

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, October 17, 1973

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 221

An Act to amend The Department of the Attorney General Act

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, seconded by the hon. Member for Little Bow, being An Act to amend The Department of the Attorney General Act.

This bill will require the Department of the Attorney General to prepare an annual report and to table it in the Legislature.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 221 was introduced and read a first time.]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

DR. MCCRIMMON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly a group of 38 students, one class from the Junior High School in Ponoka, the other from the Alberta Hospital, Ponoka. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Walsh, several teachers and nurses. We are delighted they could come and watch the proceedings of the House today. They are in the public gallery. I would ask that they stand now and be recognized by the Assembly.

FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table Return No. 153 regarding correspondence between the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada on crude oil shortages in Canada.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the answer to Question 259 asked yesterday.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a report by the Environment Conservation Authority called the Interim Report No. 1 on Land Use and Resource Development on the Eastern Slopes.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table, for all members, copies of the Department of Education policy regarding controversial issues in the classroom. This was announced on August 21. I am tabling it with copies for all members insofar as it relates to Motion No. 8, moved on the Order Paper by the Member for Highwood.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Provincial Auditor - Appointment

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Premier and ask the him if the government is close to making an appointment of a provincial auditor?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I believe we said it would probably be toward the end of of 1973 before that appointment would be made.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary question. In the course of the government's consideration, and in light of the growth of the provincial budget and, in fact the government itself, has the government given any consideration to changing the method of appointment of a provincial auditor and either having the appointment made by the Legislature or, in fact, approved by the Legislature?

MR. LOUGHEED:

No, Mr. Speaker, no changes are contemplated at the present time. And with regard to the question of the degree of growth of government I think that is argumentative.

MR. LUDWIG:

Supplementary to the hon. Premier. Will the hon. Premier continue the usual practice of the government of looking for a good devoted Conservative for the position?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please.

The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

Syncrude Employee Transport

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to one of the members of the 'team'. I'm not sure which one will answer it. Has the government conducted any studies into the feasibility of air transport for workers from areas of unemployment to work in the Syncrude project?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I refer that question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, today under Orders of the Day I will have a ministerial report that will touch on the matter, not in specific but in general terms.

DR. BOUVIER:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Have you had an opportunity to study the proposal that was submitted by the advisory board to the Alberta Vocational

Centre at Lac La Biche on September 17 regarding the air transportation of graduates of the centre to work in the Syncrude project? What are your reactions and plans along this line?

MR. SPEAKER:

Would the hon. member address the Chair, please.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, we'll take this question under advisement and respond tomorrow. In fact, we've had two proposals from that area, which our department and I, personally, have looked at.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Red Deer River Dam

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the Minister of the Environment. Would he advise the House if he, or any member of his department, has had discussions with the federal government regarding the building of a major dam on the Red Deer River?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I have had correspondence with the Minister of the Environment of the Government of Canada with regard to flow management of the Red Deer River. There is also an intergovernmental committee. The matter with regard to flow management of eastern flowing rivers was also discussed by this interprovincial committee.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Supplementary to the minister. Has the minister discussed a specific location for a possible dam on the Red Deer River?

MR. YURKO:

Does the hon. member mean discussion of the location with the federal government?

MR. GRUENWALD:

The location of the proposed dam with the federal government, yes.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, the specific location of the dam hasn't been discussed with the federal government. In my recollection, neither has it been discussed in the interprovincial committee, nor, in fact through correspondence between myself and the Minister of the Environment.

The general concept of flow regulation of the river itself has been discussed, and the manner in which this might be done between the federal and provincial government.

MR. CLARK:

Supplementary question to the minister. When does the minister expect to make a decision, based on recommendations from his advisory committees, on a location for a dam or dams on the Red Deer River upstream from Red Deer?

MR. YURKO:

Very soon, Mr. Speaker. I might say that the preferable site, for a number of reasons, is the Raven River site.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the government's final decision, that the Raven will be the location?

MR. YURKO:

I seem to remember, Mr. Speaker, that I said it was the preferable site at this time. I didn't say it was the final site.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the hon. minister any time schedule in connection with the start of the construction of the dam?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, the time schedule will be dependent on a number of matters; first of all, the resolution of the site itself, the definite location of the site; second, a cost benefit analysis; third, an environmental impact assessment; fourth, public hearings; fifth, the passage of an act by this Legislature authorizing the dam, and sixth, the appropriation of funds by the various governments.

MR. CLARK:

Supplementary question to the minister. Has the government told the public advisory committee, working on a site for this dam, of the government's preference for the Raven site?

MR. YURKO:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the minister has so informed the committee. I might also say that the committee has been given a timetable during which it is to come forward with all its analyses.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Perhaps we might come back to this topic. We've had a great number of supplementaries on it.

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

ALCB -- South African Wine

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Solicitor General, who I believe has responsibility for the Alberta Liquor Control Board. Is it true that the Alberta Liquor Control Board purchases South African wine?

MISS HUNLEY:

I would expect they do, but I'm not positive. I'll have to take that as notice and report back.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, could I place a supplementary question on this subject to the hon. Premier. Has the government considered the submission of various church organizations, that profits from the sale of South African wine should be donated to the World Council of Churches to finance its anti-apartheid policies?

MR. LOUGHEED:

In answer to that question, I would say that presentation was made to the cabinet some months ago, but at this time I'm not in a position to give any definitive answer as to the response.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, maybe I could add to this that we are meeting with representatives of the Council on Monday morning.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Income Tax Reduction

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, a question for the hon. Provincial Treasurer with regard to the announced income tax reduction. Is this solely a federal reduction or is it also an Alberta contribution?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. members will recall that the Minister of Finance for Canada in his February 19 budget announced that, from this point on, personal exemptions would be indexed to a rise in the consumer price index in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this was in response to a widespread concern in Canada that personal exemptions under our income tax system should be increased. In fact, at federal-provincial meetings for ministers of finance, Alberta and other provinces have indicated support for this kind of approach.

I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, that hon. members and the people of Alberta realize that the tax reduction is a joint reduction, not solely a federal reduction. In fact, the announcement will result in the Province of Alberta paying approximately 20 per cent of the total tax reduction to citizens in Alberta. The effect on our citizens will be that about 17,500 will no longer pay any federal or provincial income tax.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Inflation

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Has the government any evidence that benefits Alberta farmers are getting from inflation are greater than what inflation is costing the Alberta consumer?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture will obviously agree when I say that the farmers are now, as a result of some of the price increases, finally getting a decent price for their produce.

MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary to the minister. Would the minister assure the House that [the government] will undertake such a study and report its findings back to the House either later this fall or in the spring session?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, I can't give the hon. member that assurance, but I can tell him that we are constantly reviewing the costs of various food products and making sure that we monitor them on a continuing basis.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I wonder if the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs could advise the Assembly whether or not his department monitors, on an ongoing basis, the profits made by the food processing industries and the food chains?

MR. DOWLING:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, this information was presented to us by the Department of Agriculture when the department was first formed. They did considerable preliminary work in the area that is now under consumer affairs. So we relied very heavily on my colleague, Dr. Horner, and the experts in his department.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, ...

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition with a supplementary, followed by a final supplementary from the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

MR. CLARK:

I'd like to ask the Minister of Consumer Affairs if the government would be prepared to table in the Assembly the results of this monitoring they have done?

MR. DOWLING:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I certainly will when all things are gathered together. We'd be happy to.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister advise whether or not this monitoring process is continuing on an ongoing basis? Who, in fact, is doing it in his department ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Order, order.

MR. DOWLING:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. members will know, we have had consumer affairs officers involved in the PUB hearings in Red Deer, the milk hearings, things of this nature. We are constantly in touch with the food prices Review Board in Ottawa and Mrs. Plumptre. I did have a communication from her this morning regarding a specific item on which I requested information.

Our view is that we must not in any way duplicate services that are presently provided by the federal authorities. They have something in the order of 80 people circulating throughout Canada checking on prices. We gain a great deal of information from her committee. We are going to continue to do that and continue to make certain that all the services which the Consumer Affairs Branch in Alberta provides are not duplicated by the federal people.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Perhaps we could revert to this topic afterwards if the member still wishes to ask the question.

The hon. Member for Little Bow followed by the hon. Member for Stony Plain.

Health Care Costs

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Social Development. What is the purpose of the study by Socio-Systems of Calgary on health care attitudes?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, over the last year I have had discussions with officials of my department and the hospital services commission, seeking their advice on ways in which the highly escalating costs of health care might be controlled. In the course of that it was thought advisable to ascertain to some extent the attitudes of people in regard to their utilization of the health care system. The study undertaken by Socio-Systems is a related part.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Why is the Bureau of Public Affairs involved in the contract with Socio-Systems?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I think the Bureau of Public Affairs is an entirely appropriate agency to represent the government in that area.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary. Will the results of this particular study be made public?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I would certainly think so, in due course.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the matter of the escalating costs of medical men being considered in this report and in this study?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the first discussions I had related to the cost of hospitals. I have not examined the precise guidelines of the study. Rather than guess - which is what I would be doing - that the doctors are probably not included, I should probably check into that. I think though, that the fact that the vast majority of monies spent for health care is spent on hospitals rather than on other areas, is the concern we had when it was initiated.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Stony Plain followed by the hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff.

Plastic Pipe Shortage

MR. PURDY:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Telephones and Utilities. In regard to the rural gas program, is there a present shortage of plastic pipe in the province?

MR. FARRAN:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the question and the opportunity to amplify - yes, I had notice of it - on the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Lethbridge East last Monday.

Yes, there is a shortage. The CIL, the local supplier of resin to the plastic pipe extruders has told its Alberta customers there will be no more resin available in 1974 than was available in 1973.

I am grateful for the question, despite the titters, because this might draw the attention of suppliers elsewhere in Canada to the tremendous demand for hundreds of miles of plastic pipe in Alberta at the present time.

The shortage may ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly the hon. minister would like to continue with the information on another occasion.

MR. FARRAN:

Certainly.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Another speech.

MR. PURDY:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. This is still in regard to the rural gas program. Is there also a shortage of copper fitting valves, and so on, for the completion of plastic fittings?

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, there was not a shortage of fittings; there was a shortage of regulators. With the assistance of Alberta Gas Trunk Line we were able to locate a supply and none of the gas co-ops is being held back for this reason.

MR. PURDY:

A last supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will this shortage of plastic pipe cause a slow-down of the rural gas distribution in the province?

MR. FARRAN:

Is it all right, Mr. Speaker, to ...

MR. SPEAKER:

The question has almost answered itself, but perhaps the hon. minister could complete the answer.

MR. FARRAN:

There may be a small slow-down in the co-ops in the big country of Rosebud and possibly Crossroads co-ops. This is because they are all supplied by one engineer who does a turnkey operation and also manufactures pipe. I believe we can perhaps locate supplies of pipe outside his particular supply and we are endeavouring to do that at the present time. We found a supply in Saskatchewan and we have found a supply of resin in Ontario.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff ...

MR. DRAIN:

Has the minister considered the feasibility of using aluminum pipe instead?

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, we are using aluminum pipe, which a big advance in these rural gas distribution systems, but it is more expensive than plastic and is usually used in lieu of steel pipe for high pressure lines up to 600 pounds per square inch.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Canadian Wheat Board Fines

MR. WYSE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. What percentage of fines collected in Alberta under The Canadian Wheat Board Act goes back to the provincial government?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I think that question is a matter of detail and will certainly require a Motion for a Return.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

CSA Job Reclassification

DR. PAPROSKI:

Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Manpower and Labour. Would the minister be so kind as to tell us what progress has been made regarding the concern of tradesman reclassification in the civil service?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I believe the most significant item of progress was immediately following my meeting with the President of the Civil Service Association of Alberta. That same day we constituted a joint committee of the Civil Service Association of Alberta and the government to look into the eight concerns

presented to us by the tradesmen who are members of the CSA and employees of this government.

I can also inform the House, Mr. Speaker, that the government has indicated that the wage tradesmen would be moved to positions on the classified establishment. This has not been the case over the many years and is very acceptable to the tradesmen.

The government has also agreed to changes concerning 'retroactivity' in the wage agreement which is favourable to the tradesmen. Of particular significance, Mr. Speaker, the government has indicated to the Civil Service Association of Alberta the willingness to establish a mechanism designed to handle future reclassification problems.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking ...

DR. PAPROSKI:

One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister be so kind as to amplify that statement of tradesmen classification? What was that - classified, or something?

DR. HOBOL:

It's simply a matter that many of the tradesmen were what was referred to as "wage employees", which gave them no classification status. They were paid by the hour, hired when there were peak loads and released when they weren't needed. Once they are classified, and come on to what we call the establishment, they are permanent employees of the government and they are not subject to release and rehiring on the basis of the supply and demand of work. This was one of the eight issues before us at my meeting with Mr. Broad.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Highway Construction

MR. COOPER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of Highways. In view of the federal government's recently announced intention to aid in the cost of upgrading western highways, has the Department of Highways planned a stepped up construction program for the Yellowhead Highway, No. 16, in Alberta?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, there has been no decision yet in stepping up programs beyond what they are already stepped up. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, our program has been so extensive this past year, combined with the shortage of materials in both cement and oil, and also combined with the shortage of contractors, that we are having difficulty in completing the full program we had planned this year.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, how is the stepped up highway construction program proceeding in the constituency of Banff-Cochrane?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the hon. member's great interest in the Banff-Cochrane constituency, it is being very well looked after. If he would like to confirm that he should go out into the constituency and visit some of the constituents.

MR. LUDWIG:

A supplementary. Is the minister planning to pave some of the road allowances in that constituency?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. Member for Calgary Foothills followed by the hon. Member for Taber-Warner.

MR. NOTLEY:

As a supplementary question could I ask the hon. minister whether he has yet been able to ascertain what Alberta's share of this scheme would be as announced at the Western Economic Opportunities Conference?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, at this point we are evaluating that cost in regard to the province's share.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Foothills followed by the hon. Member for Taber-Warner.

Pheasant Crop

MR. McCRAE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. Can the minister advise us whether he has up to date information on the pheasant crop in southern Alberta?

DR. WARRACK:

Yes I can, Mr. Speaker. We have weekly reports on this matter. In the matter of pheasants I must say that I am very concerned as these reports are rather discouraging. I hear the same reports from some of the mail I am getting, and also from our regional biology people in southern Alberta.

MR. McCRAE:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister giving consideration to an early closing of the pheasant season?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, this is one of the suggestions that has come to me. We have begun an assessment of that possibility along with some other measures that we hope will improve the situation. But the situation is not a good one, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary. In the assessment by the hon. minister, has the hen season that has been in vogue for a couple of years been one of the major causes of the present shortage of pheasant?

DR. WARRACK:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. As I reported in the House on prior occasions, the previous government did open the pheasant season for hens. This year, 1973, we made a decision to close it. There are some variations of opinion on the matter, but there does seem to be a weight of opinion in the direction that the hen pheasant seasons of the immediate past did hurt the population somewhat.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has the minister examined whether the rapid increase in the fox population in southern Alberta is causing the decrease in the pheasant population?

DR. WARRACK:

Yes we have, Mr. Speaker. One of the considerations is the predator problem emerging in southern Alberta. However, if I might go on with what we so far think is the primary problem this year, it is the problem of very warm weather in mid-June spoiling the first hatch of the pheasants. The biologists report that most of the pheasants they are finding now are from the second hatch, so there are fewer of them and they are smaller and younger.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Taber-Warner followed by the hon. Member for Camrose.

Milk Prices

MR. D. MILLER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs. Is the minister aware that the retail price of milk is two cents less per quart in the cities of Lethbridge and Medicine Hat than it is in the towns in between these two cities on Highway 3, yet the same carrier milk trucks ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member's question is really an announcement. If the hon. member has a question perhaps he could come to it directly.

MR. D. MILLER:

Mr. Speaker, "Is the minister aware" - I started my question ...

MR. SPEAKER:

This is a common opening for a question which is really an announcement. If the hon. member is seeking information perhaps he might ask for it, but to just plumb the depths or extent of the minister's knowledge is not quite the appropriate thing in the question period.

MR. D. MILLER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is it true? I'd like to know if it is true.

MR. DOWLING:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, but that bears a little explanation.

There are eight controlled areas in the Province of Alberta. They are controlled cities, solely because they are the areas in the province where the largest producers of milk are located and this all relates to milk. They are Edmonton, Camrose, Ponoka, Red Deer, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Crowsnest Pass. These controlled areas are able to sell their milk at the price, as indicated in the statement I made some time ago. Outside of those areas - and there are uncontrolled areas - the processors or suppliers of milk are required to charge two cents more, in order to protect the small producer.

I understand from the Minister of Agriculture that there are some changes, and I'm sure he would like to add to my answer. I do know though, Mr. Speaker, that we in Alberta are now paying the lowest price of any place in the Dominion of Canada for milk.

DR. HORNER:

Might I add, Mr. Speaker, that because of the original intention to protect the small local dairies in these areas - there are a limited number of these left - it is our intention during the winter months to develop a new dairy policy for the province. One of the points which will be given consideration is an extension of milk control to the entire province.

MR. D. MILLER:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the producer getting the lowest price?

DR. HORNER:

No, as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, our producer prices compare favourably across the country and we can table these prices if the hon. member would like. We can table what the producers get in the various provinces and what the cost to the consumer is.

As my colleague has said, the consumer is getting the cheapest price across this country and our producers are above the average of the returns to producers generally in Canada.

MR. LUDWIG:

A supplementary to either of the two ministers with regard to milk prices. To what particular action of this government does the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs attribute the fact that we are getting the cheapest milk in Canada?

MR. DOWLING:

Well obviously, Mr. Speaker - because of the intervention of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Consumer Affairs in negotiation with the federal government.

MR. LUDWIG:

Do I gather that the federal government subsidy caused the whole thing to be where it is today? Is that the answer?

MR. DOWLING:

Not quite, Mr. Speaker. The facts of the matter are that it was because of the intervention of the provincial authorities of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Consumer Affairs that the subsidy was, in fact, a subsidy.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I was hoping to get a more honest answer, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Order please!

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I think that on a point of order, the hon. gentleman should be asked to withdraw. To impute dishonesty ...

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member used the expression "more honest". That perhaps implies a degree of honesty. I don't know whether the Chair ought to be weighing the niceties of this situation any further.

The hon. Member for Camrose followed by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc.

Grain Commission Hearings

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if the hon. Minister of Agriculture would advise this House if his department is going to be making representation to the public hearings of the Canadian Grain Commission later this month in Red Deer.

DR. HORNER:

Well inasmuch, Mr. Speaker, as the public hearings are taking place in western Canada as a result of direct representations by our department to Ottawa, and in that this is the first time these kinds of public hearings have been held on the tariffs charged by elevator companies for handling and storage, we certainly intend to be present at the hearings and make submissions to them.

MR. STROMBERG:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister advise the House in more detail what would be contained in the brief?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns we have had and which has been a concern of all of the western provincial governments and the federal government in relation to studies being undertaken by the so-called grains group in Winnipeg relative to our handling system across western Canada, has to do with this matter of whether or not we have an effective gathering and handling system. Certainly, part of that has to be how you use your tariff structure or your fee structure in payments to elevators as to how that gathering system works. If you put more

emphasis on storage, then you are going to have a storage system. If you put more emphasis on handling, then you are going to have, hopefully, a faster throughput and better handling system. So there has to be a balance and this will be the general tenor of our submission to the Canadian Grain Commission.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc followed by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Alberta Coal Resources

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Mines and Minerals. I wonder if the minister could advise the House as to whether the government has embarked upon a concerted program to delineate more accurately the magnitude and quality of the Alberta coal resources.

MR. DICKIE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that we have had extensive work in the coal area. I think that perhaps the area the hon. member raises will be covered in the report of the Energy Resources Conservation Board, which we are expecting toward the end of the year.

MR. HENDERSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Do I gather that the program is directed and controlled directly by the government or through the Resources Conservation Board?

MR. DICKIE:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the report is being prepared by the Energy Resources Conservation Board. As a result of that report, the government would then see if further action is necessary.

MR. HENDERSON:

A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Do I gather then that the government has not actually embarked upon any sort of field exploration program? This is just a paper research study? How extensive is the program?

MR. DICKIE:

Well, I think if the hon. member is trying to distinguish what the actual Department of Mines and Minerals is doing compared to say with the Energy Resources Conservation Board, I would answer that the department is awaiting the report by the Energy Resources Conservation Board. There isn't any coal research program being discussed between the department and the federal government that would give additional information.

MR. HENDERSON:

A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Might I, in closing this subject, direct a question to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. I wonder if he could advise the House as to whether plans have been made to provide the opportunity for Albertans to invest in possible future coal development in the Province of Alberta through the proposed Alberta Energy Company?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, it certainly would be something that would be considered by the Alberta Energy Company since it is within the objectives as outlined by the government in the creation of the company. But it has not, to this date, been considered as a specific investment.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican with a final supplementary.

MR. DIXON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is either to the Minister of Mines and Minerals, or it may be more appropriate - it's on the same line of coal - to the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce. Are Alberta mines at the present time being able to catch up with their export commitments for coal or are they behind?

MR. SPEAKER:

If the hon. minister thinks - or one of the hon. ministers feels - the question can be answered briefly, we could perhaps have the answer now. Otherwise it does seem the sort of thing that should go on the Order Paper.

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I think we should entertain that as a Motion for a Return.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Air Routes - Bilateral Agreement

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce. What progress is there to report on the "successes" as far as Alberta is concerned, especially Calgary and Edmonton, in the recent decisions on the bilaterals?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, we have read in the paper some of the awards that were made in the recent bilaterals with the United States in which Edmonton and Calgary have received services to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Anchorage, Chicago in the future, and New York. I would say considerable progress has been made. It has been the most outstanding award as far as bilateral arrangements are concerned which has ever been accorded western Canada. We are very, very pleased with the results of it.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that information. What I was trying to get at is, are the airlines now picking these up and taking steps to get into actual operation at a very early date?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, while the preliminary agreement has been reached between the two respective countries, the carriers that will cover these particular areas have not been included and until the final agreement is made, prior to the end of 1973, we won't know. But it should be done by that time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Calgary-Harradence Inquiry

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Solicitor General. Has the hon. minister made any inquiry as to the allegations made against one of the witnesses before the Harradence Inquiry, with particular regard to perhaps some tampering with the witness?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I have inquired. I don't know that a witness has been tampered with, but I have been assured by Mr. Harradence and also by officials in my department that there has been no intervention and no attempt to influence the witnesses now appearing before the Harradence Inquiry.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. I believe that yesterday she answered a question I put, that the inquiry Chairman, Mr. Harradence, apparently had a discussion with a couple of employees of her department. Is that correct?

MISS HUNLEY:

Yes, that's correct.

MR. LUDWIG:

Who were the employees Mr. Harradence met with in his extra-official activities as Chairman of that commission?

MISS HUNLEY:

I don't know if that's pertinent, Mr. Speaker. They were senior officials in my department.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, but is there any reason why the minister cannot give us the names of those officials?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The member knows well that the questions are a matter of choice as far as the questioners are concerned, and the answers are equally a matter of choice.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, thank you. One more supplementary to the hon. minister. Will she be presenting a transcript of evidence in the hearings before the Harradence Inquiry, with particular reference to the issue we are dealing with now?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I ordered a transcript of the evidence but have not received it yet. I wish to get it and read it. I understand it's a public document and almost anyone, I'm sure, could get one.

MR. LUDWIG:

Will the hon. minister be making the transcript available to us or will she table the transcript?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. minister has answered that the transcript is likely to be available to the public. If the hon. member should find that is otherwise, he may at some future time, if he wishes, perhaps introduce a motion for a return.

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge East.

Abortion

MR. DIXON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development, is with regard to the rapidly rising abortion rate in our province. What investigation has your department carried out to assure that abortion practices in Alberta hospitals are meeting the spirit and intent of the federal Statutes?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I understand that first of all there is a statement and then a question. As to the rapidly rising abortion rate, I know the hon. member sought information on that recently. I've asked my department to cooperate as far as

possible in providing it directly to him. But it has not come to my attention that the words "rapidly rising" would be justified with reference to the question.

However, as far as complying, within the province, with laws of the federal parliament is concerned, I think the manner of enforcement is well-known.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lethbridge East followed by the hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation.

Homeowners' Insurance

MR. ANDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The federal government is currently studying a proposal that would give homeowners a ten-year insurance against structural defects in new homes. Has the provincial government given any thought to such a program?

MR. RUSSELL:

I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, some of the words in the middle of the question were blurred. Would you mind repeating that?

MR. ANDERSON:

The federal government is currently studying a proposal that would give homeowners ten years of insurance against structural defects in new houses. Has the provincial government given any thought to such a program?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, that proposed federal program was a topic of discussion at a federal-provincial meeting on housing earlier this year. It's my understanding that when the federal government is ready to proceed with it, it will be available to all home purchasers throughout Canada.

MR. ANDERSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has any study been commissioned to determine the frequency of builder-defects in new houses in the province?

MR. RUSSELL:

Not by the government, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, if I might just have a word regarding the warranties on houses. This is part of the study, the Green Paper, that was presented in the Ontario House not too long ago. We are fortunate that members of the Departments of Consumer Affairs in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario are now studying plans to introduce legislation regarding warranties of all kinds which will be the same all across the Dominion, - not just warranties on electric appliances but housing and all of these things.

The Housing and Urban Development Association of Canada has had a considerable amount to do with the development of that Green Paper and the warranty system.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation followed by the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray.

Premier's Plans

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the First Minister and is in regard to standing invitations from both China and Russia to the Premier to visit their countries.

Is the hon. Premier contemplating a trip to the Far East in 1974, or is he planning a more significant trip in '74 here in Alberta - a trip to the polls?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, as of today the answers are negative on both questions. I merely find myself in a position that the matters of concern in this province relative to the federal government in Ottawa seem to be diverting attention away from trips of a nature to which the hon. member refers.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray followed by the hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff.

Emergency Air Ambulance Program

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Development. Would the minister advise the House as to why the emergency ambulance program will not cover the costs of providing nurses on flights, making it virtually impossible to get nurses to go on flights?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I'd be glad to look further into that. The whole area of the emergency air ambulance program is under review at the present time. My understanding of the way the service works is that the most important feature is that aircraft be available in all cases where required. I have certainly checked from time to time to see that that is the case and have found there is virtually no difficulty over that. However, the question of the nurses going along in essential cases is something that I'd be glad to look into further.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Alberta Housing Corporation

MR. WYSE:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. Is the provincial government planning to reverse the Alberta Housing Corporation policies in order to permit municipal ownership of public housing? This is quite a concern in my particular area.

MR. RUSSELL:

No, not at all, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, letters recently went out to municipalities urging them to get their applications in if they want to proceed this year. There are rather substantial funds left unclaimed by the major municipalities and they're certainly free to proceed on their own initiative if they want to do so. By "their own initiative" I mean by applying to the corporation for those very substantial funds that are, as yet, unallocated.

MR. WYSE:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the government considering the restriction of excessive ownership authority held by the corporation?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I think there's a great deal of misunderstanding about what has been called the ownership question. The advantages in a direct financial way to the municipalities are rather substantial. We've also given the municipalities a commitment that if the policy is changed or diluted in the coming months we would go back and make the new or pending applications retroactive.

I submit very definitely that the proposals facing the municipalities with respect to public housing for approvals and funds this year are very substantial and attractive. If the municipalities aren't constructing public housing it's their own fault.

MR. NOTLEY:

Supplementary question. Could the minister advise the House whether or not there are now ongoing discussions with the municipalities on this question?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, at the request of the municipal committee structured for that purpose, the discussions had been broken off between Alberta Housing and that committee. I have since received a report addressed directly to the government from that committee, and that is the status of current discussions on that matter.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Drumheller. Might the hon. member come back to this topic on another occasion? We have just about run out of time.

Red Deer River Dam (Cont.)

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, may I make just a very quick explanation before asking the question? The recent announcement about the construction of a dam upstream from Red Deer was received with enthusiasm by the people of the Drumheller Valley where it would have a tremendous effect.

In view of his statement a few minutes ago, could the minister give some indication of whether the dam might be started in a year, or two years, or five years?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, as of last spring the committee and the department were given a time frame of 20 months to resolve all the matters in connection with the beginning of construction of the dam.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MINISTERIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Department of Manpower and Labour

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to provide the House with a ministerial announcement this afternoon.

I am pleased to announce, sir, that the Executive Council has this week approved a general plan for the development of manpower in northeastern Alberta. Under the auspices of the Federal-Provincial Manpower Needs Committee, the Manpower Development Committee was organized and has since prepared a report.

It was first organized in April of 1973 with the broad objective of developing a comprehensive manpower plan directed towards the establishment of policies, practices and programs based on the proposed Syncrude and associated developments from the construction to the operational stages.

This plan will have two important and significant features. First, it will ensure that local residents have the opportunity to take advantage of the expanding job circumstance in northeastern Alberta. Secondly, it will ensure that there be an employment plan to provide adequate staffing for the project.

The Manpower Development Committee included representatives from the Alberta departments of Advanced Education and Manpower and Labour, the Alberta Office of Program Coordination and the Canada Department of Manpower and Immigration.

During the course of its work, this committee worked closely and had excellent cooperation from the Metis and Indian associations of Alberta. This committee has since expanded to include such departments of government as that of Health and Social Development, and likely that of Culture, Youth and

Recreation; and significant to note, a joint representative of the Indian and Metis associations will also sit on this important committee.

The Manpower Development Committee was able to gather information for us with respect to the demand for manpower which will result from the Syncrude development, including the manual work force, the administrative and clerical personnel, the construction and camp catering and maintenance staff that will be required during the construction phase. This kind of information was used by the committee in developing its plan and its report.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, forecasts were provided with respect to the growth and composition of the labour force in the town of Fort McMurray during the next five years.

With respect to the problems and needs of the local people, one of the priorities in the industrial development of northeastern Alberta is that of ensuring employment opportunities for residents of that area. A large proportion of the residents of northeastern Alberta are Native people living in small isolated communities. The committee has taken the position, and the Executive Council concurs, that appropriate action must be taken to prevent a recurrence of the negative effects of industrial development on Native communities and on the contrary, give them every opportunity to participate in this kind of development.

A number of recommendations have been made in this major report of the committee regarding training and related programs which will be required, the organization that should be established to coordinate and integrate these activities and programs with other manpower programs in the area, and with the overall development in northeastern Alberta which will occur as the project develops.

Other recommendations were those concerning additional employment development in northeastern Alberta, and also organizational approaches designed to coordinate and integrate the various manpower programs intended to relate this manpower programming to the overall development in northeastern Alberta.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the Northeastern Alberta Manpower Development Committee will prepare the detailed plans required to translate the general recommendations into specific programs and activities. The Government of Alberta regards the implementation of the recommended manpower development programs as a matter of high priority.

I wish then, sir, to table the report of the committee for the information of the House.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House welcome the announcement made by the Minister of Manpower and Labour. We regret very much that the government is not using a more coordinated approach so that in addition to manpower we are looking at an approach, Mr. Speaker, which deals with all the problems of the area. We had hoped that the government would have announced some overall development strategy for the whole area.

My last comment, Mr. Speaker, would be this. We hope that the minister, in addition to tabling the reports, would at some time in the future in the House, preferably very soon, give us some indication once again of the kind of priority this government is going to give to the Indian and Metis people or that area of the province.

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS
(Second Reading)

Bill No. 62
The Alberta Uniform Building Standards Act

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, second reading of Bill No. 62, being The Alberta Uniform Building Standards Act.

In presenting the opening of second reading for debate, Mr. Speaker, because this activity is of some long duration I should like to go rapidly but chronologically over the major events which began in November, 1970, at which time a committee was appointed to study and report on the feasibility of a uniform building standard.

I believe it's important to give the names of the committee members to indicate the kind of stage and background which these people had to do the job.

The members were as follows: Mr. John Polonuk, Chairman, Deputy Director of Planning, Department of Municipal Affairs; Mr. Austin Bridges, provincial Fire Commissioner, Department of Labour, Province of Alberta; Mr. Harold Collins, director of the Building Inspection Branch, City of Edmonton; Mr. Norman Fleming, Chief Architect, Department of Public Works; Mr. Pai-Lin Li, Chief Building Inspector, City of Calgary; Mr. William Milligan, Chief Provincial Plumbing Inspector, Department of Labour; Mr. William Weir, Head of Technical Division, Alberta Housing Corporation; Advisors to the committee were: Legal, Mr. David Axler, Solicitor, Department of the Attorney General; Administrative, Mr. John Kerstens, Department of Municipal Affairs.

This committee had as its frame of reference the feasibility, the practicability and the need for a uniform building standard in Alberta. Its first meeting was held in January, 1971 and throughout 1971 it held about ten such meetings. In addition, Mr. Speaker, it held ten public hearings.

In May 1972 it was my pleasure to table in this Legislature the excellent report of the Committee on Uniform Building Standards for Alberta. You will recall that document, sir. In the spring of 1973 Bill 62, which is up for second reading today, was introduced for the first time in the Legislature. At the same time we circulated the bill throughout Alberta to interested and concerned people, people who will be users of the legislation if this Legislature sees fit to make it legislation. We got considerable comment and recommendation for change, modification and improvement.

Last month, in September 1973, we prepared several drafts of amendments which resulted from the public hearings after our issuance of the bill for study throughout the Province of Alberta. In October 1973, we struck a ministerial committee to develop, provide and build the regulations which would support the legislation. As in the first instance, I would in this case also wish to read the names of the committee members so that the House, and Albertans generally, will appreciate the cross section of competence, ability and background these people bring to the work of the Legislature, and, as you know sir, do so freely of their own time.

The committee advising us in the development of regulations with respect to The Alberta Uniform Building Standards Act is the following: Mr. Alsie Akeman, representing the Alberta Construction Association; Mr. Bruce Alexander, representing the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta; Mr. Jack Everly, the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties; Mr. David Jenkins, The Housing and Urban Development Association of Canada; Mr. Edward McMorran, Alberta Building Officials Association; Dr. Fred Vincas, the Alberta Association of Architects; Mr. Wayne Staling, Alberta Fire Chiefs Association; and the chairman, Mr. G. Wilf Blossom from the Department of Manpower and Labour.

The initial study, which goes back to 1970, was initiated by the then government because the adoption of the National Building Code of Canada was being urged by construction associations, architects, engineers and home builders. These groups and individuals conceded that a uniform building standard would result in savings of money in planning, designing, processing and in actual building, and would have real benefits in terms of health and safety.

Coupled with these considerations was the emphasis throughout Canada beginning about 1969 which very likely led to the decision of the prior government to strike this committee, the emphasis for adoption of what is referred to as the National Building Code of Canada at the level of each province.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, represents, in the government's view, a forward-looking approach that will form the base for programs to give leadership and coordination between all segments of the industry and all levels of government.

As the name implies, the act is intended to promote uniformity in building standards throughout the province, eliminating a multiplicity of building codes and certainly improving efficiency and lowering construction costs.

It is important to know sir, I could not over-emphasize the next point. The objects of uniformity can only be accomplished if the Alberta uniform building standards become not a minimum standard but the standard as far as regulations are concerned. The benefits derived from improvements in safety factors will be most important for our citizens.

The legislation does provide for local autonomy with respect to enforcement of the provisions of the act while maintaining the overriding principle of the bill in providing the designers and constructors of buildings in Alberta with a uniform building standard.

The act makes provisions for the establishment of an Alberta building standards council to act in an advisory capacity to the minister. This body will have broad powers with respect to appeals. These provisions ensure participation by members of the public in guiding the programs under the act.

Since the first reading, Mr. Speaker, the bill has been widely distributed for study and comment. The response has been encouraging. We had general support for the bill, though not complete support. Through a special committee all the submissions have been carefully studied with a view to having changes made or regulations developed, wherever practicable, which will meet with the concerns expressed.

We are grateful to the many organizations, associations, municipal officials and others who have taken the time to review the bill and to bring forward suggestions for improvement. While some of these involve regulations, all recommendations pertaining to the content of the bill have been given proper consideration and certain changes have been made.

Mr. Speaker, the program intended by the bill will become effective on and progressively developed following January 1, 1974. However, because of the far-reaching implications of some of the provisions, steps will be taken in the implementation to recognize the need for lead time so that the industry and other users of this legislation can make necessary adjustments to meet the new standards with a minimum of inconvenience.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a few comments on Bill No. 62.

When I first saw the bill and read the title on it I was thrilled, as a matter of fact, and enthused because I thought, now there is something that we have been looking for and fighting for for a long time. I know that municipal levels of government are convinced, and have been for a good long time, that for institutional buildings, in particular schools, hospitals - as a matter of fact highrises, anything that is within the boundaries of cities and towns - uniform building standards are necessary for the safety of people, for the economy of our municipalities and all the rest of it.

Also, I think fire and safety regulations should be uniform, and we have been fighting for that for a long time. It seems that no matter what type of building you construct, from the time you start the building to the time you finish it the regulations change. Numerous times school boards and hospital boards have found themselves putting in expensive change orders that have resulted in thousands and thousands of dollars, and it has been difficult to negotiate with the building boards, or whoever the officials are, to rectify these things. So from that point of view I was enthused and I would support the bill.

But on opening the bill and looking at some of the sections where they talk about this referring to all buildings, then I become frightened, very much so as a matter of fact. If I read this correctly under Section 3 it says, any building at all. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is going to be the rule I submit it will create more problems than it solves. If we will have to have a permit to build any small building - I'm thinking of the municipalities, and I realize it could be turned to the municipal powers to authorize construction of farm buildings - you're taking away the right of the individual to do anything with the property he owns. It is almost pointless to own any property now because you have no control over it. You will be so tied up with restrictions. For example, if you have to obtain a permit to erect a building on a farm or to locate it, relocate it, demolish it, use it, change the use of it, I just think this is going a little bit too far and it gives me a great deal of concern.

I can just imagine if we follow the bill to what it looks like it will permit. Some academic could be appointed to be the director of building standards, and he would ultimately be a building inspector. I can just see him

going out to some of these farms and telling a farmer how he has to build his house, or how he should build his machine shop - whether he could or not - or how to build his grain bins or his hog barn or his dairy barn. If we keep chipping away at the rights of an individual all the time soon he is going to say, now don't let the pigs go in the dairy barn, because, you know, that's against the rules. It really upsets you when you look at what the possibilities are.

We already have our trouble with the planning commissions. They are becoming most difficult to get service out of. I had experience just this fall with a farmer having trouble getting a permit to build a quonset hut on his farm in order to store grain.

It just happened to be inconvenient for the planning people to issue the permit because they haven't got around to it yet. When a farmer wants to put up a building to house his grain, he really isn't much interested in how busy the issuer of the permit is, or the planning commission. He needs it now and he has to do it when the material is available, when help is available. All these rights are taken away from him. I think he is put to an inconvenience that is not necessary and should not be allowed. Now I am pretty sure that the minister will probably say that many of the details can be resolved through the setting up of regulations. I would simply have to say that I really don't trust very many people with regulations except myself. Regulations, as we know from the past, can be changed while the rest of us are out for lunch. So really they are not that meaningful.

In looking at the bill and so far, listening to the presentation by the minister, I have some really serious doubts as to whether I can support this bill, unless I hear some pretty convincing arguments about the freedom of the individual to do at least some little thing with his own property and his belongings.

MR. DRAIN:

Looking at Bill 62 generally, Mr. Speaker, certainly no one can question the desirability of standardizing building codes and thereby protecting the wellbeing of people in certain vital areas such as electrical insulation, sewage and so on.

However, the question in my mind is, how far and how encompassing is this bill going to be? How far, in fact, this business of permitting is going to have to go. What impact will this particular piece of legislation have on innovative housing, on a new and sophisticated look at housing? We are very much aware, with the realities of inflation and so on, it is becoming more and more difficult for people to even think of home ownership.

I conversed with the Minister of Municipal Affairs at the time he was a member of the opposition about the sophistication developing in the housing industry. A lot of it, of course, has ground to a total halt because of what you could call the establishment. In this particular area it is the labour unions and their desire to protect their own particular interests.

Some mention was made in the estimates of innovative housing approaches. I can see there can certainly be a lot of development in this area. If, as a result of this type of legislation being too much of a strait jacket, these developments are relegated to the area of not being practical, it would be a big disappointment.

So I'd be very pleased to hear from the minister on these particular points.

MR. BENOIT:

Mr. Speaker, I will only make one or two comments adding my own approval to what has been said from this side with regard to the limitations and restrictions that appear to be found in this bill.

I, too, have no objection to a certain degree of uniformity, for the reasons the minister gave. I think they are well taken. I think anybody in the building business who is conscientious about the needs of our society will want to have some kind of uniformity of building standards also. But there is something the minister said that gives me a basis for what I am about to say.

He said that this would be, not the minimum but the standard. As long as the National Building Code of Canada has been in use by a good many municipalities, it has been considered as the minimum standard and from there on people can be as elaborate, or improve the quality of their materials or their

structure as much as they desire. But to say that it has to be the standard, and that you cannot go more or less than this, I think is one indication of what we mean when we say this is just a little too restrictive and not going to be acceptable.

I think when it says that this applies everywhere and to everyone that we have to take into consideration the difference between the urban areas and the rural areas.

I recall very well, about ten years ago when the planning commission became effective, a very diligent inspector in our area came up to a farmer who was working over his chicken house. He's on the farm and there's nobody near and the inspector comes in and he sees him pounding away and he says; halt, don't pound another nail. And the farmer says; why? Well, he says, you haven't got a building permit. And he was only repairing his chicken house.

Of course this raised the hackles of the farmer. I don't blame the ...

[Interjections]

I wasn't so concerned about the chickens, Mr. Speaker, as I was about the farmer.

In a case like this there probably are some grounds for certain types of planning, even for chicken houses in certain areas. But I'm concerned that in this particular instance the administrators were caught because of their poor P.R. And the same thing can happen with this.

I am concerned that people's rights are being gradually taken away from them by this kind of thing. Unless we see some amendments made to this bill as we go along the way, I couldn't approve the precedent and the principle as it's set forth here.

I would like to say one thing further with regard to this matter of regulations. Without the regulations this bill really doesn't tell us anything. We do need the regulations if they're going to give us all the details as to what the standards will be, and particularly where the standards will be applied. So if it's our intention to go ahead with it, if not the regulations themselves immediately, at least some clear-cut outline of what is intended to be conveyed in the regulations will be set forth for our consideration before we are asked to approve the bill in third and final reading.

MR. YOUNG:

Very briefly if I may. It seems to me in the discussion of this particular bill a number of the hon. members have jumped off the mark too quickly. I think, for instance, of the discussion we just had on the problems of administration. I recognize those problems as they've been outlined and the harassment, the delay, the detail, et cetera, that could be occasioned. But I also recognize that that very thing is happening right now.

As one of the hon. members pointed out in relating his experience with school buildings, these problems do occur now and we all have, I think, experiences which we could relate in that respect. They occur now, not only because regulations change, but partially because regulations are changed by umpteen different authorities to umpteen different standards. This at least would try to arrive at one acceptable common standard.

The situation is serious enough now that in my discussions with the Housing and Urban Development Association they are quite concerned that we proceed, in fact, have been anxious for some time that this bill or the National Building Code of Canada be accepted. It is true that there are some reservations about certain aspects of it, but I challenge any hon. members to show me one code of building standards in any municipality about which there aren't some reservations.

Reservations for instance, are being voiced in some quarters in the City of Edmonton with respect to fire regulations. There are particular problems here arising out of the numerous highrises in Edmonton and Calgary, a development which we all know has occurred in fairly recent years, and whether our standards are adequate, whether the National Building Code of Canada standards are acceptable.

I am sure that if one looks closely at the Canada building standards we might have occasion to be concerned that they may not in all cases reflect weather conditions which may be peculiar to various parts of Alberta. In other

words, the weather conditions vary from one part of Canada to another and we might very well have to recognize some differences across the nation in that respect if we were to consider adopting them without any change.

With respect to a point - and I hope I misinterpreted the hon. member's remarks - but the point raised seemed to me to centre on a distinction between rural and urban building conditions and needs, it would be my submission that the primary focus of this bill is to assure that buildings come up to a standard which is acceptable and safe, primarily for human dwellings. As I see it, it matters little whether it is urban or rural, that same standard should be attained in either case.

I would hope, as other members have expressed, that we do not under this bill, interpret in the regulations the term "building" so broadly that it requires a building permit for every minor change of a door or a wall in a machinery shed on a farm, unless that is the will of the municipality. If that is so, let the municipal fathers, who are wiser than we at this distance, be the decision-makers in that regard. But I would hope that from a provincial point of view we do not extend ourselves to that degree.

However, as far as residential housing is concerned, as far as our major developments are concerned, I think this is a good bill, and I would hope that the minister will, either in closing the debate on this occasion or later on when we discuss the bill in somewhat more detail, deal with some of the points that have been raised today.

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Speaker, I think we would be in error if we accepted this bill with anything less than enthusiasm. I think we have to recognize the problems Albertans face today with respect to the lack of standards that could be called standards which may be applied within the province.

I think we have to recognize the problems of the public in obtaining information on the minimum building standards when they enter into agreements with contractors for the construction of their residences or other types of buildings.

There appears to be a lack of availability of any mechanism, body, or structure to receive complaints from the public and to deal with them adequately where there is an appearance of a lack of compliance even with the National Building Code of Canada. The matter of having constantly to direct one's problems to the court is, I would say, not necessarily in every case in the best interest of the citizen who has to cope with these problems. The additional cost of such procedures, the very length of these procedures - and very often because of the nature in which the problems are dealt with on a legalistic, technical kind of basis - does not necessarily bring equity to the citizen who is aggrieved.

I would like to make one or two comments with respect to some specific areas of the bill and that is where the bill provides that local municipal governments may pass by-laws with respect to standards within their areas and these by-laws would supersede or would apply rather than the by-laws or regulations set out under the act in the provincial standards.

I have just one concern with this. I think perhaps this is a necessary direction but the section I am referring to, if I read it correctly, is Section 3 and also Section 15 of the bill. I should be a little more specific here, I'm sorry. Section 4 (1) reads:

The Minister may, by regulation, authorize any local authority or class of local authority to enforce this Act in its respective municipality.

and it goes on to say in subsection (2):

Where a local authority is authorized to enforce the provisions of this Act pursuant to the regulations under subsection (1),

(a) the local authority may make by-laws with respect to the subject matter of section 3 ...

which I referred to earlier, and it goes on to say in subsection (2) (b):

upon by-laws being made under clause (a), the regulations of the Minister made under section 3, subsection (3), clauses (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) do not apply in that municipality.

I would hope then, in this province, that if there are by-laws passed by a municipality, those by-laws would be required to be filed with the regulations in order to have some central place citizens would know they could have access to the by-laws and be informed as to what variations may have been established by a municipal body.

I am pleased that there is provision in the bill where it will no longer be so difficult to have action taken on buildings or structures which are a definite hazard in their locality. Previously the only recourse was to take steps to have the matter resolved in court. This was not always feasible, nor was the situation such that it would clearly indicate who should have the responsibility of bringing the matter before the courts for resolution.

I am pleased this aspect of it is covered in the act and I think it will go a long way in removing some of the problems, and assisting municipal governments to overcome some of the problems they have had by having structures removed which are hazardous.

I would also hope that any by-laws passed by local authorities in the way of standards will not be of any less quality or minimal standard than those provided in this act in the regulations. Perhaps an amendment should be considered with the appropriate clause to be sure that that safeguard is exercised.

I think those are the only remarks I wish to make. But I certainly feel that we are long overdue having a bill of this nature brought before the House for consideration, and I hope that all members will support it heartily.

MR. HINMAN:

I long ago observed that one of the ways of displacing bunk in the House is to add some pure bunk which I propose to do now. I think probably I'm the only one here who has had a chance to follow the growth of this type of legislation for many years.

If my memory serves me correctly, the reasons for the original building codes were not just the same as we may anticipate them to be today. I recall that after the war the cities and the government passed laws about the kind of accommodation you could rent to somebody. When they went to enforce it they discovered immediately that they would have in the City of Edmonton not a few but thousands of people without a place to live. So they had to pull back and let people use these things.

I can remember when we first got rural electrification, a farmer said, "It was all right for me a month ago to hang a kerosene lantern anywhere I wanted to in my barn, but now that I've got electricity I've got to hire an expert to come out here and wire it just right."

I saw statistics too which show that even after all these codes have been developed, more fires resulting from electrical failures have occurred in buildings less than 10 years old than buildings over 40 years old. It all leads me to conclude that we just better not go overboard. Certainly I am one who can't accept this act with the enthusiasm that perhaps I should.

Another thing that I must call to your attention is that in these very affluent times, when governments are lending money and putting up money, it is all right for us to say we can establish codes and enforce them. The time may come when we can't afford all these things, when it does come we will find that most of these building standards were not as essential as we thought.

I mention the purposes of building codes. Really the thing that provoked people to be interested in building codes was not necessarily the safety, or the structure, or conforming with the landscape. It was the actual fraudulent building that was done, the houses were sold to people, covered up many many weaknesses. Floor would sink, walls would descend, cracks developed in basements. Most of the building codes were to protect the people to be sure that there were no fraudulent practices and people would not be just taken in.

Safety, of course, is another factor. But we have gone far beyond anything that is reasonably required for safety. It is always interesting to me to see that you can't build a house this way but if you want to, you can move into some

old house on some old farm and live there when it wouldn't meet any code. It never seems to fall down on anybody's shoulders.

If the object of the government in passing this bill is truly to get uniform standards, why doesn't the bill do just that? Why doesn't it say specifically that we will adopt the dominion code? There isn't any particular reason for a hurry in changing building codes. Something which has gone on for ten years isn't likely to cause any uproar if it goes on for a few more months. This Legislature meets twice a year. If we need a change in the building code, why can't it be made and approved by this Legislature?

Yesterday in another debate, which I realize I shouldn't refer to, somebody justified regulations by saying, the act would be this thick. That doesn't mean anything to me as long as it is where people can see it. I have a very strong opinion that if regulations were very limited and the government had to be in the acts, there would be a heck of a lot less regulations.

My experience tells me that most regulations are made at the instance of civil service and that convenience is one of the chief reasons. They are just able to talk us into it.

When you look at this act, if we are truly only concerned with safety in buildings people occupy - as one of the hon. members mentioned - why do we say anything? Why can't we classify buildings which would be regulated in the act?

The hon. member mentioned that we couldn't build a quonset on a farm because we couldn't get a permit. In my particular area we are almost at the point where somebody is going to suggest that some deaths in the planning department would be a great blessing. I am serious about it. I can give you instance after instance if you want them of how the planning regulations just make life almost unbearable for people.

I would like to suggest if it isn't considered necessary to get this bill through today, that we seriously consider drawing up a code, passing legislation that says this is the code - not for Calgary or Lethbridge - if we want uniformity, we are not then at liberty to let every municipality make by-laws.

If we want uniformity these ought to be the by-laws and they ought to be in the act. If you want to delegate the enforcement, that's fine. I am truly concerned that an act like this sets out that the minister may adopt the code and it in no way obliges him to say that this is the standard code. But we spend all this time on a bill telling us that what we are after is to establish a uniform building code.

So as I say, if the government doesn't consider it so urgent, I would like to leave this alone, and let's declare exactly what our [objectives] are and then pass that minimum act which says what the building code is, what the regulations are and what makes them necessary. If it is necessary to have some regulations to correct a very obvious danger, then at least that ought to be up for approval at the next sitting of this Legislature. I just have a feeling this is another one of the acts which slowly erode the freedom of the people, which slowly make us all mimickers who say we have to do the same thing.

In the old days I was very upset when we first had to get used to the idea that somebody bought a lot and his neighbour said, "Oh no, you can't build that kind of house, that doesn't conform with the rest of them." And I used to ask, "Well, who the ... " I'd better not say what I said. But I used to say, "Are you going to say that all the women in this neighbourhood have to wear the same kind of hats? Let's try that." At least one member doesn't like that. I'm only trying to make the point that it is ridiculous in my opinion, when we talk about free enterprise and people's rights and we pass bills to set them out, to legislate time after time unnecessary bills to curtail that very freedom.

I suppose it's useless to summarize, but I am saying that this act does not establish a uniform building code. It makes anything but a uniform building code possible because the minister can do this, he can do that. It encroaches unnecessarily on the rights of the people because it says, "any building". Now, what's the limit when you go that way? It would be so easy to classify those that we are very sure need regulating. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the bill on that principle. I recognize the objectives, I recognize it's a well-drafted bill, but I just don't like the purpose for which it is drafted. Thank you.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, when I look at this bill it reminds me of the saying, there is more trouble in this province with bad laws strictly enforced or good laws poorly enforced.

I believe that the hon. members on both sides of the House should stand up and declare whether they subscribe to the principle that we should govern with a minimum of government interference, or whether the government knows what is best for you in every phase of human activity. Let's govern and let's regulate everything to the utmost because, after all, what some of them think is good for the people must be good for the people.

I know that in stating this principle the hon. Deputy Premier is on my side. He stated that he believes in a minimum of government interference, and that is the major principle, I believe, we are discussing in this bill. There is a maximum of government interference in this bill if they want to play it that way. We have learned that we shouldn't take their word as to what they intend to do. If they have the power to regulate people and tie them up and provide more red tape, then we have to fight it there. They should not have the authority; if they are not going to use it, they shouldn't seek that power.

I'm sure that a minister, with the support of 48 people, who have already made up their minds and who are not likely to have the courage to stand up for a principle, is probably on sound ground as far as proposing the bill is concerned. He will win this thing with good support. Many people, including some who have spoken, have said that we must support this bill. I was amused by the remarks of the hon. member, Mrs. Chichak, who said that we could do nothing less than support it and then proposed a couple of amendments. Now I like to hear that. I apologize, Mr. Speaker, for giving the hon. member's name, because I've forgotten which constituency she is from. It was not a deliberate violation, Mr. Speaker.

[interjections]

But I think that not much more need be said except an invitation to the hon. members opposite to stand up and be counted. People are squirming and a little annoyed with too much regulation. It doesn't matter which government brings it in. We were not any better. I am not apologizing for what the previous government did, but I always resented the fact that we sometimes got into an area prompted perhaps by some zealous, well-intentioned civil servant who may have felt there was one more little empire to build.

Of course, the advantage in this thing is that there is a council to appoint. There will be some people lined up with good political references for appointment. This is always nice. It's always good. The day of reckoning will come because the people are beginning to resent this kind of action. They resent it very strongly. Political preference can put a government into a nosedive quicker than anything else. So here is one more opportunity. Somebody will get a job. You can rest assured, Mr. Speaker, the choice will be carefully met with, as I stated, political preference one of the factors.

I wish to go on record that I would not support a bill that gives the government the right to appoint a council and a director who is going to have absolute say in whether someone in a municipality, who may not have a neighbour within a mile, might have to clear [his building plans] with a director. If he disagrees with him or stands up to him and tells him what he thinks of him and perhaps the government, he could be fined \$1000. So he will not only have to be quiet he will have to be nice to him, of all things.

Now that is a dominance that is not going to be tolerated. Some people reserve the right to tell others off. There is a \$1000 fine if you should rub the director the wrong way. Now that's what I call a minimum of government interference! I think we'd be very well advised to study this bill, bring some people in from outside and see what they think of it.

I am sure this bill has some merit. But the principle of government interference is there and I would like the Deputy Premier particularly, who stated loud and clear in this House that he believes in a minimum of government interference, to show me where this bill is not one of the most flagrant violations of that principle we have ever had in this House.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words in connection with the bill. When we read the bill, I think we have to ask ourselves the question, what do the people want?

I have people coming to me continually complaining about holes that developed in the basement, about faulty workmanship with regard to the roof, about faults which appeared in buildings built with public money weeks or months after they were constructed. The question always put to me is, why doesn't the government do something about this? Aren't there any standards established in this country?

Well, we have the National Building Code of Canada and I support it. I think without legislation such as the National Building Code, we could have chaotic conditions developing in various parts of Canada. I believe as long as the provincial Uniform Building Standards Act does not conflict or override or overlap items contained in the National Building Code of Canada but bring them down to the application at a local level, there is a place for a uniform building standards act in this province.

I think if we were to ask the people generally for a vote if they wanted some type of uniform building standard, a very large majority would say yes. As a matter of fact in my own constituency there is almost unanimous agreement that we should have some type of minimum standard in regard to building.

When we come to the definition of building I am a little concerned. I suppose, even if interpreted as it's written, that could mean you couldn't even build an outhouse on a farm or in a hamlet without getting a permit or, as one hon. member said, you couldn't even change a door or any part of the building or structure.

I believe there's a place for The Alberta Uniform Building Standards Act. But I think we should very carefully set out that place so that it's not going to refer to every repair. That is really nobody's business. If I want to change the door in one of my rooms in my home so that it swings the opposite way, the national building code or the provincial building code should have no bearing on it. But if I want to move my garage so that it does interfere with my neighbour's property and I want to put it right on my line, then it does interfere because the water from the roof would go onto his property. I shouldn't have that right. There should be some kind of standard.

If I want to do something on my property that has a bearing on other people's property, the value of other people's property, then I think there is a place for the intervention of government. I think there are people who expect that intervention to take place.

Again, I have to say that I asked for the bringing in of some type of standard in this province. I watch some of our paraplegics and our disabled people. We invite them to have housing in some of our highrises. How can they ever get into those highrises when they are unable to walk? There's just no way to get in.

I'm surprised at the number of buildings in this city and in the province and in this country that make it impossible for people who are disabled, who are on wheelchairs, to get into them without tremendous effort. Even in restrooms in some of our large departmental stores where they invite the disabled people to come in, there's no provision for them to get to a restroom if they're on wheelchairs.

I noticed in the Hudson's Bay building in Vancouver that one floor has now been remedied, what the cost was I don't know, but remedied. I say congratulations to the Bay for doing that so that people on wheelchairs or on crutches can get into that restroom without having somebody carry them in.

We expect government to take part in this. We ask government to take part in this. I think most people want government to take part in this type of thing. So when we say we want a minimum of government interference I think we're all sincere. But we want government interference where it's meaningful and where it's necessary in order to ensure that we don't make a number of errors.

What would be the objectives of a provincial building code or a national building code for that matter? I think there has to be some type of guidance given so that we can expect a standard of workmanship in building a house or a

building, to avoid costly errors now and in the future, to present an avenue of redress.

One thing I notice about the bill, and I think it needs to be remedied unless it's planned to do it by regulation, is that where a building is built in spite of the National Building Code or the provincial building code, built in spite of it and not in accordance with either, what is the redress of the owner?

If it's caught by the inspector then there is redress and there are procedures to go through for both sides. But what if it's not caught until two, three, four or five years after the building is constructed? Is there then any redress? Is there insurance required so that the owner who paid good money for that type of thing, believing it was done according to the national standards, doesn't have to bear the brunt of the thing himself?

As a matter of fact I asked for government interference in the building of some homes in my own constituency, because three times in my lifetime I have seen homes in that area flooded out. Every time they came to government and said, we want compensation, in spite of the fact that they knew, at least the second and the third time, that they were building below the normal high water mark. How far do we expect government to protect people against themselves? Yet when a flood comes, nine out of ten people want government to do something about that and do it right away.

I think we have to weigh what we want in government interference and the way of buildings against government interference itself. How far do we want government to go? I think that is the question hon. members of this Legislature have to ask the Minister of Labour. I believe the bill has been brought in - well, certainly I was one that requested it. I think it is necessary in many respects that we have standards established for some of these buildings and I think there should be teeth in this act so those standards can be enforced.

I certainly do not agree that any contractor should have the right to go out and build with inferior concrete or with inferior material in order to make a fast buck. I don't think that is right at all and I think there is a place for government to protect individuals who are not experts in concrete or in building. And that is really the purpose of the National Building Code, to give us some of these things.

The regulations, of course, are not available, and I don't know how far the regulations will go in carrying out the definition of building. I would be very concerned if a permit were required for every item of repair to a home, a garage or any other building. I would be very concerned if a permit were required for every type of building you want to build on your land. There should be some place where the government is not expected to interfere if that building is the sole responsibility of the owner and does not interfere with other people's rights, other people's buildings or other people's land.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. TAYLOR:

Those are the criteria I would like to see established. I recognize that it is easier said than done. But I do think we could set out the major buildings, and if we have to add to them or subtract from them from experience, let's do it. But let's not make it so broad at the beginning that it will involve every building and every piece of lumber and every nail that goes into any part of a building in this province. I think that is what the people will certainly object to.

Whether or not we would say it should be applicable to every building that requires a licence or a permit from the municipal authority, or whether even that might be going a little too far, at least that is one thing that could be considered. I think it is essential that people know the distance from the sidewalk in any zone of the province, and now any highway in the province. Because that means if you don't do that, sooner or later there is public money spent in moving, which shouldn't be. So it does involve the general public. But if there is a minimum distance set, then a person should be able to build anywhere beyond that minimum distance. And I think government has a right to tell me that I can't build my house closer than X feet to the sidewalk, because other people are affected.

Now, I don't think there is any intention of telling me what kind of house I can build - surely not. But again, these things are not in the bill and no

one knows what the regulations will be. Consequently, it makes it difficult to deal with.

I am going to make a plea in connection with the council that is set up. I feel very strongly, and I think the Minister of Health and Social Development and the Member for Spirit River-Fairview feel just as strongly, because we are all on the same council and we have all expressed ourselves, that these building codes should be very, very definite with teeth behind them. To say any public building is going to have access at least for those in wheelchairs, or those who are disabled - those who should have a chance to live a reasonable and normal life. I think the hon. minister agrees with that. I don't think it is going too far to say to someone building a public place, you have to make access for those on wheelchairs, I don't think it's going too far at all. You have to have at least one available restroom for those in wheelchairs. I don't think this is going too far at all.

Now when we talk about various codes I know there is some feeling about the electrical code and the various other codes which are in vogue in the province. But I have to ask if any member would support the elimination of those codes, holus bolus today? I wouldn't. We would have more fires in this country than we could possibly dream of. I think a man should have the right, if he knows how, to put in the wiring in his house if he is able to do it. I think it should be up to a standard because I don't think he has the right to put in faulty electrical work which may put his house and his neighbour's house on fire. We have to consider more than just the individual. I think that's the criterion I would like to see established in this bill. Where it's affecting others, either land or building, that should be where the building code is brought in. When it is brought in in that respect I would like to see some pretty definite teeth put in, so these things are going to be enforced.

There is no sense in setting up laws if we are not going to enforce them. I think we have to set up a minimum of laws and make sure they are sensible and reasonable and within ordinary horse sense. Having done that, then I think we have to enforce those laws in order to be fair to everyone, including those who are put to additional expense because of the law.

I expect a building code to protect me against the carelessness of others who don't care. I expect that building code to establish standards which will be acceptable to my neighbours. I expect that building code to establish standards to permit me to use those facilities. In a private home, it's up to me whether I provide access to someone in a wheelchair. I think in a public building or store that is not the case. It then becomes a requirement.

We want minimum standards. We want government interference to a minimum. But we definitely want government interference with teeth when buildings endanger lives, endanger the property of others or interfere with the rights of others.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, in addressing myself to the bill and after examining the bill I find myself, at this point in time, really unable to firmly come out in opposition to the bill or strongly in favour of the bill. I would rather address my remarks to a number of questions which come to my mind. I hope I may find answers from the minister when he closes the debate or possibly more effectively in committee where we have latitude to examine the details of the bill.

When I first realized the government's intention to bring in the bill, the first thing that came to my mind was the question of uniform standards really related to the cost of housing. Undoubtedly this is one of the most critical problems we face now and are going to face in the future.

I had hopes that the intended legislation might get some degree of uniformity so far as standards are concerned, and not necessarily just in the area of minimum standards, but possibly something that is a little bit reasonable in the area of maximum standards that it wouldn't go beyond. In some cases I think some of the local authorities maybe do go off the deep end a little bit by insisting on standards that are unduly high which add significantly to the cost of housing. Where does the question of dealing with the rapidly-escalating cost of housing stand in priority as it relates to housing building and is separated from land costs, so far as the intentions of the bill are concerned?

Certainly I think we can't ignore the question of safety in the bill. It is my experience that we have some very good codes in the area of electrical and

gas fitting and so on. But I think there are some gaps which show up in some of the codes, particularly in the rural area, which I find in light of my experience some years back with municipal council. They raised a number of quandaries in many cases in the minds of municipal authorities as to what their specific authority was in dealing with some of these matters.

I recall building a house. I wasn't very happy with the plumbing that was done in it. Even though I was mayor of the town at the time I wasn't too sure how to go about enforcing my standards on the plumber. I decided the political approach wasn't right so I finally got the town foreman to go along and bluff his way through the exercise and get the plumbing fixed up. I was hoping some greater power would materialize to insist that the plumber do an adequate job of his work. I think there are some sort of regulations under the health department relating to plumbing. I don't know, at this moment, whether there are actually minimum standards in that area. I haven't heard of any but that doesn't mean they don't exist.

So far as it relates to the authority of the municipalities, I think maybe some municipalities are abusing the authority they do have. But I do think there are some questions, at least in the smaller municipalities and the rural areas, as to just where the municipal authority does lie in the area dealing with this matter. I don't think it is inappropriate to talk about at least providing some direction in that regard.

There is one other thing that comes to my mind in listening to the debate and reading the bill. I am wondering if the word "uniformity" isn't a misnomer and possibly raises more questions than really are justified.

Uniformity for the sake of uniformity, I think, is a rather fruitless exercise in any circumstance. When we talk of uniformity I think we have to have a pretty clear picture of uniformity for what purpose. If it is for the purpose, again, of lowering the cost of housing, if it is uniformity to ensure that houses and structures that are built outside Central Mortgage and Housing, which construction lies beyond that particular code, I think we need to know if they are being built properly and safely.

I have the feeling and, I think the experience to suggest that where construction of this type takes place outside the jurisdiction of Central Mortgage and Housing, to a large extent outside the major urban centres which are better equipped in this regard than the rural areas, the owner often finds himself literally at the mercy of a judgment and the integrity of the particular contractor he has hired to do the job.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm hoping, as we listen to the minister's closing remarks and also in committee, that we can get a clear picture of just what the meaning of the word "uniformity" is, if it means minimum standards or whether it conjures up the spectre of rigidity; whether one of the prime functions of the bill has to deal with the cost of housing, safety in areas where there are no codes which now apply, [these] are involved in the construction of houses.

One of the other questions that bothers me is how much the existing difficulties with construction standards really relate to the enforcement of existing standards as opposed to the absence of standards or codes. I come back to the plumbing question I mentioned a while ago.

I look forward, Mr. Speaker, to hearing from the minister, and from the discussion that goes on in second reading, the answers to some of these questions, hopefully will help me and some of the other members to make up their minds as to the merits of the bill.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, speaking to Bill No. 62, there is only one point I want to bring up because I can see that the debate is drawing to a close.

One point I would like the hon. minister to enlarge on, if possible, when he is closing debate on this bill is, what progress has been made toward uniformity as far as fire regulations and standards are between the Alberta Fire Commission and local fire commissions, because in the eyes of the public there is a lot of confusion. They will hear where the provincial fire inspectors have condemned a building, and that particular use is stopped. Then when the building is vacated it is not torn down, it is used for another use, and they say, well it was approved later by the local authorities. I know, under the school buildings regulations there have been a number of arguments between the school board which claims that the standard of building they wish to have complies with the local fire regulations which is good enough for them, but along come the provincial

regulations which supersede them apparently and say, no, you can't do this. While the minister is speaking in closing this debate, I was wondering if he would enlarge on that.

As far as standard building regulations, I find that the fire regulations are the ones the public is talking about most of the time, not so much how a building is built, but the fire regulations. In particular, too, there are some concerns now with the people of Alberta as to whether our standards on highrise buildings within the province are as high as they should be, considering some of the experiences they have had in other places with highrise apartments, in particular where people are living.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, I would just go along the lines my hon. colleague has been pursuing, and bring up this point about fire regulations. In many instances as related to schools, a school will be built and passed by the fire commissioner of the province. Then about a year later, somebody else comes around and their inspection says, start taking doors out and tearing them down because it isn't quite right.

Just one other point: In my town we have low-cost housing and in some of the buildings it is not so much a problem on the first storey that they have only one entrance, but on the second storey. I would just like the hon. minister to keep this in mind.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, in adding my concern that the rights of the individual that are being infringed upon in this piece of legislation, the minister mentioned earlier that there was distribution of this bill following the last session. I would just like him to enlarge on the distribution and where it went to - to those involved who would pay the bill, or to whoever it might be.

I would suggest that probably in place of having a public works ad in the daily papers, a big one saying we're moving, that maybe we print this bill so that the people who are on the receiving end would see what is actually involved. They are the ones who have to pay the bill, who have to live with it. It is less than a year ago that The Alberta Bill of Rights was passed or assented to in this Assembly, and that gave the right of enjoyment of property. Coming from a rural area we see many things here that may just infringe on that right of enjoyment of property without need.

Certainly the minister has referred to some changes, and I think before we can justifiably give second reading to this bill, we should know what they are, and should have them here for consideration at this time.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that far too much is covered in regulations. It has been mentioned here that when we meet twice a year, it is not too much to expect that we, as legislative members, approve these things and not pass them on to somebody to pass regulations behind closed doors just at the whim of some bureaucrat in government.

So with those concerns, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I should like to recognize the contributions and the criticism which I appreciate and respect and will use in the best way possible to expedite the remaining work with respect to Bill No. 62.

In doing this I should then like to recognize the participation and contribution of the hon. Members for Lethbridge West, Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, Highwood, Jasper Place, Norwood, Cardston, Calgary Mountain View, Drumheller,

Wetaskiwin-Leduc, Calgary Millican, Clover Bar and the hon. Member for Wainwright.

I can't help but recall, and in doing so I in no way despise the contributions of the members, because that is what this is about. You propose and someone attempts to improve on it. And that I appreciate.

The two points I wanted to make are simply that the initiative for a uniform building standards act for Alberta was made by the 'then' or the prior government. That in no way removed the criticism which any proposal should make. So I want to make that clear.

The second one was, as I recall, the estimates examination of last year. There was a great deal of interest and support from the other side. Again, speculating as to what happened in the intervening time would only waste our time because the point of the opposition is to oppose and bring up the ways and means to improve what a government wants to do.

I am going to be brief in my remarks because the hon. Member for Drumheller pretty well summarized the point of a uniform building code for Alberta. The reason we are moving in this direction is because there are simply too many codes. As the hon. member in his personal home problems in Wetaskiwin-Leduc, and certainly the Member for Lethbridge West in his association with the public schools of Alberta, I would well know. Against that kind of background experience I personally know that there are simply too many building codes. Someone else talked about a building being done one year and reshaped the next year.

The standards that the hon. Member for Clover Bar talked about with respect to three-storey walkups is a real concern. In addition to the one entry there is also the matter, in some cases, of having a common attic. If a fire were to begin in any part of a large complex of three-storey walkups, you would have a considerable risk problem with respect to fire and asphyxiation problems.

The question of definitions is always an important one. The Member for Lethbridge West makes a valid point with respect to the definition of a building and we will, of course, examine it.

I should like to say right out that there are exceptions, the kinds of recommendations that were so properly put with respect to what is a structure, what is a building. Does it include every building, every part of it, every kind of renovation, any kind of improvement at any time? Not so. There are, of course, as in any legislation, exceptions under circumstances that make it reasonable and fair to exempt.

The question of innovations is a proper one because in terms of buildings there have to be better ways. But the better ways do not mean ways that are unsafe or costly. Certainly the question of cost is an important one. Let me say that to those of you who know better than I about the building of homes, of contracting, of architectural work - when a contractor has to build in one municipality to one set of codes, and then take his building crew and move a matter of miles to the adjacent municipality and has to meet different codes, the question of cost quickly falls into perspective. There is just no question that cost, as this act intends, will be a priority consideration and should have that kind of effect.

The matter of rural and urban questions posed by three gentlemen, and certainly the hon. Member for Highwood, is again a proper question. But as the Member for Jasper Place so well put it, the issue here is one of standards. It is not a matter of rural or urban, and it is not a question of interfering with the nice life in the country as the Member for Wainwright put it.

Certainly we would wish no less than a good life in the rural or urban areas. But it has to be a safe life and has to be an ordered life and has to be such that it doesn't interfere with the rights and safety of other people. So the question is one of standards and not one of one location or another. We would not accept the National Building Code in its entirety although it has been accepted in Calgary, for example, but it hasn't in other places. It is clear to us, and we address this to the whole of the Legislature, unlike one member who attempted to make this a political issue and suggested we ram it through because of the numbers in the House.

I regret that kind of discussion in a matter that has to do with the cost of buildings, with the safety of the lives of people, with accommodation for handicapped people in the homes and the highrises and in the public places of our city. This is not a political issue. This is a human issue.

Let me say that the request for this kind of one standard, instead of a complication of standards is because I have personal experience - many of you have had - with municipal standards, with provincial standards and with the national code. By-laws can change sometimes as rapidly as in-laws I suppose, and the contractor and the client have some serious problems with respect to making changes while the building is in progress.

This is neither fair nor reasonable and it is the intention of this act that these things would not be so but would be ordered and orderly.

The structure at this point certainly intends to define human and other structures. I want to be clear and, should this not find favour with the House on both sides, I ask for counsel, criticism and direction to make it otherwise. With the case made so, it seems reasonable to change because this is an example, while you can't infer it necessarily from the definition of the word "structure" because it is so inclusive. One can conceive that the intent would be also to make the lives of animals safe.

It was only two years ago that a large number of race horses died in an unhappy and unfortunate fire in one of our cities, so our concern could well be beyond that of just a habitation or a place of commerce. It could be a place where people come to do a particular thing in industry and yet it wouldn't be a residence or an abode or a place of business, it could be a site out in the field having to do with industry.

With the question of the administration of regulations posed by the Member for Edmonton Norwood this would be done locally and paid for by set fees, should it happen to go to court or settle in other ways through fees that the municipality would have the authorization under the act to allocate to the person who contravened the act. I should also point out that in the ensuing discussion the clause that was quoted from the draft of the bill really refers to by-laws made pertaining to permits and inspection and to no other matters.

I appreciate the comments - to the extent that I understood them - from the hon. Member for Cardston in terms of going slow and of the motivation for the codes. It had to do with some of things that the hon. Member for Drumheller so well put, with workmanship and honesty and quality of work. When you pay for a certain kind of anticipated product like a residence or some other structure, you hope you get in fact what you are paying for and not something else which you find out when your warranty or your guarantee expires and you have no recourse or redress.

This act provides that kind of redress. It provides that kind of avenue. Certainly the matter of quality is something that's known to any of us who lives in a home or use the facilities of commercial and other kinds of buildings.

The matter of the handicapped is equally important. I'm thinking of a case just a few weeks ago when someone felt that it was in his family's best interests and he's a wheelchair individual and the time and the effort to find a place and not limit the choice where one might wish to live or could live. This couple finally found a place and that was the way they put it, "a" place in a highrise in the City of Edmonton, they found extreme difficulty in finding a place to live outside their own home which they had modified, because they had had it before he reached wheelchair circumstances. So that they finally found in a big city of nearly half a million people with all the highrises we have, their final choice came down to a place, whatever that place would be, in an apartment.

I would mention the matter of the national code as being the basis for the recommendations which we have for a provincial code. Now we do this for a very real reason. The national code is backed and worked at and supported very extensively by the National Research Council of Canada. It has the kind of resources, it has the kind of competence, it has the kind of financial backing because of the importance of keeping buildings up-to-date. They are constantly at work in the matter of testing the effect of wind, the capacity of buildings to withstand snow weight, the capacity of certain kinds of materials used for walls to withstand fire, how long they would burn before they break through, whether it is an hour, hour and a quarter, and so on.

These matters are best done with this kind of backing.

I make this point, Mr. Speaker, because while it looks like a reasonable thing to have local autonomy, there is no local municipality in Canada, much less our own province, that can afford this kind of research to make sure beyond any question of a doubt that the buildings they build are as inexpensive as safety and other criteria would dictate.

Once you have regulations - someone commented regulations are for the use of civil servants - I will just point out that there are two kinds of regulations. One is in fact a certain kind of legislation. This is the kind of regulation we are talking about, we are working at those. The other regulations are how to administer or how to regulate the work of a department. It is the former we are concerned with here, they are a form of legislation. We will have those before you as soon as we can.

The enforcement of existing standards becomes a problem because of the existence of codes and the by-laws of various municipalities. exist. For example with respect to the school situation, where does one authority begin and the next one end? Sometimes they overlap and sometimes there are gaps that no one wants to fill. It is important to note that the fire commissioner of the Province of Alberta is in fact the senior fire chief or person with the most responsibilities in this area in the Province of Alberta.

There are now many authorities like universities, and other kinds of buildings who have by arrangements with their municipalities in which they reside have special and particular accountabilities and responsibilities for the matter of buildings. It gets so that it complicates and confuses the matter of the cost of safety of approval. If you have to go to two or three authorities to get approval, you have got the kind of problems that school people, municipal people and private enterprise, construction people and architects, know so well.

I just can't help commenting on the matter of enforcement. We always say if you are going to have legislation, make sure you have teeth in it, then it can work. This has been my experience in also government and elsewhere. We have a regulation if the people who represent other people agree that we should have a certain law or a certain regulation. It should be able to be enforced or it should be dropped. That is the notion of the \$1,000.

I don't know whether the hon. gentleman from Calgary Millican was having a bit of fun or some other kind of diversion, but I know that he could not have been serious when he was saying that the \$1,000 fine was the kind of instrument that could be used by a director to make a person in the building industry perform in a particular way. I just can't believe that anyone ...

MR. DIXON:

On a point of order to the minister - the Member for Calgary Millican - I never mentioned a thousand dollars in my speech.

DR. HOHOL:

I apologize to the Member for Calgary Mountain View, and for the records I ...

MR. LUDWIG:

On point of order. I didn't intend to confuse the minister, but I obviously did. He's using my remarks entirely in the wrong context.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Shame. Shame.

MR. LUDWIG:

Sure he is.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, this is probably the first time in two years and several months and weeks and days and hours that I have made any comment that has to do with any other member other than to be positive. I'm attempting to be that here also.

[Interjections]

There is just no way, sir, that I am going to accept that statement because it says things about the civil service of this province that I am not prepared to accept or support. In fact, I would take the other view.

For the member to say that the \$1,000 which is intended to support and enforce the regulation, a regulation having to do with the safety and proper conduct of a citizen with respect to buildings, whatever those buildings might

be, to say that this \$1,000 is to be used by holding it over the head of a person to make him perform in a particular way or he will find himself hammered by a \$1,000 fine or some part of it, simply is not right. If the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View checks Hansard he will find that I am altogether accurate in how I interpret his remarks. I cannot accept them and have to make that a public record.

I regret, too, his comments about bureaucrats and civil servants initiating this particular act. I simply remind you again, Mr. Speaker, that the initial committee was set up to study the matter of uniform building standards in Alberta was set up by the prior administration. In my first address in discussion of the estimates I commended the then government, and do now, because this was a proper step and a forward step. It will coordinate, it will facilitate and provide one uniform code.

In closing I do want to emphasize the fact that it will be one standard, not a standard that some municipality could add to or subtract from. It can be no more. A municipality can't say, that is the standard the province set and we will add this. It will not be able to do that. On the other hand, it will not be able to do less. If this is not the way to go, then the government has not accurately read the people of Alberta who have been saying over the years, get us this kind of sense and sensibility into the building industry.

While one could have moved to 1975 or 1976, the records show that activity on this program began in 1969 and an official move was made in 1970. My own representations, representations to me and the government since we were here, were such that they recommended strongly that we move in 1974 or as soon as possible.

I should like to answer one question from the hon. Member for Wainwright, as to where the distribution of the material was. It was extensive, it was all over, to builders, contractors, architects, clients, municipalities and all those who would in any way be affected by the bill. The response was excellent in volume and in quality, and we have been instructed and directed by them, and will be by this House, and will continue to be.

The other matters brought before the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, can be dealt with best, by our concurrence I hope, in the clause by clause discussion at third reading.

Thank you.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 62 was read a second time.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would ask unanimous leave of the Assembly to revert for a moment to presenting reports by standing and select committees so the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands could table a report of the Select Legislative Committee on Rules.

MR. SPEAKER:

Has the hon. Government House Leader the requested leave?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES (CONT.)

Select Committee on
Rules, Orders and Forms of the Legislative Assembly

MR. KING:

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Member for Athabasca, chairman of the Select Committee, who is unavoidably absent from the House, I beg leave to table the report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on the Rules of the House. The report is in two volumes, the first being a text and a comparison of the new rules with the existing rules. Volume 2 is a suggested format for the new rules reordered in logical sequence which might be adopted by the House.

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS (CONT.)
(Second Reading)

Bill No. 75
The Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1973 (No. 2)

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of the Environment, second reading of Bill No. 75, The Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1973 (No. 2).

Mr. Speaker, there are two basic principles in this amending legislation and I would just like to speak briefly to the general intent of each.

The first in order in the bill relates to the duties of the Director of Child Welfare. Hon. members will see the wording that is proposed to be added with the explanation that this is in keeping with a more contemporary view of the responsibilities of a director of child welfare.

The legislation in this part of the Act, up to the present time, has tended to emphasize investigation and perhaps punishment in respect to the neglect of children by those responsible for them. The suggestion - that the investigation of neglect, as well as the possibility of some punishment therefor, involve the director and that he have regard to counselling and similar services for the family in respect to the protection of children, prior to neglect becoming serious - is considered to be a useful addition to the Act for the purpose of describing the role of the director and encouraging the carrying out of those responsibilities by people who work in that field on behalf of the department.

The other principle, Mr. Speaker, that I suggest is of notable importance, has made necessary a substantial rewrite of the portion of the Act relating to the expressing of a religious preference when placing a child in the care of the Director of Child Welfare pursuant to Section 30 of the Act. The actual change that is made is not a great one in intent and is only beneficial. There are no bad effects that I could detect, which might flow from this type of amendment.

In that context, I want to assure hon. members that my reading of this is that the provision introduced some time ago was that if there is no reasonable prospect of meeting a religious preference as stated by a person surrendering a child, that can be dealt with in the interests of the child. The waiver by the minister, after a report from the director of child welfare, of the requirement as to placement regarding religious preference - that particularly useful clause introduced some time ago - is maintained. There is no change in that.

The only change is that the Act previously had defined the words "Protestant and Roman Catholic" in such a way that there was the unlikely event of serious discrimination against Protestants. That is something that is rare enough in the western world in these days - that people are always criticizing the majority of Anglo-Saxon Protestants. I hope hon. members will find it sort of an interesting curiosity that we have found an occasion upon which it is the Protestant that is the subject of the discrimination.

All that was happening was that the Act in not making any reference to the various religious denominations within the area of Protestant resulted in those belonging to a particular Protestant faith having no special right to indicate which denomination was of interest to them in having a child brought up. Persons with no Christian religious belief, persons who are Roman Catholics, and indeed, all others, were covered. So by using the terminology now used and by saying as proposed in Bill No. 75, the words "denomination or faith" - "denomination", being the key change - "denomination or faith" on the part of the person expressing the preference, these words become dominant. It solves that problem and the result is that persons belonging to specific denominations can make their preference known.

MR. LEE:

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make some brief remarks relating to this bill and more specifically to Section 2 of this bill.

I would first of all like to congratulate the minister on bringing in the amendments as illustrated in Section 2, for the extension of services of his department to relate to guidance counselling and other supplementary services which might be provided by his department. As he has stated too often in the past, in this department perhaps we've had more of an emphasis on crisis kinds

of treatment, punishment, investigative kinds of things, rather than developmental emphasis which is really needed in these cases.

In doing so I would just like to speak to two considerations. The first of these is some comment as to what I would like to see as the nature of some of these services, and secondly to providing a couple of models which are in operation right now, or have been projected for providing these supplementary services.

First of all, in discussing the nature of services, I would concur with the Blair Report on mental health and its extension to this kind of service. The closer we can move from the crisis to a preventative to a developmental kind of treatment with people and mental health and social development services, the closer we can come to providing a total service.

Unfortunately in the past in our services, we have too often emphasized the crisis kinds of actions and left such things as preventative development to preventative social service departments at a local jurisdiction. Too often the local jurisdiction has found itself so strapped for funds that this type of emphasis just never did come across.

I would also like to say that when we talk about the nature of supplementary services, that these should extend to a number of situations in the department. I had the honour of presenting Bill No. 21, for instance, in the spring session in which we looked at child abuse and neglect. In The Child Welfare Act we also had provisions regarding delinquency and the care of foster children.

I would hope the provisions of this particular section would be extended throughout the department so that there is not an emphasis on one particular kind of caseload such as child neglect and abuse or delinquency, but that it encompass all of those caseloads that come under the care of the department.

I would also hope that within these services there would be an encompassing, integrated kind of treatment of all of the activities that we carry on to support in the department. I'm talking about things like social work, services such as therapy and counselling, diagnostic services related to this counselling service, educative kinds of programs, many of which were mentioned in the amendments this spring, and supportive kinds of services related to foster parent care. All of these types of things, instead of acting in their own cubby hole, would be integrated into a total service that is provided.

This is where I come to the real crux of my remarks, that is, manners in which we might provide this service. It has been my feeling that in government we often have the tendency to assume that a service can be provided only by a public service; that in providing services, such we mention now, we have to hire social workers or psychologists and place them on the staff of a particular department, in this case probably Social Development.

What I would like to encourage is a more extensive involvement and a linkage with those other shareholders and agencies in the community. We should take the expertise that we can hire within our provincial public service and combine this with the enthusiasm and the real close caring that we get in many of our volunteer organizations.

I would like to mention some of these professional and volunteer services that really are, as I see it, shareholder groups in child welfare services and ones that we should integrate as far as possible when we look at treatment, diagnostic or counselling services for children. We are looking at parents and parent groups, organized parents' associations which are often attached to schools but which could be extended to this departmental treatment. We have medical schools and hospitals. For instance, their emphases will be greatly integrated into the department when we take a look at the reporting of child neglect and abuse. Hopefully we can attach this same emphasis now to counselling and treatment services.

We have the total social workers within a number of jurisdictions, not only Social Development, but preventative social services departments and other jurisdictions within the province. There are police and enforcement agencies, teachers and school agencies, and various citizens and volunteer groups. I could just mention a few. The minister is aware of the Alberta Association for Young Children, the Calgary Community Child Battering Council, Parents Anonymous, the Foster Parents Association and a number of family service associations and various church groups.

These are people who have shown, through decades of really caring and really working with children, that they can do the job, that they can provide a

service. I would hope that we would take these initiatives and link them as far as possible into the departmental service. What I am saying is that we can share these capabilities and come up with a total service rather than a splintered kind of thing.

Just to illustrate what I am talking about, I want to comment on two services. These are two groups that came to the government in the last few months and presented proposals for this kind of linkage.

First of all I would like to talk about the Jewish Family Services in both Calgary and Edmonton. As a member of the Committee on Regulations, I was able to talk to the people involved in these associations. Their representation is simply this, that through their groups they provide a service, a total child welfare care service, which extends to foster care placements and the very things we are talking about in this bill. They provide, in almost a duplicate way now, a service which is available in our health and social development service. Their concern as expressed to the Committee was that they are not allowed to link up with the social development service. For instance, if they feel they can present a particular service to a particular family, they are not allowed the referral. There is not a referral kind of linkage.

It's my contention that groups such as this - and in discussions with them I was very impressed with the nature of the service - have professional people who are also attached to the volunteer people. So it's not a question of people not being qualified. They do have staff psychologists, social workers and so on. That's just one service.

The other service I want to talk about is one that I made the nature of a question yesterday in the Legislature. This is the proposal in Calgary by the Alberta Childrens Hospital in conjunction with a number of volunteer groups including Parents Anonymous, the Alberta Association for Young Children and the Child Battering Council for the establishment of a child neglect and abuse treatment centre at the children's hospital.

I personally feel that their proposal at this point is somewhat restricted, that when we just emphasize child neglect and abuse we leave out those other kinds of services we could provide to foster parents, to delinquents and to various other custody kinds of cases. Nevertheless their proposal has, I think, the embryo of the kind of a treatment program which I personally like. They have been able to muster those volunteer services, attach them to a professional staff at the hospital, including medical staffs, psychologists, social workers and provide a proposal for service.

It's my contention that if these people are willing to provide enthusiasm plus the professional expertise to do this, we shouldn't rush in as a department and duplicate these kinds of things, but work with them, link our services with theirs. I'm very much aware that within our department, we have the expertise to do these things. But as far as possible I would like to see our department foster these kinds of developments and act in more of a supportive, rather than an actual delivery kind of role.

I might mention one other service I've had the privilege of working along with now. The University of Alberta for instance has a community counselling clinic. This clinic, free of charge, deals in the area of guidance services, diagnostic and counselling related to referrals from a number of sources. It's interesting to me that the Department of Health and Social Development right now, from the Child Welfare Branch, does refer to this particular clinic for these services.

So the linkage is there and it is operating. I'm sure there is a liaison back and forth. What I'm saying is that perhaps we could formalize these linkages a little more so that we don't have kind of a jurisdictional tugging for clientele but that we work together in a network, a network of referral treatment for children.

Perhaps in this case, I might make a third proposal. Under Section 12 of The Child Welfare Act that we might establish an advisory kind of council, perhaps to act as the body that could get this kind of activity going, perhaps report to the minister on the success, a kind of ad hoc approach for the delivery of these services.

These are just some of the proposals I'd like to make to the minister for his consideration.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, there is one point I'd like to enlarge on in Bill No. 75. It concerns me somewhat that over the years secrecy has been associated with youngsters who run afoul of the law.

On one hand I can see that some protection is needed. But I wonder if that protection shouldn't be overridden by the fact that the child would probably get a better hearing, would be judged more by the whole community rather than by a select group of people, if the press were allowed to cover the juvenile court activities within our province. This has been mooted in Ontario quite a bit, but I personally would favour it at least for a trial period because I'm a person - and I'm sure all the rest of the hon. members are, Mr. Speaker, - vitally interested in ensuring that our young people get the same protection from our courts and from our Legislature as adults are entitled to.

Yet, if you look at The Juvenile Delinquents Act, it doesn't matter what serious crime the youngster is charged with, it's all lumped in one thing, he's a juvenile delinquent. It could be for anything from stealing a car or theft or under-age drinking or anything to a more serious crime.

The reason that I am changing my mind completely and would welcome the press in juvenile court is the recent case in Scotland where that young girl was, I think, sentenced to eight years. The public outcry that came from that, because the press covered it, I'm sure came to a more reasonable conclusion as to what to do with that child; the very public getting involved in it.

Under our system there would be no way of finding out what happened because there is no public coverage of activities. While the minister is concluding his bill, or later on in committee, I would like him to enlarge on that to see if we can't do some research to see if we can't get the public more involved in what is going on, and make him aware of the cases the department has to deal with. Most of all and the reason I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, we must do whatever we can to give the child in Alberta the same protection as the adult has. In this case I don't think it is so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I will just make a few remarks in closing the debate. I think there are two sides to the remarks of the hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

My feeling is that in a lot of ways the thing that a juvenile in difficulty does not need is publicity. That is the whole rationale behind the existing provision in the federal legislation he referred to. The better way perhaps, of achieving the same result might be through a child advocacy system and hon. members will be aware that the Supreme Court of Alberta, for example, has for some years in cases where they thought it useful appointed a court lawyer in the interest of the child in matrimonial proceedings between the parents, where say, there is a question of child custody involved.

Now I know that the hon. member's area of concern is not precisely that but it may include that. That is an example of a court which is public, the adversaries of course, are adult, but the child's interests were specifically represented.

On that basis I think that no great advantage will come to the child from publicity in regard to misdemeanours which may be serious. The hon. member pointed out that they may not be, but indeed they may be. The child advocate system, possibly working through an agency on which the general public has some representation, this type of agency pointed to in the remarks of the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight, might be the best way to achieve the result.

I do just want to add a word in regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight and say to him that the several suggestions deliberately made in his remarks are ones that will commend themselves, I believe, to all hon. members. They will certainly receive every consideration by myself and by the government in future plans with regard to this type of legislation.

[The motion was carried. Bill 75 was read a second time.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

I move we call it 5:30.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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