

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Thursday, May 30, 1974

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 236 An Act to amend The Teachers' Retirement Fund Act

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill No. 236, An Act to amend The Teachers Retirement Fund Act. This legislation removes the discrimination against retired female teachers.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 236 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. 231 The Government Computer Privacy Act

MR. D. MILLER:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, entitled The Government Computer Privacy Act. This bill would require the establishment of a registry of all data banks operated by the Government of Alberta, its boards, commissions or agencies, describing the kind of information, the reason for storing it and the individuals authorized to extract data.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 231 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. 237 An Act to amend The Workers' Compensation Act

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill No. 237, An Act to amend The Workers' Compensation Act.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 237 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. 235 The Aid to Drainage Districts Repeal Act

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill No. 235, The Aid to Drainage Districts Repeal Act.

[Interjections]

One in and one out.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 235 was introduced and read a first time.]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, on behalf of myself, the hon. minister, Mr. Topolnisky and the hon. member, Mr. Batiuk, a Social 30 class from Lamont High. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Danelesko and Mr. Sharp. They are in the members gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, some 50 students from the Caroline Grade 9 class who come from my constituency. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Maki and Miss Beebee and their bus driver, Susan Sugar. They are in the public gallery. I would ask them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, eight students from the Community Health Aid class of the Alberta Vocational Centre in Lac La Biche. They are accompanied by their teacher, Miss Mary Amerongen, who, I believe, is the daughter of the hon. Speaker. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. KING:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona, my colleague Mr. Koziak, is unavoidably absent from the House this afternoon. The constituency, though, is still well represented. We have in the members gallery 70 Grade 8 students from King Edward Junior High, who are accompanied by their teacher, Helen Stretch. I would ask them to rise to receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the Legislature 60 students from two Westbrook School Grade 5 classes. These students are accompanied by Miss Milne and Mr. Ellestad. They are in the public gallery behind me. I ask them please to rise and be recognized by the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, if I might have a supplementary introduction and to keep equality in the Getty household, I'd like to have recognized the second youngest member of the Getty family who is also in that class.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could ask the minister a question. Isn't he pleased that we didn't vote with him to remove the introductions of school students?

MR. LOUGHEED:

74 to 1.

TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a supplementary answer to Motion for a Return No. 131.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Petrosar Project

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the first question to the Premier and ask the Premier if he would tell the House what concrete, hopefully positive, results came out of the meeting which he held this morning with officials of Petrosar?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think there were any concrete, positive results. We made a number of suggestions to the representatives of Petrosar which they are now taking under consideration to examine, in a fuller way than they have in the past, the feasibility of modifying their project or doing substantial upgrading of the project in Alberta. They said they would take that under consideration.

We reiterated our views expressed in our letter of April 24 that, having regard to the supply situation in the nation, we felt they would be ill-advised to proceed with the project involving 16 per cent of Alberta's reserves under the present circumstances.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question. In the course of the proposals put forward by the Government of Alberta, did the government suggest or urge Petrosar to, in fact, consider locating a plant here, in the province of Alberta?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is yes, either in whole or in part.

We really wouldn't refer to what we put to them as proposals. We merely said we trusted that before they proceed in a final way, they would examine the various alternatives that might be open to them in terms of economic conservation and appropriate uses of natural resources, some alternative ways of meeting the feedstock supplies that do not come out of the ethane base and some of the possibilities by way of alternative approaches that had been considered. This was put in that direction and they responded by saying that they would take these matters under consideration.

MR. CLARK:

A further supplementary to the Premier. What kind of time line is Petrosar and, in fact, the Government of Alberta looking at? When does the government expect a response by Petrosar on the proposals put forward to them today?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think I could be definitive about that. The Petrosar project, of course, which was formerly the SOAP project, has been under active review and consideration by the authorities in the federal government and by the group involved for some four years. They are advanced to the degree that they are proceeding on a zoning by-law, I believe, before an Ontario municipal board, about June 6.

I couldn't respond other than to say that we'd be quite prepared to have further discussions with them when they can provide us with a feasibility report that would show the various alternatives and identify the national public interest as to what would be desirable in terms of regional economic development.

MR. CLARK:

A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Has the Government of Alberta familiarized the government of the Province of Ontario, in some detail, with the views of Albertans as far as the Petrosar project?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is yes.

Construction Industry - Labour Act

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, a second question, to the Minister of Manpower and Labour. I'd like to ask the Minister of Manpower and Labour if he met with officials of the construction industry in Alberta within the last month and indicated to them that the government would not be bringing in amendments to The Alberta Labour Act at this session?

DR. HOHOL:

That tests my recollection. I can be clear on this, however, Mr. Speaker, that since August of 1973 when discussions on the matter of possible amendments to the Labour Act were discussed with the construction industry and others concerned and possibly involved, and interested groups, the government held the position that the industry had room, in fact, to make such arrangements and such recommendations to the government as they saw might be workable in the circumstances that were sought under condition (a) of the Syncrude agreement. In view of that position, it was our contention that there was no need to amend the Act.

As I reported on several occasions, the parties found it impossible, in their view, to pursue this kind of conclusion because of certain clauses in the Act. When it was clear that they were in the position of abandoning any effort to pursue arrangements - which we would then assess and either include in amendments to the legislation, which I said would be the case, or not, if that were not necessary - when these pursuits were abandoned by the parties after a period of time, we felt that our most responsible position would be to clear any possible barriers out of the clauses that were referred to and make it possible for them to reach the kind of agreement between themselves that condition (a) indicates.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question to the minister. Is it true that the Minister of Manpower and Labour indicated to portions of the construction industry during meetings held during the last, say, few months, that the government had no intention of bringing in legislation in the form of the Labour Act that would set, in fact, a special situation for tar sand plant developments?

DR. HOHOL:

Well, yes, I would have to read into that special circumstance a no strike, no lockout type of situation. I want to make it clear - as I did several times on the floor of the House, in public outside the House and when I introduced the first reading of the bill - that we have not, as we said we would not, introduced a no strike, no lockout circumstance. All we did was remove the barriers or any impediments that industry, labour, the client or anyone felt to be there. The onus, then, is on the principals to reach a possible agreement to that kind of circumstance.

I want to repeat that the legislation does not provide - as the government said it would not - a no lockout or a no strike circumstance.

MR. CLARK:

A further supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Did the minister give a commitment to representatives of the labour movement in this province within the last two months, that there would be no changes to The Alberta Labour Act at this session?

DR. HOHOL:

Certainly it was not the intention, over the months since August, as I have said here, to amend the legislation. The circumstances, as I have described them several times, relating to this particular situation caused us to rethink, re-evaluate and make the adjustments in the legislation as we have ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. minister is going beyond the scope of the questions.

MR. CLARK:

A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Once the government made the decision to go the route that the amendments to The Alberta Labour Act indicate, did the minister contact the construction industry or the Alberta Federation of Labour prior to introducing the legislation in the House?

DR. HOHOL:

We met with the Alberta and Northwest Territories Building Trades Council executive, as I indicated two days ago in a question similar to that put by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. We did meet with them approximately 10 or 12 days ago. We had a meeting scheduled with the Alberta Federation of Labour but were unable [to attend] because we had thought the session would be over at that time, but it was not. The meeting is rescheduled. We have not been in touch with the federation. We met with the executive of the Alberta and Northwest Territories Building Trades Council.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Syncrude - Environmental Studies

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of the Environment and ask the minister whether he can advise the Assembly whether the government has received any environmental studies or documents from Syncrude which haven't been tabled in the Legislature as yet?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that all we have received have been tabled but I will check the matter. I find no reason why they shouldn't have been tabled and I will check the matter.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister advise the Assembly whether any agreement was made or discussions took place between the government and officials of Syncrude that any environmental document which Syncrude considers sensitive or confidential would not, in fact, be tabled in this House?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I can recall no such agreement. I made a public statement on several occasions that generally the department considered that all environmental information was public information and only under the rarest [conditions] would we make an exception to this rule.

There are instances when, in fact, priority data is submitted that must be recognized as such. I believe that at one point when I informed Syncrude of this matter they felt they had some information in one of their reports that was priority to their project, and as a result requested the opportunity to revise some of that information before, in fact, they made their final submission to the department, which I subsequently made public.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for clarification. I take it then, from the minister's answer, that there have not been discussions with Syncrude, at any time, relating to the confidentiality of information given to the department. Once it's given to the department then it will, in fact, be tabled in the Legislature?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I didn't say that. We certainly have discussed this matter with them on several occasions. I have indicated to them, in a very strong way, the government policy in this regard, which is that basically all environmental information is public information and only the rarest exceptions will be made. An exception will be made for a good cause, if there is such a cause.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question to the minister. Can he advise the Assembly whether it's true that the major portion of the environmental research work done for Syncrude is undertaken by Esso Research and Engineering Incorporated?

MR. SPEAKER:

There is a question as to whether the duties of the hon. minister extend to such private arrangements as Syncrude might make on a contractual basis with others.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The reason I asked the question is because if, in fact, environmental studies are being made and they are given to the department, they are going to be tabled in the House. I think it's in the public interest to know who, in fact, is doing it.

MR. SPEAKER:

It doesn't change the nature of the question.

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

Alcohol-related Criminal Offences

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Solicitor General. Yesterday we received statistics on Check Stop, drinking drivers and highway accidents. Has the hon. Solicitor General any statistics on drinking alcoholic beverages as it relates to the committing of crime in the province?

MISS HUNLEY:

Such information may be available but I don't have any specific knowledge of any study that has been done. I would be glad to check and advise the hon. member, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SORENSON:

A supplementary to the minister. Does the hon. Solicitor General subscribe [to the view] that there is a relation between drinking and the occurrence of crime?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is asking for the hon. minister's opinion on a matter which might lead to considerable debate.

MR. SORENSON:

A supplementary to the minister. Will such a study be conducted and would she report to the House?

MISS HUNLEY:

I'll consider whether or not it would be a useful study, Mr. Speaker, if indeed one has not been done. Such information may be available because many studies are going on, either at the university or in various areas concerning this very serious problem.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary McCall followed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

Calgary Retail Trade - Bridge Closure

MR. HC LEM:

Mr. Speaker, my question today is addressed to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. Could the hon. minister advise if the minister has received information or reports indicating that many Calgary businesses have suffered a decline in retail trade, up to 80 per cent, as a result of the closure of the Centre Street bridge?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I have received no such reports.

MR. HO LEM:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Has the minister given consideration to setting up a grant or government assistance to the businesses adversely affected in order to prevent bankruptcy?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I think those businesses that are affected by what the hon. member is suggesting should approach the City of Calgary first and we should hear from them.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. HO LEM:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister entertain or give consideration to government loan applications from businesses affected in order to help them through this difficult period?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is clearly making a series of representations which he might put on the Order Paper in the form of a suitable motion.

MR. HC LEM:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister care to offer any suggestions as to how the government may help the businesses so affected?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

The hon. Member for Clover Bar.

Department of Agriculture - Decentralization

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. I would like to know if the minister can inform the Legislature if his department has any intention of decentralizing the plant division of his department to the communities of Vegreville and Lacombe?

DR. HORNER:

When the government is ready to make an announcement in that area, Mr. Speaker, it will be done in the Legislature, if we are still sitting.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview followed by the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray.

Hog Prices Stabilization Plan

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture. It follows from a discussion which took place during the estimates concerning the federal hog prices stabilization plan, which I understand has been recently announced. I wonder if the minister could advise the Assembly whether he has had an opportunity to assess its implications?

DR. HORNER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we've assessed the implications of the plan announced by the federal government. In our view the principle of the plan is all right. The mechanics are not. We've already communicated to the federal minister some of the shortcomings of the plan.

We hope to have some input into it to make it a reasonable plan because the way it is now it will not, in fact, keep hog producers in the industry.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise the Assembly just what the formula is to try to relate the price stabilization to the cost of production?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. member would appreciate that it isn't my plan. It is a plan put forward by the federal government. The formula, in essence, talks about guaranteeing a margin to the hog producer, but it has some serious shortcomings in the fact that it doesn't take into consideration all the costs that are involved in the production of a hog. That's one of the serious shortcomings.

The other more serious shortcoming, in my view, is that with the undulating prices, and averaging them throughout a year, it is very doubtful indeed whether or not any support would be given to the hog industry.

Forest Fires

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Lands and Forests and it is for clarification, really.

On these sheets that are put out by the Bureau of Public Affairs, or this propaganda of the government, the statements that fires are deliberately set - are these statements made as a result of convictions by a court that have taken place, or is it just the feeling of the department that they were deliberately set?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, in response to the member's intemperate question, I'm sure that in the history of Alberta there have surely been some instances where fires have been deliberately set.

DR. BOUVIER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. That wasn't my question. I was asking if the statements on these sheets that fires were deliberately set - are they as a result of a court conviction that you can prove they were deliberately set, is it just the feeling of the department or is there information or something that points to the fact that they were deliberately set?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, fires are often deliberately set for very useful and positive reasons, such as the reasons outlined by the hon. member during discussion of the Department of Lands and Forests estimates.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Natural Gas Sale - Winnipeg

MR. WYSE:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals. Have the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board and the Alberta government rejected an application by the Greater Winnipeg Gas Co. to remove 88 billion cubic feet of gas from Alberta?

MR. DICKIE:

No, Mr. Speaker. That hearing was held by the Energy Resources Conservation Board and they have not concluded their report on the hearing.

MR. WYSE:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. If accepted, what field in Alberta will this gas be removed from?

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I don't have the details of the fields or the details of the application. If the board considered the application and approved it, they would then submit a report to the Executive Council and the details of the fields would be included in that report.

MR. WYSE:

A supplementary question. At the present time, are additional supplies of gas available for export from Alberta?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member might perhaps do his research in this regard outside the question period.

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

Soft Drug Use

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation. In the meetings with recreation ministers from across Canada that was held in Edmonton this week, was the use of soft drugs among young people discussed?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, I would say there was a slight reference to the drug problem, of course, in relation to whether, if there is increased opportunity for recreation, the other problems, hopefully, would be diminished. This was the only reference to the drug problem as far as Canadian young people are concerned.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary to the hon. minister. Was there any conviction among the ministers that the use of soft drugs, or the so-called soft drugs, was diminishing in the various provinces?

MR. SCHMID:

No, Mr. Speaker, rather the opposite. Great stress was made that the increase of recreational opportunities would help to diminish that problem.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview followed by the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray.

Indian Association - Access to Files

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Minister Without Portfolio in charge of northern development. It's a follow-up question to a question I posed several days ago concerning the complaints of several researchers for the Indian Association that they were denied access to certain government files relating to research ...

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. NOTLEY:

The question is: has the minister had an opportunity to discuss this matter with the Indian Association? Has he had an opportunity to see what can be done about it?

MR. ADAIR:

Mr. Speaker, yes, we have discussed it with the gentleman who was quoted in the article as having had some problems. I might state now that we, as a government, are not aware of any information they have asked for that has been withheld.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Has the government given any consideration to an overall policy with respect to the use of government files for research purposes after, say, 25 or 30 years?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, that is something we've given some very tentative and preliminary thought to, but, frankly, it hasn't been a matter to which we've been able to give priority. This incident that the hon. member refers to, of course, brought it to our attention. But it's very complicated.

We have a couple of departments now working on an evaluation in the hope that we will, in the future, be able to have a more definitive policy.

Syncrude - Environmental Studies (Cont.)

MR. YURKC:

Mr. Speaker, if I might enlarge a little on my answer to respect to the question asked by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. The department has just informed me that there is one document that as yet hasn't been tabled and will be tabled shortly.

However, I do want to suggest that in regard to getting permits to construct and licences to operate under the number of acts with respect to the Department of the Environment, that is, The Clean Air Act, The Clean Water Act and The Land Surface Conservation and Reclamation Act, information is required of companies, which is oftentimes process information, not environmental information, to substantiate in the minds of our engineers the fact that the plant will be properly run. This is the only area where we may make exceptions in regard to making the information public, and this is to keep secret their processes, if they have any, for that matter.

However, I might make another statement at this time. As the Minister of the Department of the Environment, I don't table all the documents that come to the department because the place would just be loaded with documents if I did. A great deal of information is required and obtained by the department before these permits are released so that not all this information is tabled in the House. But it is available to anybody who wishes to see it in the department. They can phone up and go and examine some of this information if, in fact, they desire to do so.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Forest Fires (Cont.)

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to try again. To the Minister of Lands and Forests: have there been any charges laid or any convictions in cases where the Department of Lands and Forests has had evidence that fires were deliberately set in Alberta forests?

DR. WARRACK:

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member on how effectively he reworded his question.

[Interjections]

With respect to that matter of detail, Mr. Speaker, I would certainly have to check.

DR. BUCK:

Oh, big deal, Warrack!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff followed by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Ethane Manufacture

MR. WYSE:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the hon. Premier. Has the provincial government actually granted permission to the ALPEC, which is, I understand, the Alberta Petrochemical Consortium, to construct an ethylene manufacturing facility in the province?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I thought the hon. member would be aware of the nature of the bill that's before the House in terms of Bill No. 59 which would deal with that matter.

Certainly we have made a general public statement with regard to priority endorsement for the project. But there is a considerable amount of detail involving the application that would arise out of that, together with other applications in the normal regulatory course.

MR. WYSE:

A supplementary question. Has the provincial government given any direction as to where this plant should be constructed?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I think that would be premature at this time. I understand the Alberta Gas Trunk Line consortium did mention it was giving consideration to a plant in the Calgary area in terms of the general gathering of the ethane and possibly the ethylene. But that again would be a matter which would flow through the regulatory channels in due course.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition followed by the hon. Member for Stettler.

Teachers - Short-term Contracts

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Education and ask if he has had drawn to his attention instances where teachers have been asked to sign temporary teaching contracts which last for a period of two, three or four years, rather than the traditional one-year temporary contract?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that matter has been drawn to my attention by the Alberta Teachers' Association from time to time. There are ongoing discussions between members of the department, the ATA and the Alberta School Trustees' Association.

We've drawn the attention of the latter groups to that situation on a number of occasions, and indeed, considered possible legislative changes. If the situation becomes very difficult and there are clearly situations where teachers are prejudiced, we would see introducing legislation to amend The School Act to cover the situation at a future date.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Brucellosis Control

MR. HARLE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the Department of Agriculture taken any steps to control the recent flare-up of brucellosis which is apparently associated with certain auction marts in the province?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is referring to a report that the auction mart operators have been asked to join with both the federal and provincial authorities in trying to stamp out the brucellosis.

I would have to say this, we've mentioned in the House before that this flare-up is not a larger expansion of the disease, but there is a great deal of concern both from the federal Health of Animals Branch and our own department in regard to making sure we get on top of the situation and have it corrected.

In that regard I can say that the federal Health of Animals Branch has stepped up its testing program and has asked the cooperation of the auction mart owners to help in that testing program so that we can, in fact, stamp out brucellosis.

MR. COCKSON:

Mr. Speaker, could I ask a supplementary to the minister as to whether the located herds are, in effect, isolated on their respective properties?

DR. HORNER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, they are isolated, or if you like, quarantined as a matter of fact. If there is a major infection in the herd, then they come under the federal Health of Animals Branch activity where the herd, in fact, may be slaughtered and the compensation paid to the owner of the herd. This has occurred in four herds to date and then clean-up and disinfection takes place on the premises.

MR. J. MILLER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, if I may, to the Minister of Agriculture. Is any thought being given to the compulsory vaccination of heifer calves by the government?

DR. HORNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would be concerned that we would have a compulsory vaccination program when we have spent a great deal of time trying to eradicate the disease.

I think all operators should be very cautious with regard to bringing new cattle into their herds that haven't been tested. I think it becomes a question of good management particularly. As I've said before, a good many of these cattle came in from the province of Saskatchewan where the infection wasn't as well controlled as it was in Alberta.

MR. FRENCH:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is the vaccine still available for the veterinarians who would like to use it in the province?

DR. HORNER:

Yes, the vaccine is available, Mr. Speaker. However, the other important consideration is that for livestock being exported outside the province, some countries don't like them to be vaccinated because it gives a positive test and therefore they are not able to detect brucellosis in a herd. That has always been the problem with regard to vaccinations. Unless they are done in a total area you get false positive tests in your testing program.

DR. BOUVIER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is the minister considering allowing operators to vaccinate their own herds?

DR. HORNER:

Well, I think that may be a useful procedure. But I again say, it wasn't felt it was a useful procedure prior to this because of the confusion that then ensued. The problem then becomes very complicated because how do you eradicate a herd which shows a positive

test if the positive test has come from vaccination? I am sure my honourable friend appreciates what I am trying to say.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lethbridge West followed by the hon. Member for Little Bow.

Driver Training Program

MR. GRUENWALD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Highways and Transport. What criteria were used by the minister or his department in arriving at the conclusion that the driver training course which he announced yesterday should be a 20-hour course?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, that conclusion was arrived at in consultation with the Alberta Motor Association, the various automobile training groups in the province and the Alberta Safety Council, as well as the insurance people.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Supplementary. Do these institutions indicate then that all drivers should take exactly 20 hours to achieve driving excellence?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, the course is a minimum of 20 hours and could be 30 hours if the driver requires [such] training to qualify for a licence.

MR. GRUENWALD:

A supplementary. Did these institutions indicate it takes a minimum of 20 hours training to learn to drive?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, it's generally felt by the industry that a minimum of 20 hours is sufficient, plus.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Also to the minister, or to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Are they aware that since March 1 insurance companies have been allowing the ...

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is clearly making a representation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Little Bow.

School Bus Drivers

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Minister of Highways and Transport. Has the minister had complaints in the last two or three weeks with regard to the driver examination program for school bus drivers? Earlier in the session the minister indicated he was going to observe this program closely and see if there were some more complaints. I was wondering what the present circumstances are.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we get numerous complaints on almost everything the department has under review. We received a very lengthy list of recommendations in regard to school bus

operations and safety. We are reviewing that at the present time and probably will - although many of the recommendations are in force now, some more will undoubtedly be adopted.

MR. F. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Have any of the local school authorities made representation to the minister with regard to the program, indicating they are short of school bus drivers at the present time?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, this appears to be a problem in some of the school districts.

Driver Training Program (Cont.)

MR. GRUENWALD:

A further supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker, regarding the driver training. Does the government support the concept that the 40 per cent discount to underage drivers who took a driver training course since March 1 should be allowed?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is asking for an expression of government opinion.

MR. GRUENWALD:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. It's simply a matter of whether it was government policy that they would support the premium discount.

MR. SPEAKER:

In that form - if it means active support in the way of financing but if it is a question of whether the government favours something or not, that's a question asking the government's opinion.

MR. GRUENWALD:

The question would be then, would it be the policy of the Department of Highways and Transport or the government?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, the insurance groups rate formal driving education high enough that they consider driving insurance fees to be reduced that much. It has to be endorsed by the insurance companies.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. The insurance companies have acknowledged this since March 1, before the 20-hour driving course. Is there some reason why it suddenly has to be 20 hours.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is inviting the minister to further debate.

MR. GRUENWALD:

I sure am.

School Bus Drivers (Cont.)

MR. F. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question to the minister. What steps is the minister planning to alleviate the potential problem at this local authority level with regard to a shortage of school bus drivers?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, this is a problem that every school division is faced with. We are very concerned about the safety and the operation of school buses. I think that should be a prime concern of every school jurisdiction.

MR. LUDWIG:

It is.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Certainly the hiring of school bus drivers is a problem of the districts involved.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. I certainly agree that safety is a priority matter.

My question is though, Mr. Speaker, in light of the concern that the present school bus driver examination program is one of the factors causing this shortage of school bus drivers at the local level, what type of discussion is going on between the minister and the local board level to try to alleviate this problem?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the problem is one of hiring drivers who qualify. I think the parents of school children everywhere ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. minister is not obliged to answer the question but is not permitted to answer one that wasn't asked.

MR. LUDWIG:

He wasn't anyway. Saved by the gong.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. HYNDMAN:

I'd like to ask leave of the House to revert to Notices of Motion on a procedural matter regarding the private bills report yesterday.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to give notice of a government motion that the report of the Private Bills Committee be received and concurred in.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

189. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question:

With reference to grants for cultural development for

1. the fiscal year 1972-73, and
2. the fiscal year 1973-74
 - (a) What are the names of the organizations that received grants and the amount of the respective grants?
 - (b) What are the names of individuals that received grants and the amount of the respective grants?
 - (c) What was the main purpose for which each grant was made?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, I accept the question.

192. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question:

During the year 1973,

1. How many persons committed suicide
 - (a) in correctional institutions?
 - (b) in Alberta hospitals?
2. (a) How many persons who committed suicide in question (1) left notes or letters giving the reason or reasons for the said act?
(b) Was any study made of the history of persons in question (1) to determine the reason for the said act?
3. How many persons unsuccessfully attempted suicide
 - (a) in correctional institutions?
 - (b) in Alberta hospitals?
4. What action was taken to ascertain the reason or reasons for the said act and what special treatment is provided for such persons?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development, I accept the question.

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

1. Moved by Mr. Purdy:

Be it resolved that Government of Alberta proclaim the week in which Remembrance Day (November 11) falls as Veterans Week in Alberta.

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Appleby]

MR. APPLEBY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I adjourned debate on this motion, I commended the hon. Member for Stony Plain for introducing such a resolution to the House.

As I listened to the debate by the members on both sides of the Assembly, the participation that took place that afternoon convinced me that there was a very definite, very clear and very deep appreciation and recognition of the part the veterans have played in preserving our democratic way of life in this nation.

The hon. Member for Stony Plain made mention of the fact that in a great many areas the veterans associations, and he mentioned the Legion in particular, have not kept historical records of what has occurred in the lives of veterans within their communities and the part they have played in developing those communities. I concur with this view and I believe that this type of thing could be encouraged. I think this sort of thing can be encouraged through the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation, through The Heritage Act and through means like this. I hope that many local branches of veterans organizations will take this opportunity to preserve these kinds of records.

However, when he mentioned the fact that many veterans associations in communities are limited in their accommodation and for this reason their membership is also limited, I have to wonder. If you can get more membership, these people will have to become involved. If they become involved, they could get to work and get sufficient accommodation to satisfy all the needs of the people who want to belong to the association.

The hon. Member for Macleod brought in a suggestion that if we were going to have a veterans week, it should not be in connection with what we presently call Remembrance Day but at some other time of year, perhaps in connection with V-E Day which was the occasion of the cessation of hostilities in Europe. But I wonder how we would decide whether it should be in connection with V-E Day, with the Dieppe Raid, with D-day when the attack took place on the western beaches of Normandy, or with V-J Day when I think the whole world was shocked to hear of the first atomic bomb being dropped on Japan. We could even go further back to such dates as Vimy Ridge or, I suppose, even the battle of Waterloo or further back. I don't know that we could choose a date that could be any more suitable than we have right now for Remembrance Day.

Other members, as they spoke in this debate, mentioned the sacrifices of war; some of the things that women, children and those who were disabled veterans and disabled civilians had to suffer through. Others have spoken of the fact that wars have glorified various people and deeds of courage, valour and things like this. I think we have to respect those kinds of feelings. But when you speak of glorification, I don't think any of us who were involved in the immediate zone where conflict was going on - and there are, I suppose, some 15 people in this Assembly today who participated in these conflicts - had any great feeling of sacrifice. Most of us were pretty scared. I think we did our duty and we recognized it, but it was with a terrific sense of apprehension.

I think probably one of the occasions when this came home to me most vividly was on D-day when we knew that our troops were landing in Europe and we were participating in what was probably the biggest military gamble in the history of the world. There had been a build-up to this for many, many months, for at least two years, in fact. We didn't know how it was going to be resolved. For that 24 hours when this first came about, there was a feeling among all of us that it was not just a matter of sacrifice but a great, great fear within us.

We have to wonder, are wars won, or just what happens? I think maybe we could say that conflicts are resolved. But who actually wins? What is achieved? Out of the last world war, World War II, I think one thing we could say has been achieved for 30 years, or almost 30 years, is that we have had no more major conflicts. This in itself, probably, is one of the greatest achievements that came out of that. There have been lesser wars since then; the war in Viet Nam, the wars in the Middle East. If we look at these and wonder just what has been achieved, it is very difficult to come up with something positive in the way of an answer, except to be able to say perhaps that the major powers have not been directly involved.

When we think of Remembrance Day, of course, we think how this came about. First it was Armistice Day, as has already been mentioned in this debate, Mr. Speaker. That came because the cessation of hostilities in World War I occurred on November 11. It was a memorial to that occasion, chosen because of the date. Then we had another major war and they wanted a memorial date for that. But they didn't want to forget [at the same time] the memorial date for the previous world war, so they decided to combine them into the one date and call it Remembrance Day.

It has been said in this debate that what we should do to recognize our veterans is to have a whole veterans week which would give more recognition to them than does Remembrance Day at the present time. Somebody has said that all we have is two minutes silence and that's it.

In actual fact, Mr. Speaker, I cannot agree with that because on Remembrance Day we have services participated in by veterans groups, by their auxiliaries, by cadets, by scouts, cubs, brownies, public officials, and people within the community. The object of

these services is not to eulogize war and the glorification of war but to impress upon one and all, to give us all the opportunity to remember, that we live in peace today in a democratic society.

The theme on that day then, is a sense of gratitude toward the veterans, both men and women, also to those who did not return from the conflicts. We have this sense of gratitude because we can live in the type of world we do today. Besides services, of course, the veterans' associations do have luncheons, banquets and other festivities on that occasion which set it apart from all other days.

But, Mr. Speaker, my personal feeling - and I have discussed this with other veterans and veterans groups - is that Remembrance Day, as such, should remain something very special, something very distinct, to emphasize the things I have just mentioned. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that [with] any attempt to spread out this recognition, to have it become a part of a longer period of time where different groups in different communities would be taking part in these types of activities at different times, a great deal of the significance of the whole occasion would be lost.

I think, Mr. Speaker, there is a great deal of 'meaningfulness' when we speak of the two minute silence. Two minutes is a long time when it is a matter of silence. It gives each and every one of us a chance and an opportunity to remember this sense of gratitude that I've spoken about, to recognize the desire we have to maintain a peaceful, democratic way of life and to renew within ourselves our sense of conflict to our fellow man.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS (CONT.)

MR. SPEAKER:

I wonder if the House might permit me to interrupt the debate for a moment to draw to the attention of the Assembly that we have some distinguished visitors from the United Kingdom and from the Mediterranean region who are seated in the Speaker's gallery: THE Earl Ferrers from the United Kingdom, also The Rt. Hon. James Anthony Stodart, M.P.; from Gibraltar, The Honourable Joseph Caruana, M.H.A.; from Guernsey, Mr. Bertie Albert Le Tissier; from the Isle of Man, Mr. Percy Radcliffe, M.H.K.; from Jersey, Mr. Bernard Binnington, MHCIMA; from Northern Ireland, Mr. John Ferguson; from the United Kingdom, Mr. William Baxter, M.P., Mr. Andrew Bowden, M.B.E., M.P., Mr. William E. Garrett, M.P., and Mr. Robert Woof, M.P. They are accompanied by Mr. Edward James Potter, the Secretary to the Delegation and two members of the Ottawa branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Lt.-Col. T. G. Powie and Mr. Harry Davin.

I would ask them to stand and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS (CONT.)

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a few comments to this particular resolution. I think it's not necessary to dwell in terms of the appreciation members feel toward those who made sacrifices in previous wars and those for whom Remembrance Day has been identified.

Mr. Speaker, the contributions are well-known. They have been well expressed and for my part, I don't wish to repeat them. In passing, I would like to relate to the hon. members, since we are really discussing the form in which remembrance takes place, the form in which our society continues to observe and to recognize the deeds of a historical nature, the contributions to our society.

Just recently there was an article in one of the papers quoting some university professors. It had reference to the implications and significance of our social studies programs in our high schools and whether these were as effective in handing down a sense of history and an understanding of the contributions and foundations of our society as some other programs had been.

I was very pleased to observe that there has apparently been a very recent awakening of considerable magnitude that has resulted in a fantastic upsurge in sales of paperbacks of a historical nature. Included among those, special mention was made of paperback books relating to World War Two and to the deeds of our armies and services during that time.

Mr. Speaker, major contributions, and for many the ultimate contribution, was made to our society. And so we have Remembrance Day. This debate, it seems to me, is on the matter of what is the most appropriate method of recognizing the contributions that have been made. Is Remembrance Day sufficient? Should we have, as is suggested here, a veterans week in which Remembrance Day would fall?

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that we proceed slowly with this concept. I have observed that as it has become fashionable or popular or the thing to do to name a week for certain purposes, we have some causes for which we have identified certain weeks. Weeks are identified by towns. They're identified by town councils, city councils and also provincial governments.

I am of the opinion, Mr. Speaker, that in some of these instances the consequence has been that we have, in fact, detracted from the original sense. We have made it convenient for people. Instead of, in this particular instance, celebrating or observing Remembrance Day on Remembrance Day, if the weather is inclement, if the day is a popular shopping day, if any number of reasons we could anticipate were to materialize, it would be so easy to put the observations off to another day within that week. In a sense, it would be within veterans week.

It would be very simple to rationalize that it's appropriate, it's okay. It doesn't matter too much as long as we do it within this week. I fear, in fact, that the identification of a week as veterans week in Alberta would have the consequence of doing the very opposite of what the hon. member who proposed this motion had in mind.

I realize this is a matter of opinion. But it's a matter on which I would like to be assured that particularly the group that would be most interested, the veterans themselves, had really given serious consideration, had time to think long and hard and were of near unanimous view.

Mr. Speaker, it is for that reason that I would like to move an amendment to the motion. I have copies of the amendment here.

Mr. Speaker, I would move that the words "Government of Alberta proclaim the" be deleted and replaced by "the Government of Alberta consider the proclamation of the", so that the motion as amended would read:

Be it resolved that the Government of Alberta consider the proclamation of the week in which Remembrance Day (November 11th) falls as Veterans Week in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I have indicated that my reason for doing this is concern that we may, in fact, by declaring a whole week, detract from Remembrance Day as such. I've indicated that I would wish to be satisfied and I would wish to have that satisfaction from the veterans organizations that they are, indeed, near unanimous in the concept of a veterans week.

My amendment, Mr. Speaker, would have the effect of allowing the veterans to consider the matter and come forward to the government, and would then allow the government to be assured that, in fact, that is the general view of those most vitally concerned.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I feel this is a very timely topic and that nobody really would wish not to have proper recognition paid to the veterans and to their families, and to perpetuate the memory of what has happened in the past, primarily because we are now able to stand up in this House and talk freely and appreciate how wonderful democracy is. But I think if we're just going to have this turn out to be another sort of motherhood motion to laud those people who are veterans, who know very well what they did, it will not serve as useful a purpose as I think it could if we looked at something a lot more positive.

I'm concerned about cadet activities in this province. There is nothing which makes a lot of veterans feel better than to see that the memories of their past activities, their squadron, their regiment and its history are being remembered, and that we are not entirely wiping out military activities in this province and in this country. A lot of money is being spent by the federal government and there is much activity ...

MR. SCHMID:

Would the hon. member permit a point of information?

MR. LUDWIG:

Well a question, Mr. Speaker, I will. If the hon. minister wishes to participate in debate he may, but I wasn't quite prepared to let him interrupt me and make his speech. He'll have an opportunity, I presume, later on.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, so the hon. member knows, on a point of information, that ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. LUDWIG:

If it's information the hon. member wants to give me, he can wait until I'm finished, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SCHMID:

Okay.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat involved in cadet activities and I'm aware of the fact that this government has made a financial contribution. I commend them very greatly for it. Not only am I concerned in air cadet, army cadet and naval cadet activities as military interest, but I'm quite impressed with the fact ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. As the hon. minister was about to offer some information, I was also on the point of offering a comment to the hon. member that the debate should now be strictly relevant to the amendment.

It would appear to the Chair that the choice between the amendment and the motion is whether the week should be declared now or whether consideration should be given to declaring the week. Perhaps the hon. member might address his remarks to that point.

MR. LUDWIG:

Well, Mr. Speaker, as I stated at the outset of my remarks, I would not at all argue against having the week proclaimed. But I'm saying that just proclaiming it is hollow comfort to anybody, because all the veterans well remember their backgrounds and are quite associated with their past military experiences. I'm saying that we can, in conjunction with this proclamation, really make it meaningful, really make it worth while, not only for those who have their memories, fond or otherwise, of the past battles, but to create something that will perpetuate this in the years to come. I'm saying we should perhaps have November 11 and the week on which this day falls proclaimed as veterans week.

Let's place emphasis on paying real tribute to the veterans and their families by emphasizing air cadet activities, not only for the military aspect but for the creation of good citizenship.

I believe that if we are going to honour the veterans, Mr. Speaker, as this motion intends, we can't honour them in any finer way than to let them know that interested people, and many of them are veterans, are doing something; not just declaring a day hoping that someone will take the day off and meet in the Legion somewhere and have an evening with his friends, or meet in the armories, or meet in the officers' mess or sergeants' mess as the case may be, but to do something that will live on indefinitely and that not only will make the veterans feel proud of the fact that we are doing something in a meaningful way, but will make a lot of people, a lot of parents and a lot of children, feel that we are doing something in a most meaningful way to keep this kind of spirit alive, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is clearly debating the main motion.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise you that I had intended to terminate my remarks at the time you got up.

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a few words on the amendment to this very commendable motion.

There is no doubt, in my opinion, that ex-servicemen deserve greater recognition for their service to their country than many other organizations which have succeeded in

obtaining a special week of recognition. In fact, there are so many special weeks of recognition that perhaps the year should be expanded to more than 52 weeks.

There must be room, Mr. Speaker, for instance, for a week to recognize veterans, perhaps between better garden week and Fire Prevention Week, or between farmers week and better newspaper week.

The example of service of veterans, their loyalty ...

MR. SPEAKER:

With great respect to the hon. minister, the debate must be now confined to the subject matter of the amendment rather than that of the main motion. Perhaps the hon. minister might wish to confine his observations to the desirability or otherwise of adopting the amendment.

MR. FAIRAN:

Well, Mr. Speaker, as you will undoubtedly remember, in Latin, "Fiat voluntas tua," means, "Your will be done." But with all due respect, how can you consider something if you don't talk about the subject.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. minister's opinions are divine, nevertheless the question now is whether the motion is to be amended so that instead of calling for the declaration of a week, there is to be consideration given by the government to the declaration of a week.

Perhaps if the hon. minister has no opinion on that subject, he might await the outcome of the amendment.

MR. FAIRAN:

No, I have an opinion on whether the government, Mr. Speaker, should consider whether there should be a special week for veterans.

The reason for careful consideration, Mr. Speaker, is that the views of veterans or veterans organizations such as the Legion, the army and navy, various old comrades associations and regimental associations should be canvassed and assessed.

Apart from the facts of history, veterans organizations are still very active in the community and will have many ideas on whether a special week should be granted. They'll have ideas which can contribute to the consideration by the government of the possibility of a special week.

For instance, in my own area the Royal Canadian Legion has just built a senior citizens recreation centre in Rosemary Park with help from the city and the province. I should say it is in the actual riding of the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

I think consideration should also be given to the excellent idea of the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View that more support should be given to cadets, not only the air cadets, but also the army cadets and the navy cadets.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should recognize the important place veterans have in the community and give consideration to this proposal. Therefore, vote for the amendment.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a word or two on the amendment since I spoke on the original motion.

I really think the amendment improves the motion. It says practically the same thing, but puts it in a little different way, a little different package. I really think the motion is improved by the amendment. It places the government in a position where it can consider the proclamation rather than the direct order that the government proclaim. I think that is proper for a request to come from the Legislature to ask the government to consider the matter rather than to tell the government that it has to do it.

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair]

I really favour the amendment. I'd also like to say that the amendment would include a possibility of doing all the things that were mentioned in the original debate on veterans week.

I believe the glory of any period is going to be recorded in history on how we treat our elderly people, how we treat our disabled and handicapped, and how we treat our

veterans. We have to remember that veterans, those who returned - many of them died on foreign soil or in the water or air - left part of their lives in the battlefield. It's not possible for anyone to go through modern day warfare without leaving part of his life on that battlefield whether he is injured or not. Any country that doesn't recognize the fact that veterans are a special category, I think, is putting itself as a weakling country. And any country which honours its veterans, I believe, raises itself to a much higher stature than it otherwise would.

Very few people are in the position of veterans. Veterans don't talk about what they are going to do. They actually offered their lives for their country and I think this is what we should remember. We have young men, who had tremendous ability, who did not return. We had young men and young women who returned, who left part of their lives in foreign countries because they wanted to make sure that we retained the freedoms we cherish so much in this land.

So I certainly favoured the motion and I now favour the amendment. I would hope the Legislature would go on record as supporting this 100 per cent.

MR. BUCKWEIL:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a few remarks on the amendment, having spoken to the motion.

The idea of veterans week I think is a good one. But I think we are sort of narrowing the idea down so that we are remembering those who have died and those who fought in the world wars in our particular country. I think in this veterans week we should remember that none of us today have any use for war, but that there are times when a man has to defend his own home, his own land ...

MR. FAPRAN:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I would just like the opinion of a new judge on whether the hon. member's remarks should only be addressed to consideration and not the subject?

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order. I believe it's rather amusing to have the hon. minister get up on a point of order to deny anyone else the wide latitude he has taken on this amendment ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order, order.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order. The point of order is quite valid and I am sure the hon. Member for Macleod has no intention to elaborate but to speak to the amendment. I would beg the hon. Member for Macleod to speak on the amendment as he started initially.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I intended to complete my remarks on the point of order and I would like to complete them. I believe the hon. member who was just speaking, the hon. Member for Macleod, was certainly at least closer to the intent of the ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View is expressing his opinions now. We beg the hon. Member for Macleod to proceed with the debate.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I always express ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order.

MR. BUCKWEIL:

Mr. Speaker, I will try to stick to the topic. I came in in the midst of the hon. minister's remarks when he was talking about army cadets and I didn't know that it had anything to do with the amendment either. But if he so desires, we will try to stick to the amendment which is that the government consider the proclamation of the week in which

Remembrance Day falls as veterans week in Alberta. I was trying to construe my remarks to strengthen the hand in this resolution why the government should proclaim this week as veterans week.

What I was concerned about, Mr. Speaker, was that, as I mentioned, none of us has any use for war, but there are times when we have to fight. We have to fight for our rights, we have to fight for our way of life, maybe we have to fight wars we don't want to get into, primarily for the principle and the rights of others.

MR. LUDWIG:

We have to fight government.

MR. BUCKWELL:

I think in this proclamation of veterans week we will give due respect to the army cadets and the air force cadets. But we should also, Mr. Speaker, bring to the fore during that week in this proclamation, if we are going to have a week, that we consider liberty and freedom, and just what they mean to our way of life.

We are not concerned about being militant. One of the objections some people have to the cadet corps could be that they are going to be potential combatants on our behalf in a time of confrontation. I don't believe in being militant. But I believe a man has to stand up for his rights. One of the ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Macleod is definitely going back on the original motion.

[Interjections]

Order please.

As the Chair sees this, it's just the amendment; whether the government should consider the proclamation or, as the original motion was, whether the government proclaim.

MR. BUCKWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I shall try to keep with the remarks. If, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we don't consider these things, there is very little point to having a veterans week. It just becomes another - we are having so many days during the year, let's have Mother's Day, Father's Day, farmer's day and all these other days. They are all good in their own intention.

If we are going to have a veterans week, if we are not going to think of something far deeper than what the veterans did, great as their sacrifice was, we've got to look at what imagination is it going to have. What is the purpose of proclaiming a veterans day week?

I suggest, if we are not going to look at some of the things we stand for and that, in having veterans week, we are all against war - what I am suggesting is the TV ad which shows two or three generations, how each family gave the head of their house to fight a war. And then it suggests that God Himself gave His son and he didn't fight, so the youngster today of eight or nine doesn't have to fight.

I suggest that all the veterans who fought - many of them were fine Christian gentlemen - didn't die because they loved war. They died because they loved freedom and they loved liberty. I suggest that unless we are going to tie the liberties and the rights of individuals and our desire to keep them, to the proclamation that we have a veterans week, the idea of this amendment is not going to be very worth while.

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Speaker, I am going to delay the matter of the question for just a few minutes because I think it is important to recognize the interpretation or have the correct meaning of the amendment, why the amendment was specifically drawn in the way it was, simply removing the requirement for the government to definitely proclaim a week which would be known as veterans week, why it was changed to read that it ought to only consider this and then, in fact, after such consideration the decision may be to proclaim the week as indicated originally in the motion. But I think it is important to understand the meaning of the change in the amendment and why we should really be supporting the amendment rather than the way the motion originally read.

Simply to proclaim a week without some forethought, without some indication or recognition of what ought to be done through that week to carry a message and what that message ought to be - as the hon. Member for Macleod had indicated, unless we carry a

message not of war but of peace, in that respect there is really no point in the proclamation of a week for veterans.

I think we need to look at this amendment in that light and give the government the opportunity to consider the entire matter and perhaps to come with some directive or some plan or seek out what the citizens of this province would like, how they would observe it in a meaningful way. Only then should such proclamation be made. On any other terms, I really can't see any point in the proclamation. So I really think we should support the amendment as it is to allow the government to consider such a proclamation and in that such things be taken into account in that consideration as to how the observation will, in a meaningful way, be carried out by the citizens.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

[The amendment was carried.]

MR. BENOIT:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak on the motion as amended just briefly to make one observation if I may, with regard to an extension of the meaning of the word "veterans" to be included in the week. A number of comments have been made and it is quite apparent that the motion as amended is much more acceptable than the motion as it was in the original position.

We're talking about the memories of the wars and questioning why we will remember wars and which wars we would remember and whether we should have a week or a day. These are all questions that could be battled around for a long time and some of them have a lot of emotional feelings attached to them. I really think we need to honestly honour those who have sacrificed for a purpose. I don't think it is our place to question the motives that were in the minds of those who went to war and were willing to die.

The hon. Member for Athabasca said that you have to ask yourself the question of who won the war. I don't doubt that is a very weighty question. In my own mind, without saying what other people should think, it is my opinion that no one ever wins a war, a conflict of the nature that we are talking about. But I don't think we should ever do anything to perpetuate or glorify war if we can possibly avoid it because of the fact that no one seems to have a victory in war.

That's the reason I would like to make the observation, Mr. Speaker, that if we're going to have a veterans week, we might ask the government to give consideration to who would be classed as veterans. I know we are thinking in terms of those who have actually participated in one way or another on the battlefield in wars. But I am thinking that there is a great deal of credit and honour due to the people who stayed at home and made it possible for the veterans to be on the battlefield.

If it were not for the efforts that were made by the people at home by way of victory bonds and all the things sent over to them, the preparations that were made here to supply them with the things they needed to back them up, the sacrifices made by the people at home, there could have been no successful war waged. When I think particularly of people like those in France and Britain in the last world conflict where the battle was carried on right in the homes practically of those who supported the veterans, there is no way we could take away from the honour, fame and glory due to those who did not go to the battlefield but who held the fort at home.

At this particular time we've talked a lot about senior citizens and helping them. Many of our senior citizens fought battles that were equally demanding of them right on the home front when they developed the country in which we live, the sacrifices that mothers and children went through. So if we are going to have a whole week in which to remember veterans, Mr. Speaker, I would like to throw out the suggestion of the possibility of using various days for various types of veterans.

We might cover the entire scope of veterans and give to those who have gone before us and who have prepared the way for this and following generations the honour and glory that is justly due to them, including many of those people who did not believe that they should take up arms in actual physical conflict, but who remained and were faithful in the home looking after things so that those who desired to do it found it possible to do so, even to the point, if necessary, of giving up their lives. No less did the people who worked and toiled and contributed and sacrificed at home, in many instances, make a contribution even unto death than did those on the battlefield.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is just one thought; that we extend the idea of veterans to a broader field if we extend it to a week instead of a day.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I had occasion to talk on November 11 several years ago in Two Hills, as a matter of fact, and I spent some time thinking about the need to remember. The more I thought, the more one topic came back to my mind repeatedly and that was the need to remember peace rather than war. At that time I had occasion to structure a speech about this need. The need to remember peace, in my mind, is a very vital thing. When we go along in an affluent society and have all we want, we don't realize that we have this because we really have peace. The peace, as I remember it, that occurred after the last great war was a truly remarkable thing, when families got together and normalcy returned. Families had the opportunity to grow in terms of wealth, in terms of production and so forth.

My only reason for getting up is to bring to the Assembly the fact that if we're going to remember anything it is to remember the tremendous value and worth of peace. That, to me, is the highlight of any day or week or whatever it is we set aside; this need to remember the true value of peace which we happen to enjoy but which not all people in the world enjoy.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

MR. PURDY:

I wanted to close the debate if nobody else is going to speak.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Please continue, hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. LUDWIG:

I was just going to make a few comments with regard to the minister's remarks about peace. I do not think there is anyone in this world who doesn't want peace and I'm no different. But I have always subscribed to the view that only those nations can guarantee any type of peace which can show they are able to enforce peace. I subscribe to the view of peace through power in every respect. There are some nations in the Middle East today which will have no peace unless they can establish it by fighting for survival. So it's well and good to preach peace. Everybody who was in the World War II wanted peace and the only way they got it was by fighting for it.

I have no argument with the hon. minister, but if anyone in this House believes that we can have peace in this world by dropping everything and saying, well, let's hope the neighbour is as big-hearted as we are, I've got news for him. We'll be learning a new language in this country long before our rifles are thrown away.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

May the hon. member close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. PURDY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be very brief in closing the debate on this. I'd like to thank all hon. members who participated in the first motion and also the motion that was amended. I have to concur that I think the motion as amended is a bit better. It gives the government the power to consider it instead of proclaiming it.

It's interesting that the day I brought this to the Legislature, the last day it was debated, was April 9. That particular day was Vimy Ridge day. I guess I was remiss for not mentioning this in my remarks. But that evening my father phoned me. He is a member of a legion and a veteran and asked me how the debate went. I said, not too bad. He

asked, did you say anything about Vimy Ridge, and I said, no, I forgot and he said, well, I was in the first war at Vimy Ridge. He was out celebrating this particular day in memory of what happened to us veterans at that particular time.

In closing, if the motion we have is either carried today or defeated, it will be given some consideration, I believe, by the Dominion command at their annual convention which is taking place this coming Monday in Newfoundland. Some of the people from the various veterans associations in the province will be taking this with them to Newfoundland to get the thoughts of various veterans throughout the Dominion of Canada.

Thank you.

[The motion as amended was carried.]

2. Moved by Mr. Ruste:

Be it resolved that the provincial government make representation to the federal government in the matter of Capital Gains as it relates to the family farm, that the evaluation date be moved from December 31, 1971, to the date of the last transfer of the farm within the family.

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Drain]

MR. MOORE:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest is not present. I presume you would take the next speaker in line or ...

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Please continue.

MR. MOORE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the hon. Member for Wainwright placed this motion on the Order Paper and since the last time it was debated in the Legislature, I have had some considerable thought about it and an opportunity to review it with a few individuals who are farmers and would be affected one way or another by this particular motion if, in fact, the Legislature were successful in convincing the federal government that the matter should be reviewed and changed.

First of all I would say that one or two of those individuals expressed the concern to me as to why a former minister of agriculture, the hon. Member for Wainwright, would have something against them. Those, in fact, Mr. Speaker, were younger farmers who had purchased farmland from their fathers a number of years ago. In one particular case an individual had purchased farmland from his father back in about 1961. He may pass that along to his sons. He may, on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, sell that land to an individual outside of his family. In that case, by asking the federal government to move in the direction of this motion, we would be saying to them, you use an evaluation date back in 1961 when that person sells his farm. He would certainly be penalized to a greater extent than, I am sure, the mover of the resolution might have anticipated.

So, I guess, Mr. Speaker, it is important for members to look at the wording in the context of the motion and I wonder, from its wording, whether the hon. member, in fact, wants the federal taxation department, which is collecting the capital gains tax, to gain from the motion, or whether he wants family farms to gain from the motion.

In order to make that very clear, Mr. Speaker, and to put the motion in a perspective which would only relate to those things which happened since December 31, 1971, I would propose to move the following amendment to the resolution. It reads as follows, Mr. Speaker: "Resolution No. 2 be amended as follows, by inserting the word 'forward' between the words 'moved' and 'from'." The resolution then, Mr. Speaker, would read:

Be it resolved that the provincial government make representation to the federal government in the matter of Capital Gains as it relates to the family farm, that the evaluation date be moved forward from December 31, 1971, to the date of the last transfer of the farm within the family.

Speaking to the amendment, Mr. Speaker, this would ensure that, in fact, the intent of the resolution, if it is carried by the Assembly, would be to make representation to the federal government to have the evaluation and capital gains tax apply on the date of the last sale within the family after December 31, 1971. It would in no way affect those

persons who have purchased family farms, kept them in the family prior to 1971 and subsequently might wish to sell them outside the family.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the amendment, I believe the hon. member has overlooked one point. That is, if you get back into the Income Tax Act, there was no such a thing as an evaluation date mentioned until the new statutes were brought in. There are two evaluation dates mentioned in the federal income tax laws that we operate under. One is December 31, 1971, for farmlands and other such assets; and there is an earlier date which deals with stocks and bonds and so on.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly have no objection to the amendment that has been moved by the hon. member. It really doesn't affect anything because I can appreciate that he has talked to people and they are concerned about something sort of against them. I would like to assure you, Mr. Speaker and members of this Assembly, that in drafting this resolution I took into account the income tax laws, the effect of those laws, the new Income Tax Act and its effect, and certainly there was no intention of going back beyond December 31, 1971, for any evaluation date.

With that, Mr. Speaker, if it clarifies it in the member's mind, I have no opposition to the inclusion of that part. But I say it's just a matter of playing with words because, in effect, there was no such intent. Even the income tax laws of the federal government wouldn't permit going back as he has indicated.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

[The amendment was carried.]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

May the hon. member close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, in closing what turned out to be a relatively short debate, I think I will just read the resolution for the record.

Be it resolved that the provincial government make representation to the federal government in the matter of Capital Gains as it relates to the family farm, that the evaluation date be moved ...

and with the amendment

...forward from December 31, 1971, to the date of the last transfer of the farm within the family.

Mr. Speaker, I have had contacts with many people in agriculture and discussed this at conventions and so on, and certainly there is a general agreement with the intent here. I have also had people - small businessmen - who are in the same position say, why are we not included? Well, Mr. Speaker, I have said to them that I am dealing with this because it was brought up in the House. The federal government accepted some of the earlier proposals even to consider such a thing and I am following through on that matter. Certainly the principle involved here is that we want, as members of government, to promote and to continue the family farm. The intent of this resolution is that we do not want to see young couples who have taken on the family farm end up in the matter of two or three generations, when they have to dispose of it under conditions that they can't control - they would be faced with a sizable debt or expense.

So on that basis, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of this Assembly concur in this resolution.

[The motion as amended was carried.]

3. Moved by Mr. Moore:

Be it resolved that the Department of Highways in cooperation with local school authorities be responsible for encouraging the development of a voluntary driver education program at all high schools in Alberta in areas where such programs are not now available.

Moved by Mr. Ludwig:

That the motion be amended by striking out all words after "Be it resolved that" and by substituting therefor the following:

the Government of Alberta ensure the opportunity to every eligible person in the province of Alberta of a driver education course.

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Cockson]

MR. COOKSON:

Mr. Speaker, I spent most of the morning trying to gather together all the dissertation that went on with regard to the original resolution and with regard to the amendment. I would hate to set an example of being redundant in the House. One might mistake me for the Member for Calgary Mountain View ...

[Interjections]

... so rather than - that's a pretty serious charge. It's unfortunate he's not in his chair because I would clearly enjoy debating with him for the rest of the afternoon.

The amendment which I think the Member for Calgary Buffalo spoke to during earlier debate suggested that it was an example of someone who was striving to think of something to write on the cuff of his shirt while flying by the seat of his pants. I think he was referring to the amendment by the Member for Calgary Mountain View.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that you want me to restrict my remarks to the amendment.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The Chair was attempting to gather whether your presentation was in accordance with the amendment, so would you please continue.

MR. COCKSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of criticisms that I wanted to direct toward the amendment and I think I pointed those out in some of the earlier debate, where, in fact, the original mover of the amendment completely by-passed some of the intent of the originator of the resolution, the Member for Smoky River. I think I pointed out those discrepancies and errors in some of the discussion earlier in the Assembly.

I just want to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Calgary Mountain View, whom I see is back in his seat ...

MR. LUDWIG:

Did I miss something?

AN HON. MEMBER:

No.

MR. COCKSON:

... I'll make a point, Mr. Speaker, of attempting to clarify a rather vague and inaccurately phrased amendment to a very proper and well worded resolution. I'm not sure and I don't suppose anyone else in the Assembly is sure what was meant by the term "eligible person".

MR. LUDWIG:

Would you be kind enough to permit a question?

MR. COCKSON:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUDWIG:

Chicken?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. COCKSON:

The Member for Calgary Mountain View has a great ability based on records, if you want to look in Hansard, of inadvertently deferring the adjournment of this House by approximately two weeks. I've been able to calculate it and at the price of approximately \$2,000 an hour ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The Chair is again having difficulty gathering if the debate regards the amendment. Would the hon. member please continue his presentation pertaining to the amendment as before.

MR. FUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, would the member permit a question?

MR. COCKSON:

Well, in due course, Mr. Speaker. I have no objections to intelligent questions.

MR. LUDWIG:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, who is wasting time right now?

AN HON. MEMBER:

You are.

MR. COCKSON:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View. It's pretty obvious who is wasting time. You'd almost think that he was afraid to assist in the adjournment of the business of the House so he could get back into his constituency to find out what isn't going on.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not farming. I can stick around a while. I resent he's in a hurry.

MR. COCKSON:

Well, I merely want to point out to the members of the Assembly that when the Member for Calgary Mountain View talks about the Government of Alberta ensuring the opportunity to every eligible person in the province of Alberta of a driver education course, I'm not sure, and I don't suppose he is, what he means by "eligible person". Is he referring to people who are eligible for marriage? In that case it may exempt our bachelors. Is he talking about those who are eligible for school, or those who are eligible for the Social Credit party? In that case, there may be quite a few exempt. Or is he talking about those who might be eligible to become lawyers? If that's the case maybe we'd better have a close look at this resolution, in view of some of the qualified debate that comes from the other side of the House.

I think this has to be clarified. I'm sure the Government of Alberta has no objection to all people who qualify for a driver's licence taking a course in driver education. If he intends broadening it to involve all the people of Alberta, then what the Member for Calgary Mountain View is saying in effect is that the province has to get into driver training in toto. You know, for presumably great representatives and stalwarts of free enterprise, it just baffles me why there is such inconsistency. On the one hand the free-wheeling ...

MR. LUDWIG:

On a point of order. When the hon. member says that he has been baffled, it is quite obvious that he shouldn't stress that point too much. I'm not in disagreement with him on that point at all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order, order.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That's not a point of order.

MR. COCKSON:

Mr. Speaker, what really baffles me is some of the debate I read in Hansard that has been recorded by the Member for Calgary Mountain View.

[Interjections]

That really baffles me. I'd be inclined to think that it may baffle a lot of his constituents and a lot of people who presumably supported him in the past ...

MR. LUDWIG:

Carry on!

MR. COOKSON:

... but I'd just like, in the little bit of time left, to compliment the Minister of Highways and Transport - I'm sorry to disappoint you ...

AN HCN. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. COCKSON:

... for the announcement yesterday on driver training in the province of Alberta. I can't understand why the former government, the has-been government, the government of the dinosaur age, has to have a flip-flop and end up in the opposition side, and then to infinity, in order to develop a training course for the people who wish to learn how to drive. The Minister of Highways and Transport and his colleagues, in a very limited time, have been able to put together the kind of program that I think will be acceptable to all people of Alberta.

Now I know, Mr. Speaker, I'm wandering a little bit off the amendment, but I'm going to wander back and ask the members of the Assembly to soundly and resoundingly reject a redundant and off-the-cuff, seat-of-the-pants amendment to a motion so that we can, in the limited time available to us, approve the original motion or resolution presented by the Member for Smoky River.

MR. LUDWIG:

A question to the hon. member who just spoke. I understood he was going to take a question. Is the hon. member aware of the fact that the motion as amended was implemented by an announcement of the hcn. minister yesterday, so the thing is redundant because it's now in effect? I wonder what he is spinning his wheels for, Mr. Speaker.

[Interjections]

MR. COOKSON:

Well, Mr. Speaker, our biggest problem is that the member opposite is redundant and I think probably that will show up in the next election. But again, he is deferring a decision on an amendment and a decision on a resolution which is going to give support, in effect, to the program which the province is trying to initiate. If he does that he's obviously against the original motion.

SCME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. LUDWIG:

A question. Does the hon. member feel that his performance today justifies his re-election in his constituency?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, during the member's talk he inferred that I could ask a question following it. My question to him is, does he suggest that any hon. member here is limited in his speaking time outside the rules of the House?

MR. COOKSON:

Mr. Speaker, I have to retort to that because again we're delaying the vote on the resolution which is obviously what the Opposition wants to do. I have no concerns about any hon. member in this Assembly making a positive contribution to a resolution, private bill, motion or whatever. Let's go on with it.

AN HCN. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Is it agreed that the hon. Member for Lethbridge adjourn the debate?

HCN. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Bill No. 211 - The Senior Citizens Affairs Act, 1974

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, in commencing the debate on Bill No. 211, The Senior Citizens Affairs Act, 1974, I thought it might be helpful to briefly review what motivated this bill and how it came to be.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, many constituents have expressed concerns to me via personal contact, letters, the telephone and so on about the problems that are common to senior citizens in Alberta today. For example, Mr. Speaker, we've had many contacts regarding problems with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission, prescriptions, glasses, property taxes, those seeking jobs, those seeking meaningful application of their time and those seeking accommodation which includes senior citizens homes, Mr. Speaker, which I would like to refer to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs and just remind him that there certainly has been a long-standing need for a senior citizens facility in the Calgary Bow constituency.

Also, Mr. Speaker, senior citizens have brought to our attention their need for assistance in other areas such as mental health and nursing homes, but I'm sure all members of the Legislature have experienced similar problems and have worked as I have to try to help and assist senior citizens with their problems. But there are certain areas where the senior citizens services could certainly be improved, Mr. Speaker, and that is basically the intention in the presentation of this bill.

So, after having received considerable comments from constituents and others, we tried to determine the best solution to their problems. One of the recurring comments I received was that there was no one person or even no one agency that was knowledgeable or aware of all the services and facilities which the government offered to senior citizens. So then we hit upon the suggestion, after some more consultation and so on, of a department of senior citizens affairs. In our first questionnaire, to which we had 1200 replies, Mr. Speaker, 71 per cent of those replies - and this is from all age groups - indicated that they supported the establishment of a provincial department geared to servicing senior citizens. So I think it's a generally accepted principle that a 71 per cent vote in favour of an issue certainly requires some action.

Then, to further support the need and to support the idea, Mr. Speaker, this year, in our questionnaire to our constituents, when we asked them what further services should be incorporated and so on and what government funds should be used for, it's interesting to note that without any lead-type question, but just by assessing the various points that were turned in, of the top 12 issues listed, 13.7 per cent of all responding put senior citizens assistance first.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's certainly evident that the general public in the Calgary Bow constituency is aware of a need for additional services and facilities and a need for additional dissemination of information. The biggest complaint seems to be that they do

not have any single phone number, any single person or even department to contact in order to have the queries of the senior citizens answered or directed to the source that can solve their problems.

Going along a little further in our research on this matter, we raised it in the question period one day and the hon. Premier indicated that the government wasn't considering doing anything at the moment on the matter. We then went to the Canadian Mental Health Association and others, discussed the matter and received a favourable response.

Then we checked other provincial legislation in Canada and we note, with interest, that Ontario has a department of community social services on aging. Manitoba has commissioned many studies. We found that the hon. Member for Calgary Elbow had submitted a bill which incorporated an advisory council for senior citizens when he was in the Opposition. We liked that aspect of it and have incorporated it in Bill No. 211. We sincerely appreciate the work the hon. Member for Calgary Elbow went to. We thank him for his contribution to our bill.

In drafting the bill, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to draw attention to an error which occurred. I guess you would perhaps call it a typographical error. When the draft of the bill was submitted to the Legislature, Section 2(2), the second line read "to a Minister with portfolio." When it went to the Queen's Printer it came out "to a Minister without portfolio." So I would just draw to the attention of all hon. members that in the bill, as you now have it, there is an error. I checked with the Legislative Counsel and he confirmed that the original draft did say "to a Minister with portfolio." If all hon. members would like to take cognizance of that fact they will perhaps avoid any misunderstanding.

So we have drafted a bill, Mr. Speaker, with four major points. But before I go on to that, I understand that an hon. member has a visiting school he would like to introduce. With leave of the House, I'll bow to his introduction.

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, could I have leave of the House to introduce a class?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS (CONT.)

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly, 78 Grades 3 through 6 students from the Caslan School in my constituency. They are accompanied by teachers, Mr. Bob Zahara, Mrs. Sandra Zahara, Rose Gundran and Mona Grekul and their bus driver, Dennis Halitsky. They are seated in the public gallery. I'd ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT ORDERS (CONT.)

Bill No. 211 The Senior Citizens Affairs Act, 1974 (Cont.)

MR. WILSON:

So, Mr. Speaker, the four main points, as I see them, in the bill are, first of all, that we appoint an existing minister with portfolio to be responsible. We do not see the need to increase the number of cabinet ministers in Alberta. We feel this could very readily be handled by one of the existing ministers.

The second major point, as we see it, is an appointment of a cabinet committee. Here we see their function as one of planning and coordinating the existing and new programs and the bureaucracy of the whole operation to bring about the maximum benefit to the senior citizens, Mr. Speaker. Also, we see the cabinet committee soliciting senior citizen representation in all matters pertaining to senior citizens affairs.

We see the minister appointing a senior citizen's advocate. This would be the person to whom senior citizens could direct their calls to find out whatever information they may require pertaining to any department of the government. We can see that the senior citizen's advocate is fully informed at all times on all matters relating to senior citizens. His phone number would be the one number that would be publicized and readily available for information purposes.

The next point, of course, is the advisory council on senior citizens affairs. This is the part of our bill that was contributed, at least in part, by the hon. Member from Calgary Elbow. This portion of the bill sets up the mechanics for citizen input which is very important and which, I think, would work very successfully.

Then, Mr. Speaker, having drafted the bill and introduced it to the Legislature, we set out to test it in the market place. To do this we got a [list] of all senior citizens organizations in the province from the Alberta Council on Aging and covered a good many of those organizations listed with a copy of the bill inviting their comments. We wanted to assure the widest diversity of representation and point of view on the bill. To date, we have correspondence indicating over 3,000 senior citizens in favour of this bill. Letters are still coming in, Mr. Speaker.

Some of the hon. members might be interested in just a few short quotes as to the comments. The Senior Citizens Club of Ogden House, Calgary submitted a petition and said,

We, the undersigned, hereby endorse Bill 211, as valuable to the welfare and interests of all Senior Citizens in Alberta.

Incidentally, that petition had 25 signatures on it. From Grande Prairie the Senior Citizens Council said, and I quote:

The general opinion of those present was that it would prove to be a very good thing for Senior Citizens, and I was instructed to write and inform you of their decision. Good luck to you in this very worthy endeavor.

We received an encouraging letter, Mr. Speaker, from the Senior Citizens' Central Council of Calgary. Part of their letter says:

The Council supports the principle of a department or special committee to co-ordinate provincial programs involving senior citizens.

Then from Red Deer, Mr. Speaker, we have a letter that says, and I quote:

The executive of Red Deer Pensioners Concerned discussed Bill 211 and the Senior Citizens Affairs Act. We wish to go on record as heartily endorsing this Bill.

Then from Medicine Hat we have a response from the Senior Citizens Club there, and they say, and I quote:

Many older members were heard saying "Miracles never cease, we are finally going to be remembered".

[Interjections]

Then we have a letter from the Retired Railway Veterans Organization, Mr. Speaker, here in Edmonton. They say in part:

Our organization in the city, composing of roughly 1,600 members, are in full accord with such a piece of legislation. It is a timely move and will fill a much needed law in connection with our class of the society.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. WILSON:

I would be happy to table copies of all these letters or any of them that any hon. members would like, Mr. Speaker.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we feel that the government commission study known as the Ward report should perhaps be tabled. The Ward report, if it has the depth which I'm sure it would have, should perhaps be made the subject of a public hearing and let the senior citizens respond to the work that the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development has encouraged to date. Because I'm sure he would get similar response, and we think senior citizens affairs would be better served with a public report or by making the Ward report public rather than keeping it under wraps.

Mr. Speaker, we want to assure that all existing programs serving senior citizens are dealt with, made available and publicized to the senior citizens in the most effective way possible because they certainly deserve it.

DR. PAPRCSKI:

Mr. Speaker, as I enter this debate regarding The Senior Citizens Affairs Act, 1974, Bill No. 211 - from the outset, Mr. Speaker, I find that the bill, while it can be easily supported, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it's fleeting and it is administratively oriented. The fact that it is administratively oriented, one has to quickly ask the question, is it really serving a purpose or are we going to be led to believe that it's serving a purpose?

Mr. Speaker, I suggest the senior citizens know very well the programs that are being brought about. Of course, this can be improved and there is no doubt about that.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the bill has good intentions, but compared to what has been done by this administration from the time we have taken office, it certainly is an example, and an example that is quite typical coming from the Opposition, of a non-action type of bill.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

DR. PAPRCSKI:

Mr. Speaker, surely, surely the Opposition members could have come up with many, many proposals, programs and policies for senior citizens. When he speaks, the hon. member opposite from Calgary Bow, and says there are many, many problems regarding senior citizens, well, Mr. Speaker, maybe I should suggest to him that this was a legacy of the previous administration. It certainly was the reason for the many positive thrusts that this government had to take.

When the hon. member mentioned, Mr. Speaker, that there was a need for mental health, well, need I recall and remind him that there is The Mental Health Act and all the positive and vigorous programs that are being carried out across the province. Certainly they are just starting. He can't expect all this action to occur overnight after so many years of delay and neglect.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that he's motivated because there are nursing home needs. Well, what about the increased number of beds, the increased subsidies that we have carried out to maintain standards for nursing home beds for our senior citizens? Not to speak, Mr. Speaker, of the rehabilitative programs, the diagnostic programs, the preventive programs and what have you.

Mr. Speaker, he gives a number of names and maybe they are accurate, but I challenge them on the basis, are they statistically valid when you consider the whole province? He says the senior citizens have no place to go. Well, Mr. Speaker, there are MLAs in every constituency. Maybe if he indeed did his homework, he would be the advocate of the senior citizens and bring about positive programs and not administrative programs which the senior citizens are all too tired of hearing.

So, Mr. Speaker, with all the direct benefits that could have been suggested by the Opposition regarding senior citizens, it's amazing that a bill like this, an administrative bill, a central bill, a central government bill - while we're trying to break down this bureaucracy and bring it down to people at a local autonomy basis, he brings in a central bill where everything has to be centrally coordinated again.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Where were you last night?

AN HON. MEMBER:

You're back 100 years.

DR. PAPROSKI:

So, Mr. Speaker, the hon. members can say what they want. The fact of the matter is that this side of the House, this government is interested in local autonomy and responding to needs at the local basis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

AN HCN. MEMEER:

Carry on, carry on.

DR. PAPRCSKI:

Mr. Speaker, while the bill in itself, the way it reads, is not offensive, the fact that it does really nothing, Mr. Speaker, as a representative of senior citizens, not only in Edmonton Kingsway, but across this province as we all are, I suggest is offensive to me. These people have been waiting a long time for action. To bring about a bill, after being here two years or two and a half years, as has the hon. member, and say we are going to improve merely administration, I suggest is truly amazing.

It's true, hon. members, that clarity and improved administration is needed in government, but I suggest this clarity and improved administration is necessary in all areas of government, in all governments, municipal, provincial and federal. I doubt very much, Mr. Speaker, that if this bill, in fact, came about, this clarity and improved responsiveness would indeed come about. It will only occur, Mr. Speaker and hon. members, if there is a high index of concern for the social issues, a responsiveness and a desire to really bring about positive, definitive action on the respective problems of the day.

We are all too often, Mr. Speaker, concerned about administration and bogged in red tape and bureaucracy and forget the positive thrusts which have to be brought about, in fact, on a day to day basis to bring them directly to the people.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt in my mind that since taking office the Progressive Conservative government, this government, has indeed responded, has indeed acted.

Mr. Speaker, the bill advocates a new department for senior citizens. And the question which has to be asked very quickly is why? Right now, Mr. Speaker, there is a minister who is responsible for Health and Social Development. There is a minister who is responsible for Municipal Affairs and, obviously, housing. I could very quickly say I could understand if the hon. member opposite had suggested a section - as I suggested immediately on taking office - for senior citizens as there is a section for handicapped or a section for this or that. This makes logic. But to deploy another member specifically for this area seems to be completely illogical when, in fact, the administrative structure is there already to act on it. Mr. Speaker, I even suggest this, and in fact know that not only these two ministers are intimately involved, the whole Executive Council is involved.

DR. BOUVIER:

How do you know?

DR. PAPRCSKI:

And I suggest certainly the members of caucus on this side of the House are intimately involved, involved to the extent that there is a very high index of concern for senior citizens and for handicapped people and so on. We put an input in on a day to day basis.

The question I will have to ask, Mr. Speaker - and I hope the senior citizens read the Hansard report - is what has that side of the House, what has the Social Credit caucus or the member from that famous party put in to the government regarding the improved programs for senior citizens ...

DR. EUCK:

Put us on a task force ...

DR. PAPROSKI:

... for the past two and a half years, one positive, definitive program? It has to be asked, Mr. Speaker, because they had opportunity, either by direct communication to the hon. ministers or in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest we have developed policies, we have been coordinating, we have continued the liaison at the street level, the home level, where senior citizens are, directly with them so they will have their input, and as a result we have been acting on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, there is also the cabinet committee, the cabinet committee dealing with social planning and priorities, and here again the input from the MLAs who deal with these related social issues on a day to day basis.

Mr. Speaker, to cite some of the directions and actions this bill is advocating or apparently advocating - in fact, most of these programs and policies, Mr. Speaker, have

been carried out - it speaks of recognition of the senior citizens, housing, driver examinations, health care, transportation and coordination. Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned already the liaison and the coordination which is carried out on a day to day basis by every member on this side of the House. I suggest they get down to work too.

Coordination has been carried out, has been followed through very carefully and deliberately through these various cabinet committees. So I suggest all the items, without exception, which have been mentioned as apparently a concern, are being carried out very well up to this time, and I suggest - and maybe the hon. member could have done this instead of bringing in another administrative bureaucratic bill - he ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Right.

DR. PAPROSKI:

... could have suggested instead, hon. members opposite, why not increase the liaison and coordination which is needed in all departments by all governments across Canada? Mr. Speaker, this is being carried out. We are increasing and improving on a day to day basis. And, believe me, with the legacy we were left with, it is difficult to do. But we are catching up, fortunately.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. PAPROSKI:

Why not increase communication to be clear and explicit. Surely, Mr. Speaker, hon. members will recognize that no bill increases the communication or is more explicit with regard to the programs. I suggest the hon. members know very well that they don't understand some of these bills themselves. You need a legal beagle or a medical doctor or someone ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Stop there.

DR. PAPROSKI:

... like that. They could have added, Mr. Speaker, and suggested to the government that we should add and modify and be more definitive regarding the various programs based on the need on an ongoing basis. Surely, after all these years and all the deficiencies which have been present, and certainly some must still be present in spite of the vast number of programs and policy changes we brought about - and we recognize this - surely they could have come up with something more definitive.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the various aspects mentioned in Bill No. 211 have been carried out very definitively by this program. We know very well the yearly drivers examination has been eliminated. Oh, the yearly medical examination is indeed necessary, and the bill refers to this. But the yearly medical examination, I suggest to hon. members, is necessary for all people. So this is not even discriminatory, in fact. So what else can be added here? Why isn't there a suggestion regarding drivers examination?

Mr. Speaker, the first-rank citizens, these elders, have set the pace for this province. They certainly deserve a thank you from us and we have given that in many ways we have tried and I hope we will improve. They have opened the province. They have struggled, they have suffered, they have built and they have really set the tone for this free democratic society. They have paved the path. It's clear and it is true. Certainly they don't expect a thank you. All they want is dignity and respect. And, Mr. Speaker, I hope we can give them that.

I suggest to hon. members opposite, to all hon. members, that they should spend more time and increase their index of awareness towards these senior citizens, talk to them, see them, listen to them and certainly act on their behalf. And this is much more important than any centralist bureaucratic bill.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Right.

DR. PAPFOSKI:

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of these elders, these pioneers, this administration has done a number of things in addition to some of the items I have mentioned already. I suggest that we will continue to do more.

To recall some of these items, Mr. Speaker - and I have no intention of relating all of them - but I think it's valid just to briefly, over a thirty-second frame, enumerate them. Mr. Speaker, we have health care. Essentially - the cost to senior citizens is now nil. Bill No. 90, The Senior Citizens Benefit Act, \$11 million, provided 127,000 Alberta citizens, 65 years and older, and their 25,000 immediate dependants with eye glasses, dental care, braces, hearing aids, orthopaedic shoes and other necessary surgical and rehabilitative things.

AN HON. MEMBER:

False teeth.

DR. POUVIER:

Not enough.

DR. PAPFOSKI:

Mr. Speaker, 75,000 old age security recipients received \$10 increase per month. Again, \$9 million. So what have they brought about? Another bill. Not anything to add to that area. Surely, Mr. Speaker, the Opposition could have added something more definitive to assist ever more. Well, Mr. Speaker, if they don't, we will, you can be assured of that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Fight.

DR. PAPFOSKI:

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition tends to jest in this area because they can't believe that this, in fact, is a 'now' government. They are - I recall very vividly the senior citizens mentioned, and many other citizens mentioned - their handouts were pre-election handouts. Mr. Speaker, I suggest this government doesn't act that way. It acts in a humanitarian, practical, open, responsive way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. PAPFOSKI:

Mr. Speaker, premium-free medicare and drugs in 1972. I don't know what else they can add to that. The standard of living regarding housing and the bill mentioned this, Mr. Speaker. I can't imagine what else they are going to do, Mr. Speaker. Senior citizens received the benefits of property tax reduction before any other citizens across the province received this reduction. Now this property tax reduction has been removed completely. We know very well that every senior citizen on guaranteed income security is assured, minimally, of \$200. Mr. Speaker, the rental reduction for senior citizens is maintained on a yearly basis.

Getting onto housing again, Mr. Speaker, it really shocks me to think that he would bring in housing authorities as if there was nothing done for senior citizens. Eight lodges have been built last year for 400 beds. Twelve lodges have been built this year for 600 beds, or are going to be built, and there are more coming, Mr. Speaker. Plus, there are going to be several hundred self-contained units. As an example, there are 750 budgeted for 1974, a cost, Mr. Speaker, in 1973 of \$13.7 million and in 1974 of \$22.6 million.

Mr. Speaker, I'll remind the members of this Assembly, and especially our leaders at the local level in Edmonton, that the private non-profit senior citizen lodges in Edmonton were to be taxed. Thanks to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs this was blocked, so they will not be taxed, so the senior citizens will not have to inject more dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I also remind the hon. members opposite that many senior citizens have bought extra pieces of property in Edmonton for a modest income, for their security, to

derive a retirement income. What happened? Mr. Speaker, unfortunately they are being taxed at the same rate as a business, or almost as a business. Certainly not as a residence. Mr. Speaker, we allowed the split mill rate and certainly the local authorities can modify this to allow at least the senior citizens, with these modest pieces of property, to be taxed at a lower level.

Mr. Speaker, in general, having said some of these specifics, there is expanded Victorian Order of Nurses service, there is expanded Meals on Wheels for senior citizens, there are rehabilitative programs for senior citizens. This has all been amplified and is quite clear to those senior citizens. There are home care programs, there is architectural design.

Mr. Speaker, I saw a patient just the other day who had both of his legs amputated a few months ago and what is he receiving? He will be receiving a ramp so he can get in and out of his house. He has a wheelchair, bars for support and so forth, all under direction and essentially free, Mr. Speaker - as a matter of fact, free - to assist him, the senior citizens ...

DR. BUCK:

He's voting Social Credit then.

DR. FAPROSKI:

That's his choice, but I doubt that.

Mr. Speaker, why didn't they suggest that we should increase the programs involving our youth with the senior citizens? I've heard across this province, in my travels, that youth really wants to get involved with our senior citizens. They will learn about their heritage on a first-hand basis by visiting the nursing homes, auxiliary hospitals and assisting at their homes directly. They will give the senior citizens a feeling of contact with youth and certainly it will give our youth a very important human participation.

If there is any way of maintaining our heritage, Mr. Speaker, the wealth, information and knowledge, I suggest maybe to the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation there should be some program where youth can go to the senior citizens and write about their experiences so they can be captured and documented for posterity. Even more important, the youth's exposure to these senior citizens will, in fact, make him more of a human individual.

So Mr. Speaker, in summary, the attitude has prevailed on this side of the House that senior citizens will not be forgotten and have not been forgotten. The action has been taken on a continuing basis to ensure that their dignity, comfort and happiness will be assured, irrespective of any bill such as this - and it will improve, Mr. Speaker, to assure them that if the inflation has eroded their dollar, in fact, they will be compensated to that extent.

Mr. Speaker, finally, a centrally located administrative structure should, indeed, be reviewed very carefully and possibly modified, because additions to the bureaucracy of government have to be taken very seriously. More important even than that - it's certainly conceivable that with modification a bill like this could come about, with all due respect to the hon. member - but above all and much more important than any act, any written document that certainly no senior citizen is going to read, we have to increase our responsiveness. We have to have a high degree of awareness.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, this can be done very well by a section in the Department of Health and Social Development or some other department, with an increase and a very definitive input from various senior citizens at the local level. I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that this is now being done. I know it's going to continue to be done and this input from senior citizens will even have to improve. I know the hon. ministers involved certainly have a high index about this. Certainly the MLAs on this side of the House have and this will increase.

If there is any administrative ability to improve this I have no hesitation, but I certainly would not go beyond a section in a department rather than a department itself, and I would focus on the area which we have been focussing on as a government, in all departments at the local level where people understand, communicate and can participate. That's for senior citizens and all other areas.

Mr. Speaker, these are my comments. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I believe the rule says that the ...

MP. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order please.

AN HON. MEMBER:

The rules don't say anything.

MR. KING:

Mr. Speaker, I enjoy the opportunity to take part in this debate this afternoon. The comments of my hon. colleague reminded me of my four-year old son.

[Laughter]

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. PAPECKSKI:

On a point of order, I'd like to thank him for that comment.

MR. KING:

One of his comments reminded me of something that my four-year old son used to do when he was ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Two.

MR. KING:

... about three years old. He'd close his eyes and say, Daddy, you can't see me, can you, because his eyes were closed. It reminds me very much of the attitude of the hon. members opposite. They have no knowledge of what has been done for senior citizens by this government during the past three years and ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

They're scared to look.

MR. KING:

... so they are certain that nothing has been done. Because they have closed their eyes it can't be there.

I had planned on giving a brief description of some of the things that have been done for senior citizens in the province since 1971, but since the ground was so adequately covered by my colleague, I hardly think I need to repeat it, particularly since even a brief recitation would take 15 minutes out of the 20.

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

I was opposed, in 1966, to the creation of a department of youth and I will come right out and say it, I am opposed to the creation of a department for senior citizens.

I will come back to that very general principle in just a moment, but I would like to say before I actually get into that that this particular bill interests me very much and amuses me just a little. Section 2 creates a department of senior citizens, and departments are usually headed by ministers. Then Section 2.2 says that this department will be headed by a Minister Without Portfolio. The hon. member has first of all created a portfolio and then proceeded to say that it would be headed by someone who has no portfolio. He refers in Section 6 to cabinet committees, and of course, in point of fact there is nothing in our legislative tradition that actually recognizes cabinet committees. There is no reference to cabinet committees or, indeed, to the cabinet in any legislation on the books in this province or any other jurisdiction.

He has one interesting thing that perhaps he'd comment on in conclusion. One of the things that the council he proposes to set up will do is to organize housing co-operatives to help people find part-time jobs. I wasn't sure how a housing co-operative would help

people find part-time jobs. Having made those comments though about some particularities of the act, I would like to come back to my opposition of the creation of a department itself.

I am opposed to compartmentalizing our programs for categories of people, whether those categories are based on age, geographic location in the province or income. I am opposed to the attitude that when people reach the age of 65 they should be given a gold watch and sent off to live in splendid isolation. Sometimes the way we treat our senior citizens, believing that money equals respect or consideration, reminds me of the title of a book by a well-known Canadian politician, Bird in a Gilded Cage.

The hon. Member for Drumheller may have some familiarity with the analogy I am attempting to draw. It doesn't matter how splendid is the prison you are located in; if you are in prison, regardless of its splendour, you're in prison. If you are isolated from the mainstream of society, regardless of the splendour of that isolation, you are isolated.

I was interested in some of the apparent endorsements that were read by the hon. member because I have attended meetings in the Kiwanis senior citizens highrise. I have been told by senior citizens that they do not like senior citizens highrises, that they do not like to be concentrated with other people of their own age, cut off from middle-aged people, young people and children. I think that kind of attitude is the kind of attitude that is exemplified and carried to extremes in this legislation.

We have already created physical ghettos in housing for senior citizens and I personally think it is something we should get away from. I don't like this homogeneity. I don't like the fact that my son is growing up without easy access to senior citizens, without having senior citizens living close to him who he can get to know, whose experience he can draw on and for whom he can come to develop some feeling of compassion. I don't like the idea of setting up a department with one minister sitting on the front bench and thereby freeing 21 other ministers of the obligation of considering what is going to be the impact of their particular program on people who are 65 years of age or older and who may have physical disabilities. I don't like the idea that the minister of transportation should be freed of the obligation to consider the access that aged people have to a rapid transit system because somewhere else he is free to make the assumption that another minister is going to consider that possibility.

There was a time, Mr. Speaker, when we had a department of welfare in this province. In its legislation, its administration and its social reception, it was a department that was geared to provide services to a very specific segment of our society. The hon. members opposite very rightly, I think, came to the conclusion that that was too narrow a treatment of a group of people and so they changed the name of it - and I think they changed the outlook - to social development so that it encompassed not only that group of people who were receiving material aid from the province, but a broader group of people.

With the passage of time, they said, this is still too compartmentalized an approach to the problems of a group of people. You can't treat problems in that kind of isolation so we'll broaden, not only the legislative framework of the department, but we'll broaden its program responsibilities. They changed the name to Health and Social Development and they broadened the functions of the department.

There are a number of other examples you can cite - the fact that the creation of a department doesn't necessarily solve the problems of the people whom you purport to be serving. We've had a Department of Agriculture in this province for years and years and years. The existence of the department is not, in itself, enough to do anything for anyone as the electorate obviously were trying to say in the last provincial general election. It depends not just on the department. It depends on the minister.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Here he is.

MR. KING:

And if I can use the example of agriculture for just a moment, the success of agriculture depends not just on the work of that department, it depends on what the Minister of Highways and Transport is doing, in terms of market roads. It depends on what the Minister of the Environment is doing in terms of ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

How about rural development?

MR. KING:

... or rural development. It depends on what the Minister of the Environment is doing in terms of the infrastructure in the small towns and villages. It depends on what the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation is doing in terms of the social and recreational amenities in the small towns and villages. And ...

AN HCN. MEMBER:

Education.

MR. KING:

Oh, education as well. You want me to go right across the front bench, eh? All right.

Mr. Speaker, my grandfather is 87 years old. He's living in Lethbridge and he's still very active. If he is an example of the senior citizens who have contributed so much to this province - and I think he is - he wouldn't really be pleased with the suggestion that this should be done for them because they do not want to be isolated from the main stream of society. They don't want special unusual measures. What they want and what I think they are entitled to is some recognition of the contribution they have made to this province over many, many years.

AN HCN. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. KING:

In addition to that, something they want and something I think they are entitled to, is a recognition that their expertise, their experience and their knowledge of human nature is still valuable to the people of this province, in spite of the fact that they have reached that magic age of 65.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that instead of setting up a department, the main function of which appears to be to isolate these people in their gilded cage, we should be actively considering ways, in every department, of saying to these people, we appreciate what you have done. We believe, in spite of your age, you are still sound of mind and limb. There are contributions you can continue to make and we would like you to continue to make those contributions.

I would like those contributions to be felt in the government, not through one office, one minister and one department. I would like senior citizens to have an impact on every honourable colleague who sits in front of me. I would like the senior citizens in my constituency, whether they are happy with what we are doing or critical of what we are doing, to be coming to me, rather than to one specific minister, and making those points felt to me. I think we would be in a very sad way, Mr. Speaker, if we developed an environment in which they felt that they could relate to this government through one person only or one department, an environment in which they felt that no one else cared or had the time for their concerns except for one person who is going to be called the minister of senior citizens and who is going to be paid to listen to them.

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't get over this. This is the regard that we have for senior citizens in this province. We are going to appoint someone to the cabinet. We are going to pay him a salary as a minister of the Crown and in return for getting this salary, he's going to:

seek every opportunity to meet with senior citizens and representatives of senior citizens' societies and organizations for the purpose of better acquainting himself with all matters pertaining to the needs and concerns of senior citizens.

That's the regard we have for our senior citizens? That we are going to give somebody \$40,000 to listen to them?

AN HON. MEMBER:

\$40,000 for doing nothing.

AN HCN. MEMBER:

Shame. Shame.

SOME HCN. MEMBERS:

Agreed, agreed.

MR. KING:

And if they have a concern about whether or not they've got - well let's use him as an example. You're telling me that if the senior citizens of this province have a concern about whether or not they should have access to our community colleges, that they shouldn't go directly to the Minister of Advanced Education like a 50-year old could, or a 40-year old, or a 30-year old, that they are so incapable of articulate communication, that we're going to set up someone who can listen to them, frame in some comprehensive way what their problem is and then go and act as their advocate with the Minister of Advanced Education? I think there is very little regard for senior citizens in that respect.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of accuracy, if I may ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order, order.

MR. KING:

Mr. Speaker, there's no such ...

MR. WILSON:

Well in the interests of accuracy then ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. If the hon. member wishes to dispute facts or allegations made by another hon. member perhaps he might do so in the course of the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. KING:

Mr. Speaker, if I could try to outline an environment. I have had the opportunity to be associated with a number of the senior citizens of the province, individually and in groups. I've got Operation Friendship in my constituency, which I think has done an invaluable piece of work for many of the people who live in the city centre. I might say that in spite of his department's designation, Culture, Youth and Recreation, the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation has been very kind to senior citizens.

But individually and in groups, I come back to my contention that the thing those people need most, the thing that I believe they deserve, and the thing I believe every single one of us here would benefit most from is their continued involvement in our society in an integral way.

I think that it's arrogant on the part of society as a whole, and I certainly don't mean the members of this Assembly. It's arrogant on the part of young people, particularly my age ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. KING:

Careful! It's arrogant to suggest that at some arbitrary age, and 65 is the common one today, these people should be shunted aside so that we can take over the cares and concerns of the world and decide what is best, and that we have the formal education, the experience or whatever, to make those decisions.

I believe everybody, the senior citizen and the rest of society, benefits from integration. I sincerely believe that there are serious, serious disadvantages to the creation of a single focus of concern, whether it's the government's focus outward where you have one person communicating with them on behalf of the government, or if it's their focus inward where they have to channel every communication through one minister before it can be dispersed back out again into the cabinet.

I think that in the area of housing you can see this in a really concrete way. I'm sorry that the hon. Member for Calgary McCall isn't here because I think it's an experience he must have had time and time again.

In the Kiwanis senior citizens highrise or in Meadowcroft here in the city, with which I am associated, you are putting together people of a common age. You're cutting them off from the lifeblood of the community. I think you're cutting them off from the roots of life.

Not only are you doing something which in that way is very disadvantageous for them, but you're also doing something to me and you're doing something to my son which is disadvantageous for both of us. I benefit from having those people actively involved on a daily basis with the things I do, and I would like them always to be treated in such a way that they would be close to my son and close to his son and able to pass on knowledge, attitudes and an outlook on life that I think is really important.

Mr. Speaker, I can only conclude by saying that I really am quite strongly opposed to ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Keep talking.

MR. KING:

I appreciate the recommendation that I should keep on going, but I need five minutes to conclude. So if everybody could please keep quiet and let me get to my conclusion.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether or not people will take it wrongly that someone my age feels free to take this attitude about a department of senior citizens, but, as I said, I was opposed at the time of its creation to the department of youth, and I am opposed to a department of senior citizens. I've got a large number of senior citizens in my constituency. Many of them, I'm proud to say, were among my most staunch supporters. I would have no hesitation whatsoever in going back to them individually or in groups.

[Mr. King was handed a note.]

I wish when people send me notes, they would sign them. I find it very confusing.

I have no hesitation in going back to my constituency and saying that this is the position I took on the act, because I do believe that our senior citizens - not just since 1971, I think that the government in this province for many years has had a sincere concern for senior citizens. I would have to say, in their attitudes, that extended to the previous Social Credit government.

MR. LUDWIG:

I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I do believe that the hon. member has strayed entirely from debating the principle of the bill on second reading. I think it is just and proper that in light of his utter and complete confusion on the issue, we ought to stop and put him out of his misery, Mr. Speaker. I've never seen a more gibberish and nonsensical performance in this House and you're letting him talk.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly the hon. member might wish to state in what particulars the debate now being offered is astray from the principle of the bill.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, he has entirely strayed away from the fact that this bill is advocating setting up a portfolio to deal with senior citizens affairs. You can't even connect him remotely to the principle of the bill, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, that's not a point of order at all. The hon. member is simply jealous because he's not going to have the opportunity to use his notes.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not only not jealous of the hon. Member, Mr. King, but I'm not even jealous of the hon. Member, Mr. Young.

MRS. CHICHAK:

... [Inaudible] ... speak to the point of order. When he's talking about the fact that the hon. member strayed from the principle of the bill, one of the very issues here is that the object of the council shall be the general interest and knowledge of the senior citizens. This is what the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands is talking about. I really don't think the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View has a point of order.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member, Mr. King, wasn't even in the House when the bill was introduced

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly the hon. member might refer to the other hon. members in the usual way.

MR. LUDWIG:

I forgot his constituency.

MR. KING:

I hope that little exchange doesn't come out of my time, Mr. Speaker.

The only conclusion I wanted to make was that I think it is valuable that senior citizens, in all their relationships with government, be dealt with in the same way as our other groups, and that they should deal with government in the same way as other groups. One of our objectives should not be to isolate them, regardless of how splendid the isolation, but that, even at the age of 65 or whatever, our purpose in legislation, if we're going to have legislation, should be to continue to involve them rather than to exclude them.

SOME HCN. MEMBERS:

Time, time.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Adjourn debate.

MR. KING:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to adjourn debate please.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. member adjourn the debate?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. WILSON:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands obviously was out of the House when I drew to the hon. member's attention that there is an error in the printing of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order, order.

AN HON. MEMBER:

The error is over on that side.

MR. SPEAKER:

The error to which the hon. member has referred has been taken note of and will be corrected.

MR. TAYLOR:

He based his argument on the error.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Apologize, apologize.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow morning we'll continue with those bills under second reading and a few under committee. We will probably do some supply work on estimates of departments, probably Treasury and Telephones and Utilities.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House stands adjourned until 10:00 o'clock tomorrow morning.

[The House rose at 5:31 o'clock.]

