

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Friday, April 13, 1973

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair.]

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to give notice that on Monday next, being April 16th, I intend to introduce for first reading a bill for an act being The Alberta Education Communications Authority Act, 1973.

INTRODUCTIONS OF BILLS

Bill No. 216 The Education Council of Alberta Act

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 216, The Education Council of Alberta Act. The principles in The Education Council of Alberta Act, Mr. Speaker, will be that twenty people be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, none of whom shall be members of the Legislature; that the council shall meet at least twice yearly although more often if needed; that the council report to the Lieutenant Governor in Council and the Lieutenant Governor in Council then table in the Legislature the annual report of the Education Council; and that the group of twenty people making up the Education Council will really perform as a group ombudsman to monitor what is going on in the field of education in this province. The council would have the right to hold public hearings, to become involved in limited forms of educational research the two departments of education are not involved in, and that in all, the council would really be an auditor general for education.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 216 was introduced and read a first time.]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, today we have in the public gallery 35 students who have come through the storm this morning to be our visitors here. I would like at this time to introduce them to you and to the members of this Assembly, from the Strome High School, accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Doug Munro. Will they stand and be recognized please.

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly a very distinguished visitor in your gallery. Mrs. Mabel Long of Rosetown, Saskatchewan, is the Supreme Honoured Royal Lady of Canada of The Order of the Royal Purple. Mrs. Long at the present time is paying an official visit to a number of lodges in Alberta and is in your gallery. I'd ask her to rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly four students from the Department of Instruction at Mount Royal College which is situated in my constituency, Calgary Currie. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Planidon and they are seated in the members gallery. I'd ask them to stand and be recognized.

DR. BACKUS:

Mr. Speaker, I have pleasure in introducing two groups of students today to you and through you to the members of this Assembly. The first is a group of 19 Grade 9 students from St. Mary's School in Sexsmith. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Scott and his wife, and I'd ask them to stand and be recognized.

The second group, Mr. Speaker, is a group from Grade 9 of the Harry Balfour School in Grande Prairie. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Jim Rigby and Miss Joan Krause. Mr. Rigby has brought his wife along to help manage them.

I'd like to congratulate both these schools in leaving the sunny Peace River country where, I understand right at the moment there is not a cloud in the sky, to face the miserable weather of the southern half of the province. I'd ask them to stand and be recognized.

MR. J. MILLER:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly 31 high school students from Myrnam, which is situated in my constituency. These students are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Leonty. They are seated in the members gallery and I would ask if they would stand and be recognized.

FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to file two sets of regulations required by the statutes. The first is The Electrical Protection Act regulations, adopted during 1972; secondly, The Gas Protection Act regulations adopted during 1972.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file the Annual Report of the Alberta Agricultural Research Trust.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table an item today which was presented to the hon. Lou Hyndman, the hon. Jim Foster and myself at the kick-off breakfast for Operation Placement by a British student. Operation Placement is a cooperative achievement of the federal government, the provincial government, the Chamber of Commerce and the students, and last year alone placed over 6,000 of them in jobs that wouldn't have been found otherwise.

We were presented with a football, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to share this presentation with the other members of the Assembly, and therefore would like to table it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The rules regarding tabling are presently under review, and the rules regarding chairing are being severely tested. Perhaps the House would give the hon. Clerk Assistant unanimous consent that he might, after duly examining it, release the exhibit back to its perpetrators.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Home-owners' Loans

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. In light of the substantial subsidy and interest rates available to

borrowers under the Alberta Opportunity Fund, I was wondering if the government is contemplating any action to provide similar relief to borrowers for the purchase of private homes with a view to easing the substantial rise in costs that has taken place within that industry?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Housing Corporation has had such a program in effect for several years and it is related to income.

MR. HENDERSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the government contemplating raising the income level that relates to that particular program?

MR. RUSSELL:

That's a matter that is continually under review by the board of directors of the corporation, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HENDERSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I think the minister maybe misunderstood my question. I was asking if they are contemplating any action?

MR. RUSSELL:

Well, you never give things consideration unless some action is being contemplated, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

ARDA Program

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of Agriculture. I would like to be informed as to the present status of the ARDA Program, which is the range improvement program.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I hope to have an announcement in regard to how the ARDA range improvement program will work and hopefully that will be before we adjourn for Easter.

MR. DRAIN:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Then the supposition that this is being phased out is not correct?

DR. HORNER:

It is the opposite, Mr. Speaker. We are trying to make the program available to all the people in Alberta and we are very nearly ready to announce it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lethbridge West, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder.

Killing of Beaver

MR. GRUENWALD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Lands and Forests. Mr. Minister, by what authority and for what reason did wildlife officers slaughter about seven beaver in the Indian Battle Park near Lethbridge this past week?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, I rather doubt that "slaughter" is the appropriate word. The hon. member might want to reconsider that particular terminology. As a matter of fact six beaver were removed from the Oldman River area near Lethbridge near the Indian Battle Park and the reason for this was that they had been cutting down some of the few trees in that part of Alberta. These were trees that were on the order of 70 to 90 years of age and the action by the Fish and Wildlife division was in response to a request from the City of Lethbridge with respect to the removal of the beaver.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Were they removed dead or alive?

DR. WARRACK:

Dead, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure every time something is dead, it has been slaughtered. But as a matter of fact a number of alternatives were considered. One would be to trap them with the leg-hold traps, the conventional trapping methods, but in order to do that and keep them out of reach of the public, which was a problem when they tried to deal with this last year, it was necessary then to put them in deep water so if they were trapped they would be drowned and of course killed. Whether you can call it slaughter or not, they would be dead.

Also tranquilizers don't work quickly enough on beaver to prevent them from drowning before they take hold, so again they would be dead but perhaps hardly slaughtered.

What was done therefore was that the beaver were trapped using the humane trap, the conibear, and therefore were killed, although again, Mr. Speaker, hardly slaughtered.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, are beaver generally considered to be a public nuisance in parks where there are wooded areas?

DR. WARRACK:

No, not generally at all as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, but in areas where there are very few trees and the trees are of great value because of their scarcity, it can be regarded that on those occasions, if the beaver are removing the only trees that are there, trees which can only be regrown over the course of perhaps another 70 to 90 years, they are judged to be a nuisance -- in that particular instance by the local authority, the City of Lethbridge. They made the request to it and we responded.

MR. GRUENWALD:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are wildlife officers removing beaver after they are dead from other areas in the province? Is this a problem in other areas of the Province of Alberta?

DR. WARRACK:

There may be instances where they are nuisances in other parts of Alberta, and if their removal is forced to be a removal after they are dead, then they would be removing them when they are dead.

MR. SPEAKER:

Might we leave the subject of beavers and return if we have further time.

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

Gasoline Prices

MR. CHAMBERS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Premier. I wonder if the Premier might advise how he thinks the Government of Ontario reconciles their concern over the gas prices with their new sales tax on gas?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, that is a question which has been most interesting, I am sure, to all Albertans over the past few hours in studying the Ontario budget. The situation, as you know, on our natural gas pricing proposal was that it would have a considerable impact upon the Province of Ontario. We recognize that. We recognize there would be a different impact as between residential, commercial and industrial. Our assessment is that a 15 cent increase in the price of gas at the well head, Mr. Speaker, would amount to some \$20 a year for the residential consumer in Ontario.

So we see in the Ontario budget last night, a 7 per cent sales tax on Alberta gas which means some \$27 a year for the residential consumer in Ontario. Hence, I think with that one step we have seen pretty clearly that our proposals with regard to gas are not going to have an adverse impact upon the residential consumer in the Province of Ontario, and we can get down to the issue, the industry in Ontario or the industry in Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview followed by the hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff.

Natural Gas Policy

MR. NOTLEY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct this question to the hon. Premier. Can the Premier advise the House whether the government has obtained expert advice on the constitutionality of the present natural gas policy in general, and specifically with respect to the announcements on Monday.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes.

MR. NOTLEY:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the importance of the constitutional question, can the Premier identify the constitutional experts consulted, and further, would the government be prepared to table its opinions in the House?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, no, we would not be. We have the opinions of a number of people in the constitutional area. We have approached the question, as we have said, because of its magnitude, recognizing there are constitutional questions involved. But, on the other hand, we are satisfied as a government because the ownership of these natural resources transferred by the federal government to the provincial government in 1930 creates an ownership situation of a depleting resource. The constitutional position we have taken can always be challenged but certainly, in our view, we are in a sound constitutional position with regard to the action proposed.

There may be citizens within this province who have some timid views with regard to these actions, but we feel very strongly that it is important for us to take the position, even though some challenge may occur as a result of the action and the resultant effect upon other parts of Canada.

MR. NOTLEY:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the hon. Premier advise the House whether any of the expert people consulted advised the government that their policy may in fact be ultra vires?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the answer to that with regard to the gas-pricing policy is no.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier could advise as to whether the advisors that have examined the constitutionality of the royalty rebate proposed for natural gas have also looked at whether there is any constitutional implication

to the utility-tax rebate? It seems to me there is a similarity and a precedent between these two.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I understood the hon. leader's question. Was he referring to the proposed rebate regarding natural gas price as compared to a utility rebate? Perhaps the hon. leader might expand upon it.

MR. HENDERSON:

Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a precedent in the form of a utility-tax rebate, which is rebated, mind you, back to the federal government. It seems that there may be a similarity between that and the fact that this is a rebate program, except they are funds collected by the provincial government and rebated back to the consumer. I was wondering if the advisors of the Crown had examined whether there were any constitutional aspects to the rebate program and the precedent established therewith.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I would have to answer that generally in the affirmative. My understanding of their reports is that there has been a comparison with that federal situation. We are satisfied with the constitutional position relative to the rebate plan.

MR. NOTLEY:

I wonder if I might ask one final supplementary question for clarification more than anything else. Can the Premier advise the House whether or not the opinions gathered from expert constitutional sources were unanimous with respect to the constitutionality of Monday's announcements, that is, stopping the export on the basis of getting a better price?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the position that we have taken as a government and the constitutional view that we have received is that the ownership of this asset lies with the people of Alberta, who have leased on terms and conditions pursuant to the laws of Alberta the petroleum and natural gas rights. The position that we have taken with regard to The Gas Resources Preservation Act and with regard to The Mines and Minerals Act is the position of owner. I emphasize that there is an important distinction here with regard to other constitutional legal questions. Here we are dealing with an ownership asset of the provincial government as distinguished merely from provincial government passing legislation of a jurisdictional nature.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker --

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member indicated that his supplementary was final. Perhaps we could come back to the subject if there is more time.

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

Nurses' Labour Contracts

MR. WYSE:

I would like to direct a question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour regarding the nurses at the Royal Alexandra Hospital who are threatening to strike. Is it true that the majority of the nurses in the province are working without a contract at the present time?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't answer that question specifically yes or no without checking the records of the Board of Industrial Relations. I can get that information.

MR. WYSE:

A supplementary question. Are other hospital personnel in the province working without a contract? I'm thinking specifically of nurse's aides, hospital workers and housekeepers.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, you will appreciate that the gentleman is asking questions about private enterprise and we are normally not involved until the mediation level in a dispute. However, the question is of general public interest and I will get the information.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Woman Driver Examiners and Highway Construction Flaggers

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the hon. Minister of Highways. Can the hon. minister advise whether he has had applications from women for positions of driver examiners?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have had applications from women for driver instructors and examiners.

MRS. CHICHAK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the hon. minister advise whether he has any such woman driver examiners on his staff now?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, we have recently hired a lady driver examiner, I understand, in the Calgary office.

MR. HENDERSON:

Front seat or back seat?

MR. HO LEM:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Does the minister intend hiring again the female flag operators are used in the construction of roads for the coming year?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, most of the road construction is done on a contract basis. I presume that the contractors who have been successful in the bids for those jobs and who have found that the lady flag operators on those construction jobs were satisfactory will be hiring them again this year.

MR. HO LEM:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will you ensure that there will be sufficient comfort stations to facilitate these ladies?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Beaver Pelts

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. How much money were prime beaver pelts bringing this past winter season?

MR. SPEAKER:

This would hardly be a matter of public concern which would be expected to be asked in the question period, but if the hon. minister wishes to answer briefly and happens to know --

DR. WARRACK:

I happen to 'don't know', Mr. Speaker!

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. DIXON:

My question has been answered, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Alberta Indian Artifacts

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Youth, Culture and Recreation. Have you been requested to meet with Alberta Indian representatives to discuss the documentation and repatriation from foreign countries of Indian cultural artifacts?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, no I have not been requested to do so. However, in this morning's mail, which I have not yet been able to read, I noticed a letter from somewhere in southern Alberta. It may contain a request but I have not read it.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are Alberta Indian artifacts being sold by Alberta museums to foreign countries?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, definitely not.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has your department investigated reports that certain pawnbrokers are using questionable techniques to obtain artifacts from Indians in Alberta?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may be referring to things that happened maybe 100, 50, or 20 years ago. However, at the present I am not aware of any such tactics.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Could this be the final supplementary?

MR. WILSON:

Has the government been requested by the Edmonton Indian Education Centre to return Indian cultural artifacts, such as medicine bundles, presently held by the government?

MR. SCHMID:

No, Mr. Speaker. We have not received such a request.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Marijuana Research

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. I wonder if the hon. minister has had a chance to get the answer to the question I asked last Monday: namely has the government carried out any recent research with regard to the extent of the use of marijuana in the province?

MR. CRAWFORD:

No, Mr. Speaker. I must apologize to the hon. member, but I haven't got a report from the commission yet. I will look into it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary McCall, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge East.

Calgary Ombudsman Office

MR. HO LEM:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the hon. the Premier. Mr. Premier, when may Calgarians expect the first Ombudsman branch office to be opened in Calgary as recommended in the Ombudsman's annual report?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I can't give the hon. member a date with regard to that. I'll take the question as notice and try to give him an answer in a day or so.

MR. HO LEM:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If there is a long delay anticipated, could there be temporary facilities implemented?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, provision has been made in the estimates. It is certainly a very reasonable suggestion made by the hon. member and we will take that under advisement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lethbridge East, followed by the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

Lethbridge Mental Health Coordinator

MR. ANDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Development. What progress has been made toward the appointment of a mental health coordinator for the Lethbridge region?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the government proposes the appointment of a number of coordinators for regions throughout the province. Quite a number of them have been appointed, I think in the neighbourhood of six or seven, and as far as I know there has not been an appointment made for Lethbridge. But I will check into the matter and let the hon. member know when it might be expected.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Alberta Agricultural Development Fund

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. The question is, is the amount of money available sufficient to process all of the applications under the Alberta Agricultural Development Fund? Secondly, Mr. Speaker, is there a possibility of some acceleration in the processing time of these applications?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, there has already been an acceleration in the processing time. As I've said in the House before, the great...[Inaudible]...of applications came about because of a complete lack of agricultural credit in this province in the past four years. So the demand for credit was really quite substantial. We are attempting, through our district agriculturalists and our credit advisors in the rural areas, to make sure that credit is available to all farmers who would like to improve their production in the coming year. This will be done jointly through the amount of money we have through the direct lending facilities of the Agricultural Development Corporation, and also through the guaranteed-lending program, through the chartered banks, the Treasury Branches and the credit unions in Alberta.

I would expect that with this joint program we will be able to take care of the credit needs of the province. I am sure a lot of hon. members, particularly from the rural areas, have had some complaints and some inquiries with regard to the question of delay and with regard to the question of who might be eligible. Mr. Speaker, guidelines have been set up. We are trying to follow these guidelines for the best interests of agriculture generally and the family farm in particular.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Is the hon. minister contemplating any major changes in regulations for this year?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, we are contemplating major changes in the regulations in so far as they affect the dairy farmer and people who are interested in becoming dairy farmers.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Are any of the applications being made, applications for consolidation of previous debts?

DR. HORNER:

Yes, there are a number of applications being made as consolidation loans, or a combination of direct lending and guarantees to consolidate their lending or their debt position so they can go ahead.

Again these are the kinds of loans involving some considerable amount of work by my field officials in an attempt to make sure that if we go through this exercise, down the road the farmer can indeed be better off than he is at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Natural Gas Policy (Cont.)

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Premier, and it's really a follow-up for clarification. By way of explanation, Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding of the hon. Premier's answer to my question that the government feels the position is constitutionally sound in a general respect.

My specific question however, Mr. Premier, was, is there unanimity among the constitutional experts you have consulted with respect to the decision you announced on Monday?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I have been searching for many years to try to get any kind of a unanimous view among lawyers about anything, but as far as this particular question is concerned, it's probably as high a degree of unanimity as we can anticipate. In any particular question of legal opinion we take the view, of course, that we own this asset. Owning the asset, we have these alternatives as I have mentioned before in this House: we can continue to sell it below its value, we can stop selling it or we can press as hard as we can to get value for it. And when we take an action that affects others, we accept the possibility regarding the constitutional questions involved and the legislation that we have.

But certainly, with the exception in my view of a very small minority of Alberta citizens, there is very strong support for the position we have taken and the recognition that constitutionally we as a province have said no further gas will be removed from this province unless we get value for it. We're prepared therefore to take what limited -- and we think it is limited -- constitutional risk is involved and we're determined to press on with our action.

MR. HENDERSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier could clarify a statement with regard to freehold leases.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the freehold situation is a separate aspect that has to be looked at differently, legally. Certainly that is true in terms of the legal questions involving The Mineral Taxation Act. It's certainly true with regard to The Gas Resources Preservation Act or The Mines and Minerals Act, because the foundation is different. However, because the vast majority of the situation involves Crown leases, we've taken the position of the various actions in these energy matters. We've assessed the freehold position. We are satisfied we are on strong constitutional grounds with regard to the freehold position; however we recognize there is a distinction and that the distinction should be borne in mind.

MR. HENDERSON:

A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Did the export applications which were recently turned down to TransCanada involve any element even though of a minor nature, of freehold leases or was it all Crown?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I can answer that in a definitive way because of the field situation and the number of fields that are involved, as hon. members know. There has been no separate analysis made of that. The separate analysis has been made on the constitutional legal question but not in relation to the specific application.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Transmission Lines

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture and it's a follow-up to a question I asked the minister about a week ago with regard to studies the government has carried out regarding main power transmission lines across agricultural land.

The minister was going to check and see if the government had done some studies last year on this as a result of the recommendation by I think the committee on Law and Law Amendments last year when we were looking at that legislation.

DR. HORNER:

I'm not sure that I understand the hon. member's question -- if he is dealing with the problem in regard to the question of high-line transmissions

through agricultural land, the question of how the Surface Rights Board and other boards should treat this land; whether it should be on a buy-out if you like, or whether it should be on an annual rental basis. I've asked the Chairman of the Surface Rights Board to give me a report, and I should have that in the near future, in relation to what the best approach might be to give the landowner a fair amount of treatment in this regard.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister. Mr. Minister, my question arises from the recommendation of the Legislative Committee on Law and Law Amendments last session which recommended or asked you or the Department to do a study into the question of transmission lines over agricultural land.

DR. HORNER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. This is ongoing and I expect a report from the chairman within a matter of weeks in relation to his recommendations on how the farmer could be best treated in relation to these transmission lines.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lethbridge West followed by the hon. Member for Highwood.

Highway Location Signs

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Highways and Transport. I wonder if the Minister would like to tell us if there has been any change in policy regarding the erection of signs near highways, indicating the locations, actual locations shall we say, of various tourist attractions to our visiting tourists?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Speaker, there has been a significant change in the signing on highways and I'm not sure exactly what -- I'm a little hesitant to deal with the word "actual". In its contents, I would like the hon. Member to make his request a little more specific.

[Laughter]

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, yes. If the Minister would just like to indicate whether the permission is now granted to people who would like to put signs up on or near highways indicating, let's say, the location of various tourist attractions?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, that would depend upon the nature of the sign, the quality of the sign and whether it is a commercial or a viable operation.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, maybe I should direct my question to the minister in charge of Tourism. What is the Department of Tourism doing to facilitate and assist visiting people, tourists, to locate various tourist attractions in the Province of Alberta?

MR. DOWLING:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. We are doing a considerable amount. The Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation because of its involvement with historic sites, the Department of Lands and Forests because of its involvement with parks and other recreational areas, and the Department of Highways and Travel Alberta have an on-going committee dealing with the regulations relative to signing along all highways in Alberta.

It is something we established very early on when I developed some responsibility for Travel Alberta, and there is considerable alteration being made. Naturally it doesn't matter whose branch you are talking about. We all want things to move faster than they are. There are changes being made, but they are being made in consideration of all Albertans, in consideration of the tourist industry, the parks and the private sector as well.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Highways and Transport. Has the government made any changes with respect to the signing policy concerning political signs?

MR. COPITHORNE:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Sale of Methaqualone

MR. BENOIT:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Does the minister know if the sedative drug Methaqualone, which is creating a problem among the young people of the United States because of its abuse, is being sold excessively in Alberta?

MR. CRAWFORD:

No, Mr. Speaker, I don't know the answer to that question. I'll check and see if the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission has any information on the subject. That being the understanding, at least for me if not for Hansard as well, that the hon. Member will spell that.

MR. SPEAKER:

Has the hon. member a supplementary or is he now going to volunteer the spelling?

MR. BENOIT:

I'll volunteer to spell it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Perhaps it might go in a memorandum to Hansard.

The hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, followed by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Relocation of Beavers

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. The question is has the Department of Lands and Forests discontinued the former policy of live-trapping beaver and relocating them in a more friendly environment?

DR. WARRACK:

Not totally, but we do try that as an alternative, prior to having to go to a more final measure with respect to dealing with the problem.

Beaver Pelts (Cont.)

Incidentally, while I'm on my feet, I might indicate to the hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation that the price of beaver pelts -- and these pelts are called blankets because of their shape -- did reach about \$60 this year, although \$40 is more of an average price. At present we are in the spring trapping season and the value of the pelts is lower because of exposure to the sun and air. I'd like to thank the hon. Member for Athabasca for his help on this answer.

MR. DRAIN:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Were the beaver that were trapped in Lethbridge pelted out, and was the meat turned in for somebody to have a banquet on? It's an epicurean delight, beaver meat, and --

MR. SPEAKER:

There is some doubt about the question having sufficient urgency for the question period.

[Laughter]

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Project Recovery

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Health and Social Development. Some time ago I asked him in the House why the funds to Project Recovery had been cut off. He indicated there were some sort of discussions going on and I was wondering if the minister could advise what the outcome of those discussions was so far as funding for Project Recovery?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that that has been satisfactorily resolved. The Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission did meet with the representatives of Project Recovery, I think, some two to four weeks ago, and came up with a proposal that was satisfactory both to the commission and Project Recovery. In acknowledging the interest of the two hon. gentlemen opposite in having raised it, I should say that the settlement of the matter was much contributed to by the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway, who also took an interest in it.

MR. HENDERSON:

Supplementary. I wonder if the minister could advise the House as to what the nature of the settlement was or does he have the information available at this time?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, my recollection is that it's a short term funding arrangement in which both parties have agreed on the conditions of evaluation of the service and its continued relevance, in view of the entry to the scene of the detoxification centres and recovery units that the province is also providing.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Police Morale

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. the Attorney General. Has the hon. Attorney General or his department received any representations from the city or any person or association regarding an investigation of morale of the Edmonton Police Force?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I've had one very brief discussion about that with an official of the City of Edmonton, but apart from that I haven't received any representations. I can't speak for the other members of the department, although I haven't heard of them receiving any.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary. Is the hon. Attorney General considering some investigation?

MR. LEITCH:

No, Mr. Speaker, not at this stage at least. The Edmonton City Police Force is, of course, employed by the commission, the Edmonton City Police Commission, and certainly at this stage I think the matter is one that would stay within that jurisdiction. What might happen in the future, of course, we'll just have to wait and see.

MR. TAYLOR:

One further supplementary. Was the morale of police forces a factor that was considered in the preparation of the new Police Act?

MR. LEITCH:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking -- oh -- the hon. Minister of Youth, Culture and Recreation has a supplementary answer.

Alberta Indian Artifacts (Cont.)

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, for the total enlightenment of the hon. Member for Calgary Bow I would like to state that the museum was requested verbally by a group of Blood Indians from the Cardston Reserve regarding the item at the museum and they were given full information; however no items were returned.

Bangs and Brucellosis Vaccination Program

MR. COOPER:

I have a question and it is directed to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, would the hon. minister inform the members if the provincial financial support to the Bangs and brucellosis vaccination program has been discontinued?

DR. HORNER:

Generally the answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is yes, because the province is in a general way brucellosis-free. However, that doesn't mean we are not concerned about a continuing watch on brucellosis and in continuing to make sure we don't get any upsurge in brucellosis or more commonly undulant fever or aborting fever in cattle. It is of particular importance and has cost the people of Canada and Alberta many millions of dollars to reach the stage they are in now in which, generally, brucellosis is under control. We have withdrawn our support to brucellosis because the situation is under control but we intend to continue to watch and make sure that we don't have any start-up in it as well.

MR. COOPER:

Is it not correct, Mr. Minister, there have been increased incidents of the disease in certain areas of the province recently, namely, Calgary, around Vilna and my own part of the province, the northeastern-central part of Alberta?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I would hesitate to say that is true until I saw some technical reports. In the areas the hon. gentleman is talking about I would have to know it wasn't IBR or certain other diseases that were prevalent and also cause abortions in cattle. As a matter of fact we are awaiting reports on the

situation in the Vilna area now, but I would think that is more related to IBR than to brucellosis.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MINISTERIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be able to announce today a position paper which will have profound significance for residents of rural Alberta.

As stated in the Speech from the Throne, the government plans to proceed with the extended-area service to eliminate toll charges between many country areas. It also intends to complete the program to bury telephone cables and thus replace rural overhead wires in the province. The elimination of tolls from so many rural areas is part of the government's general policy to increase the quality of life and to improve the economic framework of rural Alberta.

The government proposes, therefore, to resume the extended-area service program abandoned for financial considerations by the former government in 1969. It proposes not only to reactivate the program but to double the former limit of 15 miles to 30 miles. It will also aim at flat-rate calling for fringe areas around the metropolitan centres of Calgary and Edmonton.

The government proposes to proceed with the extended toll-free areas as expeditiously as possible, recognizing there is a current delay of up to two years in design and delivery of necessary equipment. The service is primarily intended for resident telephone users in adjacent communities possessing a strong neighbourhood affinity. It will, however, also be available to businesses in those areas. The intention is to allow less costly and more convenient calling from a rural area to a neighbourhood market centre, but not in such a manner as to by-pass that market centre in favour of a larger town or city.

The total program, when completed, is estimated to have a possible cost of more than \$40 million. The first phase involving some 187 routes, or 374 linked areas, is estimated to cost \$10,734,591 and will involve an increased cost annually of \$3.75 million.

A further attempt to accelerate the program will take the form of an experiment in 11 linked-toll areas in the province. This follows a successful experiment in north-west Alberta in 1972. These routes will be given toll-free service without waiting for the more comprehensive technical improvements to the exchanges or additional cable. This is a calculated risk since overloading of the lines by excessive coiling or overlengthy coils could have serious consequences on the system.

No route will be included in the timetable for the plan unless there have been mailed questionnaires and clear requests from the communities. Where necessary a public hearing will be held.

The first phase, Mr. Speaker, of 187 new routes will improve the quality of life for many rural Albertans. It will involve telephone installations in 120,000 rural households.

Before tabling this position paper, Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to my predecessor, the late hon. Len Werry, who put so much work into this program over the past year.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS (Cont.)

MR. WYSE:

Mr. Speaker, could we revert to Introduction of Visitors at this time?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. WYSE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to the members of the House some 47 students from the Crescent Heights High School in Medicine Hat and their

teachers, Mr. Peter Wheeler and Mrs. Prossa. They left at 2:30 o'clock this morning, and I would like them to stand and be recognized at this time. They are in both galleries.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

1. Moved by the hon. Mr. Miniely, seconded by hon. Mr. Dowling.

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

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Ruste]

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, in taking part in this, the second budget debate of the 'now' government, I would like to commend the Provincial Treasurer on his delivery of the budget address. To you, Mr. Speaker, I respect your position as Speaker of this Assembly. I appreciate the difficulties you are faced with from time to time, and certainly I appreciate your rulings as they are made from time to time too. I believe you are endeavouring to permit the freedom of speech, of expression, for all the members of the Assembly no matter from which side of the Assembly.

First of all I would like to deal briefly with some of the requirements, some of the concerns in my constituency and I think about the best one and the first one would be dealing with highways. These concerns aren't necessarily in the order of importance because I think everything is important as far as it relates, not only to our own individual constituencies, but to the province and indeed to the nation.

We would like to see the completion of Highway 41, and I understand the minister has announced that some work will be done on this highway this year. Certainly the expansion of the grid-road system, or what is now known as the Alberta growth roads, will be appreciated and will certainly assist the rural areas and the urban areas in being interconnected for commerce, for business and for the delivery of goods to markets.

I have discussed with the Minister of Health and Social Development the hospital needs in the constituency, as well as additions to senior citizens' homes to serve those people who are our pioneers and who need these spaces as time goes on, and certainly in the nursing home field as well.

I might mention, Mr. Speaker, that one of the first senior citizens' homes in the province is in the Wainwright area. It was built by people in the area who were interested enough to meet, discuss it, and we were certainly able to have this one included as one of the first 50 within the Province of Alberta in the senior citizens' homes program.

Certainly in the matter of community facilities, parks, recreation, these are all appreciated and certainly there is need for an increasing number of these as the people have more time to spare, the ability to get around and traverse between communities.

Secondary industry and decentralization -- and in the matter of secondary industry I would like to mention that I trust no step is taken that might jeopardize the Camp Wainwright situation which we have in that part of the province, because it's a pretty important feature in the well-being of the town of Wainwright.

Dealing briefly with education: about a year ago a delegation came up from my constituency following a vote in that area in which the ratepayers had turned down an additional amount of money for educational facilities and needs. And certainly we are concerned that the discrepancy or the difference doesn't grow between the smaller centres and the larger urban areas.

I was glad to hear today the policy announced by the Minister of Telephones and Utilities dealing with the extended service. Certainly when you realize that Alberta is pretty well covered now with the buried-cable system, this is the next logical step. And I think the rural people of Alberta will look forward to the completion of this as they do the buried cable system.

Housing is another problem for many of the areas, and I say housing within reach of the people who want to use it. Housing is available but in many cases it is too high a price for those who would like to use it.

I would suggest to the government that it should set up some central place where information can be made available of the various grants and programs so that the communities which are interested may be able to contact this office, or whatever it might be, to get all the programs, whether they be federal or provincial, and there are certainly a multitude of them.

Mr. Speaker, in the whole economy today we find inflation as, I think, the biggest single problem we have to deal with. And when we look back to 1962 and, say, a person had a salary of \$5,000; ten years later in 1972 he would need to earn some \$7,270 to stay even with what he earned in 1962. This, of course, since we are in 1973 now, we see this still going further and making it more difficult. I believe there are many who are still on fixed incomes who are having quite a struggle to keep on the go.

So much for some of the concerns in my constituency. I have followed with interest in the last couple of sessions the mutual admiration society, I believe, that our leader has mentioned; of the comments made by the speakers in this Assembly. It appears to me that when they have nothing to offer, they go back to what has happened in the last 36 years. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that to be a successful politician the attack is to find out where the public is going, take a short cut across the field, get out in front and make them think you're leading them. I submit it takes more than a politician today; it takes a statesman.

And when I look at the record that the Province of Alberta has built up, the enviable record over a period of years --

[Interjections]

Listen to them, listen to them.

Certainly in the savings to the citizens of Alberta alone and the fact that they haven't had a sales tax compared to even our Conservative governments in other provinces, Alberta is in leadership which is the envy of all.

Mr. Speaker, in watching the performance on the other side of the House I can't help but think of a tour I took down in Los Angeles one time to a movie studio. The tour was one that capitalizes on the tricks of a trade built largely on illusion. It appeals to people's curiosity and the fact that few know anything about what goes on behind the scenes of this enormous business.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that I am tempted this afternoon to look on what has happened on the other side of the Assembly as you would in a tour like that. I suppose, Mr. Speaker, you could say the billboard up here would be "The Member for Barrhead and the Member for Calgary West," or maybe shorter it would be "In Horner-Lougheed What Really Goes."

Now in the budget address, and I'm looking at it in this light, the reference to agricultural income and to the Minister of Agriculture --

Now certainly I have heard a lot of praises and I will give the Minister of Agriculture a fair amount of credit. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this has been overdone. He has been raised on a pedestal. Certainly when you look at some of the things that are happening -- I would just like to say, do I understand from the members opposite that the Minister of Agriculture has created the crop failure in Russia, which in turn made Russia a major importer rather than exporter of grain? (I understand that Russia purchased one-quarter of the U.S. wheat production because of their own crop failure.) I think not.

Do I understand that the Minister of Agriculture is responsible for the grain situation in Asia, for droughts and flooding, lower production estimate, and other concerns in that area? I think not.

Is the Minister of Agriculture responsible for the Indonesian imports of wheat, where they say there is an acute grain shortage in the Pacific nation? I think not.

Now we get down to the FAO, the Food and Agricultural Organization, which is fighting the west African drought, and where there is a shortage in six west African countries. Is the Minister responsible for that? I think not.

Then you get into the situation of the causes of acute food shortages or what the organization -- and I am referring to the FAO, describes as a shaky grain situation in China, the disappointing wheat output in Australia, the worst harvest in Chile since 1930, and an all-time low in world fishmeal production which affects poultry breeding in the United States and elsewhere.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the Minister of Agriculture is responsible for that or had any control over it whatever. Now let's see what the annual report of the Department of Agriculture says about the agricultural situation, and I am quoting from the Animal Industry Division part that refers to:

The rapidity of changes that affect relationships in agriculture were amply demonstrated in 1972. Difficulties in grain marketing had great influence on the animal industry in 1971, particularly in hog production and cattle feeding. As 1972 advanced, the export market for all grains increased in a spectacular manner, thereby practically reversing the effects on hog production, cattle feeding, dairying and poultry production.

Mr. Speaker, this is from the annual report of the Department of Agriculture.

Then we have a comment from one of the staff of the department in one of the farm papers. I am going to quote just a part of it where it says:

We are witnessing today some unprecedented commodity prices, the result of world short-falls, and all of them peaking simultaneously.

So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that before the Minister of Agriculture is built on too high a pedestal, as a result of the increased income in the agricultural field, we look at what has really happened.

If that isn't enough, Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer to the federal House of Commons Hansard, where the Progressive Conservative spokesman for the agricultural industry, Mr. Murta, had this to say on January 9 this year:

The buoyancy that our grain sales are experiencing at the present time comes from the misfortune of other countries and not necessarily from aggressive marketing approaches instituted by the present Liberal government.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair.]

So, Mr. Speaker, I feel that certainly the reason for the all-time high in the agricultural income at this time goes as a result of the unfortunate situation in which many, many countries in this world find themselves.

We see an all-time high set in February of this year for west coast shipments of some 35,000,000 bushels of grain, and, Mr. Speaker, this is due to changes instituted by the grain industry, the Canadian Wheat Board, and many others who are working toward that end. Certainly such things as the block system, the ability to call for grades required, and the federal government's input into hopper cars and such have certainly assisted in moving this grain to markets that have been made available through misfortunes of other countries.

I think, if we look back about ten years, we will see somewhat the same situation in 1961-62 as we had in 1971-72.

So I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Agriculture took over a master farm with the bins bulging, with the bills paid up and because of the misfortunes in other countries which produced markets at much higher prices... Just to give you an example of what the wheat was selling for within a year at Vancouver, on January 1, 1972, the wheat at Vancouver was \$1.75. A year and a day later it was \$3.04, or up 73 per cent. Rapeseed and other grains have all advanced substantially.

I would like to remind the minister also that the costs are certainly rising rapidly as well. And as far as I'm concerned as a producer and as far as other producers are concerned, it's what is net that counts and not the gross returns.

I would like to commend the minister for continuing with the market thrust begun by the late Social Credit government, and the appointment of Mr. Harry Hargreaves as Alberta's market commissioner.

It's rather interesting to recall some of the thrusts and market thrusts and so on that we've heard about. I well recall when the Acting Minister of Agriculture at the time, Mr. Reiersen, went to Winnipeg and offered to the Canada Grains Commission a sum of money to be matched by Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the total of those three to be matched by the federal government to send out a mission to sell grains. This was accepted and I think it was one of the starts to many of the programs we have today. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, before the minister gets overly anxious in this field, that there is a need for coordination with the other provinces and certainly with the federal

authorities. It's alright to get up and pay the bills for a lot of things, but I think when the others are going to benefit, there is a need to coordinate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are two things I'd like to table today. One deals with the meal that we had in one of the major hotels in the City of Edmonton where the butter was wrapped in a wrapper indicating that it comes from outside the province. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that this doesn't do much to the visitor to the Province of Alberta, an agricultural province, where they say, use Alberta products, and here is butter imported from another province.

Also at the same time I would like to draw the attention of the members to a publication put into every farmer's mailbox in Alberta, as I understand it, the Prairie Implement Buyer's Guide. It was sent to the farmers of Alberta by the Saskatchewan Industry Department. They were advertising some 140 separate articles made in Saskatchewan. There is a rather detailed description of each of these and also where you can get more information. All a person has to do is fill out this card, send it back to the Saskatchewan Industry Department indicating the information he would like along with his name and address, and it will come to him.

Compare this to what we have in Alberta. It lists the places, but it doesn't say anything about what they are. Certainly I would recommend to the Minister of Industry and Commerce and others that they take a look at this and provide something like it for the manufacturers of Alberta agricultural products in this province. And I'd like to table them at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I think I'll leave it at that for the time being with the Minister of Agriculture.

I would like to touch briefly on The Alberta Bill of Rights, The Individual's Rights Protection Act and I guess you can say the acts that have been put on in introducing this. Certainly at the last session we witnessed a super-production on the bringing in of The Bill of Rights followed later by The Individual's Rights Protection Act. We witnessed a lot about open government, about Hansard, about MLA involvement. We have seen many things since and time that one can't help but wonder just what was meant by the demonstration we had when they were brought in. Certainly we have had earlier at this session many things like the Slave Lake case, the Craig case, the Orders for a Return that have been debated because of information that isn't forthcoming, as an open government might have indicated.

Then we get the rights of the individual. We have a resolution brought in on the floor of the House where they were going to let the junior person or the young person have equal rights with the older people in insurance. If they were so interested in this, why didn't they bring in legislation to do it rather than a resolution?

If a farmer wants to put up a sign on his farm or wants to start a business on his farm anywhere near a highway, I think it would be well to take a look at how much red tape he has to go through if he is going to get permission to do this, if indeed he does get permission.

So, Mr. Speaker, I submit that there are many things that lead one to wonder about the difference between the Alberta Bill of Rights as proposed and what is really happening in this province.

We have the right of the individual and the right of the municipalities, and we have a bill that is coming in this session, I understand, if it is not already in, which says basically that amendments last year gave municipal councils the right to tax senior citizen homes if they wished. Mr. Speaker, this was if they wished. Now they are bringing in an amendment which would remove the municipalities' option and is retroactive to December 31, 1972. Now, Mr. Speaker, if they believe in local autonomy, why the sudden change from one year to the other?

Another one that I would like to mention, Mr. Speaker, deals with an article in the ATA magazine and I'm going to quote it from the March-April issue of this year. It deals with the matter of local autonomy versus provincial control, and I'm going to read just a part of it as follows:

This gives the appearance of very great autonomy to school boards, since they may decide to add or delete any aspect of a program they wish. However, this autonomy is more apparent than real because, without the power to raise money above a provincially mandated ceiling they may only add to a program if they subtract from other programs to equal value.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these are things I'm just raising. It really creates a question in my mind and in the minds of others about local autonomy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, another one I would like to refer to is the matter of open government and that is in the 1971-72 Report of the Alberta Public Works Department. And it is rather interesting that page 10 there states as follows:

On the following pages will be found the list of tenders called and contracts awarded during the fiscal year under review. Previous annual reports have included detailed description of the majority of projects under construction during the year. This section of the report has been discontinued. However, information on specific projects may be obtained by interested parties on application to the department.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in looking at that I can't help but wonder why it isn't being continued because I think that anyone who gets a report can study it and follow it and get the information. Now, evidently there is some that isn't going to be provided.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is much made of the rights of the individual, the rights of the members, and expression. And I was rather disturbed when I look back to a few days ago, earlier in the session when the Premier, after the Member for Olds-Didsbury had spoken in this Assembly, got up and spoke as follows, and I'm quoting: "But I thought I would wait until I had heard from the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, whose record of distortion of the record is pretty clear to all of us." Now, Mr. Speaker, fortunately you were able to straighten this out at a later date, but to me it indicates something that is certainly undesirable in an Assembly such as this, from the Premier of our province.

Going back, Mr. Speaker, a bit and to one of the things that happen from time to time. I can recall the Premier on a national program, a program that we saw in this city, where he left the impression that his government was responsible for payment of the two-price system for wheat. Mr. Speaker, certainly nothing can be further from the truth. But the Liberal government in Ottawa, which I know several opposite have not too much use for, did pay that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to look at another thing to see how things change. I well recall that over eighteen months ago there was a campaign on and the Premier and others were out on the hustings. I recall rather an interesting incident. This deals with the Bertha Army Worm and the rapeseed situation. I'm going to quote now from one of the papers where reference was made to Mr. Lougheed and Mr. Smallwood, who held an impromptu press conference to denounce the Strom government for stealing the Tory candidate's idea that the provincial government should pick up half the cost of lannate spraying of worm-affected rape crops. Mr. Lougheed said the Provincial Government "has a responsibility to be on top of the matter" But let's get this straight - the idea to pay 50 per cent of the cost of chemical sprays was Cliff Smallwood's.

Then back here it was really good, and it says: "It makes you wonder what would have happened if an election campaign were not on, whether the action would have been nearly as fast!"

Mr. Speaker, as an agriculture producer, I think we've had rapeseed crops sprayed since. We've had the same problem, that there has been very, very, very little assistance. I was expecting there would have been some this following year. However, Mr. Speaker, it seems that it depends on where you sit or where you are at the time it happens.

Now, Mr. Speaker, going into the two-price system for natural gas that was announced by the Premier, certainly as Albertans, the owners of the major part of the resource of this province, I think it behooves the Premier and everyone in this Legislature to get as big a return as we can from the resources we have. I think when you look at the overall picture and I compare the energy picture with the rapid change in the agricultural picture, certainly you can't help but wonder. Maybe they are even getting enough, at what is being done now. I can recall also, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly, when the Premier in one of these acts, got up on the floor of this Assembly and condemned the previous Social Credit government. I'm referring to the following statement he made on oil royalties:

Regrettably, the former Social Credit government made -- in our view -- a very serious error in judgment many years ago in 1948 when it unnecessarily agreed to insert in petroleum and natural gas leases, a specific provision that the maximum royalty rate which would be payable by the producers under

these leases would be limited on the petroleum to 16 2/3 per cent of gross production.

Now it goes on, Mr. Speaker, and I won't take the time of the House for the rest of it. But it is rather interesting that this was made a real production, that the previous government had erred. In the position paper tabled later that session, the following was rather interesting. I questioned the Minister of Mines and Minerals on this -- he answered in the affirmative. It goes on to say, in part:

After considering the four alternatives previously outlined, the Government noted two important facts:

1. All existing petroleum and natural gas leases -- including those with maximum royalty limitations -- contained the following significant provision:

the lessee shall pay and discharge all taxes now charged or hereafter charged upon the rights granted under the lease.

And it goes on to say:

The important point is that the leases contain a specific provision contemplating either new or increased taxes subsequent to the date of the execution of the lease.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to me, the Premier's performance when he got up in this House and condemned the previous administration, knowing full well that that clause was in this, doesn't show much courage or courtesy or honesty to the people of Alberta.

I think, Mr. Speaker, when we realize that the royalties come from the resources that belong to the citizens of the Province of Alberta, these things should be out in the open if we are talking about open government. I think, when we look at the fact that the last permit for export of natural gas was in 1970, those in charge then were realizing that changes were taking place in the whole energy field. I'm submitting, Mr. Speaker that those of us who have farmed for several years have sold wheat for 19 cents a bushel, and probably there are those on the other side who have as well. We're not expecting to be paid from the 19 for what we do today.

But certainly, in light of today's situation and conditions it behooves the present government and all of us to see that we are getting as much as we can from the resources that belong to us, the people.

I would like to commend the Minister of Agriculture for the provision of the meetings in the various parts of the province on the new taxation schedules. These were very well received, and I would like to suggest to the government that they consider establishing, much as the federal government has done, an evaluation day schedule for farm properties. While it is true that many of us will not need them for 10 years, 20 years or whatever it might be, certainly evaluation day is one that is going to be with us for a long, long time, and I think every effort should be made to have those records for the protection, shall I say, of the agricultural industry as land is transferred years down the road.

I think the hon. Opposition Leader dealt with the, shall we say, empire building within the Department of Agriculture, and I think the minister should look very carefully at this. Certainly when the products we produce are in short supply you don't really have to put in all the effort you do when there is a surplus.

I have noticed also in the Department of Agriculture what seems to me to be a haven for anti-wheat board people and all I am going to say on that, Mr. Speaker, is it is pretty easy to tear down. Yes, even fools can do that. But what is the alternative if it is taken down? I think, Mr. Speaker, also that the minister delights in taking the odd remark at the Alberta Wheat Pool and I would suggest to him that is one of the largest farm organizations owned totally by Albertans. It is operated totally by Albertans and certainly the delegate body in the Alberta Wheat Pool is about 70 members and they represent people across this province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Tell them it's a monopoly too.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, I think the producer is entitled to the highest return and the net return I am talking about, and certainly anything that can be done to facilitate this, to improve this is much to be desired by the people of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, in a return tabled in this House a short time ago, No. 183, it was indicated by the Minister of Agriculture that no consultation had taken place with any other department relative to the institution of the Future Farmers of Alberta program. Now I am not arguing against the type of program, but Mr. Speaker, I would hesitate to see a 'deputy deputy deputy' set up some time to deal with this when we have the staff, we have the program. This could be fitted very nicely into the 4H program, under the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation.

DR. HORNER:

That's where it is.

MR. RUSTE:

Now the minister says that is where it is, but it is still set up separately as I understand it. It was announced as a separate program.

DR. HORNER:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, to make sure the hon. member is awake. The program and the pamphlets were a joint announcement by myself and the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation. The program specifically states -- both our names on there -- and it's for the purpose, when I announced it, of putting some money back to the 4H movement.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's explanation of the program and so much the better, because I don't think we can afford to get programs running out all different ways.

Mr. Speaker, we get into the matter of the record budget of \$1 billion, almost \$500 million. This compares with \$1,207,000,000 in 1971 and as short a time ago as 1965, I understand, there was a total of some \$494 million. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, with increases such as this there should be an expansion of programs, there should be continuations of many of the programs already underway.

But what amused me in this program was the fact that he said there was no increase, no proposal of any tax increases. But evidently, under regulations, by Orders-in-Council, behind closed doors, such things as the drivers' licence increased, hunting licences increased, snowmobile licences increased, liquor tax price increased, your increased price in gasoline, gas, oil, fuel and so on and then the last one was really the dilly on the trailers. Instead of having one \$5 licence per trailer that could be transferred -- and I am using this mainly in the field of recreation -- now they are required to have one for each trailer. So Mr. Speaker, I submit that certainly there are increases in taxes indirectly and this is what hits my pocketbook and yours.

Now much is said about the tax reduction program and it is unfortunate we haven't had the opportunity to discuss this so far, but I understand it will be coming in shortly. I would just like to say that there are communities in my constituency where there is not a home that will get the maximum amount under this program. I think it is going to be interesting to see what the actual result is, rather than using broad figures or averages. I think you are going to find that some of the old people who got the \$150 under the old program, under the old government, are going to end up with less under this one. And certainly there are people who are going to benefit from this, who are better able to pay than many young people who are just starting up in life.

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. Speaker, we have such terms as "thrust", "exciting", "new vitality" and so on, an unending stream of press releases. Mr. Speaker, in analyzing what is going on there have been names changed, true enough. But I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this government is building on previous programs. Look at our senior citizens' homes, for the senior citizens in this province who have built it. Look at the marketing and trade missions, Alberta's marketing commissioner.

[Interjections]

Look at the environment. Those of us who were at the Annual Fish and Game dinner heard the now president congratulate the Social Credit government for the setting up of the Department of the Environment.

MR. ZANDER:

How much did you pay him?

MR. RUSTE:

And we have seen follow-up on this from the present government.

The Human Rights Act, Mr. Speaker, is one that was, shall we say, brushed aside by the 'now' administration when it put in The Alberta Bill of Rights. But I submit, Mr. Speaker, that The Human Rights Act covered just as many freedoms as any of the legislation on the books now.

We see a change in the newspaper announcement. It says: "New office takes place of HRDA", but then it goes on to say: "Don Getty, minister of intergovernmental affairs said that the concept and the operation of the HRDA will continue in the new office." Change of name, but really what else changed?

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Province of Alberta too, with human rights, established the office of Ombudsman, and I think this is one of the first as well in this Dominion. It was rather interesting listening to the Ombudsman giving one of his reports a while ago, when he was referring to this. I am just quoting a part of it and this is not in the annual report but a talk that he gave to a chamber of commerce: ...he added, "I have not found one case where a decision has been made from bias, malice and, above all, not the slightest trace of corruption."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I submit that for an Ombudsman who took over the 'beefs', shall we say, that have built up over a number of years to come out and say that is a credit to a government that was in charge at that time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister announced the extended area service. I refer to the annual report of AGT that was just tabled this session where it goes on to state:

The final 25 exchange areas are to receive buried cable in 1973, and the last of the related equipment installations are to be completed in 1974. Upon completion of this project, Alberta will have the largest and the finest rural buried cable system in Canada.

I agree with him. But it was started a few years ago; in fact quite a few years ago.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the highway campsites, the Treasury Branches, the continuing home-owner tax discount are from programs that were started earlier.

But I would suggest that the biggest resource that we have within this province are the people of Alberta. When I hear the Provincial Treasurer treat the matter of provincial debt lightly, I am reminded of the City of Edmonton where some 16 per cent of our tax dollar goes to look after the debt of the city. And in the Dominion of Canada, there is in excess of \$6 million a day just to pay interest payments alone.

So I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Provincial Treasurer, instead of saying that is irrelevant, look seriously at this matter and not get carried away with the amount of money that is flowing through his hands.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have expressed the concerns of my constituents. I am not saying I have covered them all. Certainly for a government that has expressed open government, I was rather amazed this year in looking at the number of Orders-in-Council. Over 2,000 Orders-in-Council were passed this last year. And of course many of those affect directly and indirectly the pocketbook of each of us. Certainly we have seen at the last session the increased pay that was awarded to the members of this Assembly. I have been rather disturbed this session at the lack of legislation that has come in, to this point in time, dealing with the affairs of this province. A year ago there was a tremendous flurry, real busy, busy, busy. Now when the pay has increased we have slowed down it seems.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one thing that I want to express again is my concern at the subcommittee study of the Estimates. As a representative from a constituency, I feel pretty strongly that there are two things that I should be doing in this Assembly. One is the studying of the legislation which affects us all, and number two, is the spending of money. To me, of the subcommittees there is only one quarter that I can really get into in detail; the other three quarters become missed in many parts.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the increase of pay that we voted ourselves rather generously last year, I think this has fanned the flames of inflation in this province. Every time I hear of settlements being made in salary and wages, I can't help but wonder whether those people say, "Well, as these boys on Parliament Hill voted themselves a substantial increase we should have some of the same."

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing I would just like to say that the hallmark of the 'now' administration will go down something like this: they will have the most civil servants in Alberta's history, they will have the most expensive government in Alberta's history, the biggest cabinet in Alberta's history. Mr. Speaker, I think another hallmark will be that they will endeavour at all costs to take the existing programs, put different names on them and call them theirs.

So I submit, Mr. Speaker, that when I started I said there would be a billboard up there "In Horner-Lougheed What Really Goes", and I think it could read, "Horner-Lougheed, an Era of Deception." Thank you.

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Speaker, generally there is an advantage in not speaking early in a debate, particularly quite far down the line, when the field is as broad as it is here in this House. In speaking far down the line in a debate one can then determine what one should not say, so I would suppose then that what I will be saying here today is what should be said.

With the ever-increasing pressures on government to provide more funds and programs in various fields I want today to reflect on four points and these are employability of the disadvantaged and handicapped, leisure and recreational development, educated manpower, equal opportunity and fair treatment of women.

Speaking on the point of employability of disadvantaged and handicapped, first we might consider what kind of individual would fall under the group of "disadvantaged." I see under the grouping of disadvantaged such individuals as are employable from the standpoint of age and health, but their productivity is so low in the functions they perform that their competitiveness in the labour market is at a very low level.

I see individuals who have no visible handicap and are outwardly bright in appearance and in action but require a fairly high degree of supervision. In this group as well, might fall individuals with emotional complexes who have an insecure feeling of ability to compete with their counterparts.

There are as well, those who are in a comparatively strong position as far as capability is concerned, but who are constrained from active participation in the labour market because of such factors as various home responsibilities or as a result of religious, moral or cultural convictions. There are those who fall into the group of employed, whose jobs simply do not demand the kind of salaried incomes that are sufficient to maintain them at a socially acceptable standard of living.

The individuals who might come under the handicapped group are more readily recognized, probably, generally in the minds of the public and these I will refer to as individuals who have physical, visual, hearing and speech disabilities.

As this government recognizes the disadvantaged and the handicapped in the realm of top priorities, it is, therefore, of some consequence that the budget allowance for this priority is in the higher category. However, whether the monetary priority given to this aspect is of the consequence and nature that it rightfully deserves, one must take two points into consideration. One is whether such programming and priority is to be viewed on a short-term base and its effects, and secondly, what those effects are on a long-term base and which point is of greater consequence.

If we view the position from a short-term aspect, we would look at the cost of educating and training each individual and the demand for the service that such an individual can offer in the labour market immediately on completion of

training. This in itself may appear prohibitive in cost and may lead governments to believe that due to such cost it would be more economical to have such individuals on social assistance and apply the excess funds, which might not then be used in the educational or training programs, to other areas.

However, if one takes the long-term view, Mr. Speaker, then these are the additional aspects that might be considered; without the adequate individual counselling, education and training for not only ability to work but training for some specific type of work, some of the consequences could be permanently damaging from the emotional standpoint. Such results may mean social assistance for a great number of years, if not for a lifetime. Additional health care costs and many other effects, the need for greater attention to provide facilities, not only separate but jointly with regular educational training institutions, are obvious. It must, however, be borne in mind that the provision of such facilities must be accompanied by the supply of specialty personnel, material to work with and such support factors deemed necessary for a successful program.

It is not only important to provide such institutions and support to educate and train the disadvantaged and the handicapped, but it is equally important to complete such a program with the support factor of employment assistance, employment placement and follow-up.

Although we have moved extensively in this area, I feel it is not enough. For the disadvantaged and the handicapped have as much right to the opportunity of self-support and living in a social pride to the extent that may be made possible in our human endeavours.

I feel that although a great deal has been done in the area of senior citizens and in the area of the extremely handicapped -- and, of course, we are continuing our consideration in these areas, the group that might be called the middle-disadvantaged and handicapped group really does not quite receive the care and attention that it ought to.

Perhaps one might ask, how far does one go in support of such programs? I would only say this, that so long as there are among us those who need assistance in the area that might then result in their being able to help themselves and to live in our society with pride and dignity, so far we must go with our aid.

Millions of dollars go out of this country daily and out of this province to aid the under-privileged and under-developed in foreign countries and so it should be. But I would like to suggest that at least once a year, perhaps, a total and complete dedication of funds be raised by a March for Millions for the disadvantaged and handicapped in this province. I feel sure that following such a program people would be more willing to give aid at other times to the disadvantaged and under-privileged in foreign countries.

In looking at the area of leisure and recreational development, I would like to view leisure and recreational development in an interlocking kind of way. By and large, when we think of leisure we think it is a time when one ceases to work in that area which one generally occupies to produce an income. In considering recreational development one might automatically think of a facility in which a certain sport or leisurely activity is housed. But this need not necessarily be so in either case. Leisure may be the development of an activity that may either produce income under circumstances other than the basic supply of funds on which one guides oneself in a standard on the social ladder, and recreational development may be both a facility and an activity of the human mind and body.

Let me make these two points individually. Leisure can vary from total and complete idleness both in body and mind to an activity that is engaged in, which gives one pleasure, gives one a relaxing sensitivity from the usual strain of having to compete in a work-a-day sense, an activity that may perhaps produce a partial income and is of a relaxing nature in the sense of tensions but provides a therapy for others.

Recreational development, on the other hand, can be an activity of the mind or body or both that improves one's physical health, one's mental health and gives strength in the ability to cope with the competitiveness of the total social and work community. I believe it is apparent that the two factors in the above aspects are by and large synonymous.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that leisure and recreational development does not begin in the adult years, but in the very early years. This kind of programming and development becomes very important in an area where a

concentration of low-income groups exists, where large numbers of citizens are on social assistance, where there is a concentration of culturally deprived and poverty homes. It is in such areas that greater consideration and assistance must be provided by governments. With the participation on the part of government in the development of recreational facilities, it is becoming evident, that it is necessary, as well as its participation in program development and the making of such programs available to the disadvantaged.

We have such concentrations of populace in the city and across the province. I feel such a concentration exists within my own constituency, and I have a great deal of concern that the young, innocent children will continue to suffer emotionally and will not come out of the socio-economic group in which they now live and, perhaps, will continue to live.

Such results then breed a continuation of these very problems in the offspring time and time again, with only very small numbers being endowed with the additional strength they require to break out of such a cocoon. It is therefore I feel, Mr. Speaker, relevant that greater examination be given in this area.

With respect to educated manpower, we must look at the fact that with the ever-increasing costs of education and monies poured into secondary education, institutions and programs, I think it timely to consider the situation which confronts a fairly large section of our educated manpower today. The sharp decline in demand for educated manpower in many areas has been having a tremendous impact on the thinking and attitudes of the younger generation who are reaching quickly the age when they must make a choice of directions in their lives. We have many people graduating from a number of faculties for whom there is no employment demand and these young people ask, "Why is there no better direction?"

In the past it appears that governments have been concerned with programming and projections of manpower needs in the labor area and more and more capabilities for such statistical predictions and forecasting are being developed.

However, it seems to me that little has been done in the area of educated manpower. It would appear that universities have been concerned with the prestige of the number of graduates and the number of prestige faculties that may be offered in the university. Little program development has taken place from the point of view of immediate or long-range planning in educated manpower needs.

A major user of educated manpower has long been the educational system itself. As schools expanded to cope with booming enrolments and young people remained longer in school, the need for such manpower was there. But no planning had been taken into account to accommodate the changing cycle in needs and the decreasing enrolment and the need to employ educators in the numbers that are graduating.

In the area of research, governments spend limited funds for such programming, offering little employment for researchers. Program statistics with respect to educated manpower for professions is virtually non-existent. By and large, that is true. The possibilities of expansion in these areas of professions have virtually not been explored. The dependence of markets for trained people on provincial and federal programming and financing has not been totally assessed. With government recognizing the need for developing its own manpower-forecasting programs, here in the province, it is important to consider developing assessment and monitoring capabilities in the area of career opportunities in professions.

There must be a greater accountability by the universities to government for the funds provided to universities. The degree of rigidity and constraints in transferability of credits must be a priority for review, as such constraints are a strong influence in supplying professionals to meet the needs of society.

With respect to equal opportunity and fair treatment for women, there are several areas I would like to comment upon briefly. One is employment opportunities. Time and time again we hear comments from executives respecting the competence of their secretaries, their executive secretaries who are women, but very seldom is that competence translated to a capability for a front-line job. This is a matter of perhaps innocent attitude that, hopefully, will continue to change at a greater speed.

There is the area of equal salaries for positions that are filled by men and women where the responsibilities are virtually the same, where the demands are

virtually the same, but where there is a difference in the salary rate. These certainly exist very widely in the health services fields, research, accounting, office management and janitor service work, just to name a few. We look at statistics on the staffs of universities. It is extremely evident that such differentiation exists.

There is another area, the area of menial tasks. By and large and generally, without intention perhaps, they are assigned to women. In our changing society and in the changing role of the breadwinner, such differentiation in salaries and capabilities of earnings creates a hardship where it is the woman who must be the breadwinner for any number of reasons but because of the lower-income scale attributed to women's jobs, the income is not sufficient.

I'd like to briefly cover the area of legal rights, the inadequacies in our legal system in regard to the capability or the possibility of women of broken homes, mothers with children -- the shortcomings that exist in their ability to recover from the husband or from the father of the children, maintenance and support. Although many of these husbands or fathers I speak of are employed with handsome salaries they manage, in devious ways, to avoid payment of support in carrying out their obligations. Yet our legal system has somehow not adequately been altered to overcome such problems.

There still continue to be inadequacies in the division of property and what a wife is entitled to and what a husband is entitled to. It seems that, by and large, in many cases the fact that the woman played the role of a housemaid somehow has a lesser value than the income brought home by the husband. I have to acknowledge at this time, there also exist inadequacies in legal rights in some respects where men are concerned. But if we take them and measure them in quantity, the scales are extremely overbalanced against the women.

I don't say that it is the men who are totally at fault in many of these areas. I think some of this fault has to be attributed to women, in their shyness to come forward and try to compete, probably because of the kind of social attitude we have grown up with. So the onus is on both but, by and large, I think the scale balances to the wrong direction far too much. I think a great deal of education needs to be carried out and here is where I feel the inadequacy is, as far as support in the budget.

In a better development of a women's bureau, I feel there should be greater budgetary support and it can have significance not only for women and their rights and what they should be doing, because I think the education needs to flow in both directions. I think women need to be made aware, as well, of the areas where there is unfairness toward men and so it should be a balanced kind of situation. I think this can only be accomplished by greater budgetary support to develop that kind of program.

Mr. Speaker, it has been my pleasure to have these words with you.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS (CONT.)

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could have leave of the House to revert to Introduction of Visitors?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and to members of the Legislature, some 22 students from the Peter Pond School in Fort McMurray. They are Grade 8 students on an exchange tour with an Edmonton high school and they will be in for the weekend, fortunately. They were late mainly because of the weather; they left the banana belt of Fort McMurray this morning and arrived in this blizzard country late this afternoon. These 22 Grade 8 students are accompanied by their teachers, Miss Marianne Bartman and Gerry Edlund. They are seated in the public gallery and I would ask them to rise and receive the recognition of the House.

MF. BARTON:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Legislature, Chief Walter Twinn of the Sawridge Indian Band. I would like to give a brief history of Chief Walter and his understanding and capabilities in the development of the North. In 1967 he purchased 31 acres of land and today he has one of the finest recreational facilities as far as hotel and motel accommodations in northern Alberta. I would ask Chief Walter Twinn to rise and be recognized by the members of the Legislature.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS (CONT.)

MR. COOPER:

In speaking very briefly in the budget debate, I do congratulate you on the very fair and interesting manner in which you carry out your oftentimes very difficult duties. I also appreciated the very fine presentation of the budget by the Provincial Treasurer and enjoyed the contributions several of the cabinet ministers have made. With one exception, each minister gave a detailed survey of the functions and workings of his department and plans for the year ahead.

I cannot say the same for the address and the debate given by the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. I was looking forward to his address, but it seemed to me the first part of it was a sermon in which he said we delivered very poor speeches from this side of the House, and the second part was sort of a song of adoration, chiefly about himself.

However, I did get one point from his talk and that was he didn't think we were talking enough about our constituencies. I am going to confine my remarks pretty much to my constituency or the area in which my constituency lies. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, there is very little point in enumerating areas of activity in which all is well, so I have chosen to speak about a few trouble spots. I do so in the belief that the same problems possibly exist on a province-wide basis in rural constituencies.

The first item I would like to speak on is rural hospitals. Representatives of at least two small hospitals in my area are very, very greatly concerned about the future of their hospitals. Both hospitals have rendered yeoman service over a period of more than 50 years and are still doing so. However, they are in need of extensive renovations; in fact, they should both be replaced. Apparently there are no funds for replacement; possibly some for renovation, which they don't think is feasible or sensible.

Members of the hospital boards read of substantial government grants to agricultural societies, grants for recreational buildings, grants to recreational commissions, grants for various kinds of winter-works programs, and they find it rather difficult to understand why no money is available for such an essential and necessary service as that which hospitals offer and in which, of course, they are chiefly interested.

The two small hospitals I have in mind were among the first constructed after The Municipal Hospitals Act was passed in 1919. The buildings actually, as I said before, need replacing and at the very, very least, quite extensive renovations. To add to their troubles now, the fire commissioner's office has practically ordered them to make a lot of major changes in the buildings to conform with the regulations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the communities in which these two hospitals are located, the hospital is the very centre of the economy of the village or the hamlet. Take the hospital out of either of these centres and you certainly aid the demise of the rural community. I think we are all agreed that we are dedicated to saving these communities. In the case of one of the hospitals, closing would mean the loss of 14 jobs at the hospital alone. In one centre, there is one doctor, in the other centre, two doctors. No doubt they and their families would move elsewhere. Both centres have drug stores with pharmacists. Without a doctor there would be little purpose or need for the pharmacist and the drug store would probably close.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, closing a hospital starts a chain of events aimed at the very heart of these rural communities. I will admit that possibly the patients could be absorbed in other hospitals. But nothing would recompense for the loss of the hospital and all that it represents to the community from an economic or industrial viewpoint. The very prosperity of these small centres has been built up over 50 years on the continued existence of the hospital there.

Now, the government is attempting, with business and agricultural loans, to keep our villages viable. One of the ways to achieve this in the two places I have in mind, Mr. Speaker, is to make it possible to keep the hospitals operating. This could be true, I would imagine, in a dozen villages or hamlets in rural Alberta.

As I said before, we do have considerable funds for grants to agricultural societies, which really mean the construction of curling and skating rinks, community halls, recreation buildings, and these grants I most heartily welcome and approve of. My constituency has benefitted from them. They provide an incentive for the communities to continue and add to the facilities which are made possible by these grants.

But I also think that some system of upgrading or rebuilding our smaller and older hospitals should be embarked upon to continue this vital factor in the life of our villages. I think it's the consensus in this Legislature that centralization has gone quite far enough.

Moving on to schools and speaking of centralization again, it was my impression that it was generally recognized that school centralization had gone too far already but surprisingly enough it still continues. During this present session I have had appeals from people in centres in two counties to attempt to save their schools. In one case, in the hamlet of Ranfurly in the county of Minburn all community activities centre around the two-room school. The county did plan to close one room and even suggested that it would be advisable to close both as the new formula of the new education finance scheme is based on per-pupil grants. Therefore the county school committees can only meet their budgets if they centralize. This means that some smaller schools and many, many classrooms located in the villages and hamlets must be closed.

It appears to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Department of Education should provide additional money for the operation of schools in rural areas as compared to urban schools. The County of Minburn has announced its school closure program for the September term. I have in that county within my constituency five small school centralizations and some classrooms are to be closed in every one of them. I should interject here that, following representations made to the county school committee by the people of Ranfurly, they have agreed to continue the operation of the two rooms in that school for another year.

In announcing the plan of classroom closures and further centralization the county committee made several very significant statements. I would like to quote from statements they sent out to all the people, at least they published this statement in all the papers in the county. I'm just taking extracts that I think would be of interest. This is a statement by Mr. R. A. Gorrie, Superintendent of Schools, County of Minburn, No. 27. He is attempting to justify the closing of classrooms:

Under the new finance formula the supplementary requisition rate for 1972 has been virtually frozen. The school committee can only have this increased in 1973 if they can demonstrate need to the Minister of Education.

And going on:

Consequently, the only viable but most unfortunate alternative is a cutback of educational services to reduce the high rate of educational expenditure to match the increase in revenue. This simply means that the school committee is forced to make very reluctant decisions with respect to cut back of school programs and increasing very significantly classroom loads of teachers. We recognize that by so doing the child suffers in comparison to what he used to, but there is no alternative.

The closing statement in the article, Mr. Speaker:

I submit that under the present circumstances dictated by the educational financial formula there is little room for argument, for freedom and for autonomy.

The present educational finance scheme, equalizing as it does grants to urban and rural students, cannot help but encourage more centralization. Once again, as in the case of the Department of Health, the Department of Education can help materially in preserving life in rural Alberta. But under the present plan, Mr. Speaker, the demise is being speeded up in yet another phase of rural life.

Another letter from the school committee, County of Vermilion River. I'll just quote very briefly from it:

The views expressed herein have evolved after careful and serious consideration of several actions of the government, namely the new school foundation program fund, accreditation, the educational opportunities fund and the early childhood services program.

Permeating through all of the above noted we see the continued, if not the accelerated erosion of local autonomy. Concurrent with this erosion we see an ever-increasing lack of competence in the abilities of local school boards.

Leaving the school problem, Mr. Speaker, not for a moment did I ever think I would have a Hutterite problem in my constituency. No sooner was The Communal Property Act repealed than I had one, and right on my own doorstep.

Great concern was expressed, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency over the repeal of The Communal Property Act and these fears were certainly realized almost immediately by the optioning of considerable land for a new Hutterite colony. A tract of the very finest farm land in the constituency is involved. It is located midway between two towns, the towns of Mannville and Vermilion. Concerns have been voiced to me by adjacent farmers who realized that they were about to be hemmed in forever, because once a Hutterite colony is located, situated or started it stays there. Some families have growing sons who have shown an interest in continuing to farm. Now there will be no land available to them. That opportunity would certainly disappear.

Others expressing fears for the future were businessmen because with the farmers being bought out they were losing customers, and with the Hutterian Brethren coming in they felt they were not gaining anything. Businesses in towns and villages require all the customers they can possibly obtain to keep these centres alive. Businessmen feel that the proximity of Hutterite colonies is certainly not an aid or a help to our towns and villages.

I would like to emphasize here, Mr. Speaker, that none of the businessmen or the farmers who approached me on this problem had any personal animosity or ill feeling towards the Hutterite Brethren. They were just concerned for their future.

I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that the problems of hospitals, schools and Hutterite colonies are problems quite common to many constituencies in rural Alberta, but I do have more localized issues and I would like to mention some of them.

I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that more extensive use of the Vermilion Provincial Park is quite a concern. It is certainly a concern of mine and other people in that area. It is very gratifying to see the throngs in the park in the summer season. These numbers continue to grow year by year. It is a very pretty park with very nice campsites. It is located above a lake, close to the town. People come there meaning to stay overnight and quite frequently stay for two, three or four days.

But it is the limited use in the winter months that worries me. Vermilion Provincial Park is a natural winter playground. It is located in a deep valley. It offers natural ski runs. For example, the Vermilion Ski Club at the present time is looking for a new location for their ski tow, which is located some five or six miles south of Vermilion. They would certainly look after any activity regarding ski runs. Tobogganing is coming back. I don't mean power tobogganing either. It is coming back into favour and Vermilion Provincial Park has numerous places that could be converted into very nice toboggan runs.

I am still of the belief, Mr. Speaker, that the use of snowmobiles should be allowed in restricted areas in our parks. Certainly in the Vermilion park we have 2,000 acres, much of it not in use. I am quite well aware that the use of snowmobiles on the lakes in the park was never prohibited. But in the case of Vermilion Lake there is the problem of reaching the lake. It is an artificial lake which has high dikes on part of it and a deep river bank on the other side of it, so it is very difficult to get onto the lake without travelling through the park and of course in a snow run, unless you have some kind of transportation for your snow vehicle you just can't get there. Being close to the town, of course, not many people have transportation for their snow vehicles.

Consequently, Mr. Speaker, I do think that in a provincial park located close to a small centre of population as in the case of the Vermilion park, it could be made use of in the winter as well as in the summer. I think that regulations regarding parks should be more flexible. We have probably one set

of regulations that covers every park in the province from the far south to the far north and conditions certainly differ.

I certainly do hope that the new provincial parks announced for Calgary and Edmonton will be available for use the year round. We have had too many recreational facilities and buildings which, due to the nature of our climate, are used in season only. When there is an opportunity to double the time of use of any of these facilities, let's do it. And I certainly realize the Vermilion Park, located as it is, close by the town of Vermilion -- any other park close to a centre of population certainly presents problems for the parks branch. It becomes looked upon as a recreation area by townspeople and additional development or facilities is expected. And I can appreciate too, the attitude of the parks branch that the area should remain much in its natural state where people can get close to solitude if they wish and enjoy unspoiled nature. Now this is possible in the summer season only. I have approached the parks branch with these problems and I have found them very approachable, very sympathetic and I'm sure they will come up with some solutions.

I'd like to move on to the Vermilion College, at one time called the Vermilion Agriculture School. It was promoted to the Vermilion Agriculture and Vocational College and is now known as the Vermilion College. For the past number of years the Vermilion College, along with the colleges at Fairview and Olds, has been the subject of numerous reports.

We have had in 1968 the Provincial Board of Post-Secondary Education Report. This was followed by the Tradition and Transition Report and the Alberta Colleges Commission Report and the Worth Report. Each one of the above reports, while differing in many respects, had one thought in common. They all advocated the full integration of the Vermilion College into the public junior colleges system and advocated that selected university transfer courses should be taught. And such a move, of course, implies substantial alterations in their traditional functions.

Now along comes the Bosetti Report which we received not too long ago. It advocates the same move and I quote from the report:

This college should continue to broaden its program offerings to include selected university transfer, industrial technology and vocational programs.

And I am certainly in agreement with this recommendation.

However, the report does continue on and further recommends that the "Vermilion College operate as a satellite of Grant McEwan Community College", and this I certainly most vehemently oppose. I cannot see any advantages to be gained by this move. All I can see is the diminishing use of a Vermilion College. The word "satellite" indicates to me that the Vermilion College would be over-shadowed by the city-based college and its expansion would be slowed down. I feel that this recommendation of the Bosetti Commission negates two very important, stated principles of present government policy, namely decentralization and equal educational opportunity for all.

One primary reason for opposing the satellite college idea, as pointed out by the staff of the college, is that university transfer courses must be authorized by the university. Therefore, it would be more advantageous to deal directly with the university rather than through a very unnecessary middleman.

Now surely, Mr. Speaker, the message is plain. Five reports by highly qualified educational authorities, after due study and thought, have made the same recommendation. It now behooves the hon. Minister of Advanced Education to make a decision and include the Vermilion College under The Public Junior Colleges Act. The hon. Minister has made definite decisions in major matters of concern. I would like to see him further enhance his stature by making this move.

The housing situation has caused me concern. Mr. Speaker, another problem area common to many towns is the construction of houses under mortgaging plans. These certainly must come under closer scrutiny and some sort of supervision. There doesn't seem to be any at the present time.

To illustrate, a house construction company purchased property in a new subdivision in my home town of Vermilion, and this happened in half a dozen towns of similar size. Homes are in very short supply there. There is a decided need for living accommodation. Consequently there was a rush of prospective customers, purchasers. Some made down payments. The demand was

such, Mr. Speaker, that the construction company purchased additional lots and started more houses.

Not one of the houses was ever completed. They reached a certain stage of construction. Many were completely closed in, very close to completion. Some were ready except for heating and plumbing and they are all still standing there, the same way. There has been nothing touched for six months on them. The company is apparently without funds, being sued in court by many creditors and this was a construction firm reportedly financed by the CMHC. And as I said before, Mr. Speaker, the same story is being repeated in half a dozen towns throughout Alberta.

Surely such large, important, and very much needed construction operations, affecting so many people require some sort of regulation and supervision. And now that we have a new department, a new minister in charge, I think that possibly it will be looked after. I certainly hope so. Every person in Vermilion thought this was an Alberta Government housing plan and the people severely condemned this government, so much that I had a very hard time defending them.

[Laughter]

I'm very pleased to see that the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs is now studying the problem and I hope that suitable laws and regulations will be introduced which will re-inject some competence into housing plans. There is a terrific shortage of housing in many, many towns, Mr. Speaker.

I think this is the last item I have sketchy notes on, Mr. Speaker, and that is the matter of cattle rustling. One more worrisome problem which I regret to state seems to be growing -- that of cattle rustling. It seems to be easy now for a rustler to pick up a truckload of prime cattle and just simply disappear.

At the same time the RCMP is hampered in running down the culprits. There were 1,935 head of cattle reported missing during the year 1972. So serious is the situation that the RCMP have officers detailed specifically for livestock investigations in Red Deer, Edmonton, Lethbridge, and Calgary and they hope to have one stationed soon in the Peace River district to help combat the rustling problem.

In my constituency, Mr. Speaker, there have been two multiple thefts, one of 25 head of cattle and one of 17 head, both directly from farmer feedlots. One when the cattle had been finished and were to be marketed the next day and no trace whatsoever was found of either lot of cattle. Now farmers and stockmen who are members of the East Central Alberta Grazing Association, at their annual convention held in Vermilion in February passed the following resolution:

Whereas the RCMP and provincial brand inspectors presently require a search warrant to inspect herds on farm premises, and whereas requiring a search warrant is time consuming and often defeats the advantage of a surprise inspection, therefore be it resolved that the RCMP and specifically named brand inspectors be empowered to inspect herds on farm premises, excepting dwelling houses, without a search warrant.

As it now stands, the farmers and the stockmen feel that all the factors help the rustlers make a complete getaway.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd be very unpopular in my constituency if I didn't ask the Minister of Highways for some road construction --

AN HON. MEMBER:

Highway 36.

MR. COOPER:

How did you guess? The construction of Highways 36 and 41 within the boundaries of the Vermilion-Viking constituency. I am quite well aware that construction is being carried on further south on both these highways. On Highway 41, there is hardtop from Wainwright south and hardtop from Vermilion north, but there is no hardtop between the two, a distance of some 38 miles. This road has been newly rebuilt -- it's oiled. The 38 miles traverse the Battle River Valley, two beautiful coolees, the Buffalo and the Grizzly Bear. Each one has a history, as you can tell from the names. From Edmonton to Wainwright via Highway 14, north to Vermilion via 41 and back to Edmonton via 16, or vice versa, makes a very lovely Sunday circle tour, and the Alberta Tourist Association was advertising as part of "See Alberta First" such tours in

the Edmonton Journal a couple of seasons ago. I think it's a very good idea. It's an easy day's run. But it has been my observation, Mr. Speaker, that city people are sissies when it comes to roads. They want hardtop all the way.

Alberta lacks north-south highways, as we know, in the eastern part of the province, and I would like to see Highway 36, particularly from Viking to Highway 16, completed in an early program. These two north-south highways, Mr. Speaker, reach from, in one case, the international boundary into northern Alberta and in the other case from TransCanada No. 1 right into the greatest holiday country in Alberta in my opinion. There will be a lot of members here who will agree with that, especially members from Lac La Biche, St. Paul, Ponnyville and Lloydminster. The area is full of lakes, fine beaches and good fishing. Open that up with a complete north-south highway and a couple more north-south highways, Mr. Speaker, and you will be giving a real impetus to the areas through which the highways pass.

These are all rural areas, Mr. Speaker, with no major centres of population concerned. Highways 36 and 41 traverse rural Alberta in the true sense of the word. So let's channel the tourist traffic over them with the hope that some of the tourist's dollars will remain in our towns and villages. At our lakes north of the Vermilion-Viking constituency there are provincial parks, campsites and motels to satisfy every tourist's need.

I think, Mr. Speaker, I have left the various departments plenty of problems to wrestle with, and I thank you very much for the opportunity of addressing this House.

MR. LOUGHEED:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion by the hon. Premier to adjourn the debate, would all those in favour please say aye, those opposed please say no.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

Committee of Supply.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair.]

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Committee of Supply will come to order.

Executive Council (Cont.)

Northern Development

Appropriation 1418 Minister's Office

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Northern Development Vote 1418. Is it agreed?

MR. STROM:

I know the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake asked the minister some time ago whether or not there was going to be a report and I have also followed it up. Will there be a report from the northern Alberta development board as required by statute or what is the situation at the present time?

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Chairman, as I reported as that time, the Northern Alberta Development Council has not met and as a result we have nothing to report but we will be making a report before the end of this session of the activities of our office.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the hon. minister can advise then, as to whether or not it is your intention to have the board function, or is it being phased out at the present time? I take it that for the past 18 months there has been no activity of the board whatsoever.

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair.]

MR. ADAIR:

Actually, Mr. Chairman, it has been quite a bit longer than that. There was nothing for about two and a half years now. We have not met and as I stated a year ago, we passed an amendment to add two members to that board. In the meantime, we are working towards the bringing together of what will be called the Northern Development Group as outlined in the budget. That group will then, in turn, work toward getting the advisory council back into action. Those are our plans at this stage.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Notley, just one moment please. I have a little announcement here. I have a report here from the AMA Road Report at 3:30 o'clock. All highways north of Calgary are in extremely poor condition with up to eight inches of snow and visibility limited to zero. The only exception is Highway 28 to St. Paul and north.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, could I ask the minister whether or not those two additional people that we made provision for in the amendments to the act last year were in fact appointed to the Northern Development Council?

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Chairman, no they haven't been. As we said, the council itself has been totally inactive; we have not called any of the other people together at all. We are hopefully about to form what will be called a Northern Development Group. Once we get the group together, that is a group of five professional people, they will sit down with my office and we will then reorganize the Northern Alberta Development Advisory Council as it was a couple of years ago with the addition of two additional members to better balance the geographical areas of the north.

MR. NOTLEY:

If I can follow that up. I'm still not clear in my mind why the development council did not, in fact, meet last year. Obviously when the amendment was proposed to the Legislature a year ago it was certainly with the understanding, at least I thought it was, that there would be some meetings of the council. I am wondering if the minister could advise the committee why, in fact, the council did not meet and what the rationale was behind not having any meetings.

It seems to me also, that if you're talking about a new approach to northern development, wouldn't there have been some value, Mr. Minister, in having repeated meetings of the old council, as it was constituted, to provide some input into your thinking as to what changes could be made?

MR. ADAIR:

That is a possibility, Mr. Chairman. But, I might add too that one of the main reasons it didn't meet was that I didn't ask them to get together, mainly because at that particular time I had thought, had everything fallen into place, we would have had our group developed a little earlier. We are at the stage now where we are very close to getting our group together and then we will call the group together to, more or less, set out our plans from there. We did not meet at all during the past year.

We have been mainly dealing out of my office, I might add, Mr. Chairman, not as much specifically in the outlying areas with the areas of northern

development, but mainly with the offices of the Metis and Indian liaison. We have been spending most of our time in that area plus developing what we feel will be the Northern Development Group.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, in listening to the hon. minister, it appears to me that the previous government was critical for having a small board and no meetings, and now the thrust from the Conservatives is a bigger board and still no meetings. I suppose that is supposed to solve something.

But I wonder if the minister can tell us whether he considers this issue to be of such low priority after a year-and-a-half or so in office, that they haven't got around to simply doing anything yet. They are merely jockeying around and hoping to get a board together, not even knowing who the board is going to be or perhaps they can't find enough people capable to be on the board. What is the problem? I mean, this appears to be some sort of a 'wait and see until it is too late to do anything', Mr. Chairman.

MR. ADAIR:

No, I don't think that is quite right, Mr. Chairman. I think one of the things that maybe should be pointed out right now, is that the hon. Member for Slave Lake was a member of that particular board. The former Member for Grande Prairie, Mr. McLaughlin was a member of the board, the former Member for Dunvegen at the time, I believe it was, Mr. Pimrite, was a member of the board. These people have more or less actively relieved themselves of that responsibility.

We haven't restructured the new board. It didn't meet for a year prior to the election, I might add too. So it was totally inactive for the year ahead of that, and it has been since then. And until we structure our group, in order to get some direction to give to the advisory board, then that is where it will stand.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I am glad that the minister agreed entirely with what I said. And this business of "...until we structure our group..." is something like some consideration being given to some vague policy in many departments, that it is just being considered but no sense of direction yet and no board, no indication that something will be done in the foreseeable future, not just now.

This was sort of a 'now' government, everybody jumping up and down, we want to do something now. And now they don't know what to do, they are going to structure a board or they are going to consider something or they are going to consider what to consider. But I think the minister has indicated in his answer in agreeing with me that this whole issue is of such low priority that maybe they will get around to do something someday, but I have my doubts about it.

MR. NOTLEY:

Could I ask the minister whether or not he has received the resignations of any of the former members of the board, or whether these people are still technically members of the board?

MR. ADAIR:

I have not received any formal, written resignations -- if that is what you are referring to.

MR. LUDWIG:

I wonder in all the programs that were available in the past, lending programs, educational programs, all the programs for the northern areas, dealing with the Metis and the Indians -- can the minister advise in what areas have there been increases in spending, in what areas have they abolished spending and in what areas have they transferred spending? Give us a general outline of any improvements or increases in spending in this particular area, in dealing with the problem generally.

MR. ADAIR:

I can do that, Mr. Chairman, when we get to 1420.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

Appropriation 1418 agreed to: \$50,000

Appropriation 1419 Northern Development Group

MR. NOTLEY:

I would like the minister to be quite specific in just outlining the Northern Development Group. You mentioned a moment ago that, if I understand rightly there were to be five professional people. I would like to know what he means first of all by "professional people", what the skills and the experience are of these people and what disciplines they come from. I would like to know what steps are being taken to ensure a community input to the Northern Development Group and, further, I would like to have some idea of when this Northern Alberta Development Group will be in a position to reactivate the Northern Development Council or make proposals for a somewhat more workable council.

MR. ADAIR:

Well, as I said a little earlier, Mr. Chairman, in relation to the five professionals, of course we would have a director of the Northern Development Group. We would hope within the four senior staff people that we would have an economist and consultants that would allow us to cover all aspects of the area of northern development and to be able to provide us with the information necessary to develop a comprehensive, long-range plan for the northern development area and tying that in, of course, with all the other line departments that are part of government.

Of course with that, as I said just a moment or two ago, we would then be considering the reactivation of the Northern Development Advisory Council. It would be along the lines of what it was before, a group that would advise government what could be done in the areas of further development of the north, looking at industry, transportation and practically every other phase of the development of the north.

I might add that in that particular area, we sat down with Manpower and Labour and discussed the job opportunities and the relationship that may have to the forest product complexes at Slave Lake and Grande Prairie, the tar sands at Fort McMurray and Peace River and also the tar sands complex we mentioned just a moment ago. But I think, in relation to that, once we get the Northern Development Group in action as quickly as possible, and that's the soonest I can say right at the moment, we would then sit down and re-establish the terms of reference for the advisory council. That's our plan right now, to get it into action as quickly as we can.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, just to follow up on that. It seems to me that one of the important points we should be looking at, Mr. Minister, is the role of community input. If this Northern Development Group is going to be considering some long-range programs including the restructuring of the Northern Development Council, it seems to me there should be provisions for ongoing consultation. So I'm wondering if you could advise the committee, first of all, whether or not you have written or contacted all the improvement district advisory boards, village councils, town councils, the city council in Grande Prairie, county councils, et cetera, to try to elicit from them their views on what should be done.

Let me just leave it at that and then I may have some supplementary questions.

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Chairman, in relation to that, no we haven't specifically written to them. But that is one of the first items on the agenda for the Northern Development Group when they get into action and also one of the terms of reference that was previously a part of the advisory council and would then be reinstated within that particular area. Once we get the initial one going and the advisory council back into action, we would then be going out into the communities and contacting the various towns, villages, hamlets, IDs, any area, or any group, any chamber of commerce that relates to that particular northern development aspect.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, if I could just pursue this to clarify in my own mind exactly what this chain of command is. Is it fair to say that the northern development group has as its principle objective the reconstituting of a northern development council, or is that objective to be somewhat broader? Is it the objective of the group to begin assessing, as I thought I understood a moment ago, some of the longer-term programs of northern development? Because if that's the case, it seems to me that we should be making provision for community input before we get on with this business of the Northern Development Council.

MR. ADAIR:

Certainly, Mr. Chairman, that's a possibility. But the broader scope is exactly what the group will be doing. They will be looking at the long-term, tying in with it the advisory council and its role.

MR. NOTLEY:

Has consideration been given by the council, or by the group, or by those of you who are working on the northern development group for an early conference, let us say this year, including all the municipal authorities in the north and various groups such as the Metis Association, the Alberta Indian Association and the MLAs from the region, to consider the whole future of the northern development mechanism within the Alberta government?

MR. ADAIR:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, as a matter of fact that's one of the first things. I might mention too, that we don't have the group operative at the moment. An executive assistant and myself have been doing most of this, but as soon as we get that going, one of the items we have, and I have it written right here, is to pursue as quickly as possible the northern development conference that would involve all of the resource people of the north, the people of industry, the people of governments -- local, provincial and federal, the people who are the community leaders, the members of the Chamber of Commerce and any other people who are interested. We would like, hopefully, to have that some time this fall, as quickly as we can get this into action. That is our plan right now, to try and set that up, but where I am not sure at this stage.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, there is another question I would like to pose to the minister and that concerns what steps have been taken by your department to date to assess the northern development schemes in other provinces? I understand that Saskatchewan has taken a slightly different approach to northern development and there you have a full-fledged Minister of Northern Development with all of the departments in the north coming under the Northern Development Department, rather than the minister being a coordinator of departments under other ministers' jurisdictions. I gather that they are taking a slightly different approach in Manitoba and British Columbia.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is, have you had an opportunity to acquaint yourself with the moves made by the other provinces in the west and, for that matter, elsewhere in Canada too -- Ontario and Quebec?

MR. ADAIR:

Other than just meeting with the officials, we have sent my assistant to Saskatchewan and Manitoba. We have met with the officials who have come in to Alberta but we haven't pursued it to any further length. Again, I must emphasize that with the budget amounts we had last year, we had very little parameters in which we could work. We were working mainly with Metis and Indian liaison, with our other time devoted to getting this particular aspect going. We have placed our priority on getting the Northern Development Group in action and getting that particular phase into operation as quickly as possible.

Of course, what has happened also in the restructuring of what was the old HRDA group and the forming of the office of program coordination, we had moved into our office some members of the group who were in the community development field. These people are now working out of our office and are working in the area of Metis and Indian liaison. So we have eight people there as of -- I believe it was January 15 or the first part of February when they moved over to assist us in that area. So we do have some people working in specific areas. That is covered in Appropriation 1420 when we get to that particular one.

But in the other area of northern development, we have the monies approved and what we asked for, to try and get this group going just as quickly as possible and to activate the monies in there which will also cover the payment for the advisory group members to travel back and forth, so we can get meetings going.

MR. NOTLEY:

I take it then, Mr. Chairman, that one of the functions of the Northern Development Group, in addition to the other things you have mentioned, will be, in fact, to carry on active consultation with other provinces to ascertain what their experiences have been and to get some idea, perhaps, of some of the advantages that their approaches might offer and at the same time to avoid some of the pitfalls they fall into.

MR. ADAIR:

That is right. We would certainly be cooperating with the office of the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs in meeting with the other provinces, the federal people and any other aspect that can provide for us information that will assist us to stay out of the traps, so to speak, that may have been created in other areas, and also to assist, in any way we can, in offering to them changes that we see.

I might add that, again it relates to Appropriation 1420, but it interrelates with northern development and the Indian and Metis liaison, is a fact that in negotiations with the other provinces in the HRDA agreement, for one example, we were totally unhappy with the presentation as it was. We had discussions with both the Metis and the Indian associations. We had discussions with Mr. Getty's department and we are now preparing, after consultation with the native people themselves, an alternative to be presented to the federal government.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Mr. Minister, what direction will you be taking in the future as far as community development is concerned? You will recall that for a time there were a number of people who worked out of the old Human Resources Development Authority offices who were community development people and who did a large portion of their work in the north. Then over the past 19 months those people have, to quite an extent, been phased out. Now I hear the government is giving some consideration to -- well, what are you giving consideration to, as far as community development is concerned in the north?

MR. ADAIR:

I was waiting for you to tell me what we are going to consider, sir.

MR. CLARK:

I will in just a minute.

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Chairman, again that relates to Appropriation 1420 and the people we have working in that particular area. They will be interrelating between our Northern Development Group and our Indian and Metis liaison group. They are in there right now -- the people who have moved over from the community development portion of the old Human Resources Development Authority.

MR. CLARK:

Specifically how many people do you have involved in that area right now? And who are they?

MR. ADAIR:

What was the last part of that question?

MR. CLARK:

Who are they?

MP. ADAIR:

We have Mr. Tom Poach, Mrs. Zella Harris, Mr. Ike Glick, Sam Sinclair, Ray Albair and Bob Langdon, at the moment.

MR. CLARK:

And just following along from there, last weekend I believe it was, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for Canada on a television program, made what I considered rather a startling statement dealing with the question of Indian rights, or aboriginal rights, when he indicated that no longer would this be dealt with on a national basis as far as Canada was concerned, but that, in fact, it would be done on a regional basis. The first question dealing in that area is, what kind of input did either your office or the northern affairs and your Indian-Metis liaison branch have with the federal government before this was done? Secondly then, what plans do you have in dealing with this question? Because virtually as I understood the minister's comments, he has thrown the ball now to the provinces. How do you see us going from here?

MR. ADAIR:

I can catch the ball, yes. To my knowledge, Mr. Chairman, no consultation with us unless it was with the office of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and to my knowledge, nothing.

We have now put the wheels in motion to have Tom and the fellows in the -- Mr. Roach, I'm sorry, and the fellows in our office assess just exactly what the complications, the implications may be in that particular area.

I think the attempt by the minister to throw it back to the province is a bit feeble at this particular stage and I think that certainly we'll be taking a very good look at it.

MR. CLARK:

What is the position of the province then on this particular issue?

MR. ADAIR:

I would say, and again this is my own personal opinion, that it is still a federal jurisdiction. It is still within the jurisdiction of the minister himself, the federal minister.

MR. CLARK:

Have you had discussions --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Would the two hon. members address the Chair; you're carrying on dialogue out here.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Mr. Minister have you had discussions with the Indian Association of Alberta on this specific question of aboriginal rights?

MR. ADAIR:

Not in the last week, we haven't, but we are setting up a meeting to discuss that particular point.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Appropriation 1419? Any further -- Mr. Clark.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, through you to the minister. Mr. Minister where does the proposition stand that was made by the Indian Association of Alberta, and I believe one of the firms interested in the tar sands development, as far as the training of native people is concerned?

MR. ADAIR:

Well, Mr. Chairman, that particular proposal has not been formally presented to the province. It was presented to the federal government and they in turn got in touch with the office of manpower and labour, but the presentation by the association was not formally presented to us. But we have contacted the Indian Association and we have a meeting tentatively set up in the very near future to discuss that particular point.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Minister, following the phasing out -- through you, Mr. Chairman -- following the phasing out of New Start, the government called or requested Syncrude and other groups in the area to present to the government some proposals as to what should happen in that northeastern corner of the province because the whole idea behind New Start was that New Start would try a particular kind of approach to deal with the problems of the native people in the northeastern corner of the province. It is my understanding that the government asked for proposals from a number of organizations; where do those proposals stand now?

MR. ADAIR:

That particular committee is still meeting and I may ask the Minister of Advanced Education to comment further on it. But the Indian Association was also a part of that particular committee in which they were relating to the job opportunities, not only for the native people of northeastern Alberta, but for all the people of northeastern Alberta and working closely with industry and government.

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Chairman, if I can respond further to that inquiry, the proposal which we received was one put together by the representatives of industry, the Indian Association, and the Metis Association, although other persons were involved in the committee, I think primarily from government.

The proposal that was put forward was essentially a structure involving the establishment of a company to own, coordinate and deliver educational services within the northern regions of the province with the cooperation and assistance of industry, the Indian Association, the Metis Association and government. And as I recall, if my memory serves me correctly, the governing authority of this corporation would be a council, representative of the groups to which I have referred.

At the time this proposal came forward and when reviewing it with the Minister for Manpower and Labour, we concluded that while a corporation structure may have some useful advantages and benefits, we felt that in the short run to get some of these facilities off the ground and opened up as it were, we might be in a better position to do it through a department of government and then re-examine the question of possible, contacting, liaison involvement with the Indian Association, the Metis Association and industry. Since that time, the Department of Advanced Education has endeavoured to open up as vocational centres, a centre in Lac La Biche and the other smaller centres in that area, as well as the centre in Fort Chip., and other smaller centres like Janvier, between -- well, the members know where they are.

We have experienced some degree of success in that. We have not frankly been able to move as quickly as we would have liked in opening these facilities, getting programs underway, involving local people in an advisory role in establishing the kinds of programs that we should offer, identifying the skills that are needed in the region, identifying the students who should be admitted to these facilities, follow-up counselling and follow-up work with industry. Now, all this while, my colleague, the Minister for Manpower and Labour, has been involved, as have I in a sense, with industry in identifying their requirements in the various industries in the north down the road for several years, and making arrangements to accommodate training programs for them.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could conclude your remarks. We are at 4 o'clock.

MR. FOSTER:

Well, it's not a subject, Mr. Chairman, that you can deal with lightly as it is extremely --

HON. MEMBERS:

Adjourn.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Is it agreed that we rise and report?

[The motion was carried.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain estimates, begs to report progress and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the report and the request for leave to sit again, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, a point of order concerning business on Monday and Tuesday. Monday afternoon, Monday evening and Tuesday evening, the House will be in Committee of Supply to consider those remaining estimates. That's Monday afternoon, Monday evening, and Tuesday evening.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

[The House rose at 3:57 o'clock]