

LEGISLATIVE ASSFMBLY OF ALBERTA

Friday, May 31, 1974

[The House met at 10:00 o'clock.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 242 The Hearing Aid Sales Act

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill No. 242, The Hearing Aid Sales Act. The main purpose of this bill is to require all those engaged in the hearing aid practice to qualify for a certificate of registration.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 242 was introduced and read a first time.]

Bill No. 240 The Calgary Borrowing Validation Repeal Act

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill No. 240, The Calgary Borrowing Validation Repeal Act.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 240 was introduced and read a first time.]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of pleasure today in introducing to you and to the members of the Legislative Assembly, 72 Grade 4 students from the Gold Bar Elementary School with their teacher, Miss Wendy Polhill. They've come to visit the Legislature and see it in action. They've come to see some of those people who were responsible for the establishment of that huge park they are going to enjoy in future years.

MR. CLARK:

They'll have to pay for it.

-----  
TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I should like to table the Pension Benefits Branch Annual Report for the fiscal year 1973-1974.

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the answer to Question No. 146.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file four reports with the Legislative Assembly. The first one is a background paper on the use of gaseous fuels in vehicles. The second one is a multiple waste treatment and disposal study commissioned by the government. The third is the Odour survey of the Edmonton city sewage lagoon, and the fourth is a site development and reclamation plan of the Syncrude project.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What'll it cost Bill, do you know?

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Fall Sitzings

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Government House Leader. It deals with the anticipated fall portion of this session. Is the hon. Government House Leader in a position to indicate what dates the government is looking at for the resumption of this session in the fall?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, probably October 25, 1974.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, is the Government House Leader in a position to indicate to the Assembly what bills, if any, the government plans to leave on the Order Paper until the fall portion of this session?

MR. HYNDMAN:

At the moment I wouldn't see any being left on the Order Paper for the fall session, but that could conceivably change.

MR. CLARK:

One further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Government House Leader. Is the government prepared to give consideration to leaving Bill No. 52 in committee stage until the fall session?

MR. HYNDMAN:

No, Mr. Speaker.

Power Outages Assistance

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the second question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask if he is in a position to indicate to the House if that portion of the Alberta Disaster Services program dealing with the problems resulting from power outages in that area of Alberta from Innisfail down to Nanton, and the closing date for assistance has to

be in the DAS' offices by May 31? Is the minister in a position to extend that deadline some time, in light of the fact that local advertising has not been carried by local papers?

DR. HORNER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't intended that that should be a firm, rigid date in any case but rather, a date with which we might try to speed up the administrative procedures to try to get out any assistance which is coming to them as quickly as possible.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Harradence Commission

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Solicitor General. Would she advise whether any of the recommendations of the Harradence Commission have been implemented in the Calgary Correctional Institution?

MISS HUNLEY:

Some have been implemented, Mr. Speaker. Some, about renovations, are planned for this year.

MR. LUDWIG:

Could the hon. minister advise which one, if any, has been specifically implemented?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, there has been an increased consultation with the correctional staff with a view to improving the communication between staff and administration, and the upgrading of training. Additional opportunities have been offered to the staff to upgrade their educational training and qualifications. This is an ongoing discussion in consultation with the department and the CSA involved.

I have already commented about the change in the physical plant which will be an ongoing thing and cannot be done until the designs are correct. I don't have all of the report in front of me so basically, right off the top of my head, those are the ones I can think of.

MR. LUDWIG:

A further supplementary. Have the staff ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Would the hon. member please address the Chair.

MR. LUDWIG:

Have the staff requirements been filled in the Calgary Correctional Institution?

MISS HUNLEY:

I don't know whether the staff is currently right up to date or not. There is an ongoing recruitment program that we have been working on. It's had some success. I don't have the exact information as to whether all vacancies have been filled. The warden has not yet been appointed.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary. Has any staff been added or taken on at the Calgary Correctional Institution since the Harradence report?

MISS HUNLEY:

I can't answer that, Mr. Speaker. There were vacancies. All positions were not filled. Our first objective is, of course, to fill all staff vacancies [through] a

recruiting program. Whether those have all been filled - I don't have that information this morning.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Oil Sands - Job Bid Guidelines

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Premier. It deals with the government's 1971 guidelines concerning oil sands development as it relates to Alberta firms being given the first chance to bid on jobs and supply services.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier is, can the Premier advise whether the government has checked reports that Canadian Bechtel has completely bypassed many local firms to place a \$5 million order for heat exchangers with the Montreal Locomotives Corporation?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'd be quite happy to check into that matter. I saw a recent review indicating that on a general basis there had been a very marked improvement in the degree in which local contractors and businesses were involved in the second oil sands extraction plant, as compared to the first.

But on the specific item raised by the hon. member, I would have to take that as notice and give a response either myself, or through the Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question to either the hon. Premier or the Minister of Industry and Commerce. Could the Premier advise the Assembly what specific steps the government takes to monitor contracts to ensure that they comply with the December oil sands guidelines?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, in order to comply with the request that we develop as much Alberta product in industry as possible in the Canadian Bechtel operation, we have received from Bechtel a list of the goods and products they will be using on their project. We then receive from them, on a monthly basis, the placement of the orders for those goods and the recipients of the successful tenders.

We also have an individual in our organization who is responsible for checking out and continuing to check any complaints we receive from local manufacturers or suppliers that they are not being fairly treated. That is our method of having a check in cooperation. I must comment in the House that Bechtel has been very cooperative in this regard.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question to the hon. minister. Has the government developed a specific list of areas or functions where they will insist on tendering among local contractors and suppliers?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out, all goods and requirements that Bechtel is putting into the project will afford the first opportunity to Albertans, the second to Canadians and the third to North Americans.

MR. NOTLEY:

One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise whether preliminary assessment has been made as to the progress of Canadian Bechtel in supplying contracts to local contractors, and whether or not such a progress report could be tabled in the Legislature?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, to answer the last part of that question, I don't think such a progress report could be tabled because there are so many extenuating circumstances in the supply

of goods for projects of this nature. Some of them, maybe on the surface, look as if the local supplier or local manufacturer should be given the nod for receiving the particular order, but the circumstances - maybe delivery, maybe price, maybe service or the specifications themselves - might be on the shortfall.

So it becomes a difficult thing to table in the House and to identify the specific reason why the local supplier or the Canadian supplier does not get preference over, we'll say, an American or an off-shore supplier in certain instances. But basically, we are monitoring it to the best of our ability.

#### 4-H Club Sales

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. In light of the absence of commercial buyers at 4-H calf club sales, has the government made any suggestion to 4-H beef clubs that they should perhaps reschedule their 4-H Achievement Day for some time after the strike uncertainty is removed?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, we would hope, first of all, that the latter part of the hon. member's question might be resolved at that time. On the other hand, the 4-H sales are primarily aimed at the local market and we've taken steps, in conjunction with my colleague the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation, to ensure that the federal beef subsidy in fact goes to the 4-H people at these sales.

The question of rescheduling the sales would have to be a matter of judgment with regard to the particular 4-H group in the particular area.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Cypress followed by the hon. Member for Wainwright.

#### Crop Insurance

MR. STPOM:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. I wonder if he could advise the House as to the number of farmers who have now signed up for all this crop insurance?

DR. HORNER:

I can't at this moment tell the hon. member that but I'm sure I can get that information for him. We are working very hard in relation to the question of crop insurance to come up with a radically new program.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. minister would mind getting a breakdown of, say northern Alberta and the rest of the province for me. My reasoning, Mr. Speaker, for placing the question that way is to see if there is any connection between this and other emergency insurance that is provided for them.

DR. HOPNER:

I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would outline his request, perhaps the best way we can get him that information, by region, for his assessment, would be on the Order Paper.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Wainwright followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge East.

Cabinet Tour - Northeastern Alberta

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Premier. Have arrangements been completed for the cabinet tour to eastern Alberta as to dates and places to be visited?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I believe they have but I don't have the exact dates in mind. It's towards the latter stage of June, around June 25, I believe. It is a two to two and a half day tour through the area, essentially, of northeastern Alberta. I would be happy to provide the hon. member with specific data if he wants to send me a note on it.

MR. RUSTE:

My supplementary question to the Premier is to ask if the elected members of the Legislature in those areas would be notified by your office.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, certainly we would make sure that that happens.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Alberta Truckers - Access to U.S.

MR. ANDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Highways and Transport. What has been the outcome of the representations by the province for a more equitable ... [Inaudible] ... United States highways by our commercial truckers?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member would repeat his question.

MR. ANDERSON:

What has been the outcome of the representations by the province for a more equitable access to United States highways by commercial truckers in Alberta? It's a follow-up to a question which was asked some time ago.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what the hon. member is asking. But we have ongoing hearings with the highway traffic board which allows American and Alberta truckers trucking authorities. That is an ongoing commission which is active every week.

MR. ANDERSON:

I had the impression from the question asked before that there was an unfair settlement between the two. My supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, is when does the government expect to be in a position to announce the increasing of loads on our highways?

MR. COPITHORNE:

That also, Mr. Speaker, is under consideration and negotiation almost continually.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

Insurance Rates - Accident-Free Drivers

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs. Is he giving any consideration to making a recommendation to the insurance industry to revise its rates to those drivers over 16 who have driven five accident-free years, in light of recent announcements?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member, I am sure knows, when a driver drives for a period of time, a year, accident free, he receives an automatic reduction in rate because he is then put in a different category. If he drives for two years the rate is a little less, and three years and so on. I am not sure if that is what the hon. member is dealing with.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I had intended to ask the minister if he is prepared to recommend that there be no discrimination against drivers who have had five years accident-free driving, on the basis of age. I wanted to know if he will recommend that anyone over 16 who has driven five years accident free should have standard adult type of insurance rates?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, what I can say is that we are constantly examining the insurance rating scheme with the Alberta Automobile Insurance Board and the industry in the hopes that we can come up with a system which, in fact, is more equitable than that we have already provided.

MR. LUDWIG:

The last supplementary. Would the hon. minister recommend that the insurance industry does not discriminate against drivers under 25 if they have had five years accident-free driving?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, the insurance industry rates a group on accident frequency. It has really nothing to do specifically with age, although in the green book it appears to be that way. It is a matter of accident frequency in a given area of the province and with relation to a particular group of people. They are examining, I am sure, as is all the insurance industry in the competitive enterprise provinces, various methods of dealing with the automobile insurance industry.

MR. LUDWIG:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister support the present policy of insurance companies in discriminating against drivers under 25, even if they have had five years accident-free driving?

MR. DOWLING:

First of all, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is asking for an opinion which I shouldn't give him. It's not in order. The second one is also out of order.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The question may have been technically out of order but it was most appropriate.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Wage and Price Pause

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the Premier and, with your leave, just a word or two of explanation.

My understanding, in response to a question from the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View relating to wage and price controls, is that the Premier indicated that he would consider a temporary 'pause' or wage and price freeze for a short period of time.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier, is whether or not the Government of Alberta has considered the duration of the pause? What period of time would it consider to be reasonable for a temporary wage and price pause?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I wish I had with me the exact words in which I answered that previous question in Hansard, and I would refer the hon. member to it.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Has the Premier considered or discussed with Mr. Stanfield the position of the Government of Alberta with respect to a compulsory legislated price and wage pause or a voluntary scheme?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, my discussions with the Hon. Robert Stanfield have not extended to that degree of detail.

MR. LUDWIG:

Do you think you're still on talking terms with him?

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

3. Hon. Mr. Hyndman proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

Be it resolved that the Report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be received and concurred in.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, the sole purpose of this motion is to enable implementation of the remission of certain fees for, I believe, three of the private bills, which was a recommendation of the Chairman of the Private Bills Committee. We will be moving later on today perhaps to second reading of those bills. This simply enables that part of the report to be implemented which recommended that the fee which was put into the Assembly be returned.

[The motion was carried.]

#### GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS (Second Reading)

#### Bill No. 52--The Alberta Labour Amendment Act, 1974

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to move second reading of Bill No. 52, The Alberta Labour Amendment Act, 1974.

Preceding that introduction I should like to clarify and make certain that, in answer to questions during the question period yesterday, the records are accurate with respect to two dates that I estimated. I have checked the dates. The meeting with the Alberta and Northwest Territories Building Trades Council and the representatives of the government was held on May 27. On May 8 we met with the Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association. And that, sir, is for the record.



Bill No. 52, Mr. Speaker, is intended to facilitate the negotiation of collective agreements between the principal contractor engaged to construct oil sands plants, including the ancillary facilities, and the construction trade unions whose members will build the plants and facilities.

This bill is permissive in intent and any collective agreement entered into is to be for the lifetime of the construction project.

The bill removes the effect of registration of employer associations from the construction of an oil sands plant in a lease area.

A collective agreement between the principal contractor and any trade union is entered into on behalf of any other employer who is performing work or will perform work in the lease area.

It is, Mr. Speaker, of strategic economic importance that the development of the Alberta tar sands proceeds in an orderly fashion. The bill will permit the parties responsible for construction of oil sands plants to establish collective agreements that will have the effect of providing labour stability to the completion of the project.

The government is committed to ensure that the parties have the authority through legislation to develop this stability through their own initiative and by their own agreement.

The bill will require the principal contractor and any trade union, in reaching a collective agreement, to include within the agreement wages, health, welfare, pension benefits, vacation and other holiday benefits that are established in the existing collective agreements negotiated by the local construction industry and trade union.

The local construction industry is provided a role in respect of establishing conditions of employment for construction of oil sands plants to the extent that the principal contractor, in reaching any agreement with the trade union, will pick up a number of monetary items from agreements negotiated by the local construction industry.

Should the principal contractor and any trade union fail to establish a collective agreement for construction of an oil sands plant, the existing rights under The Alberta Labour Act, 1973, continue to have effect. Existing collective agreements continue to their term and in negotiations for any renewal of the collective agreements the parties could obtain the right to strike or lockout.

Mr. Speaker, the government believes that the parties responsible for construction of oil sands plants, through mutual agreement, will ensure the orderly development of oil sands plants in Alberta in recognizing the importance of these installations to all Albertans.

MR. CLAPK:

Mr. Speaker, in dealing with Bill No. 52, I don't plan to spend a great deal of time, but have some rather pointed remarks I'd like to make.

First of all, on several occasions during this session we've asked the government if there were going to be amendments to The Alberta Labour Act. On more than one occasion, we were told there would not be amendments to The Alberta Labour Act.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, representatives of the construction industry in this province were assured by this present government that there would not be changes in The Alberta Labour Act during this particular spring session of the Legislature.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, this legislation was introduced in the House on Tuesday of this week. We're being asked to give second reading, approval in principle, three days later.

The government would like to give us the impression, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation came in at the very last minute. I must point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that when the legislation came in it was introduced in the usual format. It's obvious, Mr. Speaker, that the government has had this legislation on the back burner for some time. Why the government would introduce this legislation and then call for second reading three days later, why the government would hold this legislation till the very, very last of the session, frankly leaves a number of possibilities open to most anyone's imagination.

I emphasize once again, Mr. Speaker, that the government gave an understanding to some segments of the construction industry in this province that it would not be introducing legislation of this nature during this session.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that this kind of legislation is rather legislation or government by crisis management. I'd have to point out, Mr. Speaker - and I'd like the Minister of Labour to straighten me out, if this isn't so, when he concludes the debate -

that he was requested by people in the construction industry in this province to convene a meeting on a face to face basis with representatives of the construction industry and representatives of the labour organizations involved. The minister either could not or would not organize such a meeting.

It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, the very least the government would have done would be to use the good auspices of the Minister of Labour, some other cabinet minister or the Premier to, in fact, call the representatives of the labour movement in this province into a meeting - also the representatives of the construction voice in this province and the representatives of Syncrude - to call the three groups together before introducing this kind of legislation and then call for second reading three days later.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the course which the government is following is rapidly conceived and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the government has been poorly advised on this matter. There is no member in this Assembly who doesn't want the Syncrude plant to go ahead. But repeatedly, during the fall session and again during this session, we've asked the Minister of Labour how the negotiations are going between the labour organizations and those people responsible for putting together the construction portion of the Syncrude venture. Repeatedly, we got wishy-washy answers, giving us the impression things were moving along rather well. Then, to hoist [this] upon the Legislature, with three days notice, and ask us to give second reading is, frankly, Mr. Speaker, a sad commentary on action.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we have to look seriously at what the results of this kind of legislation will do. It is my understanding that the members of the trades council are not wildly enthusiastic, by any stretch of the imagination, about this legislation either. I suspect that representatives of the [Alberta] Construction Labour Relations Association aren't wildly enthusiastic about this legislation.

I would be much more favourably inclined to this legislation if the minister had got up and told us about the various meetings that had been held, how he himself or some of his colleagues in the cabinet had, in fact, had the two parties face to face in the same room at the same time and tried to work out some sort of arrangement. If everything else failed, then we had to go this route, and then introduce the legislation much earlier in the session so there would have been an opportunity for all members on both sides of the House to get a response from the parties affected.

I'm sure it's no secret that some of the members on the government side of the House have had representation from both the union people and the construction association saying pretty frankly, what the heck is going on, bringing this kind of legislation in at this time of the session.

It's odd, it's odd that this kind of approach should be used in that northeastern part of Alberta once again where we've had damnable legislation earlier in this session.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. CLARK:

I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, as I've said earlier, no member on either side of the House doesn't want to see the Syncrude plant go ahead. But, Mr. Speaker, if the government feels it must move in this particular direction, why have we had these games we've played this session in question period during the fall? Why not have laid the cards on the table? Why not have called the two groups in, eyeball to eyeball, face to face and dealt with the problem on that particular basis?

It's my understanding, Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Manpower and Labour has said today, that the principal contractor building the Syncrude plant will accept the contract worked out in the province between the construction people and their labour representatives. But this legislation, as I understand it, makes it possible for the principal contractor then to become involved in a number of extras, a number of fringe benefits. We're kidding ourselves if we don't think this is going to cause some real heightening of the cost of construction across this province.

We're also kidding ourselves if we don't recognize that this kind of legislation has the potential of leaving some very serious scars in the labour organizations and in the construction industry in this province.

We're also kidding ourselves if we don't recognize that this kind of legislation, very possibly, can pave the way for some extended strikes across this province. There'll be little stopping people who will be out on a legitimate strike seriously considering - and perhaps more than seriously considering - going up and taking work on the project in the Syncrude area.

I want to underline the point once again as clearly as I can. If this is the last resort, if the government was not able to work out any kind of arrangement, given the existing labour legislation in this province, then for pete's sake why have we brought this in at the very last? Why haven't we had some indication that this kind of legislation was going to come in earlier? Why haven't the principals involved, both representatives of the labour movement in this province and representatives of the construction group in this province, had some sort of advance information as to what the government's intentions were? From my information, both groups received a call from the minister the day the legislation was going to be introduced.

The last point I want to make, and it's a point I have already made perhaps twice, is that when we're looking at this kind of legislation, trying to sweep it through at the end of the session - hopefully so that it won't get that much public attention - it really seems to me that this kind of legislation, this kind of approach, is not the kind of approach that is going to serve the whole province of Alberta in the best stead over a period of years.

Now I fully recognize that the decision for this legislation might well have been made by the cabinet, and the Minister of Manpower and Labour is the fall guy in this case. He has to present the legislation to the House. Nevertheless he is the person who has to account to the Assembly for the legislation.

I specifically would like the minister to respond in the course of concluding remarks to two specific areas.

Why were there not face to face meetings with the unions and the construction people with the minister there, all three groups right there in his office? Why was this not done a series of times? Why did the minister not become directly involved himself in seeing that several of these meetings were convened?

Secondly, I would like to know why this legislation was introduced on the day it was, giving us only three days for consideration before we get into second reading?

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make just a very few comments on Bill No. 52 and express my real concern about the effects this bill could have on the construction industry and the costs of construction in the province of Alberta.

As the Leader of the Opposition has stated, and I certainly concur, no one wants to slow down or de-emphasize the importance of the Syncrude development in northeastern Alberta. But you cannot deal in isolation with construction workers, with trades or with any group which is in the labour field and say it is for that group only. It just will not work. Anyone who has had any experience in negotiations of any kind at all, knows that no matter what you do in one particular area it will have an effect on those adjacent to it and ultimately further away.

So I warn the government, I warn the minister, that when these agreements are set up for that particular area you are going to find a very devastating effect on the price of construction in this province. You just watch what is going to happen to the price of schools, to the price of hospitals. [Watch] the difficulties you are going to have.

In particular, that development is going to be heavily oriented toward demand for plumbers and steamfitters. You watch as they are sucked out of the city of Edmonton, for example. First of all, try to get them here and try to meet the cost they are going to demand. Try to meet the fringe benefits they are going to demand and see where you, where you are going to be sitting, are going to find this.

I think it is something the government possibly has overlooked. Because it isn't just developing Syncrude. There is no project in the world which is worth going ahead with at any cost. I think everything has its price and I think the price here might just be pretty devastating.

So I will just say, if this is going to affect only those up there - if this is the intention, if this is the thought - forget it. It just doesn't work that way. I would hope the government and the minister would realize the impact this could have on the construction and building industry in this province. Possibly serious thought should be given to delaying final reading of this bill until contact has been made with all unions and all construction workers in this province.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I want to say at the outset that I share the concern which has been expressed in the House about the three days notice.

There really are very few bills we can debate during the course of this legislative session which are more important than the bill we are talking about now, Mr. Speaker. We are discussing a bill which is one of the basic aspects of the Syncrude agreement, which is going to affect the construction industry throughout the province and which is going to deal with the rights and opportunities of construction workers in the province of Alberta to share the opportunity wages which may come their way as a result of the enormous development which is taking place in the oil sands.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it is not unreasonable that those of us on the Opposition side of the House express our shock and concern that we have three days in which to consider the principle of one of the most far-reaching acts which this government has, or in all likelihood will, put before the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I listened yesterday to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour, whom I respect in many ways. I think he is the most liberal of the Tory front benchers across the way. Nevertheless he mentioned that one of the reasons the meeting with the Alberta Federation of Labour didn't take place was because the session lingered on and there was going to be a new meeting set up. That's true. But I think it should also be pointed out, Mr. Speaker, that it's my understanding from talking to officials of the Alberta Federation of Labour that that meeting, which has been scheduled for later in June and which was to take place May 22, was their annual presentation to the cabinet, when they would be dealing with everything from workers' compensation through to the implications of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, when we are looking at a bill with the significance of the legislation which is before us today, it seems to me that there just really is no reason why there haven't been ongoing discussions. I would have hoped, Mr. Speaker, when the minister introduced the bill, that we would have had a pretty clear discussion of what the positions of the two parties were and why the government reached the conclusion that it was necessary to bring in legislation. There is no doubt in my mind that there are certain people who would very much like to force the government to legislate an on-site agreement. I recognize that that isn't contained within this bill and I am pleased about that at least.

I think, Mr. Speaker, the point is also made that when we have rapid tar sands development, it is going to have an enormous impact on the construction costs throughout the province. But, Mr. Speaker, that is something we just have to face. I don't think there is any way we're going to get around it. It just happens to be a fact of life. If you're going to have rapid development of the oil sands, you are going to have a demand for construction tradesmen, and that is going to push up the cost of construction throughout the province. Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is any way we can come in with simple legislation that is going to guarantee that point. It seems to me that that is inevitable as part of rapid development of the oil sands. I suppose it's one of the costs on one hand, but one of the benefits on the other hand too, at least benefits to those people who are working in the construction trades.

The final point I would make, Mr. Speaker, is that the one heartening aspect of this bill, as I see it, is that we are not going to have a final legislated settlement; that the resolution of the on-site agreement will be between the construction trades and the principal contractor. I realize that is going to bind the subcontractors, but at least in the bill we have maintained the principle of free collective bargaining. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that that is vitally important.

Any suggestion that we should throw free collective bargaining out the window in order to carry on with the process of developing the oil sands, where we would in any way, shape or form jeopardize the rights of Canadian workers simply to pick up the pace of oil sands development, would indeed be a price which is too high to pay and which we shouldn't pay. Frankly, I am pleased to see that the minister has indicated in the bill that it will be as a result of collective bargaining and also that if collective bargaining between the principal contractor and the construction trades doesn't result in an on-site agreement, the provisions of the Labour Act as they presently prevail will continue in force.

Mr. Speaker, having said those things, it seems to me that we are dealing with legislation which is so far-reaching that there really - and I have yet to hear from the minister - was very little excuse for why this couldn't have been introduced earlier so that the members of the Legislature would have had an opportunity, more than three days, to consider the impact of this far-reaching piece of legislation.

While we are forced to deal with it now, and while this is going to have a very significant impact on increasing construction costs in Alberta, I nevertheless conclude my remarks by saying that the rights of construction workers must be guaranteed. The only positive feature of the bill I see at this stage is that it appears that the free collective bargaining process is incorporated in it. For that reason, I find some reason to be hopeful.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I certainly am in agreement with the remarks made by the three previous speakers. I think that a good case has been made and could be made for ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Would the hon. member address the Chair please?

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I believe I have mentioned your name or your position.

A good case has been made for holding this bill. If the government feels that it cannot be held until October, then it would be much better if we held it and called a special session in late August or when the parties are ready to proceed with this bill.

I'm concerned about a number of things which can happen as a result of this bill which are not obvious at the present time. How will it affect the unions throughout the province? Will there be an attitude of opposition? Will we sort of rock the boat at a time when we don't need to, when the price and wage situation is rather sensitive as it is? Is the minister disturbing an issue which can have serious repercussions to the rest of the people?

I frankly feel that the previous practice of consultation with labour - even though labour doesn't always have its own way, they want to know that they have been heard - has been downgraded considerably under this government, without any reason given. It is easy to meet with labour representatives to get their full views, and I don't mean just the minister himself; all of us.

I don't want to repeat anything the previous speakers have said, but the minister could not justify postponing the final decision on this bill for at least a month, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BUCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a few words on this bill. Probably it has upset the Opposition to have this bill come in. In fairness to the minister, it probably upset the minister to have to bring the bill in.

This is dealing primarily, of course, with the Syncrude plant. I think we all agree in the House that it is of necessity that the Syncrude plant go ahead. In this province we are also interested in secondary industry, petrochemical plants throughout the province. The Alberta Gas Trunk Line is one, Dome Petroleum is another.

I would like to ask the minister how he envisions this legislation? While designed for the Fort McMurray area, the tar sands area, how are we going to divorce this legislation from similar plants across the province? The same skills which are needed to develop the tar sands are used to build many of these petrochemical plants. Are we going to be in the position that if we get out beyond the bounds of the Fort McMurray area and other companies building our petrochemical plants ask for the same sort of legislation, or this legislation has to be used, what effect is it going to have on the total labour picture in the province?

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, a few comments on some of the observations which have been made on the introduction of this particular legislation.

I view with extreme regret, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we as a government have been forced to introduce this legislation. I say that with sorrow from my experience in labour relations.

But I want to say something else; something which has been missed, as I see it, in all the remarks which have been made heretofore. All the remarks which have been made this morning make it sound as though statesmanship in labour relations comes only from one source in this province and that's the chair marked Minister of Labour. If the parties, management and labour, are going to take that view, Mr. Speaker, they are going to have government involvement in a manner which they may or may not like.

Mr. Speaker, I've been involved in labour relations. There is no reason the parties could not voluntarily have gotten together if they had any desire to do so. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to both management and labour that it's in their interests, in their own selfish interests, if not in the responsibility they have to society in this province, it is at least in their own selfish interests to do a little bit of discussing among themselves.

There is no reason the Minister of Manpower and Labour should be called upon to hold the hand of each party to an agreement or a dispute. I say to the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview that if he wants free collective bargaining, free collective bargaining brings with it a responsibility to act in a statesmanlike manner.

The hon. member made reference to sharing the opportunity wages which will arise in the Fort McMurray area. I don't know what he means by opportunity wages. He may mean a reasonable wage. He may mean a highly inflationary wage, a wage which is unfair to all other segments of society. Opportunity wage could mean that. If that's what he is meaning, then that, in my opinion, is not a statesmanlike approach.

Mr. Speaker, I don't wish to speculate further on what he means, but it could well mean that we will get the very most we can squeeze from this situation. Mr. Speaker, if that is the case I think, as members of this Legislature responsible for the public interest, we have a terrific challenge on our hands and it is not going to be an easy challenge to meet. It means, in fact, that at least one major sector of our society is disregarding its responsibility to the public interest.

Mr. Speaker, I have had, and I presume other members have had, some representations from the management side of the construction industry in this province. I would say, Mr. Speaker, that at least in the construction industry in this province, I single out the Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association as being a miserable failure in terms of being able to consolidate itself and act in an effective manner.

Mr. Speaker, there are many groups in this province - in fact most groups of contractors which are considered as and acting as registered employers - which are not represented in that body. Now if that body deems itself the spokesman for the construction industry, I suggest to it that it should get organized and become representative of that industry in an effective way.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that what I have to say is going to help the minister or harm the minister, but I say it from some experience in labour relations. The construction industry has a responsibility and, as far as I understand, we perhaps have been unable in the construction association in this province to achieve what has been achieved in other provinces. I invite that body to look at itself and, if not, the contractors to look at themselves and to see if they can come up with a more effective mechanism for joint action.

It's quite clear, Mr. Speaker, in a project of this magnitude, that there has to be some togetherness among the employers. There has to be some togetherness among the employees and there has to be a responsibility and a willingness to accept what we normally regard as the rights of each.

MR. LUDWIG:

Was there togetherness when you told us about this act?

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about Syncrude. I am concerned about the impact on wages and on our economy. I think we have a tremendous opportunity, and I say that to the trade unions and to the construction industry. But they also have a responsibility. And, Mr. Speaker, the responsibility is one which surely they can accept at times without having to have the minister hold their hands and guide them to the bargaining table.

If we're really concerned about free collective bargaining, and I think most of us in this Legislative Assembly would be, I ask that we all reflect upon what that means. That means voluntary action and voluntary action may come about without having a set of hard legislation within which it must take place. If they really want to agree, they can agree and we can accommodate if necessary. If they don't want to agree, we have a different situation.

Mr. Speaker, I have said my little bit as an individual. I don't know whether I'm being unfair. I don't believe so. I say again, if the hon. members opposite in their comments would give some consideration to the concept of responsibility that the parties we are here discussing had for the public interest and to an effort to exercise that in a manner which they apparently have failed to so far, I think this bill might not have been necessary.

I think that troubles down the road may be avoided and avoided fairly readily. It's not going to be easy but it's not impossible either. If they want the opportunity to flex their rights, they can do so and meet their responsibilities at the same time. I'm quite prepared to give them my assurance that I, as an individual member on the government side, will do my very best not to interfere in their actions as long as they are in the public interest.

MR. RUSTE:

In rising to take part in second reading on this bill, I don't want to repeat too much of what's been said by hon. members on this side of the Assembly.

But I was nothing but amazed at the statement by the hon. member who last spoke as he related to miserable failure. I submit, Mr. Speaker, maybe that is because there is an organization that has enough gumption, shall we say, to get up and speak its mind against the government.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. RUSTE:

It seems to me that those who speak against government or oppose government, the thumbs go down on them and they are not listened to.

My concern as a legislator in this Legislature is that here we have a session that, according to members opposite, has lingered on and on, and yet we have three days notice on a major piece of legislation such as this. I can't help but think this was brought in at this time so that we as legislators are not able to get the feelings, the concerns and the problems of those involved expressed to us. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, three days on a bill like this - I can't help but think that the government thinks it knows best and knows it is going to bulldoze it through this Legislature.

The minister in speaking the other day referred to the session and that he hadn't had the opportunity to meet with them. I submit, Mr. Speaker, there doesn't seem to be any problem of the Premier and some of the others attending political nominating conventions while the session is on, despite saying to the people, we haven't got time to meet with you.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. RUSTE:

I think, Mr. Speaker, this is the utmost in arrogance as far as government goes and certainly I'm not prepared to support this bill at this time.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place made a couple of comments that I think we should set the record straight on. He indicated the government wasn't responsible and the principals involved in the Syncrude project were the ones who should iron out their own problems. I would say that he should refer to the memorandum of agreement between Syncrude and the government initially, particularly condition (a) which relates to labour matters, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. WILSON:

When the original memorandum of agreement was drafted the government invited itself into participation in this matter and assumed certain responsibilities regarding labour matters.

Secondly, the Minister of Manpower and Labour in the province of Alberta is responsible for providing some leadership in these matters. Certainly some of his predecessors have provided excellent leadership in these matters in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that there was no notice served on this bill has put the government in the position where they can be justifiably accused of having raised suspicions as to what they were trying to pull off. They're raising suspicion because the bill was printed when it was introduced in the Legislature. So, for several days and probably weeks, the government knew very well what they were going to do. There certainly needs to be a very full and satisfactory explanation made as to the reasons for introducing this bill without notice in the waning hours, so to speak, of this lengthy session.

So, Mr. Speaker, we cannot let the notion that the government had no responsibilities go without being challenged, because it is clearly on the record that they do have responsibilities in this regard.

Secondly, we do need a very satisfactory and detailed explanation as to the reason for the unusual and peculiar manner in which the bill was presented at the tail end of this session - presumably near the tail end of the session anyway. Because of the magnitude and nature of the implications that can flow from this proposed legislation, it seems to me that the maximum amount of time should have been afforded for all hon. members to participate in this.

For example, Mr. Speaker, I understand that even government backbenchers, yesterday, were attempting to find out what was going on by contacting the principals, holding meetings and discussions and so on. It seems to me that the cabinet isn't being fair even to its own backbenchers, Mr. Speaker, let alone the Opposition, in the manner in which this has been presented.

It suggests a panic reaction or something of that nature. It suggests a situation that has been poorly planned. The consequences of this bill, Mr. Speaker, will be upsetting for all Albertans, the tradesmen and contractors involved and the families of the employees. It will have very upsetting consequences for these types of people throughout the whole province because the government has known right from the beginning of the Syncrude agreement that certain steps to handle this unusual situation would have to be taken.

They haven't instilled confidence in anybody that they knew what they were doing. They haven't published statistics, figures or even opinions - or offered any opinion as to the effect the building of this plant will have on all other Albertans. For example, in the matter of supply of services and materials, what effect will it have on the cost of new housing throughout the province? What effect will it have on the cost of building a garage for somebody in any one of the towns, villages or even on the farms in Alberta? Will the materials be available? What effect will it have on these things? The government has not ...

MRS. CHICHAK:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. Member for Calgary Bow has strayed far from this bill in his current comments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh. Oh.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood is quite accurate. I would urge that the hon. member speak to the principle of the bill. This is what is before us at this time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh. Oh.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, if you think you're going to cut off the debate ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order. Order. That is no point of order.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That's your opinion.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, we're talking about ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order. Would the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View please take the place in the Assembly which is his place. Please.

MR. LUDWIG:

I'll take my place, but there's no rule or citation demanding that I do it.



AN HON. MEMBER:

There certainly is. Get in your chair.

MR. LUDWIG:

There's not a rule in this House that says I should. I'll do it anyway, but there's no rule to say that I should.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order. Please continue.

MR. APPLEBY:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View knows that we are not in committee. And he knows very well he must be in his place when we're in general Assembly.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order, if you will quote the citation that requires me to sit in my chair, I will apologize for not being in my chair. Otherwise let's not waste time.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Sit down.

MR. LUDWIG:

I was going to.

MR. WILSON:

Well, Mr. Speaker, my comments are directly related to the bill because this bill, if passed, will have an effect on every Albertan. It will have an effect on the rents senior citizens pay, for example.

Now, how much effect? The government hasn't indicated that it has even considered that a point. It hasn't indicated that it has considered any of the other ramifications of the thing. We're talking about 25 to 50 per cent of the trades labour force that presently exists in Alberta being involved in this one particular region of the province. What effects will the drain of that labour force have in the other areas of the province? The government hasn't indicated that it has even considered it. There is no indication that the government has taken any compensating steps to make up for the disruptive effect this project will have on other parts of Alberta.

I'm certainly not talking against the Syncrude project. I'm fully in favour of it. But I think there is an onus on the government to provide some leadership, statistics and information. There is onus on the government to show the rest of the province that they know what they are doing. So far they haven't given any indication that they know what they are doing in this affair.

They have introduced a bill to provide a dictator, the northeast commissioner, to look after most of the problems. Now they have found they have another problem that they haven't fobbed off on the commissioner, and we hear government members saying that the government shouldn't have to assume the responsibility for the labour factor in this construction project.

The government is not showing that they have any understanding of what is about to happen in this particular project, and what the side effects are going to be in the rest of the province. There is a very strong need for the government to take a leadership position here and reassure the rest of Alberta, not just by fancy words, but by providing facts and figures to show how the whole situation can be accommodated and how the minimum amount of disruption to the rest of Alberta will be accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, I do not at all subscribe to the comments that have been offered by the other side that the government does not have responsibility in this area.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question, question.

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Speaker, I just feel I must make a few comments with respect to the remarks that have been coming from the Opposition with regard to this bill. The attitude that has been expressed in many areas is just unbelievable.

In a consensus it almost appears as though the members in the Opposition, or at least those who have spoken, have indicated that they would rather not see the project go ahead ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh.

MRS. CHICHAK:

... than have to recognize or cope with the effects that the development in the tar sands area will have on the balance of the province. They seem to fail to understand, Mr. Speaker ...

MR. LUDWIG:

We only said ...

MRS. CHICHAK:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View has had his opportunity to speak. So long as I'm on the subject matter I would prefer that I be given that opportunity to speak which I gave him.

MR. FUSTE:

On a point of order ...

MRS. CHICHAK:

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that ...

MR. FUSTE:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker. The member just speaking inferred that members who spoke on this side were against the Syncrude project. I want to make it abundantly clear, Mr. Speaker, that in my speech ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

That's not a point of order.

MR. FUSTE:

... I was opposed to the way it was brought in.

DR. HOHOL:

You're debating; that's not a point of order.

MRS. CHICHAK:

I can't help, Mr. Speaker, but draw the conclusion from the remarks of the members who spoke - particularly the hon. Member for Calgary Bow, who has indicated that the government has no understanding of the effect that the Syncrude project will have on the balance of the province. My God, what are we doing - encouraging and doing everything possible so this project can proceed.

Have we no understanding of what is going to happen to the rest of the province? Well, you better believe it, Mr. Speaker, we have an understanding. This is why the amendment to The Alberta Labour Act is being brought in, to be sure there are no impediments in the way of the project being able to succeed in the interest of all Albertans.

If I draw the conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite who have spoken don't appear to be anxious for this project to go ahead, from the remarks that were made you can draw no other conclusion, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury - and I'm covering these points not to help out the minister; I think the minister is too much a gentleman ...

MR. LUDWIG:

He sure needs help.

MRS. CHICHAK:

Certainly. He's too much a gentleman to bring forward the kinds of issues that the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury and some of the other members have raised. I think those things perhaps need to be said.

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury and others have complained that all they have been given is three days notice with respect to this particular bill. All through last fall and earlier in the session the hon. minister and the government indicated there was no intention to bring any amendments to the Labour Act. That was quite true. But, Mr. Speaker, there is a difference in the party that has been elected to government now. It has been elected because we are prepared to deal with the issues as they arise with the changing times. When the changes require a need to reconsider positions, we are able to move in that direction, Mr. Speaker, not wait on them for years thereafter and have all Albertans suffer for the lack of courage to be able to make the kind of decision we must make to cope with the situations as they arise.

With regard to what effect this amendment will have on labour contracts in the construction industry and in construction throughout the province - whether these amendments were brought forward or not, if the Syncrude project is to proceed surely the project in itself will have whatever effect will be the result, irrespective of this legislation. This legislation only removes any misinterpretations or impediments that would prevent two parties getting together and coming to an agreement on working terms which might be in the best interests of the project and all Albertans.

Surely we have to be able to understand that kind of thing. Are we to sit until October, and next year, and the year after with regard to the two parties being able reasonably and with a great deal of responsibility to come to terms on what surely must be the kinds of terms they must agree upon? If there doesn't seem to be a capability of interpreting the legislation that is in existence, and if the parties feel there are impediments, surely it's the onus of the government to remove such impediments to enable them to reach the kinds of conclusions they feel they ought to reach in the best interests of all Albertans.

The overall concern from the other side simply appears to be the fact that they have only had three days time in which to deal with the bill. Well, it hasn't been just three days that the unions, the contractors and the parties to this whole project have had to discuss and consider. They have been at it for months. It's only in the last instance that if the obstacle was the government, then the government will remove the obstacle to those parties being able to agree. The three days have absolutely no bearing on the matter at all.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make just three short comments on the bill.

First, I would like to emphasize the point raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, that no one on this side is opposing the Syncrude project. I think that has to be emphasized. Because we have some concern about a certain bill and speak on the principles, that surely doesn't say we are opposing the project. The project is something we all support. I think every Canadian supports the Syncrude project. I don't know of any who don't. I would like to emphasize that point and I think it should be emphasized.

Secondly, the point which has been made I think by a number of speakers, and I don't say on any one side of the House, is that wherever labour is involved labour should have some input into the solutions or suggested solutions as to how to solve the problems which arise. Labour is not immature in this province. Labour is a pretty viable organization with very knowledgeable people at its head. The more input we can get from labour the better the solution is going to be because it is the lives of the labourers and the wives and children of the labourers which are affected. And so I do think there has been insufficient input from labour and perhaps the minister can answer and tell us why. The more input we can get from labour the better it is going to be.

The third point I would like to make is one made by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West and several other members, that you can't isolate one part of the province today in regard to labour relations, in regard to wages, in regard to almost anything. It is almost impossible to isolate one part of the province. I think that stands to reason.

The whole world today is a very small world. What happens in one section of the world is known almost all over the world within minutes. If wages are going to be in a

different category in one quarter of the construction industry of the province it can't help but have an effect, an adverse effect, on the rest of the province. I believe this is a point the hon. minister should mention very carefully.

As the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview says, if we want to do something in a hurry, and if the advantages of developing the oil sands for Canadians are so important, then we may have to pay an extra price. That extra price will be unfortunate if it has an adverse effect on development in the rest of the province. I believe every step has to be taken to make sure the construction workers and labourers in other parts of the province are not going to be adversely affected because of the necessity to speed up the development of the oil sands and vice versa.

The whole project is a worth-while project. The developing of the oil sands rapidly, at least reasonably rapidly, I think is important not only for Canada but possibly for the world. It's the greatest reservoir of oil in the world today and the development, as outlined by the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals the other night, particularly in the deep sea sections of that, may take three, four, five or six or more years. The world is using oil at a terrific pace and consequently the development of this tremendous reservoir is important. I think we have to weigh the importance of that against the effect it may have, particularly on labourers and the wives and children of labourers in that area and in the rest of the province.

Those are the only three points I wanted to mention in connection with the bill. I plan to support the bill. But I do think there are very important implications and complications which may arise from it. I would certainly expect the hon. minister to deal with some of these points we have raised, in seriousness, in connection with the development of the tar sands.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could have the leave of the House to ask the minister one question which he might answer when he concludes his remarks?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Is that agreed?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister, when he concludes his remarks on this bill, would advise the Assembly whether the government has any contingency plans for further legislation if a voluntary agreement is not reached during 1975, that is, whether or not the government has on the burner any legislation which would, in fact, legislate an on-site agreement if the provisions of this act don't work out?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to attempt to summarize the legislation before us, to respond in a general way for the most part, and in some instances specifically.

I should like to comment first, in a good-humoured way, that the hon. Leader of the Opposition has a convenient capacity for amnesia with respect to memory on matters which are important - convenient because he can shift from one position to another. So amnesia is becoming a rather characteristic trait of the hon. Leader and is one which it is probably well to cultivate on the floor of the Legislature because it's handy. I should like to recall to you, sir, again in a good-humoured way ...

MR. LUDWIG:

You'd better do some shifting in a hurry.

DR. HOHOL:

... that on the second or third day preceding the conclusion of the fall sitting of the Legislature, the hon. Leader of the Opposition - and I do not quote him, but I paraphrase him, and Hansard will show me to be right - open to correction of course because I am going by memory back to last fall, just before the House came down, in the discussions during the question period the hon. Leader of the Opposition said to me that he would hope I would take off my jacket, get off my desk and roll up my sleeves, settle the bus strike and then get a site agreement of the Syncrude project. I am paraphrasing him and I am certain I am accurate. I simply say there has been quite a remarkable shift and this amnesia is something the hon. Leader of the Opposition is cultivating with a rare capacity.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister would permit a question. Is that the explanation why you didn't have the two groups meet with you face to face?

DR. HOHOL:

I am just not going to get into that kind of thing because the question in no way relates to my introduction to the discussion.

Let me deal with the matter of face to face. I should like to recall to you and the Legislature that on many occasions - not once, but on many occasions, and this is where this amnesia also applies - I stood in my place in the Legislature and said time and time again that, beginning last August, following the statement of condition (a) in the Syncrude agreement, representatives of government and members of the Department of Manpower and Labour met with Syncrude. We met with Canadian Bechtel, we met with the Building Trades Council, we met with the Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association time and time and time again.

In introducing debate today I pointed out that we met with the Building Trades Council on May 27 and that meeting was attended by other representatives of government, including the Premier. I pointed out that on May 8 we met with the Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association which speaks for a major portion of the construction industry in Alberta. At that same meeting were representatives of Syncrude and, in addition to other members of government, the hon. Premier was also in attendance.

I recall saying on the floor of the House that in excess of 30 meetings have been held with various combinations of the principals and interested and concerned parties. Those were meetings of considerable importance. They were meetings of considerable length. They went into nights, into Saturdays and Sundays. In saying this, I look for no decoration, not even a paper one. I simply want to set the record straight.

Where it came to a matter of consultation, it's sheer and absolute nonsense to suggest that this government has not consulted over hours and weeks and months with the people to whom we looked, with whom we worked and for whom we tried to provide, to the best of our ability, the kind of leadership that the honourable Opposition asks for. And that's for the record.

To debate the principle of this bill is one thing, and for that I thank the hon. members because we need the assistance. I would not stand here for one minute, Mr. Speaker, and say the issue is a simple decision or simple to arrange with respect to legislation. It was a difficult and complex decision to make. But a decision had to be made to leave things as they were or to present to the Legislature, on behalf of the interests of the people of Alberta, Bill No. 52. That's the tough decision we made. We've made tough decisions before. We did it this time. We'll make it again. The day a minister or this government can't make a tough decision on behalf of the people they represent, then they ought not to represent those people.

The matter of the three days - we felt, and I still feel, that instead of delaying the second reading until Monday or Tuesday, we [should] debate it today so that the legislators, the media and the people of Alberta could have a chance to assess the discussions and the debate in preparation for clause-by-clause reading, so that we could be as informed as possible on the contents, on the principle, on the hopes and aspirations embodied in this legislation. What could be more fair than that?

Of course it is completely up to the Opposition as to how long we debate this bill. If three days aren't enough we can debate it on Monday, on Tuesday, on Wednesday, on Thursday, on Friday, and if you can arrange it, sir, I'll be here on Saturday.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Not much time.

DR. HOHOL:

So the matter of three days, sir, is a specious argument. It simply doesn't stand up.

With respect to comments about discussions in the question period, I simply restate that it was continuously the position of this government that the parties involved should and could, in our view, reach the conclusions sought for in condition (a). It became clear that they were unable to do so, even with our assistance, and so I was called to a meeting of the principals who, on their legal [opinions] and on their own opinion, said they could not continue to go through discussions which have to be viewed by them as negotiations.

Please understand, sir, that the concept of registration is clear in the sense that if the owners or employers have an agreement with the trade unions, they could not thereafter negotiate, much less sign, a second agreement unless it was a successor agreement. Under those circumstances they felt that even though we called them discussions, in point of law it was their opinion that they were negotiations and therefore they had to conclude them and report to me in that way. I accepted their statements and we considered what position was proper for the government to take.

As the point has been made so well on the floor here today, we felt that, as a responsible government, so long as the industry felt it wished to have condition (a) - and some part of the industry felt that way, some part of the industry felt differently - but in any case, if any of them felt they could not reach that kind of arrangement unless certain parts of the Labour Act were moved aside, we finally concluded - and not so long ago, and not easily or readily - that we would attempt to put aside the kind of legislation that appeared to be barriers and impediments to those who legitimately felt they wanted to seek the kind of agreement indicated in condition (a). We felt this was the responsible and proper thing to do and, as understood by some of the members but probably not all, all we did was set aside the registration conditions, permitting them, the principals involved, to proceed accordingly on a possible site agreement.

I should like to point out that there will be divergent views on this matter, of course there are. But I should also say that in some respects we were counselled and followed the counsel of those with whom we met for many, many hours. I have to go back to this because some of my senior officials spent hours far beyond what you would expect from them or from any senior officials. But they are of such stature and maturity that comments with respect to no consultation, no work by government, no leadership by government, they can rise above and live with. I know, because I spent many hours, weeks and months with them on this matter as well as many other matters.

The Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association, in one of its major recommendations, talked about a model which involved an area including a particular project with specific reference to the Lorneville area projects bargaining. We have done that and we have met the ACLRA's request at least to that extent.

While we are talking about the Syncrude plant and the Syncrude enterprise, may I point out and remind you, sir, that we are talking not just of that particular site, but we are talking about the whole area that covers the oil exploration with respect to synthetic crude.

So we did develop or permit or define the legislation in Bill No. 52 as an area, not just Syncrude, but such other projects as may come into the area in the future, so that we don't have to re-invent the wheel, should that be necessary, time and time again. We did respond in part to the aspirations of the Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association.

With respect to the Building Trades Council, they wanted to make certain that there would not be an adverse effect from the negotiations at the Syncrude site if that were to be the case. It will not be the case and so we responded favourably to the representations of the Building Trades Council in adopting what we call, Mr. Speaker, the pick-up arrangement. So the Canadian Bechtel organization, on behalf of Syncrude, will not negotiate wages and wage-related areas like pensions, holiday pay conditions and others that relate to wages. Those will be picked up.

The point, made by about six people who said the money on the Syncrude site will inflate wages elsewhere in the province, is simply not a fact because there will be no wages on the Syncrude site which will be different from wages anywhere in the construction trades industry in the Province of Alberta.

Canadian Bechtel will pick up the wages now existing. There are agreements between all the construction owners and all the trade unions at the present time. These will be

picked up. If they are picked up and if the other fringe benefits are agreed upon between Canadian Bechtel and the various trades, then there will be the agreement which is permitted under Section 52 and not through our legislation, but through the direct collective bargaining of the people involved. If that is not the case, if there is no agreement to pick up the wages in wage-related areas, or if there is no capacity to negotiate certain other things like travel conditions or pay, camp conditions and a host of others, if that isn't possible, then the existing agreements are the agreements on that particular project including access to strike and to lockout.

What we have done is what any responsible government ought to do - to make collective bargaining possible on the site to the extent that the principals feel it is in their interests and in the interest of Alberta. We find that these principals, as we refer to them, have the concerns of Alberta completely, as part of their approach to this whole matter. That they have different views on it is surely not beyond the reason and beyond the expectations of a fair-minded person. Surely it is fair to expect that the trades council and the construction employee groups would have different approaches to resolve the same complex problem. Our role has been one of working with them in every way possible.

I want to set another record straight which was asked [about] in a specific way, the matter of the Building Trades Council and the construction industry being brought face to face. I would respond in two ways.

First, we tried to do that. There is no question that if I had invited them officially, over my signature, or through a phone call, they would have come. But the facts are simply these. The Building Trades Council did not recognize ACLRA for reasons of its own. One of those reasons was that at that particular time, some months ago, ACLRA was not registered for any of the trades with whom it bargained. It bargained through what we call voluntary recognition. There were other reasons.

Also, I had a phone call one day from the President of the Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association who said that just at that moment the President of the Building Trades Council had left his office, that they had met and that they had discussed the problems and made certain recommendations and appeared to make them jointly. At least in the conversation with the President of the ACLRA I had the feeling he was speaking - that certain agreements between the two groups had been made at the presidential level. But to bring two groups of people together who for their reasons do not want to meet together - for us in some way to coerce them, if I could use a pastoral type of expression, and use a shotgun marriage approach - they don't usually last, Mr. Speaker. It was not my intention and it's not the intention of this government to lean on or coerce or attempt to compel any two groups or individuals to meet face to face if their inclinations and predispositions and matters of record are different.

The matter of postponing the legislation has been mentioned, Mr. Speaker. That would be pointless because, as I said some minutes ago, the parties judged that they could not meet because so long as they met in their definition of meetings, those would be negotiations. They have long since reported that they could not meet because of the registration effects upon meetings, that they would simply be non-legal, if not illegal. So that to postpone it for 30 days or 40 days or 50 days is simply not feasible, not possible and completely impractical. Because this kind of legislation, had it been anticipated some months ago - they have been without this kind of legislation, is the point I'm trying to make - all this time and haven't been able to agree ... So to give them 30 more days when we have been working at this since August simply misses the mark. They need this enabling capacity to meet together jointly to see if they can reach the agreements and the conditions specified in condition (a).

With respect to the comments on wages, I have dealt with [this] before. It's my view, it's my knowledge, that because of the pick-up arrangement the wages on the Syncrude site will not have the effect of inflating wages elsewhere. This point is well made. If that were the case, it would be unfortunate. I would say, Mr. Speaker, that the opposite is the fact. The effect of this legislation will be to ensure that nothing in the Syncrude wage situation escalates wages elsewhere or that escalation of wages elsewhere does anything different to Syncrude than Syncrude picking up the wages.

The cost being normal, it's a fact that labour, materials and other things are going up, the point made by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. I believe he understands the bill, its intent and its emphasis to leave these matters to the parties involved in a very real understanding and concept of what free, collective bargaining is all about. That is what we are making a provision for in Bill No. 52.

Considerable mention has been made about the government's role in providing leadership. I hope I have set that record straight. Certainly we accept that; we could do no less or we would not be government.

What I found very interesting, as an aside, is the hon. Member for Calgary Bow, whom I simply can't understand. It is probably more to do with me than the hon. member. But he

keeps hammering away that the government should take responsibility, and we did - Bill No. 52. And he opposes it. How can you have it both ways? How can you talk about providing leadership and then say, don't do anything, don't bring us Bill No. 52, don't move out the registration, don't let the parties have access to the same table because registration gets in the way in their judgment and in the judgment of their legal people. You know, you've got to get straightened out somehow. But that is likely not going to happen.

I should like to comment on the balanced and very positive comments on Bill No. 52 by the hon. Member for Drumheller. I think one of the main purposes in Bill No. 52 is continuity of labour. One of the major problems in the construction industry is that it doesn't work twelve months of the year. Secondly, it is more disposed - not by its own choice, I'm sure, but by circumstances - to protracted negotiation, to difficult negotiation, to strikes and to lockouts. When the hon. member talks about what is the effect of this on the families of the working men, the question, in its positive sense, is very well put.

The intent of condition (a) in the Syncrude agreement is to provide labour stability for the life of the construction phase of the project - not thereafter when the construction phase is over, which might be four to five years. There is a revision to the existing agreements. But for that time, the tradespeople, the employees, the workers on the jobs will have those jobs and will know they have got them for four or five years without layoffs, without lockouts, without looking elsewhere for work, without getting \$10 a day strike pay or no dollars a day strike pay. The honourable gentleman makes the point very well. It's one of the key points in the legislation, or at least in condition (a), and in our attempt to remove any impediments for the principals to reach condition (a).

In concluding, Mr. Speaker - I wouldn't usually do this, but the hon. Leader of the Opposition and three or four other hon. members made a great deal about the three days - I felt, and still feel it was genuinely better to do it today because of that fact that the principals couldn't reach agreement and let us know they couldn't. Let me say that the legislation to turn around the concept of registration was complex, difficult and time-consuming and this bill sat nowhere in the back rooms or on the back griddles, as someone put it, for days or weeks. In fact, the last amendment to the amending legislation occurred the day before we gave first reading to the bill. That's how current and how recent this particular legislation is, because the House is running down and the principals to condition (a) are enabled to reach agreement on their own because they feel there are some impediments in the legislation which we are removing, or hope to remove if we get consent of the House. I would not normally do this.

But I remind the House, Mr. Speaker, that a major bill, Bill No. 116, was passed in this Legislature in the spring session of 1971. It was introduced in mid-April. It was given one, two, three readings - one right after the other - to create, sir, the northern development commission, hastily drafted and pushed through.

Now we talk about three days between introduction and debate to give people, and Albertans generally, the opportunity to examine the legislation over the weekend and debate it possibly as late as next Wednesday, clause by clause, so we can have the most informed and intelligent discussion that we can under the circumstances. When people talk about three days after the introduction of a bill, and I look into the records and see Bill No. 116, an overwhelming kind of legislation putting together a northern development commission, put through in less than that time, you just have to wonder about the matter of political amnesia.

In summarizing, Mr. Speaker, I agree this was a tough decision. I have never said otherwise. But if tough decisions can be made by legislators, then I have to think of what Truman said. If the heat in the kitchen gets too high, then get out of the kitchen. I am going to stay in the kitchen, Mr. Speaker, and I will try to interpret, explain and do the best I can to make certain that the legislators and the people of Alberta understand the spirit and the content of what we are trying to do on behalf of Albertans to ensure labour stability on the biggest and greatest enterprise that this province has ever seen.

If we couldn't, in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, change our position on any issue - we have several times before and we will again, I for one, and this government without any question - if we couldn't change our views on an important issue it would be most, most unfortunate. We are not in that kind of attitude. When we feel that we enable people to do what is in the best interest of Alberta, our responsibility is to do absolutely no less. That is the intent of Bill No. 52, sir.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Manpower and Labour would permit a question.

Does the cabinet share the same view of the Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association as does the hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place?



AN HON. MEMBER:

Get off it.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, there was a question - I'll return to this one - from the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview that I didn't respond to in a specific way. That had to do with, do we have other contingency legislation should the parties to a possible resolution of condition (a) not come through? The answer is, no, we have not.

We had hoped and worked very hard to obtain condition (a) without any change in the legislation at all. We felt that we had to remove the registration in a responsible way. That's where it stops. But the future would hold that. It would be difficult to say. We have not discussed it and I can say, with full responsibility, that there is nothing in any file, there is nothing in any back room. We don't have any back rooms and we don't have files in any back rooms. The ones that the Opposition had we have put to better use.

AN HON. MEMBER:

There are more cabinets.

DR. HOHOL:

Yes, right. There are more cabinets.

So we have no intent to go beyond the present legislation. As I say, we have to keep our options open. We are confident in a quiet, serious and sober way that now that we have removed the impediments the principals will reach the intent of condition (a) as specified in the agreement.

With respect to the Alberta Construction Labour Relations Association, the Alberta Construction Association, the Building Trades Council, the Alberta Federation of Labour, the Manufacturers' Association, the chamber of commerce and just a whole host of others, please, if you will let me, Mr. Speaker, recall that not all construction groups belong to the ACLRA as the hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place mentioned. Not all the trades belong to the Building Trades Council, so this adds another dimension, or at least it did with the registration in the legislation. Removing it makes them all the same and makes it possible for them to get to the same table.

I think the hon. member spoke clearly on the basis of his experience in labour relations. I have a high regard for the ACLRA. They have a difficult job to do. They attempt to speak for the construction people. Alberta needs a strong, coherent voice in matters of construction. So, as minister, I have the highest regard for that and other organizations. Their roles are difficult and complex. It isn't always easy for the building trades or the construction industry to agree on all matters, as it isn't over there or over here. If it were that easy it would be unfortunate.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 52 was read a second time.]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

May the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs have leave to introduce some guests to the Assembly?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS (CONT.)

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly 23 Grade 9 students from Jubilee Junior High School in Edson. They are accompanied by their Grade 9 social studies teacher, Mr. Ted Jeomans and Mr. Lyle Prior, their room teacher. I wonder if they would stand and be recognized by the House.

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

Bill No. 59 The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 1974

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 59, The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 1974.

Since I consider this bill to be an important part of this government's policy to assure the orderly economic development of the Province of Alberta I would like to just give a little preamble.

As I mentioned in the introduction of this bill, this amendment act is designed to assure maximum utilization by industry located in Alberta of Alberta natural gas resources and the orderly and planned development of major industries that are developed through the processing of those natural gas resources.

In discussing Bill No. 59 there are two important questions, among others, which must be answered. First, why we need the bill, and secondly, what the requirements will be.

In answering the first question it is this government's belief that Alberta has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop a basic petrochemical industry within the province. This development must occur in an orderly fashion and it is the objective of this act to assure just that.

The province of Alberta is at a threshold of change and over the next decade will move from a primary extractive economy, where our resources are exported to other parts of Canada and the rest of the world for processing, to an industrialized economy which will see further processing of our raw materials and increased manufacturing in the secondary and tertiary industries.

In accepting this challenge of managing Alberta's economic future we have identified major objectives which will be significant to Alberta's economic strategy for the late '70s. The objectives are, to undertake an integrated development approach to primary industries; to increase the processing of natural resources and maximize the returns from them; to develop efficient and internationally competitive processing and manufacturing industries - in other words, world scale economically scaled plants; to achieve maximum attainable employment, to provide greater domestic control over those resources and to improve our income and our opportunities through balanced regional development.

A major step we can take to achieve these objectives I have just mentioned would be to develop a petrochemical industry here in Alberta where we have the feedstock by-products of the natural gas and crude oil.

Alberta has become a most viable location for the petrochemical industry at this time because of the following facts: there is a world shortage of petrochemicals caused by insufficient capacity; there is a world shortage of hydrocarbons available to the western world; a need exists for reliable supplies of hydrocarbons at competitive prices which Alberta can offer; Alberta has sources of methane, ethane, crude oil and condensates which can readily be made into basic chemicals such as ammonia, methanol, ethylene, benzene, butadiene, et cetera.

Industry representatives realize the advantages Alberta has with regard to petrochemicals, and the demand for establishing those processing plants in Alberta has increased immensely. For example, there have been 19 world-scale fertilizer plants proposed for Alberta, over four methanol plants and two fairly extensive ethylene complexes, namely, the AGIL-CIL project and the Dow complex. Further developments are also being considered for naphtha, condensate cracking and crude.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 59, The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 1974, will allow the government the flexible authority to obtain an orderly means by which the projects can move on stream.

In replying to the second important question which I mentioned, Bill No. 59 provides that an industrial development permit will be granted when it is in the best public interest to do so.

The preliminary criteria used in granting a permit shall include the following considerations:

1. That the application be consistent with the provincial development strategy, one example being the degree of resource upgrading in the province.
2. The present and future availability of hydrocarbons in Alberta.
3. The hydrocarbon usage such as the type and period of time of that usage.
4. The location of the facilities within Alberta so that there will be a balanced regional growth.
5. The marketing program of the applicant which includes the competitive position of the company, markets to be served and the market price projections.
6. The investment program including capital costs, the degree of Alberta participation, capital equity, the economic viability and the company's financial strength.
7. Assurance that the ecological and human interests of Albertans are maintained and protected.
8. The technology used, and
9. The consideration of manpower requirements such as the number and quality of jobs created in Alberta as well as the accuracy as to whether Alberta can meet those needs.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I hope that all members of the Legislature realize the important need for Bill No. 59 and I request that it be passed accordingly.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, in rising to comment on Bill No. 59 I would say at the outset that I am sure the members on this side of the House are going to support Bill No. 59. I am sure that members on both sides of the House appreciate the need for some type of permit system that is going to enable the government to deal with this question of very rapid development in the province.

I will have to say that I was also pleased to have the minister outline what he considered to be the component parts of this provincial development strategy. He talked about the availability of hydrocarbons, the usage, the location, the plant, the marketing program, the investment program and then the economic and human circumstances, the technology involved and the manpower requirements.

Now, I hope, Mr. Speaker, that it is just a quirk of circumstance that the minister had the last three particular components at the end and not at the first. It seems to me very important, when we are concerned about the development strategy we are going to use in this province, that we not get too tied up in the quantity of these types of things we are going to have in the province; that we don't get so tied up in the quantity of the kind of developments that we are going to have that, in fact, we lose sight of the quality of life in the province. I have raised that point on one or two other occasions but it does seem appropriate to raise it once again on this particular opportunity.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that, despite the development strategy which the minister outlined for us here today, once again, the government would give some rather serious consideration to the holding of some public hearings across the province, this summer and this fall, if for no other purpose than to get a broadly-based public response to the outline of the provincial development strategy which the minister outlined on this particular occasion here today.

I am sure the minister will recall that earlier in the session during question period I asked the Premier if the government planned to use that particular route. At that time I was told by the Premier that the government felt that this Legislature was the proper place to do that. While I have no argument with that it seems to me that both the Legislature and the people of Alberta would be better served if there were a broader and perhaps more all-inclusive response and input into this provincial development strategy which the minister outlined here today.

I would ask the minister, in concluding his comments on Bill No. 59, that he give some indication whether the government is prepared, at this time, to become involved in a series of public meetings across the province this summer and early this fall? Recognizing that some decisions have to be made before then, as far as development is concerned, I would ask you to hold these up. What I'm asking you to do is to hold these public hearings across the province and have uppermost in the minds of all of us that in addition to the quantity of development in this province we don't want to lose sight of the quality of the way of life in this province either.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, while I agree that a good deal of emphasis has to be placed on the quality of development in Alberta, I have to stand in my place and say to the members of the Assembly that we shouldn't allow that kind of argument to deter us from making some pretty important steps in the next several years to nail down industries which can, in fact, survive in the province of Alberta. I just cannot understand the arguments one hears from the leader of the Alberta Liberal party who wanders around the province saying that somehow any move to industrialize Alberta is not in the best interests of this province.

Now no one, I think, in this House, either on the government side or on the Opposition side, wants to see the kind of crude industrialization where the quality of development isn't considered and where we have the enormous problems that have developed in some other parts of the world. But there is surely a difference between that extreme case, the wall-to-wall factories that the leader of that party talks about on one hand, and the need on the other hand to develop viable industries which make some sense in the province of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, we know perfectly well that there is a host of industrial development operations that just cannot be started in Alberta because we are in no position to compete on the world market. But, Mr. Speaker, when you look over the things which are possible, there are certain areas where the government must move in order to diversify the economy of Alberta. One is agricultural processing. But another is clearly the petrochemical industry.

No matter how much I may quarrel with the government's policy as to the specific projects, I have no hesitation in saying that we would be out of our minds as legislators if we didn't zero in on petrochemicals as one area that can be developed where we can move in and develop world-scale industries which are based in the province of Alberta. Clearly there is no doubt about that.

I just find it impossible to fathom the arguments of some of these types who wander around the province, who are wealthy enough to be able to say that we should have a pastoral economy, where everybody is happy, where we have Swiss chalets in the mountains and a few sheep pasturing in the fields and we don't have to worry about the problems of pollution and everything else. You know, if you've got a million dollars Alberta would be a nice place under those circumstances. But frankly, that's not a practical proposition at all and no legislator and no responsible government, in my judgment, can miss the boat as far as Alberta's opportunities are concerned.

Again, this isn't to argue that we want the kind of crass development that has occurred in parts of the United States, but I don't think, no matter how much I may disagree with the government side, I don't think that's their intention. So, as I see it at this stage of the game, regardless of the approach we take, whether it's public or private or what have you, it's fundamental that we make some important moves quickly to diversify the economy of Alberta. Unless we do that and unless we recognize the importance of that commitment, this province is going to be in very serious trouble in the years ahead.

So, Mr. Speaker, for that reason I support Bill No. 59.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the principle of this bill, one thing I note again that happens to be a trend of this government in a lot of its legislation and a trend that I oppose and will continue to oppose, that is, giving the cabinet the right to either implement legislation or suspend it. This is an undesirable trend. I'm not the first person to say that this kind of legislation is not good legislation. It leads, perhaps, to some political control of situations.

I'm referring particularly to the last [clause of Section 42], "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations exempting any persons or classes of persons from the operation of this section", that's [clause 8]. It means that if it suits our purpose and if, perhaps, politically we like it, then we'll say, company X doesn't have to come under this. I oppose this thing. Not because it's coming now, but because there is a trend in this government to go that way. For about the third time at least, we're saying that we can suspend legislation for reasons not set out. Now perhaps the minister might have some very good reasons for it. It's still not the best way to go.

I'm also saying that when you look at the principle of this bill, certainly much good can come from the board determining what is in the public interest. But they are letting a body, that may be learned and may be competent, but it's not all-knowing, not all-seeing and not the end of all things to determine when a permit shall be granted.

So little by little - not little by little, but almost in indecent haste - we're moving into more controls and more branches of industry, more government intervention, more of the situation where we have to go cap in hand to someone who may be acting in the best interests of the people and say, can we get this. I suppose that maybe in this case the hon. minister can justify this.

I'd like the hon. minister to determine what the criteria will be for all these permits, what will be the reasons for turning them down or accepting them, and who will have the final say. But in no way will I accept as a principle in any bill the right of a government to suspend or not to suspend legislation. There have to be some very strict guide rules who can do it, because otherwise I'm saying that it's a political thing and will be political because politicians will be in charge. I know that some hon. members will descend upon me and say, well, this just happens to be my attitude. Well it is.

I have been in correspondence with some parliamentarians recently about this kind of move by governments. I'm not going to state that they can't do it within limitations. But I'm saying that, as in previous legislation where the government has the right to encroach on legislation and ignore it if it suits its purpose, this thing carried to an extreme would be, in my opinion, an abdication of the responsibilities of this House.

Just that one point, Mr. Speaker, in no way will I support that they can say that company X has been friendly to us, they don't have to apply, they can carry on. Company Y has been giving us a little trouble, we'll bring them under this, the law allows us to do it. They say, we won't do it. If you're not going to do it, why seek the power to do it? Is that power really necessary?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. FEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, seldom in this House have I the occasion to compliment the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. But I thought I might invite him over on this side.

To the Leader of the Opposition and to the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, of course, the emphasis is certainly on the quality as well as the quantity. We quite agree that it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity as expressed, as a matter of fact, in the statement by the Premier on May 16 in this House. He identified the fact that the petrochemical industry was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and along with agricultural processing afforded a great opportunity for future generations of this province.

I might just say that I think it's important and I know we'll get into more detail on this in the committee stage of this bill possibly, so I'll reserve any further comments in that regard as to the petrochemical industry and its impact on the economy in the province until that time.

In closing my remarks in regard to answering the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View, the necessity, of course, for the permit is well known. The fact is that there are limits to those natural gas reserves as well as to the condensates and the crude oils. While this covers the natural gas area and natural gas products, the fact remains that the market place and the freedom of the market place sometimes is not in the best public interests of the province. In the case of a natural resource in which there are limitations to the availability and supply, there has to be, unfortunately, somebody, some hearing. The ERCB is a reasonable vehicle to hear those requirements in regard to the quantity of resource that's available.

As far as referring it to the cabinet in regard to other factors in covering the policy that will establish the criteria to go in these permits, I'm sure the hon. member appreciates that from time to time these requirements change with the impact of forces other than the provincial force itself, and I refer to federal programs. For that reason there has to be that recourse.

CLERK:

Under second readings, Bill No. 65, The Emergency Medical Aid Amendment Act, 1974, the hon. Mr. Crawford.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, if there is a look of puzzlement when I get up to move second reading of Bill No. 65, it's only because I didn't hear the Clerk recite the due second reading of the previous bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I wonder if we could permit the Clerk to do it now.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 59 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 65 The Emergency Medical Aid Amendment Act, 1974

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 65, The Emergency Medical Aid Amendment Act, 1974. I would say to hon. members that it is important and significant legislation. I gave, I think, as adequate a description of it, at the time of introduction, as probably needs to be given on second reading, because although it's important, it's short and easily understood.

What I think I will do is just indicate to hon. members that if there are any concerns that may be raised by other hon. members when they may wish to speak on the bill, I would deal with those in closing debate.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 65 was read a second time.]

PRIVATE BILLS  
(Second Reading)

Bill No. Pr. 1  
An Act to Incorporate Alberta Motor Association Insurance Company

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands, I move second reading of Bill No. Pr. 1, An Act to Incorporate Alberta Motor Association Insurance Company.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. Pr. 1 was read a second time.]

Bill No. Pr. 2 The Alberta Stock Exchange Act

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona, I move second reading of Bill No. Pr. 2, The Alberta Stock Exchange Act.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. Pr. 2 was read a second time.]

Bill No. Pr. 3  
An Act to Incorporate The Calgary Convention Centre Authority

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, I move second reading of Bill No. Pr. 3, An Act to Incorporate The Calgary Convention Centre Authority.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. Pr. 3 was read a second time.]

## Bill No. Pr. 4

An Act to amend An Act to Incorporate The Canada West Insurance Company

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. Pr. 4, An Act to amend An Act to Incorporate The Canada West Insurance Company.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. Pr. 4 was read a second time.]

Bill No. Pr. 5 An Act to amend The Edmonton Community Foundation Act

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. Pr. 5, An Act to amend The Edmonton Community Foundation Act.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. Pr. 5 was read a second time.]

Bill No. Pr. 6 An Act to amend The William Roper Hull Home Act

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. Pr. 6, An Act to amend The William Roper Hull Home Act.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. Pr. 6 was read a second time.]

## Bill No. Pr. 7

An Act to Incorporate Stockgrowers Insurance Company of Canada Ltd.

MR. ASHTON:

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. Pr. 7, An Act to Incorporate Stockgrowers Insurance Company of Canada Ltd.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. Pr. 7 was read a second time.]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker left the Chair.]

\* \* \* \* \*

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

Department of the Environment

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the hon. Member for Whitecourt, Subcommittee B has had under consideration Vote 29, the Estimates of Expenditure for the Department of the Environment and begs to report the same. I therefore submit the following resolution:

Resolved that a sum not exceeding on income account \$14,694,062 and chargeable to capital account \$10,234,000 for a total sum not exceeding \$24,928,062 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1975 for the Department of the Environment.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I just want to make one or two very, very brief comments as I have spoken previously in debate in the House this year.

I just want to say that the department is now three years old and it has expanded quite rapidly. This spring we decided to freeze the department for a year in terms of manpower to give ourselves a chance to catch our breath in the direction in which we were going. But I might say I believe that in the last year we have made real strides in terms of maintaining a quality environment in Alberta and this year we have extended our area of concern primarily into the area of land management.

I would publicly like to thank all the civil servants who have worked for the Department of the Environment, who have worked very diligently and very hard in the performance of their duties in regard to providing services to the people of Alberta.

I also want to commend them on one other area of performance in which they have really excelled, and that is in the area of cooperating and coordinating their work with respect to other departments of government. I believe the Department of the Environment has probably done more than any government department in terms of working through departments, bringing departments together and in resolving problems which have multi-concerns.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make one or two brief remarks on some of the activities or possible absence of activities on the part of the department, and to register a plea for the department to take a stronger initiative in the question of the problem that all municipalities face with garbage disposal. I think it is a problem which is applicable to all municipalities, large or small, and requires some long-term planning initiatives on the part of the government.

Urban municipalities are almost always forced to try to go outside their municipal boundaries in the interest of trying to acquire land to set up sanitary landfills, and nobody in the adjoining municipality in the rural areas is very anxious to acquire the distinction of being the dumping grounds for their garbage. I think this is understandable.

It seems to me that the government should be setting up a long-term program. Possibly some of the money which is going to be made available for buying land, under the program introduced by the Provincial Treasurer, could be devoted in this direction. I can foresee the government acquiring acreage in selected areas which are environmentally satisfactory, well in advance of the needs, landscaping it properly so it's not an eyesore to the public, and such measures as this in the interest of setting up sanitary landfills which are available to a number of the communities in a given district, thereby, I think, easing a lot of the troubles the municipalities now have. I am not going into detail because I know the minister is better acquainted with the problems than I am at this point in time.

I think also the government is going to have to look at the question of using sanitary landfills as the answer down the road to this particular problem. As I say, Mr. Chairman, I think it's one which needs a longer perspective than is being taken now.

Instead of trying to deal with the problems on an ad hoc basis as they arise, I simply would urge the minister to take the matter under advisement with a view to tackling the problems more aggressively than has been the case. I think in the past there probably hasn't been the necessity for the provincial government to become involved. But with the restrictions the government is now placing on the department, on the operation of landfill methods and the problems this is creating for the municipalities, I think it is obvious that the provincial government has a greater responsibility to find solutions for the problems.

MR. YURKO:

I think, Mr. Chairman, where the answer is quite obvious I might answer directly and then take the next question.

I appreciate the suggestion made by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc. I might, however, say the department is moving in this direction. We have conducted a major study in terms of solid garbage disposal and I filed a report today in that regard.

We have a tentative policy in terms of assisting municipalities with respect to buying land for landfill sites when they are regional landfill sites. Where several communities can get together the government will, in fact, purchase the land, lease the land back to a number of communities and then reclaim the location afterwards.



This is now being done on a sort of selective basis on the judgment of the minister, but the policy can be extended quite readily and without too much difficulty if there is a demand for it.

I must admit that perhaps we haven't publicized this policy as much as we should and we'll take some action in that regard shortly. But I do appreciate the member's suggestion and I think we are moving into the area. The real question is how fast we should move. The hon. member is suggesting that perhaps we should move a little faster and I am not entirely certain that I don't agree with him.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to hear that. I would just make the plea again that I think it is desirable on the part of the government not to wait until the demand arises from municipalities, but rather it should take the initiative to anticipate some of these needs five years or more in advance, with a view to, I think, preventing some of the eyesores that sanitary landfills now represent. Planting a shelter belt, trees around some of these areas, for example, is highly desirable in advance. Adjacent to some of the larger metropolitan areas I think it can be argued also that once these sites are developed, utilized and finished, they make good park areas. They could be used for recreational purposes if they were properly landscaped and so on.

So it's preferably a case of not waiting until the municipality makes a demand, Mr. Chairman, but rather I think looking ahead at least five years in anticipation of some of these needs. I have said earlier even land acquired in anticipation - maybe there are a few misfires under such a program, but I don't know of anybody who has lost money buying land in this country in the last 30 or 40 years, including the government.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, maybe I should have risen before the minister answered, but certainly some of the smaller communities in my area have expressed their concern about the requirements, and when they get certain deadlines and haven't the money to fulfil them.

I appreciate the comments the hon. minister has made and maybe we could get all the information he has referred to so that some of these communities could act on it on that basis. You get some of the small ones - even the hamlets where there is a certain amount of this refuse - they have to get rid of it, and where to get rid of it is the question. I think we have to watch in the regulations brought down that we don't hamstring some of these small areas, small communities which have limited finances with some expenditures which are over and above what they can manage.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make one other comment. The approval of landfill sites is still under the Department of Health and Social Development from a health point of view. The Department of the Environment approves them in regard to ground water, possible ground water contamination. But the approval procedure is still under the Department of Health and Social Development.

We have had several internal discussions within the government in terms of where this responsibility should eventually lie, and those discussions are still continuing.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make two comments. First of all, in connection with the mosquito control program, having asked the government to consider a provincial program for two or three years, I would like to congratulate the government on bringing in this program. This may not be a matter of life and death for people, but it is certainly a severe nuisance to people and can even be more than a nuisance for those who have suffered malaria in earlier years.

The modest amount which has been put in, I think, is reasonable. I would also like to say I am very pleased that it is in direct grants. The breeding grounds of mosquitoes are no respectors of the economic condition of a municipality or an ID, and where there is a very severe area or a very excellent area for breeding mosquitoes from the mosquitoes' viewpoint, it is sometimes very, very difficult for the people to provide the money.

I think it is in the interests to try to get those breeding grounds out of the way. I am thinking of an area in ID 7 where the water has ceased flowing on one side of an island and consequently has become a very excellent breeding ground for mosquitoes. I would hope this money could be used in IDs also for the purpose of ridding or destroying these breeding grounds. That's the best way of carrying out a mosquito control program.

The second item I would like to mention is the municipal water supply assistance. I would like to say that I, for one, appreciate the work of the engineers of the department

in their willingness and the minister's willingness to permit them to come to public meetings to discuss the details of plans with the people. I think this is an excellent program and the people really appreciate it.

I would even like to see the program accelerated because one of the things we need in this province, and probably all over Canada, is water supply and sanitary provision for sewage. I would hope that within a very few years no person in Alberta will be required to use outdoor privies and will have a good water supply. Many of our hamlets are able, with some assistance, to get water and sewers and I would like to see a program undertaken by the government that within a reasonable number of years we will have water and sewer throughout the province of Alberta, certainly in every hamlet. I believe it's in every village at this time.

I would like to commend the hon. minister for the increased assistance in connection with water supply. I would hope that within the coming year that might be extended to sewage treatment as well.

MR. D. MILLER:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to bring one or two thoughts to the attention of the minister at this time. Some things can wait and some things we shouldn't wait for. With respect to the demand for more irrigation water in the south to increase food production, the minister no doubt is quite aware of the capacity some of the main canals have had and [will] have in the future.

I mentioned once before in the Legislature a highline irrigation ditch which would parallel the St. Mary and Taber irrigation district. As explained to me in the past week when I was discussing this with the manager of the Taber Irrigation District, he said they could take more applicants who were begging for more water east and north of Taber and all the way down to Medicine Hat if work was started on this feeder canal, this highline canal, which was considered some years ago. They could drop down into the smaller canal at various places along the way, whereas the Taber irrigation district canal can't carry all the water which is demanded now.

There is no limit to what we can produce in the south if the water is made available, especially with the latest designs of sprinkler irrigation being offered if the farmers wish to use them. But there is a hindrance even to that. They run into a lot of obstacles in their fields, especially with power lines. With power lines in the field, the farmers are just unable to use wheeled sprinklers or these big-shot rotating systems of sprinkler irrigation. Sprinkler irrigation has a decided advantage because we use less water with it and the applications can be made more frequently. Less water runs to waste and less salt comes to the surface of the ground.

I'd like the minister to consider especially this means - and not five years from now - but consider this high-line ditch to supply these systems which are below it, and feed water into it at various levels so we can meet more of the demands and requests for water.

MR. YUPKO:

Mr. Chairman, I think before I get too many more questions, I'd like to make a few brief comments. First of all, with regard to the mosquito control program, we felt we would move fairly slowly in this area but with what we felt was real, positive impact towards establishing an overall mosquito control program in the province.

I just might indicate that 22 municipalities have applied for assistance and have been approved, and if the members are interested I can read them off. Sixteen are not committed. Are you interested in the municipalities?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes. Agreed.

MR. YURKO:

Very quickly, they are: Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Brooks, Raymond, Cardston, Fort Macleod, Hanna, Drumheller, Stettler, the MD of Provost, St. Albert, Spruce Grove, Camrose, Wetaskiwin, Rainbow Lake, Peace River, Vegreville, Fort Saskatchewan, Claresholm and Fort McMurray. Presently showing interest but not yet committed are: Leduc, Killam, Blairmore, Forestburg, Morrin, Olds, St. Paul, Bawlf, Warner, McGrath, Swan Hills, Mayerthorpe, Stirling, Mundare, Tilley and Ponoka. The three areas which indicated no interest are Calmar, County of Lac Ste. Anne and Bow Island.

The program is expanding and will be expanded throughout the coming years.

In terms of the Municipal Waterworks Assistance Program, it is our intention to accelerate this program as fast as we possibly can, consistent with the engineering capability of the province. Each community is asked to undertake to have an engineer in terms of planning their system with our engineers. We have such a list of towns that wish to get in on the program almost immediately that all the money budgeted for this year is already tied up. It is my intention to come to cabinet for an additional appropriation at the earliest opportunity this year to continue the program.

I also must say the Policy Position Paper No. 17 must be read in conjunction with Policy Position Paper No. 5 where the government does basically guarantee a water supply source to the various communities. This is apart from the assistance under the 50-50 program of \$150 per capita.

I think members are losing track of the Sewage Disposal Assistance Program and aren't selling it throughout the province as well as they should. I think that is a truly remarkable program because it takes into consideration a number of very substantive factors. That program is based on putting a ceiling on costs in terms of sewage disposal facilities for all towns. It's \$13.76 per year per person maximum, and the government picks up the costs above that. What that really does is suggest a maximum cost to a household - if there are four people in the household - of something like \$53 to \$54 a year, and the government picks up the rest.

We are now working basically on a maximum allocation of \$600 per capita in the communities plus the \$150 picked up by the community, or a total of \$750 per capita. We initially started with \$450, but this was simply insufficient to get sewage into some of the smaller communities.

It's a very attractive program and the communities haven't been moving as fast as I had hoped they would move. But they are coming to us in a major way and I think you'll find the program moving pretty substantially in the future in terms of getting sewage facilities to all the towns in the province.

With regard to irrigation, I might say that we made some major policy decisions in this area over the last two years. The first was in identifying the responsibilities between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Environment. We have split this responsibility at a very meaningful point. All headworks come under the Department of the Environment, but once that water goes on to the irrigation districts, it is entirely the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture.

We do have some areas of concern yet with respect to what a major on-stream works is. We're imposing a fairly liberal interpretation here and taking under provincial operation and maintenance costs directly more than just the on-stream structure. In some instances we are taking the major reservoirs. We're now giving consideration to taking over some of the major reservoirs in several irrigation districts and considering these as part of the on-stream headworks, and as a result, putting in a major provincial government input in terms of rehabilitating some of the structures within this identification of the headworks.

The Minister of Agriculture may wish to comment in terms of expanding the irrigation system with respect to the irrigation districts. The highline canal, I think, would lie more in the Minister of Agriculture's area than in my area, but I do want to say this, that we anticipate the major need for water in southern Alberta for irrigation.

We are upgrading the priority water use for irrigation to third in the hierarchy of priorities, the first being domestic, the second municipal and the third irrigation and agricultural-based industries, and then the rest of them, so that most of the water throughout the southern part of the province, as available, will be identified for agricultural use.

We, of course, have extensive programs in terms of increasing the supply of water. The federal government program in connection with the province - the rehabilitation program - is one. We are, of course, very actively seeking additional storage sites throughout the south. We will be establishing regional or basin commissions, in fact, to attempt to adjudicate some of the conflicts which we know are arising. They will provide a great deal of influence on the government as to where water should be impounded, its use, and so forth.

I indicated that we have under active consideration more impoundment on the Oldman. But I do believe that there must be a rationalization of water use within the basins themselves before any thought whatsoever will be given to diversion from one basin to another because more and more, as Alberta grows, we recognize that there is a need for the water within every basin. It is simply a long range mistake in most cases to attempt to divert massively from one basin to another. There will be a need for irrigation water in some of the rivers coming further north. This is one of the reasons we anticipate flow regulation on the Red Deer River before too many years go by.

Perhaps the Minister of Agriculture may wish to comment briefly on his program of extending irrigation in southern Alberta.

DR. HORNER:

Briefly with regard to the member's comments in regard to power lines, gas wells and so on, I'm sure that he is aware - and he did bring to my attention the question of diagonal power lines. Unfortunately they were built in the years prior to major sprinkler pivots coming into effect. We have initiated some discussions with Calgary Power and with the REAs as to whether or not we can find some solution to that. Of course, the solution is to move the power lines if at all possible.

Calgary Power has now agreed that in the areas that are being rebuilt this will certainly be taken into consideration. We are trying to develop with them a program in which, where an obvious problem exists, we could work with the farmer and the REA to build around or remove the poles which are obstacles to sprinkler irrigation.

We recently had a decision from the Energy Resources Conservation Board with regard to location of wells on the northeast corner of quarter sections, which I think is a major step forward.

Insofar as expanded irrigation, I know the hon. Member for Taber-Warner, and indeed all of the members from the irrigation areas, are aware that the demand for water has increased substantially, particularly because of the increased viability of diversified crops and also because of the newer methods of irrigation which take a great deal of the back labour out of the situation. We are going to try to expand it just as fast as we can in conjunction with the Minister of the Environment providing availability of water in the headworks. The highline canal [about] which I have talked to people from down there - both the Minister of the Environment and I will be having a look at it later this spring. We will be discussing it with the irrigation district involved, as well as the question of upgrading which, I think, is of a priority nature in regard to the Lethbridge northern area.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, further to the minister's reference a while ago about getting the information out to the municipalities, organizations and so on, I was just wondering if he would make available to the members an updated list of the policy statements which he has in his department. What I'm finding is that we get a policy statement at a certain time and there is maybe an addendum to it, or something that comes along. I think it would be good for the members of this Assembly to have that because if we pass something on to a municipality that may not be current, then we are in trouble. So I would ask the minister to consider that.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, that's a good suggestion. The only one that has been revised is the Alberta Municipal Waterworks Assistance Program. It was doubled basically. That's being revised and will be sent out again. But if the members wish the whole package, I can certainly send out a new one to all the members. There is quite a series of policies in this area.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a few words about this department and, particularly, commend the hon. minister for the manner in which he responds to questions in this House. He provides information in a sincere manner. It's quite a contrast to what some other ministers try to get away with in this House.

Although I certainly believe that this hon. minister is doing an outstanding job in his department, the problems are many. After having given him a compliment, I feel there is one area where he perhaps has to do something - he tried his best but it isn't working out. It isn't too large a problem but it's a very aggravating one, and that is the disposal of beverage containers, the gathering of bottles and cans. A lot of people are very annoyed about it.

I know it was a serious effort to solve the problem. It is a big problem, and many people are back to where they were years ago, where they hope somebody can come to their

place, pick up the cans and bottles and take them away for nothing. Sometimes I have heard personal complaints, and I am sure the hon. minister has had some too, that someone has to drive around to a place and be told, you have to sort these things out or you can't have a refund. He takes them back in disgust and doesn't waste any more time on them. It's well and good that you get 5 cents a bottle, or whatever it is, but when you have to spend a couple of gallons of gasoline looking for someone to take these things off your hands, the problem isn't quite good. I don't know what to suggest but I do know there are a lot of irate people in this particular area.

One concern I do have is the very serious outbreak of mosquitoes. I am sure that even if the hon. minister had three times as much money, he is not a magician. The year is bad. We have a lot of water. But I commend him on the program, that even though we can't solve the problem, let's do the best we can. I am sure he is sincerely trying to do so.

Mr. Chairman, with just those two comments I wished to make, I hope the minister will continue his good work. He has shown a serious concern about a tremendous number of problems and I am sure he will continue to do a good job, Mr. Chairman.

MR. YURKC:

Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a very brief remark on The Beverages Containers Act and that program. We consider the program to be successful. We are not discouraged.

We have analyzed some of the depots and they are working too close to a margin of no profit. We know we have to increase their handling charges and as soon as the hon. members permit the passage of the act, we will take some action in that area. There are some second generation depots coming up or being proposed, and I think some of the members might be surprised as to the type of depots that might evolve in the future, particularly in the large major urban areas in respect to handling the bottle and can recycle. But they need a little more money.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BENOIT:

I just had a couple of questions. There is an overall increase of expenditures, about 37 per cent. The minister says they are holding down increases in personnel, and I would like to know why there is such a large increase in salaries even though the personnel is not increased. Is it the kind of personnel that is being employed, or does this department, because it is new, feel the necessity for increasing the salaries and wages more rapidly than other departments?

The second point I would like to bring up, Mr. Chairman, is the matter of this water recycling in - what do you call it - the Calmar system for water and sewer. I think that if the department has any information available on that and what it could do to assist either private homes or villages and hamlets, it would be very much appreciated by the members and probably be a little bit more out in the news with regard to it.

MR. YURKO:

Very briefly, in terms of water recycle, I'll attempt to get some information in that regard and distribute it to the member if he wishes it.

What was your first point? I've forgotten ...

MR. BENOIT:

Salaries. The amount of increase in salaries in comparison.

MR. YURKC:

We ... [Inaudible] ... the manpower in the department last April. Nevertheless, because of the irrigation rehabilitation program and the takeover of headworks from the federal government, we have transferred to the department 21 additional people from the federal government. So that is indicated as an increase.

Basically, the increases in salary in this department aren't very much different from any other department. However, we have had a general upgrading of personnel because of the reorganization and I've said on many occasions that the department uses consultants to a large degree. However, the department reorganization and structure is attempting, very strongly, to emphasize quality of manpower rather than quantity. We are trying to hold on to people who are very qualified in this area because it is a very highly technical area. If there is any additional upgrading in this department over the other departments it is, perhaps, because the degree of qualification with regard to technology is somewhat higher in this department than in some of the others.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of questions I'd like to ask and it is now 1:00 o'clock. Shall we adjourn?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

Is it agreed that the hon. member ask the questions?

MR. STROM:

Mr. Chairman, I'd move that we adjourn. Others have questions.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise, report progress and beg leave to sit again.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

Having heard the motion, are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[Mr. Appleby left the Chair.]

\* \* \* \* \*

[Mr. Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MR. APPLEBY:

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

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

We will swing back to Committee of Supply for Estimates Monday afternoon and evening.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

[The House rose at 1:02 o'clock.]