. It could be embarrassing to the hon. minister but, in the meantime, the public ought to ask this question: Is the minister hiding something and if he isn't, if they are so proud of their projects and their program they want the people to know where all these tourist spots are, what are they hiding, if anything?

That is a good question and we will ask it over and over again until we find out, and we will be obliged to ask the question in public; what is the

government hiding here? I'm not saying they are hiding anything, but I am asking if they are. If they are, let's have it.

MR. HENDERSON:

I suggest this really isn't a laughing matter when the gentlemen seated opposite think it is a big joke that an Order of the Legislature can be flouted in this manner, and a suggestion that regulations passed by Order-in-Council by the Premier and his colleagues take precedent over an Order of the Assembly. It is absolutely fundamental to whether this Legislature and the exercise we go through in here is meaningful, or whether it is just a bunch of hogwash to entertain the gentlemen seated opposite. They seem to think it is strictly a matter of entertainment.

There can be no question whatever that zones have nothing whatever to do with the actual location. How on earth could an area covering several square miles be interpreted as "actual location"?

And the minister is demonstrating nothing but contempt for the Legislature and his contempt is obviously being shared by the two jovial members, the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. They think it's hilarious that they have duped the members of this Assembly in this manner.

The problem is simply this: the order said the "actual location"; that is what the return was supposed to provide, that is what the order provided. We didn't order it from the opposition side, it wasn't ordered from that side, it was ordered by all members of the House collectively on a motion by the minister himself. And if we are to sit here and accept this nonsense, Mr. Chairman, and call it democratic action and a meaningful performance in the Legislature, then I suggest we might as well all pack up and go home and let the task force opposite just rubber-stamp the exercises and the operations of the Premier and his friends who sit around the council table.

Because there is no way whatever that the minister can hide behind the regulations. It is a very fundamental matter, Mr. Chairman, and I see no point in proceeding further with the study of the estimates, or even any consideration of any of the returns unless there is something in principle established here -- which I always thought had been established until the gentlemen opposite took office and started demonstrating their arrogance toward the Legislature and the people of Alberta.

The Premier is arrogant; he won't even answer questions. He wouldn't even sit in the House last night when we were going through the estimates on the Executive Council. I have never seen a man spend as little time in the Assembly as the present Premier of Alberta has spent this year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HENDERSON:

He considers it beneath his dignity to come in here and discuss any of the matters that are of concern to the people of Alberta. Then we have the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs thinking it's a great big joke that the Minister of Tourism stands up and reads off a regulation that they passed privately, and tries to convince us it takes precedence over an order of this Assembly. And I suggest, Mr. Chairman, we either get a commitment out of the Minister of Tourism to produce the information that was ordered by the House, or he might as well pack up and go home, because there is absolutely no point in trying to pretend that this Legislature has any particular authority to deal with the matters of public concern.

The implication that is contained in this exercise is very clearly that the Legislature takes second place to an operation or an exercise that goes on within the Executive Council.

Had the matter in question been a part of legislation that had been established as a matter of public policy by this Legislature itself, then I could go along with the minister's words, because it would have required an amendment to the legislation, to the Act, to deal with it properly. But it wasn't. It was simply something that was cooked up behind closed doors to put a veil of secrecy over the way they are handling \$50 million.

And I suggest that after it has been debated -- and the only argument is that it is improper to disclose the names of the individuals -- and the minister

stands up and moves the amendment that he did, which in his own words was to include the actual location of such projects -- then he has the gall to stand up and read a regulation and suggests it takes precedence over the House, the affairs of this Legislature, Mr. Chairman, well then I suggest you should leave the Chair, we should get the Speaker in, and we might as well adjourn the Assembly and forget about any semblance of democratic government.

It is not a laughing matter; it is a very fundamental matter. And there is no point in proceeding further until we get a commitment out of the Minister of Tourism and the Deputy Premier, since the Premier considers it beneath his dignity to sit in this Assembly these days. Until we get such a commitment we, as I say, might just as well pack it up and go home and save the taxpayers all the money that we are wasting in spending paying MLAs' wages on both sides of the House and what it costs to go through this exercise. Because obviously it is an absolute waste of time, absolutely. And if the gentleman, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, wants to get up now and demonstrate what a jolly little game it is, I suggest he have the opportunity of doing it.

But as soon as he has finished doing that and soon as the Premier gets up or the Deputy Premier -- it is hard to tell who is the Premier these days, we see more of the Lieutenant Governor around here than we do the Premier of the province in this particular Assembly --

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, ccme cn.

MR. HENDERSON:

-- I suggest that as soon as these two gentlemen across here who think it is such a big joke have offered their words of wisdom, then we could get down to business and get a commitment out of the Minister of Tourism to provide the information that was ordered by the Assembly.

And if we don't, there is absolutely no point in sitting around here any further, absolutely none whatever, because obviously the gentlemen seated opposite, some of them at least, consider that what they think, come hell or high water, takes precedence over what this Assembly collectively has decided should be done, and what is in the best interest of the people of the province.

So, Mr. Chairman, I think we either get this matter resolved, that we get a meaningful return in keeping with the motion approved by the House, or as I say, we call the Speaker in and adjourn the affairs of the Assembly because there is no point in proceeding any further.

MR. GETTY:

Well, Mr. Chairman, there are several things I would like to comment upon, not the least of which is the hon. member's degree of self-importance, if he thinks any member in the House who happens to be smiling at any given time would necessarily be smiling about the the hon. member is saying. Surely, Mr. Speaker, it could be from a variety of things, and it takes some ego to think that if someone smiles it is because they happen to be listening to what the hon. member is saying.

[Interjections]

MR. HENDERSON:

Point of order, as fundamental as the one that is going on before this House, that private jokes going on between two cabinet ministers take precedence over that matter, that's fundamental. I suggest that the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs doesn't even belong in the front bench.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. HENDERSON:

He is not even a water boy for the Premier.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, order --

MR. HENDERSON:

-- let alone a --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, Mr. Henderson, there is no point of order there. Mr. Getty please continue.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Chairman, the member has an opinion on how important something is in his own mind, and that's fine. I suppose when he is standing up talking, he considers that what he saying is extremely important. But surely that's a matter of judgment or opinion because there are many times he has stood up and said things and, Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, they are not important and not fundamental to the operation of this House. I think every member in the House would have to agree with that.

If I were smiling it may easily have been because of the fact that he has repeated himself, and Hansard will probably show it. He made the same statement while he was talking at least four or five times. It was apparent last night in a different debate that there was continual repetition. When the hon. Leader of the Opposition has some subject he wants to discuss, once he has the floor, we have to listen to the same subject being repeated over and over and over again. Sometimes, Mr. Chairman, while it is important in his mind, frankly, for the third, fourth, fifth and sixth time it's not important in the minds of every other member in this Legislature.

MR. LUDWIG:

Speak for yourself.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Calgary Mountain View and the hon. Leader of the Opposition are working very hard at seeming to dredge up some kind of heat and working themselves up into a lather about the Motion for a Return of this House to the effect that in some way it is ignoring the House or harming the fundamental operations of this House. Frankly, I think they are dealing in an interpretation of words and they happen to have one interpretation of what "actual location" is and the hon. Member for Edson has a different interpretation.

But, Mr. Chairman, the tourism office does split the Province of Alberta into certain zones for the purpose of identifying the particular needs and particular attractions of those zones. There's no question that one interpretation is that you are giving a location for some tourism project; it would be by zones. The various projects, I'm sure are actually in those zones. He has told you the zones they are actually in. Now your interpretation may be completely different, but I suggest if they want different information they would have to be more specific when they come up with a request for information. Otherwise you do have this interpretation factor.

I believe the hon. members recall the debate as well, in that the intent and the spirit of the regulations were that the people who apply for these loans and receive them must be kept confidential. Those are the existing regulations and laws by which we operate in this province.

MR. HENDERSON:

Laws of the cabinet, not of this Legislature.

MR. GETTY:

Then, Mr. Chairman, to merely try to identify the project by a specific location is really no different from putting a name on it. I suggest that what the hon. minister has done has provided the information for the members in the best way he could, taking into consideration the regulations.

And all this dredging up of some kind of lather, some kind of white heat over there, about the very foundations of this Legislature, or the province

coming apart, or that everybody should go home, is strictly some kind of red herring. And I suggest that the members of the House are not going to accept that at all, and they will, in fact, tell the members to continue with their committee work. If there is more information they wish to obtain from the Minister of Tourism, surely he is here and prepared to give them every bit of information they want. With respect, though, there are certain regulations and laws that he must observe at all times.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, that has got to be the most conspicuous exercise in sophistry I have ever heard. When a minister stands up and can stand there without biting his tongue when he tries to lead this House to believe that the order reading "actual location" is synonymous to mapping out on a map of Alberta an area which represents -- Zone 8 alone represents 25 per cent of the Province of Alberta. And that's the definition of accuracy by the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs! It comes to be repetitious, Mr. Chairman. I intend to be far more repetitious than I have been thus far on this particular point, because it is fundamental to the affairs in this particular Assembly as to whether an Order of this Assembly means anything.

When the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs stands up and says, the regulations or the laws of this Legislature that is absolute nonsense because the regulations he is quoting were written by him and his friends over there. Even the people in the back benches on that side of the House weren't consulted on it, I presume. Certainly nobody on this side of the House was consulted.

So when the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs goes through an exercise as foolish as the one we have just witnessed, where he tries to say that an area representing the Peace River Bloc, which must be something around 25 per cent of the Province of Alberta, can be considered as being an exact location, well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know how on earth he can even find a football field in Edmonton, because, you know, he obviously has no concept of distance, geometry, geography or anything.

I come back to the statements I made earlier and which I make again. I suggest that if the Minister of Consumer Affairs, or Tourism, or whatever he is called these days, tries to lead us to believe that the word "zone" in here is synonymous with "actual location", and that was his intention, he deliberately misled the House. If that is the kind of game we are going to go through in here, then I suggest once again there is very little point in wasting the taxpayers' money with any semblance of a democratic operation in the Province of Alberta so far as the 'now' government is concerned because there is no similarity whatever. I point out again, that the wording of the amendment that was approved by this Legislature was the wording introduced by the member, Mr. Dowling, and seconded by the hon. member, Mr. Hyndman. I state it again. By amending new paragraph 1 to read:

The amount of each Alberta Opportunity Company tourist oriented loan granted, including the actual location of such projects and the terms under which each loan was made.

The actual location -- and that a zone, which as I say in the extreme represents 25 per cent of the province is synonymous with the words "actual location", then I have to suggest that the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs has demonstrated his clear incompetence and I suggest he should offer his resignation to this House. Nobody in his right mind is going to take seriously a proposition such as that.

I am pointing out that this isn't a matter of my opinion. The order in question was approved by the Legislature, not by the Leader of the Opposition.

We are getting another bit of the same treatment that we read about in the paper. The Minister of the Environment comes up and calls a public meeting to discuss an issue. The public start telling him what they think he should do and he says the public isn't going to decide this, we are going to decide this. Now we have the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Minister of Consumer Affairs starting to say that the Legislature isn't going to decide these things, we are going to decide, that an Order of this Assembly means absolutely nothing, that they can seriously stand up and put an interpretation on an order such as that which has been put on by the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. I suggest his credibility has been strained pretty badly this session. But it has been strained beyond the breaking point with the presentation he just made.

I call once again upon the Minister of Tourism, or Consumer Affairs, or whatever he is supposed to be, to stand up and give us the information that was asked for and was ordered by this Assembly. It didn't say "notwithstanding or withstanding the regulation" that they wrote in the back councils of government here some place, wrote privately, and on which there was no consultation with the public in any way, shape or form. They didn't make any such amendments in the motion approved by the House.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, I think it's incumbent upon the Minister of Tourism to explain to the House exactly what on earth it is he thinks he is trying to get away with. I say once again, there is absolutely no point in proceeding further with the affairs in this House if exercises such as this are to be condoned by members of this Assembly, because it means that a minister of the Executive Council is not in any way, shape or form to be held responsible for anything that he does and is in no way accountable to this House.

I think it is time for an accounting and I quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, am prepared to stand up and repeat the same speech all afternoon and all night, and do it all day tomorrow, tomorrow night, and Friday if need be, to see if the orders of this Assembly mean something or whether they don't mean something. Because the way the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Minister of Consumer Affairs has treated them, they obviously think they are a great big joke.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I think it's necessary to comment on some of the remarks the hon. Leader of the Opposition, in fact, has made and to get something straight for the record.

He referred to a meeting that the Department of the Environment called in regard to the White Mud Creek affair, and as a result of that meeting the paper very prominently displayed the results of the meeting with what they considered an appropriate headline for opposition use.

Now what, in fact, went on at the meeting and what should be made very clear is that during the course of discussion, I made it very plain to the meeting --

MR. HENDERSON:

Well, Mr. Chairman, if the minister wants to make a statement to the press about their report he should do it on Orders of the Day. He shouldn't be doing it now.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, order, Mr. Henderson.

MR. YURKO:

He's getting a little touchy; he won't let me explain.

What I attempted to indicate to the meeting was the fact that the 250 people at the meeting weren't going to make a decision on that particular matter; that, in fact, there was a much broader aspect --

MR. LUDWIG:

Would the minister permit a question please?

MR. YURKO:

Awww --

MR. LUDWIG:

Would the hon. minister permit a question?

MR. YURKO:

As soon as I'm finished I'll permit a question, Mr. Chairman.

The fact that there were aspects of that problem that were much broader than the 250 people represented at that meeting, and that the government had as a result, the responsibility to hear the views and to understand the views of a

much wider spectrum of society, including those who are going to be buying homes in Mill Woods and those in lower income levels, in terms of making this decision.

This is what I tried to get across and there is an accurate word-by-word transcript of that meeting which, in fact, can be displayed and typed out and circulated to the members of this House to indicate that is exactly what I said. The government had a responsibility to all the parties and all the people concerned with the White Mud Creek decision and as a result it wasn't about to let the 200 or 250 people at that meeting make that decision. It had to be made on a much wider basis.

Now in terms of this discussion, I don't really have very much to add to the uselessness of the discussion on the other side except to say that the word "actual" itself may have many meanings. And if the requirement were to designate the town in which this particular industry or this particular expansion was going on, or a new motel was going on, then I'm sure this information would have been supplied. If, in fact, there was a requirement, or the wording was used where, in fact, this had to be identified in terms of a highway, along a certain highway of development, then I'm sure this would have been done.

But when the word "actual" is used, "actual location", the whole province of Alberta is, in fact, an actual location. If I said --

[Laughter]

Well, of course, Canada is an actual location in terms of world geography. And I can talk about London being an actual city in Europe and I'm perfectly correct. I can talk about it being an actual city in the British Isles and I'm certainly correct. So I don't see what the hon. members are arguing about. They still haven't learned how to write a Motion for Return. If they wished to know the town it was in, then they should have asked for the town it was in. If they wished to know along what highway it was located, they should have, in fact, asked for this.

MR. HENDERSON:

Absolute stupidity.

MR. YURKO:

So they are now equivocating and trying to indicate that they should have been given information they haven't been given. I'm amazed at some of the arguments that are made, particularly when I recognize that I sat in the opposition benches for a number of years and recognized the information that I received when I put in Motions for a Return. And with that, Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, when the hon. minister says he is amazed at what he hears over here, I'm no longer amazed at what I hear over there. I'm beginning to expect such nonsense from the ministers. It's become routine rather than the exception. When he says actual location would be good enough if this were in Alberta, well, that's exactly what the hon. minister did. He may as well have told us "That's in Alberta" because he gave us one area of the one zone that is several million acres at least. And when that means "actual location", I have an idea that they're really trying to get away with it rather than comply with the motion.

I think one more thing needs to be said about this whole exercise. I am wondering whether the Premier knows about this and whether he condones it. Because then it makes it more interesting, since it then hits at the very root of the integrity of the whole government.

It's happened here over again, it's happened here before, it's happening again that we have seriously questioned the integrity of the government and all they can do is turn around, bandy words around and heap abuse on the intelligence of the hon. members on this side. That in no way clears the integrity of the government. And I am surprised that the Premier must know about this by now and he feels that all's well if the minister says it's so, it's so.

I think the Premier had to, on previous occasions, pull the fat out of the fire for some of the ministers. And this is one more occasion I believe he

ought to stand up in the House here and explain that he either supports what they have done or he will see that we will get the answer that the House ordered us to get.

I believe that it is the indifference of the Premier which is rather interesting at this stage of the session -- that he cannot come here and stand up and say that I agree with the hon. minister. I wonder whether he knows about it. If he does, and he condones it, then I believe the opposition has a very interesting job to perform in this Legislature.

I also feel that the opposition has no alternative but to pursue this matter on every occasion and as relentlessly as it can, to get justice. Because it is not refusing me an answer, or the hon. member, Mr. Dixon, or the opposition. The people are entitled to know those answers. The people's representatives in this House voted unanimously that it's "actual location". And if "actual location" means within 10 million acres, then I believe the minister is not only in contempt of the House, he is in contempt of everything that is common sense.

"Actual location" -- if I want to know the actual location of the hon. minister's house, he'll tell me it's in north-eastern Alberta. I'd expect more intelligence from a kindergarten student than that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

North-western.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes. Yes. I'd expect that to be in north-eastern Alberta. Now the 'brains trust', of the Conservatives is beginning to rise, Mr. Chairman. We're in trouble now. "Actual location" -- what's the "actual location" of say, the Deputy Premier's home? It's in Alberta. That's the answer we get from that other side. --

DR. HORNER:

No question about it, Alpert,

MR. LUDWIG:

And the hon. Minister of the Environment says "actual location" could mean "in Alberta". Of course it is in Alberta. It's in Canada --

[Interjections]

Yes, why not be more vague and say it's in North America? And then we'll really be confused. But I think, Mr. Chairman, that if the whole exercise appears to be repetitive, that we are frustrated in an effort to obtain the information ordered by the highest authority in this province and they are thumbing their nose at the Legislature.

I wonder what people like Diefenbaker and Baldwin and maybe the Deputy Premier's brother would do if the Liberals tried to pull one off like this. There would be an insurrection. They would probably walk out, probably tell the government where to go in proper language. And I think it's about time the people got the message. Maybe they will tell the government where to go in no uncertain terms.

I'm just absolutely amazed at the nerve of the minister to sit there and feel that he can pull this one off and whether he does or not remains to be seen. If he does, it will not be because the opposition hasn't been trying to get justice in this Legislature.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Chairman, since the hon. member across here mentions integrity, I think integrity also starts when an hon. member from across the road does not know what he is talking about, in speaking of accusing the hon. Premier of not being in the House last night during his estimates. The hon. Premier was here during the estimates that concerned his office --

MR. LUDWIG:

Part of it.

MR. SCHMID:

--well, just let me continue here. And also maybe they don't know that the hon. Premier returned the same day from Toronto where he negotiated on behalf of the people of Alberta. He had to get up that morning at 5:00 o'clock Edmonton time and was here last night until 11:00 o'clock. So that's an 18-hour day.

If the hon. Leader of the Opposition wants to call that integrity -- bringing up matters like this and not adding what the hon. Premier was doing before that -- Mr. Chairman, that is not integrity.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, when the Legislature is in session the Premier has a responsibility to be in the Legislature, and it's the government that chose the estimates, not the opposition. The government chose which estimates were to be considered last night. We had nothing to say about it. And so if the hon. Minister of Youth, Culture and Recreation is complaining about us having his estimates the day he came back from Toronto, he should speak to the Government House Leader, not to us. But surely, to argue that the Premier of a province should be in the House a reasonable amount of time is not being unreasonable. Premier Lougheed is not in the House a reasonable amount of time. He's out of the House far more than he is in the House.

But I didn't stand up to discuss that particular item. I think that is a responsibility Premier Lougheed has to take himself. But I certainly think it shows some contempt when the hon. Premier does not remain in the House through the Executive Council votes particularly, as well as for other debates.

What I wanted to deal with, Mr. Chairman, is the matter of the definition of "actual location". If the hon. minister, when he made the amendment, intended that this would mean a zone, then surely the hon. minister would have said so. "Actual" means "real", as close to the spot as possible. What else could "actual" mean? And "location" means where it is located. So "actual location" surely means within a reasonable area in which the actual industry is located.

For the hon. Minister of the Environment to talk such nonsense as saying the actual location of London is in Europe, is completely ridiculous -- completely ridiculous. I don't think there is a court in the world that would accept the definition of "actual location" as meaning within a very, very large area.

I would suggest to the hon. minister that when the words "actual location" were used when he brought it into the House, I really thought he was referring to the legal description. I think that's maybe reading too much into the words "actual location". But I'm not sure that a court wouldn't rule that "actual location" would mean the legal description of that particular area. Nobody will know, I suppose, unless it is referred to a court, but it seems to me very reasonable that that could be the definition.

But to say the "actual location" is in an area of several thousand square miles is really going way beyond any realm of realism at all.

I would think that the hon. minister would be prepared to say, in connection with this "actual location", whether it is within the vicinity of Calgary. Even that is stretching it, when you say "actual location". But that's getting a little closer -- or Banff or Peace River or Vermilion, whatever town it happens to be. Then, of course, you are getting within reason of actual location.

But I suggest that the wording of the amendment did not refer to zone at all, and consequently if this is what was meant, the House was certainly misled. I'm prepared to give the hon. minister the benefit of the doubt, if he is prepared to bring in the actual location, meaning within some reason of the place where it is actually located. Surely the nearest town or the nearest highway or within a county would really be stretching it when you are talking about "actual location", but even that is being a little more sensible than saying within a whole zone of thousands of square miles.

My point is, Mr. Chairman, I would be willing to wager that there isn't a court in the country, a court in the land, that would define "actual location" as being an area within a zone of several thousand square miles.

So, I am appealing to the hon. minister, who is a fair man, to live up to his own amendment and to bring in a supplementary document showing where these

actual locations are, at least reasonably close, saying the zone or the city or within some reasonable distance of some certain town -- so at least we have something that adds some realism to the word "actual" in regard to the word "location."

If the minister is not prepared to do that, then I think we should appeal to the highest authority in this House, the Speaker, and have him give the ruling on what "actual location" means. He heard the debate and it reads very, very much as if the hon. minister intended to bring in something that would indicate the general area at least -- and that is stretching it -- but the general area at least, of where this money was being spent.

Surely, that is not being unreasonable, that is simply being reasonable and I would hope the hon. minister would follow through and give us that information.

MR. PEACOCK:

When the hon. Leader of the Opposition makes scathing remarks about the integrity and...[Inaudible]...on this side of the House in regard to being responsible to the electorate, it becomes a little disturbing to have to recall that in this very House during the debate on the Opportunity Fund, we indicated at that time that we would certainly look at the regulations and review in the fall, and secondly, that we would not preclude any member of this Legislature from having a look, on a confidential basis, at anything he thought was not in the best interests of this province in regard to the loans.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, it disturbs me to have -- and I know my colleague needs no support or defense in being confronted with being irresponsible in regard to the return -- but surely the regulation, and I am the minister responsible for it -- in stating that it would be in the privilege and sanctity of the offices of the Opportunity Fund company, the name -- surely that must be respected in this House until such reviews are made and the regulation is changed.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Chairman, we have now heard a great 'foofaraw' by the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Mountain View and most of the blame, Mr. Chairman, can be laid squarely on their own door; they don't know how to write a motion for a return.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

It's your wording.

DR. HORNER:

They don't know how to write a motion for a return or to make sure that the motion they voted for, in fact, was what they wanted. The hon. members, of course, are supposedly experienced parliamentarians. I have some doubt about the experience or the question of whether or not they are parliamentarians, but the situation very surely is that they have, in fact, got themselves into their own box by not writing motions for a return properly and not knowing what they were voting for.

[Interjections]

The question of whether or not, you want a specific situation -- then you should ask for that specific, you shouldn't ask in generalities.

I am rather amused by the hon. Member for Drumheller's little speech on Orders for a Return because I can recall with some amusement and some clarity that I tried to get out of him when he was Minister of Highways a number of questions and he sat me down, and I say quite properly so, because he wrote in one line an answer to the return without paying any attention at all to what the question was and I never got the information. And it was improperly drafted.

I got my information in other ways and that was quite satisfactory. As a matter of fact we got it out of the Estimates by asking questions and by persevering in that matter.

But the question from the hon. Member for Drumheller -- when he was a minister, his reply to motions for a return has to be a real classic example of non-information. And, as I said, it relates to the question of the structure of the returns. It relates to the question of what, in fact, the meaning of a

return is, the question of the acceptance or not -- in relation to a number of factors -- of these motions for a return.

It used to be the accepted practice in this Legislature to stand up and say briefly that subject to concurrence it was all right. Our present Speaker feels there should be a difference in this matter and that, in fact, all of these things have to be specifically worded in the Return. And I suggest to the hon. gentlemen opposite that, in fact, if they want to get the kinds of specific information they are asking for, then their return has to be structured in that way. It has nothing to do with the question of whether or not the minister moved an amendment because the order or the motion (asking for information) was still theirs. The structure of that particular order is their responsibility. And if they want specific information then they have to ask for it in those specifics.

Well, the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View has had a little bit of legal training and knows that is a question of opinion. And his particular efforts in this regard have not been striking examples of how you should do it.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, this entire matter rests on the question of whether or not returns should be structured properly, whether or not the government responds to those returns in a specific nature or in a general nature, whether or not the people who want this information have the necessary -- I think it's a matter of spending some time on their part in relation to the drafting of these motions for a return. If they would spend some time drafting them, then I think they would get the information they require.

I therefore, Mr. Chairman, would like to suggest here that the entire matter of motions for a return be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections with regard to their structure, their importance and the kind of reply they get.

And as a matter of fact, we will make that a motion, Mr. Chairman.

I move that all matters with regard to motions for a return be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections with regard to their structure, import and replies.

MR. HENDERSON:

Point of order, Mr. Speaker. He is entirely out of order. If the government wants to make such a motion, the minister knows full well -- he gives us all this lecture about parliamentary procedure -- that the proper order is for them to put a government motion on the Order Paper and bring it before the House, and it will be dealt with in that manner when the Speaker is in the Chair.

But he is entirely out of order by introducing that question into this particular debate. It is a red herring and it has nothing to do with the exercise. I have described a lot of what the Deputy Premier has said in other debates as hogwash, but nothing that he has ever said previously exceeds the latest contribution he just made, because it is absolute hogwash.

When he stands up and says it is the opposition's responsibility, when two ministers of the Crown bring in a motion which amends a motion which reads "the amount of each Alberta Opportunity tourist oriented loan granted including the actual location -- of such amendments -- of such projects." ...To hear the Deputy Premier try, with any seriousness, to lead anyone to believe that people seated on this side of the House are responsible for the wording of the ministers on that side of the House, it is just beyond any credibility whatever. And certainly the motion is completely out of order and if the Deputy Premier wants to make that kind of motion he knows full well the way to do it. He can make it and put it on the Order Paper -- when the Speaker is in the Chair.

DR. HORNER:

On a point of order, Mr. Chairman --

MR. HENDERSON:

I have a point of order already, Mr. Chairman, and so I think I should be allowed to finish.

DR. HERNER:

I didn't know the hon. member was speaking on a point of order. He didn't announce it.

MR. HENDERSON:

I did so. I sure did. Now, you see, the Deputy Premier never listens. It's completely out of order -- the motion, Mr. Chairman --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Henderson, if I may just consider this motion that was presented by the Deputy Premier, I would rule that a motion made by a committee cannot be referred to another committee. I would accept that this is a Notice of Motion and refer it to the Speaker. But my understanding is that one committee cannot refer a motion to another committee, and we are in Committee of the Assembly now.

MR. HENDERSON:

I'm not too sure if the ruling is right, but I have no objection to the Chairman referring the matter to the Speaker. In fact I think before we are finished we will refer this motion to the Speaker anyhow.

But I want to return to the comments made by the Minister of Industry and Commerce, and he comes back to the question of names -- I guess he's gone to join the Premier. The question of names has nothing whatever to do with the debate. That was settled once in the House by virtue of the amendment we are talking about which was introduced by the hon. minister, Mr. Dowling, when the question of names was deleted. And once again the suggestion that members sneak around through the back -- as the 'Minister of Skulking Affairs' has said -- skulk through the back corridors to go into the minister's office and find out privately and secretly what this is all about when it's public information is, of course, completely nauseating as the Member for Drumheller said, and it's probably a more polite word than what I was going to use. Obviously we reject that. It's public information and we should have been entitled to it in the first place.

So, Mr. Chairman, I suggest once again that the Minister of Consumer Affairs should make a commitment to the House that he is prepared to comply with the Motion for a Return that was ordered by this Assembly on Motion for a Return No. 109. And if he is, we can go ahead with the rest of the business of the House and hold this vote. But in the absence of such a motion I suggest there is no point in proceeding further with the study of the Estimates.

We have a whole list here of returns and according to my count -- and it might be in error by two or three or four -- there are five from the Attorney General I understand. We have three from the Treasurer. There are 5, 8, 12, 16, 17, 20, 23 -- the Minister of Labour has done hardly anything yet, there must be about ten there.

There are around 45 to 50 returns that are still outstanding. If they are not going to be treated with any more seriousness than the return we are discussing today then we might as well forget about the returns too. They are going to be absolute nonsense, and they won't be relevant because the ministers are not prepared to accept directions of this Assembly.

So, Mr. Chairman, a simple way to resolve the issue is to get the commitment out of the minister to comply with the order. It's all we want. We can still hold the appropriation and go on to other business. But failing that, I guess we will just have to be prepared to stay and debate it. Because in actual fact the minister has not complied with the Motion for a Return that was ordered by this Assembly.

I suggest the integrity of the government is at stake on this particular issue, because if they make a farce out of this particular exercise, they make a farce out of everything. It's fundamental as to whether an order of this Legislature has any meaning or not, I think, particularly when it's an order from the Legislature which is based on wordings that were introduced by the government itself. Obviously, they are doing nothing but playing games on the matter. They don't consider the matter serious in principle, it's a big joke.

So, Mr. Chairman, once again, it's a simple matter. All the Minister of Consumer Affairs needs to do is give us the commitment to comply with the Motion for a Return No. 109 as was ordered by this Assembly.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I knew that the members opposite, the government, were a bit desperate about the situation because they did get themselves caught in another embarrassing situation. I didn't know how desperate it was until I heard the Deputy Premier make his remarks, and it was rather amusing to have him talk about being a parliamentarian. I've suggested once before that all he brought with him from Ottawa in his many years in parliament was a lot of bad habits. He hasn't changed a bit since he got here.

I know that when you talk about integrity of government, the integrity of the government is not affected by what anyone says. It is affected by what they do, and that is where the whole thing hurts the government right now because they have been caught more than once. They have been on the defensive on the matter of their own attitude toward civil liberties, toward the supremacy of the Legislature, toward the interests of the people. They have been caught on this and they have been defending themselves and defending themselves very weakly.

I feel, Mr. Chairman, that it is almost unbelievable that we should have 48 members on the other side and not one of them has the gumption to stand up and tell the Minister, "Let's do the right thing and let's not try to be too smart or too cute for the people of this province. Let's not try to talk about legal training or definitions of words." "Actual location" has some meaning. And in the context in which the minister gave his answer, it has no meaning. "Actual location" is definable. If you talk about legal training, and you have rather a preponderance of it on that side, get together and see whether "actual location" is as meaningless as the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs seems to think it is. I am sure that we can perhaps go beyond this House if we can't define "actual location". For the hon. Deputy Premier to say, "Well, it is the wording," there is nothing simpler when you are caught in a bind than to start blaming somebody else. They can see the faults in any little shortcoming of any definition here, but they can't see the major faults on that side. They are blind to them.

So it's a weak argument by the Deputy Premier in support of a weaker position by the Minister of Consumer Affairs not to come clean in what we want to know. Certainly the people can't fault the opposition for wanting to know how \$50 million is going to be spent. The public has a right to know because the public is underwriting that expenditure.

If we had a recession, which has happened under the Conservatives in previous times, when things went 'belly up', somebody would have to stand up. The Deputy Premier would be the first one to say, "Well, why didn't you say something when you were over there?" Well that is exactly what we are doing. Now he is trying to put the blame on this side. They fall into it but it is our fault. Everything wrong that has happened in this House is our fault.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes. Yes. And the faultless one just got up and made a speech and met himself head on about parliamentary procedure, fumbled, sat down and didn't have his quarterback or anybody to recover the fumble for him. So now we are caught. The Opposition is stuck with the problem of keeping this government honest. It is the biggest job any opposition ever had in Canada since I can remember. In fact, I would just love to have the Right Honourable John Diefenbaker sit over there. He would probably tell us, "Go to it, boys. These fellows don't deserve to be in office." Because he is one honest Conservative. Yes, it is a pity that we haven't got too many.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Chairman, I am glad the hon. member's opinion of Mr. Diefenbaker has changed since previous conversations with him.

MR. LUDWIG:

I have always had a very high regard for him, which is more than some of you have had, in the past. Yes, and you know it. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I am remiss. I should be talking to you.

Mr. Chairman, we might not get the information we want. I doubt whether we will. It requires a magnanimous man to commit a heresy and say, "We have all been wrong and we will change and we will come clean now." It requires some

stature to do this and I don't expect it. But don't expect the opposition to drop this argument because we have no right to drop it. If we are going to discharge our responsibility we will have to fight this thing until we get it, and it appears that we are going to have to get it the hard way in this House.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Chairman, the challenge has been thrown out to some of us back here to stand up and put the government right. I have been a little confused by this whole debate and I would like to clarify this situation somewhat and put a question to the hon. Member for Calgary Millican whose Motion for a Return, I believe, it originally was. I would like to know from the hon. member, was he asking for a legal description, a postal address, a site address, a town address, a tourist zone, or what, in fact, did he want when he requested the information?

MR. DIXON:

Well, Mr. Chairman, in answer to that question, the "actual location" I had in mind -- I thought if we could get the names which the hon. members opposite said we couldn't have because of the regulations that the cabinet had set up.

And secondly, I said the "actual location" which I would have preferred -- the legal description would be the best for "actual location."

DR. HERNER:

Why didn't you say so?

MR. TAYLOR:

What did you say in your --

MR. DIXON:

Well, I meant to get the actual legal description. All right, so I'll settle for this. I would even go along if you want to forget about the actual legal description and say that it is located in the town of Banff, or the town of Jasper or the town of High Prairie.

Because as I look this over I'm getting quite concerned. I can see here where we've loaned money, believe it or not -- I wouldn't have believed it until I got this return today -- and in all fairness can this government justify loaning money on second mortgages in the amount of up to \$500,000, which is a half a million dollars, at the same rate of interest as they gave first mortgages? I don't think there is a business in Canada that is carried on that way. It's unbelievable. And here, I'm just going to have to get this clarified, too, from the hon. Minister of Tourism. Are these amounts that are given the final amounts that will be given, or are these advances?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Chairman, the amounts indicated are the final amounts of the total loans.

MR. DIXON:

Well, Mr. Chairman, in that case then, in the first page on zone 9, all the chap borrowed was \$6,860 and look at what he is going to build. He's asking for a mortgage of almost -- let's say \$7,000 -- he wants a mortgage for a motel complex consisting of 41 cabins -- you couldn't build one cabin for \$6,800. Residence, office, store, laundry facilities and, believe it or not, a swimming pool. And it's located in zone 9, and even figuring your zone 9 out, it's probably in the Banff area somewhere or Jasper, one of the areas there. All he has is a first mortgage for \$6,800.60.

You want his personal guarantees, you want the postponement of the shareholders' loan and you want the assignment of the key man's life insurance.

On a first mortgage on 41 cabins and a swimming pool and everything else and you want the poor fellow's life insurance and you're giving him \$6,000 -- he must have \$300,000 or \$400,000 invested.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Why that security?

MR. DIXON:

Well, you must have asked for that type of security and I notice where you give second mortgages with a heck of a lot less security.

But this one really gets me when we're loaning second mortgage money at the same rate as we're loaning first mortgage money.

Now I think, in all fairness, I'm a person who likes to see the interest rate come down but I think you've got to be fair. When you consider that the competition, the man next door to this one, who hasn't been able to take advantage of the rate -- there is nowhere he can go and get a second mortgage for the same rate, if he's borrowing from the conventional lending institutions, as he can a first mortgage.

And I'm alarmed at some of the amounts that have been loaned on second mortgages: \$500,000 in zone 1, a 96 unit motel with a restaurant and a drive-in; \$370,000 in zone 2 for a motel complex; and so on. And here's another one, another half a million dollar loan which is a lot of the taxpayers' money: an 80 unit motel with dining lounge and beverage facilities; maybe they're going to sell a lot of beer. Anyway, it's zone 11.

Second mortgages -- we've asked them for personal guarantees and postponement of the shareholders' loans, whatever that means.

But I'm just trying to point out, Mr. Minister, that I think this location is very vital because we have had some complaints from people not being able to get a loan or who have not wanted a loan but are in the same competitive business.

And when you talk about "actual locations" I couldn't help but laugh, Mr. Chairman, when I heard the Deputy Premier and the Minister of the Environment playing hide-and-go-seek. I could just imagine if he got called out by the page and his wife wanted to be picked up tonight, and he said, "Where are you, dear? I'm in Edmonton, come and find me." Well, she'd say, "What kind of games are you playing?"

Well, this is what's happening. Or she may even say, "Well, where are you?"... "Well, Edmonton is in Alberta. You can find me." How ridiculous can we get? And the Deputy Premier, even if his wife said that she was in Barrhead, he'd say, "Well, are you close to the drug store or down at the elevator, or at the clinic? I don't know where it is."

But really, I think this game of hide-and-go-seek has gone far enough and in all seriousness if the government wants to play games, that's fine. There are lots of recreation facilities and I'm sure the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation can make the hon. Minister of Northern Affairs the coach and we can have a lot of fun playing games.

But I think when we are spending \$50 million of the taxpayers' money, they are entitled to know a lot more than the government is willing to give them as to where their money is being spent. And so, let's quit this foolishness and I'd like to see the hon. minister say, "We're going to give you the actual location". I would even agree, as mover of the Motion for a Return, if they gave the town it is located in to me -- that would be close enough.

DR. HORNER:

Ask for it.

MR. DIXON:

Surely to goodness, the hon. Deputy Premier says, "Ask for it." Well, I'll ask for it now. Would you bring in --

DR. HORNER:

Motion for a Return.

MR. DIXON:

No, no. Why? Well, we can go through the motion of bringing in another motion for a return but if it takes another six or eight weeks we'll be a long time passing these estimates.

I'm just -- cut out the foolishness --

MR. COOKSON:

Good idea.

MR. DIXON:

...[Inaudible]...of location and get down to business and give us the location. We can carry on. Because I think you've got to look seriously upon the type of loans that have been given out at less than the going rate for first mortgages and which are way below the rate for second mortgages. And it's unbelievable to think that this government is approving loans for the same rate of interest for a second mortgage as they do for a first mortgage, when your security is just half as good on a second mortgage as it is on a first mortgage. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. YOUNG:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View challenged us to set the government straight. And he will, I think, appreciate in view of the answer from the hon. Member for Calgary Millican who needs to be set straight. We had earlier heard a speech from the hon. Member for Drumheller in which he indicated that his interpretation of "actual location" in this Motion for a Return was the town or something vaguely indicating that sort of an address.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. My interpretation was a legal description but I'd be quite prepared to settle for the town.

MR. YOUNG:

Then the hon. Member for Calgary Millican said he thought when he was requested to give a response, he thought that he was going to get the legal description. The hon. Leader of the Opposition has waffled all around the topic along with the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View, and they haven't really indicated what they thought, if they thought.

Now Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that in view of the confusion in terms of specifying what was meant in the Order for a Return, it is incumbent upon the opposition in this instance, or at least the member who originally moved the order, to specify fairly precisely -- and I say that especially in view of the hon. Speaker's rulings with respect to Orders for a Return -- to specify fairly precisely what was meant.

With respect to some of the comments that the hon. Member for Calgary Millican has made. He has, on the one hand, said we haven't acquired enough security. We've made loans, loans which were indiscreet in terms of not sufficient security. On the other hand, he has said we've taken the poor guy's blood for some of the loans.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. As I am directly involved, I'd like to clarify the situation with the hon. member. What I was doing, hon. member through the Chair, is showing you that here's a man who borrows \$6,800 and we are asking him for several commitments and it's a first mortgage. And we're asking for less commitment from a man who's borrowing half a million dollars on a second mortgage. That's what I said.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Yes, that's what he said.

MR. YOUNG:

That's correct. I said that you've tried to have it both ways.

[Interjections]

Now, I would remind you, hon. members, that it was this government that repealed The Industrial Incentives Act, which was passed by the old government which, in fact, gave money -- just outright gave money -- to industrial developments, and I think, if my memory serves me correctly, also to tourism developments. That we are not doing --

AN HCN. MEMBER:

Check the Ontario government.

MR. YOUNG:

--and I would suggest, too, that if a government is going to be in the business of granting loans, loans presumably which would not otherwise be available through the normal commercial financial institutions, then we have to be satisfied with somewhat less than the usual type of security in most instances. If it is available, fine, but in some instances it isn't available. That's the whole purpose of government being in the business.

MR. DIXON:

More.

MR. TAYLOR:

Look in the return.

MR. YOUNG:

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican has just made the statement that there isn't nearly enough in the one case, relative to what was accepted in the other. And I say to you again that if we are to do a job with respect to the promotion of special circumstances, then we have to expect to have some special situations, situations which we would not normally find in the normal commercial financial transaction. That is what this company is all about. That is why we put \$50 million into the Alberta Opportunity Fund. And I think it is doing a good job.

MR. HENDERSON:

I rather enjoy this exercise of looking backwards that the people opposite seem to want to go through all the time. As I say, I come more and more to the conclusion that there are more and more conservative features to this government than there are progressive. After listening to the election campaign, one of the big pitches was 'open' government. To hear the hon. member who just spoke offer the comments he did and talk about the previous program -- well certainly grants were made. The amount of grants that were made under that program are a pretty token amount compared to the amounts which this government gives out in grants the first year they are in office to sort of feather the nests of some of their political supporters.

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

So I think if you really want to examine the record, the question of grants is pretty insignificant compared to the grants -- and I'm still waiting for a return on what the grants have been from this government for the first year in office -- I think it's about six weeks behind schedule, too.

And then to have a government who preached open government in their election campaign come along and set up a program such as this -- and by executive decree, not by legislative approval, but behind closed doors -- go through an open government exercise invoking a veil of secrecy over a program involving \$50 million in public money, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it just defies credibility.

And then to listen to the debate in here where member after member on the opposite side gets up and goes through a feeble exercise trying to say that the reason the wording is inexplicit in their minds is because we did it. In actual fact, I point out for about the fifteenth time that the wording we are talking about is the wording by the members, Mr. Dowling and Mr. Hyndman, the amount of each Alberta Opportunity Company tourist oriented loan program, including the "actual location". And then we witness all these Alice-in-Wonderland exercises of motions to refer how to write returns to the Committee on Elections and Privileges. We get into all this hind-sighting and so forth, Mr. Chairman, and it is somewhat unbelievable.

I say again, we can continue to sit here and debate the matter ad infinitum and ad nauseum. And I say quite seriously, I'm prepared to stand here and repeat the speech over and over. But there is a very fundamental issue before this House. And the fundamental issue is whether the orders of this Assembly mean something, or whether they don't mean something.

[Interjections]

Because in the words of the Deputy Premier, the words of the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, the words of the Minister of Tourism and the words of the Minister of Consumer Affairs, an Order of this Assembly means absolutely nothing. It is quite in order for a minister to stand up and wave a regulation that was passed in secrecy, wasn't debated, wasn't publicly examined before the fact, but was invoked by executive decree and say that regulation -- determined by 20 or 25 of the people seated opposite -- takes precedence over an Order of this Assembly.

And I say for about the sixth time, that the issue is too fundamental to let the matter rest and we are quite prepared to sit here and go over and over and over the whole exercise the rest of today, we are prepared to do it tomorrow, we are prepared to do it Friday and we are prepared to do it the following week, if we have to, in order to find out whether there is any semblance of democratic process left in the Province of Alberta.

I suggest that either of two things be done, and I suggest the determination of those rests clearly with the government, and presumably with the Deputy Premier since the Premier doesn't concern himself about these affairs anymore, that either the Minister of Consumer Affairs gives a commitment that he is going to provide the information as per the return and will agree to hold the appropriation in committee.

If the minister isn't prepared to do that, then I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that it would be desirable to bring the Speaker in and have the Speaker examine the return, examine the motion that was approved by the House and get a ruling. In the absence of one or two of those we are prepared to continue with the debate on Appropriation 1414. Because the issue is too fundamental to leave unresolved and treated as lightly and casually and arrogantly as the Deputy Premier and one or two of his colleagues are treating it.

So, Mr. Chairman, again for the fourth time, I would like to hear what the Minister of Consumer Affairs is prepared to do relative to making a commitment to the House to fulfill the order under Motion for a Return 109 wherein, by his own words he points out including the actual location of the project. If he can give us that undertaking we can hold the Appropriation 1414 and we can go on with the business of the House.

[Mr. Chairman resumed the Chair.]

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. leader of the Opposition, of course, continues to rant and the situation remains the same. The question is a matter of interpretation of the actual wording of the return and the opinion of the minister as to what that requires. We have heard the Member for Calgary Millican say -- and, of course, there are -- interpretations of what location means. It can be a post office address, a county, a tourist zone or what have you, and unless the opposition are willing to be specific, they can hardly expect to receive specific information.

Again I say, in relation to the return, we are quite willing that the Speaker should be asked to rule on the return and the interpretation of the order.

MR. HENDERSON:

Make a motion.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and refer this matter to the Speaker of the House.

[The motion was carried.]

[Mr. Speaker took the Chair.]

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the Estimates of the Executive Council. On Appropriation 1414, the question of Motion for a Return No. 109 has been raised. It has been referred for your

consideration whether it was answered completely in order that Appropriation No. 1414 can be dealt with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly before dealing with the matter further, I should ask the House whether it concurs in the report even though it may not agree with the substance of what it signifies.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, just very briefly, I think the question very specifically is whether the exact order that was produced by the House, Motion No. 109 on February 22, and whether the Return that was tabled today, No. 109, really fulfils the directive of the House so far as providing in the wording of the motion the actual location of the projects.

I assume the Speaker may have heard some of the debate which has been proceeding and has some background in the matter. If not, we have the Return here, and we have the appropriate motion in Votes and Proceedings.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Opposition Leader's assumption concerning my having heard the debate is correct. However, the Speaker has no appellate jurisdiction and I'm not entitled or authorized to rule on points of order or privilege, which may have arisen in committee. We are now sitting as the Legislative Assembly and if any member wishes to raise any matter that has come up in committee it would have to be done in some appropriate way in conformity with the rules.

DR. HORNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, if I can have the unanimous consent of the House then I would like to move that the entire matter of the question in Motions for a Return, including Motion No. 109, be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections for their consideration and report.

MR. SPEAKER:

On a point of order, as I understand it, a motion of that kind would require the usual notice.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, that is why I asked for unanimous consent, the leave of the House to make the motion at this time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Is the House prepared to give the hon. Deputy Premier the unanimous consent which he has requested.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is not unanimous consent. Possibly the Deputy Premier might wish to consider whether he might wish to bring the motion up on the usual notice.

[Interjections]

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of privilege to bring to the attention of the House that a Motion for a Return, No. 109, was not in keeping with the order given by this House. I believe that the return as tabled is nothing short of being in contempt of the House by the hon. minister of consumerism, who in filing the return which required actual location of projects on which money was lent, in one case indicated that it was in zone 8, I believe, which is roughly five million acres or more.

The whole dispute, which led to the charges against the government of being in contempt of the Legislature by that kind of return, was the definition of "actual location". And I am suggesting that charges made by the opposition are valid and established in fact, because no matter what broad meaning you might give that word the minister of consumerism has not brought himself within any kind of definition of "actual location".

We have heard debate by hon. ministers saying, "Well, actual location could be in Alberta, or actual location could be in Canada." But actual location in the accepted meaning of the word means some specific spot or area in which this project, on which this money is loaned, must exist and not tell them, "Well, it's in the woods. There's five million acres of woods, if that's your 'actual location' try and find it if you have time."

That's the kind of reasoning we have been dealing with. Not only am I saying that the minister is in contempt of the Legislature by filing that kind of a return, worse yet, Mr. Speaker, he's had so much support from the other side that I believe every one of those people are caught in this kind of an exercise which lends to the contempt of this House, the charges of contempt of this House.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we ought to have some indication whether this government or the hon. minister is obliged to give any recognition to an Order of the Assembly, which I suggest is the highest order that can be given in this province. It supercedes anything that was done, including any regulations that were passed privately in some smoke-filled back room by the cabinet. The regulations of the government do not supercede a specific order of the Legislature. The Cabinet cannot overrule a specific order of a Legislature because a Legislature is supreme.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that a proper motion which ought to be before the House, that ought to have unanimous consent, is that the minister of consumerism be ordered to comply with the order that was made by the Legislative Assembly some seven weeks ago with regard to Motion 109.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to explain just briefly the position that we took in filing this return, if I might?

MR. SPEAKER:

I apologize for interrupting the hon. minister. The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View has referred to the smoke-filled cabinet room and although on my return this afternoon I have on several occasions been referred to as Mr. Chairman, I should observe that a certain cloud in one portion of the Assembly indicates the combustion of tobacco.

MR. LUDWIG:

I apologize for the fact that I referred to you as Mr. Chairman. We were in committee previously; it was not done intentionally. The motion I make that the hon. Mr. Dowling --

MR. SPEAKER:

I am not being sensitive about the reference to "Chairman". I should perhaps be a little plainer and say that I thought I had noticed the continued combustion of tobacco while I was in the room. I would suggest that the hon. member who may know something about that may wish to discontinue.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, I --

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, a question of privilege has been raised and I suggest that it's not parliamentary for the hon. member to try and move a motion at the same time. The question of privilege must be decided upon.

DR. HORNER:

I would like to speak to that privilege, Mr. Speaker, because the question surely is whether or not, in fact, the Motion for a Return was properly constructed in the first place to secure the information wanted by the hon.

member who placed it. If a motion is not constructed properly then the information that he might receive may not conform with what he would have liked to have received. But that surely is not a privilege of the House, but rather it is a responsibility of the hon. member, whose motion it might be, to make sure that he has the motion constructed in such a manner that he receives the specific information he may require.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, it's not a question of the House to interpret what some vague suggestion that the hon. member who is drafting a motion might have. But rather it is perfectly proper to respond in the manner in which the minister may feel proper to that kind of thing if it isn't specific.

I submit, therefore, Mr. Speaker, that there is no question of privilege. And I again offer to the hon. members opposite the chance to have this entire matter dealt with by the Committee on Privileges and Elections in relation to our rules that govern the entire question of motions for a return. Surely the question then resolves around an interpretation, if you like, of the language.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, it's incumbent upon the people placing the motion to make it in such a fashion that they receive the information they require. But if they don't, then that responsibility is theirs.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I think if the Speaker will recall the debate that took place on Motion for a Return No. 109, the only real issue that was raised by the government at the time the motion was before the House was the question of the names. They had no quarrel with giving the actual location. The government moved an amendment whereby, in effect, they removed the question of name from the return and agreed to go along with the wording, "actual location of such projects".

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that in the question of privilege, that when one looks at the return, which has been produced by the minister and by the government on the directive of the House, and which includes and uses the word "zone" where one zone from eye-balling the map, I would suggest, must include an area of close to 70,000 square miles in the corner of the Province of Alberta, and then compares the ordering of actual location and the description of a zone as being actual location encompassing an area of 70,000 square miles at the outside and one of the larger zones, obviously, Mr. Speaker, I think the words of the Deputy Premier so far as the wording of the return and the intent of the return are concerned, are obviously somewhat facetious. No one can seriously suggest that an area of 70,000 square miles can be relevant to the problem of an exact location, because the projects in concern aren't scattered over the 70,000 square miles. They are at one point in that 70,000 square mile area and that represents the actual location.

So I have to suggest that there is a matter of privilege involved, Mr. Speaker, because the minister, either in the amendment, in the intent that was before the House at that time, or in the Motion for a Return, is misleading the House. Very clearly, the return does not comply with the Motion for a Return that was ordered by this Assembly.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that we are really getting down to brass tacks in the sense that we have to look at the original motion and the amendment. Now the original motion requested specific names. That was debated at some considerable length and an amendment was put in, which deleted reference to specific names. That amendment was agreed to by this Legislature, by hon. members opposite and by this side of the House. In other words, it was agreed to by the amendment that the specific names would not be made in the return.

Now, I think that therefore the understanding of the amendment is very simple because the amendment referred to a general geographic description.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No.

MR. HYNDMAN:

If the amendment, as construed by hon. members opposite, gets down to naming the street address and the owner, then we are right back to what the House defeated and that is the exact names. The hon. members opposite agreed that the exact names, or something so close that they could be ascertained I

suggest, should not be made a motion for a return, should not come into this House. Then by approving the amendment they agreed that the names, or certainly something, which would put the names almost in front of the House, should be kept confidential.

Therefore, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, by approving the amendment they therefore agreed to a wider general description than an actual address, or other matters, which the hon. Member for Calgary Millican has said he wished he had put in the return if he had thought about it.

MR. HENDERSON:

A point of privilege, Mr. Speaker. If it had been the intent of the government that this is what they would do -- and that hypothesis that has been outlined by the Government House Leader was their intention very clearly -- then they should not have moved the amendment involving the words "actual location". So I suggest that the words presented by the Government House Leader are basically irrelevant to the question of privilege, because there was no such statement of that type made during the debate on the motion. The only issue that was raised by the government was the matter of name. The question of actual location was not of concern to them.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker --

MR. SPEAKER:

I believe the hon. Member for Highwood was seeking the floor a moment ago.

MR. BENOIT:

Mr. Speaker, in the original motion the request was for the names of the 80 tourist-oriented individuals, not places. The names of the individuals, the actual location of these tourist oriented projects. Now the objection was that the names of the individuals were not to be involved and so we had agreed to the amendment made by the hon. minister, and the amendment reads -- have you got it there? Yes, in the amendment it reads that that portion shall read, "The amount of each Alberta Opportunity Company tourist-oriented loan granted, including the actual location of such projects and the terms under which each loan was made."

So, Mr. Speaker, there is no way, by the widest stretch of the imagination that the term "names" applied in the first instance had any reference to the location of the place, but rather to the people who were receiving the loans.

And in this instance the Hansard and Votes and Proceedings and Orders of the Day all agree and there seems to be no problem. Everyone completely agreed that we should have the actual location of the project and there is no way I can understand, in the widest stretch of the imagination, that "actual" can refer to an area with some 100,000 or 100 million acres. It just couldn't be done.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I gather that the members have now narrowed their arguments down to what they feel an interpretation of the word "actual" means because the hon. minister and other ministers, Mr. Speaker, when they are dealing with a motion for a return, recognizing that the motions for a return come from the other side of the House, are reluctant to change any more words --

[Interjections]

-- reluctant to change any more words than necessary because, in fact, they are the members' motions for a return and you are trying to get them what they want.

But there are some cases, and in this case, where a regulation of the province specified, in fact, this information should not be given. And the minister would have, in fact, been breaking the regulation. So what was done, Mr. Speaker, is that he amended the motion for a return, he left in as many of the words that the hon. member had put in as possible.

But what the House agreed, Mr. Speaker, was that they would not identify the people who obtained the loans on these projects. And they would not identify them in any way because, Mr. Speaker, if we follow the hon. member's argument -- that you now pinpoint by the house address or the exact location where it was -- the House would be doing indirectly what it had decided not to do.

So the hon. Minister Responsible for Tourism, and tourism zones being designated in this province by zones, has given the hon. members to the best of his ability these locations, without doing what the House had decided not to do and which the regulations of the province say you should not do.

So, Mr. Speaker, surely the projects are actually in those zones. They are actually located in those tourist zones. And the minister has shown that.

If it would help any of the members of the House, we happen to have a dictionary with the interpretation or dictionary definition of the word "actual", and I'd be happy to read into the House. It certainly does not denote anything like exact address or anything like that, Mr. Speaker. I will read it for the members. Actual: active, existing in act, not merely potentially, existing in fact, and imagined conditions, not false or apparent, real --

MR. TAYLOR:

Agreed. Real.

MR. GETTY:

"Present or active at the time." Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it is pretty clear that these projects are existing in the zones and they are actually located in the zones and the minister has presented that to the House.

I would say one other thing, Mr. Speaker, about motions for a return and the problem like this that the government has. There have been many motions for a return that have been worded so broadly that you have to use some interpretation. Now early in the session we were attempting to keep that interpretation general so the House would not have a great deal of difficulty in accepting motions for a return. But one of the hon. members opposite said that he wanted them down to the fine wording. And we have had some motions for a return that are so broad that in one case, one that I am dealing with, in trying to be exact we are having to go through every file, every file that the government owns, to determine if there is any correspondence in there having to do with advertising.

MR. HENDERSON:

What's wrong with that?

MR. GETTY:

Well, we tried, Mr. Speaker. So the point we're making here is that the motions for a return are open to interpretation. The interpretation surely is that they are actually located in these tourist zones and surely the House cannot do indirectly what it agreed not to do.

[Interjections]

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the question of privilege, considering the position the hon. members are placing themselves in to decide whether this alleged breach of privilege actually did occur, might I just refer to Hansard for some guidance and direction --

MR. LUDWIG:

Beauchesne.

MR. DICKIE:

-- Beauchesne, for the Speaker. I'd like to read from page 102 in Rule 113:

Members often raise so-called "questions of privilege" on matters which should be dealt with as personal explanations or corrections, either in debates or the proceedings of the House. A question of privilege ought rarely to come up in Parliament.

And this is the key point I'd like to suggest:

It should be dealt with by a motion giving the House power to impose a reparation or apply a remedy.

Mr. Speaker, what I am suggesting here is that we are actually debating whether there was a breach of privilege or not and I am suggesting that the hon. members on the opposite side, if they are alleging this breach, should propose a motion so we can debate the motion and give the guidance and direction of the House on that motion. And I'd go further to suggest a proper --

MR. HENDERSON:

We did move such a motion and if --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals is speaking on a point of order as I understand it.

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I was going to come to the point that was raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition on the question of the motion. Might I suggest to the hon. members that the motion that should properly be entertained is the motion made by the hon. Deputy Premier. That's the motion that the House should consider, not the motion that the hon. Member for Mountain View made. If the hon. members wish to proceed with that motion then I think we should proceed with it and have a vote in the House on it -- if that's the motion that the opposition members wish to consider.

The point I wanted to make, Mr. Speaker, is that we shouldn't be debating here whether the alleged breach of privilege has been taken. We should have a motion on the floor, debate that motion and decide and dispose of it as members of the Legislature.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, on the point of order that has been raised --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs has been attempting to make some observations on the point of order, and since we have not yet heard from him perhaps we should hear from him now.

MR. DOWLING:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the point of order, just a word of explanation on Travel Alberta and how it treats its zones and how they are established. They are established, Mr. Speaker, --

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, that's no point of order.

MR. DOWLING:

Yes it is, it relates to the point of order, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say briefly how the zones are established. They are established on the basis of some specific, geographic feature of the area that sets it aside from any other area. There are 14 in Alberta and every item of concern for Travel Alberta is dealt with on a zone basis. These 14 zones are allotted money --

MR. LUDWIG:

On a point of order --

AN HON. MEMBER:

Sit down, Albert.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. There cannot be, as the hon. member himself observed recently, a point of order on a point of order. The hon. minister's remarks may, at the moment, appear irrelevant. But in many cases relevance becomes apparent as the argument is developed.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I thought the question raised was whether there should be a motion before the House to debate. That was the point of order. That's what Mr. Dickie raised.

MR. SPEAKER:

My understanding is that what we are now discussing is whether or not there is a point of privilege and that the Chair is going to have to decide whether prima facie there is a question of privilege in what was raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View. I did not understand that we were debating the propriety of a motion which might have been proposed with or without notice.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals rose on a point of order, quoted from Beauchesne and said the proceedings going on about discussing privilege are out of order. There should be a motion before the House. I rose to speak to the point of order and the Chair pointed out that the Minister was on a point of order. Then I rose again to speak to it and it was indicated by the Chair that the Minister of Consumer Affairs was trying to rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker, I'm a little confused, because I gather from your words that we are back to the question of privilege. It's a point of order relative to whether there should be a motion before the House, but it was my understanding that we were discussing the point that was raised by the Minister of Mines and Minerals.

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly my language was not sufficiently exact, but I did understand the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals to be discussing -- and the other hon. members who have entered this mini-debate -- discussing the question of privilege which was raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View. I understood the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals to be stating that raising the question of privilege in the manner in which it was raised was out of order and that it should have been raised by means of a motion, or dealt with by means of a motion. Now whether you want to call that a point of order or a point of privilege, I don't think is of any great consequence at this juncture.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, it was the Chair that referred to the matter as a point of order. When I rose on a point of order to discuss it, the Chair said the Minister of Mines and Minerals was speaking to a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

If the hon. Leader of the Opposition wishes to make some observations concerning the remarks by the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals, possibly he could do so when the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs has completed his observations.

MR. DOWLING:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I really was trying to say was that every program of Travel Alberta is put forward on a zone basis. We have any number of programs throughout the year. Our financial contributions to the Alberta tourist industry are on the basis of each of these zones. Our information centres are established on the basis of zones. Our programming generally is on the basis of zones. On this basis, the Order for a Return was placed for the information of the House.

I would just like to make one other point. I hope it is relevant. The Minister of Industry and Commerce has indicated that the information the hon. members are asking for is available to them on a confidential basis.

MR. HINMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what I can say on the point of order, but if I follow what has been said, I just want to observe that if a zone is "actual location", it's no wonder the government is lost.

However it is making good time. Now I think with five lawyers on the front bench, and four to back them up, they should have been very much aware that we accepted that change, that amendment, because we thought it would give us the very thing we were asking for. If we desired to find out who owned it, we could. And there was no mention of the intent -- we did think it would do something. Certainly it wouldn't put the man's name on the table in a return for the public. We could serve our purpose in that way. And I think any intimation that zone is "actual location", as accepted by courts of law and accepted by people, is utterly ridiculous.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say just a word or two in connection with the point of privilege. It seems to me the whole thing -- whether it is a breach or not -- resolves around the words "actual location". By the broadest sense of interpretation, surely you can't say the actual location of a project is in a zone which consists of several hundred or maybe several thousand acres. It's like saying Ottawa is located in North America. Surely no one would say that was an actual location.

In regard to the drafting of Orders for a Return, this may well be a subject that is worth considering. But we have to note that this wording was part of the amendment which became part of the return. And the wording was placed there by the government itself. So the return became partially government-constructed with their own words, and it says, "including actual location." Surely, if the hon. minister was going to mean that this meant zones -- if this was what he had in mind at the time -- he might have said location. But when he said "actual location", I would suggest this rules out any suggestion that zone could be included. Surely it must mean the legal description or a little broader, maybe the mailing address, the town or village or city, but surely it shouldn't go beyond that in interpretation. If it does, it is simply making a mockery of the English language.

MR. KING:

Mr. Speaker, I think what we are discussing at the present time is the question of whether or not there is a bona fide question of privilege and consequently whether or not a motion might possibly be made for the resolution of the question of privilege.

I would draw your attention with respect to the propriety of the question of privilege to annotation 105 on page 96 of Beauchesne, annotation 104(3) on page 95 of Beauchesne, page 80 of Beauchesne and page 116 of Beauchesne and I would make the following argument, reading from Beauchesne: "A matter of privilege must be one which has recently arisen involving the privileges of the House, and calling for its immediate interposition". And I think that is a significant passage.

Going to Page 95 and again reading from Beauchesne we read that: "A matter which is postponed to suit the convenience of the House or to secure the attendance of a Member implicated, or to give the Speaker an opportunity to consider it fully does not forfeit priority when eventually raised."

Now in the light of those two statements, before I continue with my argument, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind you that when the hon. the Deputy Premier attempted to receive the unanimous consent of the House to make a motion dealing with exactly this matter, the unanimous consent was denied by members of the opposition, presumably indicating rather conclusively that they do not believe it demands the immediate interposition of the House.

On page 80, Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to the annotations in Beauchesne which set out the rather rare occasions on which the Orders of the Day, once having been called, might be interrupted and on page 116 I would like to point out the rule against 'Anticipation' and in view of the fact that the hon. the Deputy Premier attempted to receive the unanimous concurrence of the House to make a motion dealing with exactly this question, and in view of the fact that such an attempt stands as notice, I would argue that it is as well out of order to have made the motion in view of the fact that it anticipates the motion which had previously been made and denied unanimous acceptance by the hon. members of the opposition.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, speaking to the comments of the Member for Edmonton Highlands who has just spoken, I would suggest, in all due respect, that the denial of unanimous consent to introduce a motion that the Deputy Premier introduced does

not in any way indicate that it is not a matter requiring the immediate attention of the House.

I suggest the contrary, that it does require immediate attention in the House and that is why we did not agree on having the matter referred to a committee at this point of time.

It was also the question, as the Chair has pointed out, whether there was a matter of privilege involved. In regard to the quotation from Beauchesne, that it must be a matter which has just occurred -- it has just occurred. Motion for a Return 109 was just tabled in this House this afternoon, we immediately went into committee, we didn't even get a chance to examine it. In fact, I had to send a notice to the Clerk to get hold of it so I could start looking at it. We got it just when we got into committee.

But the suggestion that the denial of unanimous consent to refer the question of how to write motions for a return to the Committee of Elections and Privileges -- and that was the motion the minister made because he didn't deal with motion or the question of Motion for a Return 109.

[Interjections]

Even if he did, Mr. Speaker, we are suggesting the fact that we refused unanimous consent did not in any way indicate that the matter should not be dealt with by the House expeditiously, and that is consequently why we denied unanimous consent because we feel it is critical to the further proceedings of this House at this time, because we are not prepared to proceed with further discussion, in any meaningful sense, of Vote 1414 until the matter is resolved.

So it is obviously in the best interests of the House that the motion be denied and that the question of privilege be resolved at this point in time and not referred to a committee sometime down the road as the hon. member has suggested.

MR. KING:

Speaking to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, if I can briefly restate my argument. If a point of privilege is to be raised at the earliest possible opportunity, then there was a prior opportunity to raise this and that was on the motion made or attempted to be made by the hon. the Deputy Premier.

The question or the term 'interposition by the House' refers to the question of debate. It can't anticipate how the House will resolve that debate. The motion which was made by the hon. the Deputy Premier, and for which he requested unanimous leave, made specific reference to this Order for a Return, No. 109, and had unanimous leave been granted by the House, there would then have been the opportunity for interposition, that is for debate of the merits or otherwise of the argument.

But the hon. members opposed denied the opportunity for the earliest possible interposition by denying unanimous consent to debate the resolution this afternoon without leave, and I think by denying unanimous consent, they denied immediate interposition and by denying immediate interposition, they cannot very well turn around immediately thereafter and attempt to make a motion of their own.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I would refer you to page 95, subsection 3 of 104. And the section quoted by the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands is referring to the point of privilege, not another motion. The whole thing is dealing with a matter of privilege.

It goes on to say: "A matter which is postponed", the matter means to refer back to the same section a matter of privilege. It is not another motion, it is a matter that is already under discussion which is postponed, the matter of privilege which is postponed to suit the convenience of the House or to secure the attendance of a member implicated, or give the Speaker an opportunity to consider it, does not forfeit priority when eventually raised.

This is referring to the matter of privilege, not to another motion.

MR. HENDERSON:

Returning Mr. Speaker, to the question of --

MR. SPEAKER:

There are some hon. members who may wish to add some observations. I neither wish to prolong nor cut short the debate but we are taking a great deal of time in it. However, if that is the wish of the House -- the hon. Member from Edmonton Strathcona has not yet made his observations with regard to this matter of privilege.

MR. KOZIAK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The fact that the words "actual location" are not clear even in the minds of the members opposite, is brought home by the comments from the hon. Member for Drumheller, when he stated just a few minutes ago that "actual location" should mean at least a post office address, and if not that, at least the village or the town or the city in which the particular project is located.

Well, just those words point out the fact that the words "actual location" can be given more than one meaning. Does "actual location", Mr. Speaker, mean specific location? Does "actual location" mean, Mr. Speaker, municipal address? Does "actual location" mean legal description? I think the only way that you can logically approach the meaning, the definition, is to take the matter from reverse, and say now, is that particular development actually located in that zone? If it is, then it complies with the order. Had the order said municipal address, Mr. Speaker, and the response been zone --

[Interjections]

I imagine, Mr. Speaker, that I must be getting nearer to the truth because of the reaction I am getting from the opposite side.

[Interjections]

Mr. Speaker, had the motion for a return called for municipal address then there is no way the hon. minister could have replied with zones and said to this House in this fashion, "I've complied with the order in this fashion." Had the motion for a return requested legal descriptions, again zones would not have been satisfactory.

But, Mr. Speaker, the words "actual location" are not defined and the discussions today, especially the comments made by the hon. Member for Drumheller, would indicate that in every person's mind they have some different meaning. If we want a specific answer we should put a specific question. Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important to look at the matter from reverse. Are these developments actually located in those zones? If they are, the question and the motion has been properly answered.

MR. TAYLOR:

Playing games. Playing games.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make one brief comment and really I think it gets down to the crux of the matter. If the problems of dealing with resolutions of motions for a return are going to result in what basically this has become, an exercise in semantics, where members of the government are trying to suggest, when they refer to a location of a specific project being in a zone which covers an area of some 70,000 square miles and that argument is to be treated with credibility I suggest, Mr. Speaker, then it isn't going to matter what wording we put in a motion for a return because we are going to find some exercise in semantics that the government will resort to --

DR. HORNBER:

That's a lie.

MR. HENDERSON:

--which is going to stretch credibility to the limit beyond which it has been stretched in this particular case. It will become an exercise in semantics. And we come back to the basic question of whether there has been a matter of privilege involved.

We suggest once again, Mr. Speaker, the minister has not complied with the order of this Assembly. That examination of the order by the Assembly and

examination of the return cannot logically, in any sensible shape or form, lead to the conclusion that the name of the individual was specifically requested. It was obvious from that, the information requested was fairly precise. The only thing the government objected to was the removal of the question of name and left the question of precise location in the motion for a return.

If they did not intend that, if they intended zone, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that wording should have been used in the amendment they introduced. We would have had a debate at that time and we would not be confronted with this particular problem today.

But I suggest seriously, Mr. Speaker, that one cannot evade the question of privilege with an exercise in semantics where one tries to argue that the actual location of a physical facility is being defined someplace in a 70,000 square mile area that isn't meaningful in any way so far as the definition, in a practical sense, of the words "actual location" is concerned.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, on Motion 109 -- and I think this is the crux -- it was the government which agreed to the "actual location" and at the time they did not object to it. As a matter of fact it was moved by the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs, seconded by the Minister of Education, that the actual location would be given. I think even if it had location in the motion you have to identify the location. To say that it's in Alberta or in some zone is not being realistic. The location can be identified in this case, the actual location can be established because actual material facilities have been built there. It's not flying out in the sky; they can give it quite easily. It's not difficult to obtain. There's no reason why the actual location cannot be given.

Now if the government has realized that maybe -- as one of the hon. ministers, I believe it was the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs -- they woke up two or three days later and found out the actual location might give away the names of the individuals involved. Well, if they had any objection to that they should have brought it up at the time they made their own motion.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think as a reasonable person "actual location" to me means actual location where the facility is located. It is located on a certain piece of land. It is just like saying, "What is the amount of money spent on the project?" The hon. minister might say, "It's around \$15,000." I would say, "What is the actual amount?" So he looks in the book and he says, "It's \$14,999." So "actual" is the key word here and the government can skate around it all it wants but it should still come up and quit playing hide-and-seek, Mr. Speaker. As the Speaker of this House, it is not incumbent on this House or anyone in here to try and deny someone some information, especially when you say the "actual location".

"Actual location" to me means where the facility is built. If we want to use the term North America, or Canada, or zone 15, there is no way where you could get away with any sort of an argument like that except maybe in the minds of the members opposite.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of the Environment, followed by the hon. Member for Wainwright.

MR. YURKO:

I would like to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the term "actual location" is a matter of opinion. Having worked in several disciplines myself, I recognize that the term "actual location" to a navigator means something entirely different than "actual location" to a surveyor, for example. The terminology will mean two different things to two different people.

I would also like to bring to your attention what the Minister of Consumer Affairs has actually indicated to this House. That is, in his department the discipline is established in such a way that when they talk locations, actual locations, when they talk about committing money for tourism, these are identified with zones. So the terminology of that department is basically associated with respect to zones.

I would just like to bring one other matter to your attention, Mr. Speaker. If, in fact, you consider that "actual location" is a matter of opinion, as it is in my mind a matter of opinion dependent on discipline or associated with

somewhat different than precise location, then I would submit to you, sir, that if "actual location" is defined as a matter of opinion then surely there cannot be a matter of privilege based on the matter that in fact is opinion, or very subjective to opinion.

MR. HENDERSON:

May I just read the definition of the word "locate"?

MR. SPEAKER:

I believe the hon. Leader of the Opposition, who has already made a number of submissions on this point, might postpone his further submission until we have heard from the hon. Member for Wainwright, followed by the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, who appears to be ready to adopt the hon. opposition leader's submission.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to prolong this to any great extent but the hon. Member for Calgary Millican expressed what I had in mind. I would like to add a further point. Not only did the government word the amendment that was made and accepted, but following that the hon. Member, Mr. Gitter, made the following,

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the amendment and I am very pleased that the hon. minister responsible for tourism saw fit to come forward with a very sensible amendment.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think the government on the other side made the amendment. They concurred in it and as far as I am concerned, and I am not a learned lawyer or anybody else, that certainly when it gets down to actual, "actual" means actual and that is it.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, just making two comments. First of all, I think we have heard a number of wild and differing points of view as far as the matter is concerned. I am not really sure whether I am more confident or less confident about Alberta's position in negotiating with the federal government, after hearing the Minister of Mines and Minerals comment.

The point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is simply this. When we are arguing about the term "actual location", it is important that we keep very much in our mind the term "location" and where these particular projects are located.

Following on the point that my colleague to my right was making here, from the Oxford Dictionary dealing with the word "locate": exact place of -- and with the greatest of respect, when we talk in terms of various zones that the Minister of Tourism has outlined today and use that as the exact place, to use the exact word here "the exact place" to try and stretch that into answering the motion for a return, is indeed stretching the point to a very great degree.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I believe one talks about a zone being a specific kind of an area. The map filed by the hon. minister indicates that he has 14 zones and every zone is different. He's trying to answer in a very general sense what is, in fact, a specific question.

I was amused at the argument of the hon. member, Mr. Koziak, when he said "actual location". I wonder if he were in court and the judge asked him, "What is the actual location of the accident?" Would he say, "It's on Highway No. 2." He'd tell him to pack his bags and the hearing would be over. "Actual location" means somewhere, and I'd like to refer to the hon. --

[Interjections]

-- somewhere in particular. I meant somewhere in particular, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. Minister of the Environment says that it depends on the discipline that you have been sort of brought up in, and if he knows the actual location of the project in zone 8, I wonder if he could find 15 surveyors including himself to tell us where it is. He couldn't find it. All the engineers in this room could not possibly find that thing without doing a square search by air as to where this place is. So instead of telling us where this project is, they are,

in fact, concealing it. Instead of revealing a site, a location to us, they are concealing, they have concealed in their answer the location of these numerous projects on which money was loaned.

So I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we have had a lot of exercises here, we have avoided the issue of actual location, specific location. When the hon. member asks the question: If I told you my address, the address of my house, would that be actual location? I say yes. If you want a general location, you could say it's in the north-east quarter of the province. That is general, that is not specific or actual. Because the minister of consumerism tells us that there is one project in zone 8, and zone 8 has roughly 70,000 square miles. And if that isn't a contempt of not only the House, but of commonsense, then we haven't seen any, Mr. Speaker.

And when we talk about a point of privilege. I haven't got the journals before me but I believe that in the 1969-1970 journals of Ottawa, Mr. Speaker ruled I believe, if I can recall the page of the ruling, it's probably 15-83 subject to correction, that the Speaker --

[Laughter]

Check it for yourself before you laugh.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It's somewhere in there, Albert.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. members get amused -- the most amusing part today was their attempts to try to avoid giving us answers that the House ordered. But the ruling was made that if a specific charge is made against a minister, and I made the charge that the hon. minister of consumerism is in contempt of this House and if it is found that he had, in fact, given us a misleading statement, then that is a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker. At least it has been ruled so. It had been ruled in the House of Commons that when you make a specific allegation against the minister, a specific charge, then that could be ruled a point of privilege and I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, that is what we have done.

We have spent most of the afternoon trying to establish that the minister is in contempt of a House order. And we should not be dealing with whether the wording is good or who is to blame for it if it isn't good enough, because it becomes the order of the House and the wording of the motion ought not to be debatable any more according to the rules of this House.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that a point of privilege has been established and we should get a ruling from you on that.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Iacombe has not yet been heard, and I wonder if we might conclude the debate with a final observation by the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and the conclusion by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. COOKSON:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I was just wondering if the hon. members opposite would save their campaigning for the Calgary by-election until after the House adjourns.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, my comments have to do with the interpretation again, and where the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View has stood up and said to him "actual location" means somewhere. Now surely, Mr. Speaker --

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The Chair did in fact hear the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View's afterthought and the use of that expression.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, my only other point is then, that a matter of opinion or interpretation which obviously can be different between members can never be a point of privilege.

MR. LUDWIG:

It's not a difference of opinion.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I simply want to remind the House once again that the definition of "location" is: discover exact location or actual location of -- that's really the thing -- not the last point I want to make on it. I suggest relative to whether there was a question of privilege involved and whether the return has been complied with, in judging where the return deals with actual location, I suggest the only definition of "actual location" that's relevant is what is on the map that's made up as part of the return.

And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it's almost impossible even from the map itself to determine -- you can't even tell where the boundary lines of the zones are. It shows one running up into the northeast side of Alberta, disappears against Wood Buffalo Park and one can't tell where it goes from there. It looks like one of the other lines here has been drawn over about three times and they weren't sure which one it was supposed to be. By no stretch of the imagination can one use this as evidence in arguing that even the definitions of the zones on the map are meaningful.

I also suggest, Mr. Speaker, there must be some relationship between the definition of "actual location" in this exercise and that which is used for practical purposes in registering the mortgages and so forth. Because surely they don't simply list a \$500,000 loan, we've taken a mortgage on a motel in zone 5, and you start through a 65,000 square mile area to try to find out where on earth you have the half million dollars supposed to be in collateral tied up to back up the public's money.

So I suggest, Mr. Speaker, there is very definitely a matter of privilege involved. The issue is fundamental as to whether this House and its orders have any relevancy so far as requirements that are placed on ministers of the Crown. It's a very fundamental issue which cannot be treated lightly. And when one examines the return in detail, and compares it to the actual motion that was made and approved by the House, it is extremely difficult to argue with any degree of logic that the return is meaningful in the sense of the words that were contained in the original motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Clearly the question which has been debated quite fully is one on which the Chair would have to reserve a decision. Of course my only duty in regard to the matter is to decide whether or not prima facie there is a question of privilege, and whether or not it was raised at the first opportunity. There would appear to be no doubt on the second point. As to the first point, I shall have to take into account the remarks of the hon. members and try to bring in a decision tomorrow or Friday.

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

[The House rose at 5:32 o'clock.]