

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Thursday, June 6, 1974

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure today for me to introduce some 30 Grade 8 students from Westminster Junior High School in the riding of Edmonton Glenora. They are in the members gallery. The class has been studying government at school, and now they are here to witness and study another dimension of the subject of government. They are accompanied by their principal, Mr. C. B. Thompson. I would ask that they stand and be recognized by the Assembly at this time.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Bill 55 - Representation on

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Attorney General if he has received a representation from the Civil Liberties Sub-Section of the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch, requesting the Attorney General and the Minister of Municipal Affairs, "to withhold obtaining assent to Bill 55 until such time as hearings can be held in the Province of Alberta to determine the full force and effect of Bill 55, and further to determine whether the said Bill 55 shall be assented to in its present terms."

MR. LEITCH:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I received such a request either yesterday or the day before.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General. Is it the government's intention to grant the request made by the Civil Liberties Sub-Section of the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch?

MR. LEITCH:

No, Mr. Speaker.

Land Use Forum

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, a second question, to the Minister of Agriculture. I'd like to ask the Minister of Agriculture if he could indicate to the House when the background information will be available for the land forum public hearings starting early in July?

DR. HORNER:

I would think some would be available almost immediately. I'll make sure that members of the Legislature, as well as interested groups that might want to appear before the forum, receive the background material.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. Is it the intention of the land forum to follow the same procedure as was followed by the Environment Conservation Authority when it set up a number of resource centres across the province?

DR. HORNER:

I'm sure the chairman of the land forum has had some discussions with the members of the Environment Conservation Authority relative to how those hearings were conducted and how they were beneficial. We would hope to improve on any areas where the officials of the Environment Conservation Authority might have felt there could be an improvement in the hearings in getting people involved as much as possible in ideas and bringing them forward before the forum.

MR. CLARK:

A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. Is it still the government's intention to submit to the Legislature the land forum's report in 1975, along with proposed legislation?

DR. HORNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, that will depend a great deal on when we get the report. I would expect that once we receive the report, have an opportunity to review it and then decide on legislation is going to be down the road some time.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc followed by the hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen.

Cheese Plant - Wetaskiwin

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Agriculture. I would ask the minister, in light of a number of inquiries I have received, if he could advise the House as to what action the government is taking to resolve some of the difficulties being experienced by a new cheese plant financed under the Agricultural Development Corporation?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, as with any enterprise, sometimes start-up difficulties are encountered. The new cheese plant at Wetaskiwin is no different from other business ventures in that regard. It has been further complicated by the dumping of foreign cheese on to the market, which has caused some difficulties.

However, I would like to assure the House, and indeed the producers shipping to that plant, that the department intends to stand behind the plant. We think it has a good future and that producers will not suffer from being associated with it.

In that regard, we have assigned one of my senior people in the Dairy Branch to work very closely with management from a technical point of view. We have also assigned, through the ADC, a financial administration officer to assist in the stabilization of financing.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, given a month or two, we expect the situation there to be resolved. In the meantime, the producers will be protected.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

Ambulance Service

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Solicitor General. Following the ministerial announcement of yesterday, what arrangements have been made with respect to claims for ambulance service?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen for giving me advance notice of the question.

The ambulance service has to be handled in the regular way, in that the individual will apply on the regular forms to Alberta Blue Cross. The only difference - and this is only for senior citizens, of course - is that there is now no \$15 deductible, because that has been picked up by the provincial government.

Drug Costs - Senior Citizens

MR. FRENCH:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. What steps will be taken to publicize the changes in this whole new program which will take effect in less than a month, on July 1?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission has already prepared an information notice which will be mailed towards the middle of this month. This explains the new program and the fact that there is now no deductible on the coverage, and that they may pick up their prescriptions by paying only the 20 per cent.

Also in the package will be a new card with a superimposed number 75 across their regular Blue Cross card. This applies, of course, only to those over 65. Pharmacists will be advised by the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association in order to seek out further cooperation from that organization.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Individual's Rights Protection Act

MR. WILSON.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour. Have all government personnel in charge of hiring been supplied with copies of The Individual's Rights Protection Act?

DR. HOHOL.

I don't know whether they have or haven't. I know every member of government services has access to all the published information we put out from time to time. I am sure this item is of the kind of consequence and importance that every senior public servant relevant to be guided by it would avail himself of it and be familiar with it.

MR. WILSON.

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. What specific government action has been taken to inform personnel in charge of hiring of the rights of individuals seeking employment?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I have to point out that in the Public Service Commission we have an extremely important office filled by an extremely competent commissioner. The staff of the commissioner's office is of like stature in Calgary. We meet constantly on many matters of concern to government in terms of our responsibilities for management, including personnel.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. What disciplinary action is undertaken in cases of breach of The Individual's Rights Protection Act by provincial government employees?

DR. HOHOL:

That, of course, is a hypothetical kind of circumstance that the hon. member describes. If he is aware of a situation where that has occurred or has the appearance of occurring, it would be completely consistent with my responsibilities to get that information and follow up on it.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Public Works. Has the minister been advised of an incident occurring in the last 27 hours wherein a female applicant was allegedly refused employment with the Department of Public Works because of her sex?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Surely the hon. member would expect that type of question to appear on the Order Paper. But under the circumstances, in view of the implications, perhaps the hon. minister might wish to answer briefly.

DR. BACKUS:

Mr. Speaker, I haven't been informed of this. If the hon. member is aware of some fact of this nature and would like to give me the information on it, I will certainly be happy to follow it up.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Crude Oil - Wholesale Prices

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs. It concerns allegations made elsewhere about double ticketing by the major integrated oil companies as far as their wholesale price increase is concerned.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is, can the minister advise the Assembly whether the wholesale price increase announced by the oil companies several weeks ago was only on oil purchased pursuant to the oil agreement of April 1, or were there stocks already on hand?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please. Surely the hon. member is asking a question which, on its face, is not clearly within the responsibility of the hon. minister and might be addressed to the oil companies in question.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, this really is a matter of public information, but I'll rephrase the question. Can the minister advise whether he has any information in his department as to whether or not the oil companies raised the wholesale price of gasoline on oil which was actually purchased prior to the oil agreement of April 1?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, the knowledge I have at hand is that the major oil companies did not raise the price until stocks on hand were used up. They followed to the letter the terms of the agreement set down by the federal minister.

MR. NOTLEY:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise the Assembly what methods the government uses, or what device the government has, to monitor the situation to make sure that his assurance is, in fact, correct?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, I can't be assured of this, but I believe the Provincial Treasurer's department does have a facility for monitoring stocks held by the major oil companies. Perhaps he might wish to add something to the answer.

MR. NOTLEY:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Provincial Treasurer, following from the answer of the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs. Could the Provincial Treasurer advise the Assembly what steps the government takes to monitor the situation?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I think I could just answer in a broad way that the Treasury Department does monitor and watch these things, but if the hon. member had a specific, perhaps I could give a more specific answer.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In light of the Provincial Treasurer's answer and the minister's previous answer, can the Provincial Treasurer assure the House that from the monitoring his department has done there was, in fact, no premature increase in the wholesale price of gasoline in this province on the basis of oil which was purchased prior to the oil agreement of April 1?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I have some difficulty with the word "premature", unless the hon. member again would be more specific. I've indicated in the House that relative to prices at the pump, wholesale prices both in Alberta and across Canada, I would not be anticipating a finalized report on this matter until some time during the current month, if not somewhat later, with respect to the month of May. So I'm not in a position at the present time to say anything specific. I'm waiting for a full report from my department on the matter across Canada and in the province of Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary question for clarification then. In view of the fact that as much as \$8 million would be at stake here ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. NOTLEY:

... can the Provincial Treasurer advise whether or not either he or any member of the government discussed this question with the officials of the integrated oil companies to ensure that before any price increase occurred ...

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. NOTLEY:

... in the wholesale price of gas, it would only relate to ...

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member's question is complete and he is now extending it into a debate and a representation.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, can I put that question, then, to the hon. minister? Were there any discussions?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I have indicated in the House as well that hon. members on the other side seem to forget that the reason a price increase occurred was the fact that the federal government had frozen the price west of the Ottawa Valley last fall, and that the minister ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. Provincial Treasurer is not obliged to answer the question, but neither is he entitled to answer one which hasn't been asked.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question then. Can I, in fact, pose the question to the minister that I asked before? That is simply whether or not the government has held discussions with the integrated oil companies to make sure that no price increase occurred on oil purchased prior to the oil agreement?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, again I have to say that the May 15 date was set by the federal government as far as the increase in the wholesale price of crude oil west of the Ottawa Valley. Again, I'm somewhat at a loss to understand what the hon. member is referring to.

AN HON. MEMBER:

So are we.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Wainwright followed by the hon. Member for Little Bow.

Expropriation Act

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Earlier in this session we dealt with the Expropriation Act and at that time I understood the minister indicated there would be hearings in relation to that, as related to power lines and pipelines rights of way and so on. Could he inform us at this time of the plans for the summer on that?

DR. HORNER:

I can't give any exact dates or anything like that, Mr. Speaker, but I intend to follow up the commitment I made and have the Surface Rights Board do exactly what I said I would have them do, that is hold hearings in relation to interested people with regard to review of rentals and above-ground structures.

MR. RUSTE:

A supplementary question to the minister. Would he inform the members of the Legislature then as soon as he finds this out?

DR. HORNER:

I'll have the Chairman of the Surface Rights Board make the information generally available.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Little Bow followed by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Government Bargaining Agencies

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Manpower and Labour. Has the minister or the government given consideration to establishing bargaining agencies, other than the CSA, to bargain for various employee groups of government, particularly for the boards or health institutions?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I recall when I was a private citizen that the hon. member had been responsible for the service called Personnel ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. If the hon. minister wishes to answer the question rather than reminisce, he is entitled to do so.

DR. HOHOL:

That's correct. I just wanted to put it in perspective. I would then go on to say that surely he knows that is not how bargaining units are established.

For his information, because I'm certain everybody else is clear, a bargaining unit is established by a union making an approach to the employees and attempting to get the number of signed sheets of paper which say that they are prepared to have this agent as their bargaining agent. This information, if it is in excess of 50 per cent, is turned over to the Board of Industrial Relations, which then holds hearings at which both the employer and the employees make their case. The Board of Industrial Relations either provides a certificate for the employees for a new and other union or it does not.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Petrochemical Projects - Feedstocks

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals. Is there any foundation to the statement by Shell that there is insufficient natural gas in Alberta to fuel the planned petrochemical plants here?

MR. SPEAKER:

I have considerable doubt whether the question in that form is in order. It might be directed elsewhere, but if the hon. minister has that information within his department and wishes to answer, perhaps we might proceed with it.

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can answer it in this way. I believe that was a news report emanating from the requirements hearing before the Energy Resources Conservation Board and a submission by Shell to the Energy Resources Conservation Board on the requirements hearing. Of course, the government will be receiving a report from the Energy Resources Conservation Board as to their conclusions at the finalization of those hearings.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

Taxation

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. In the ongoing assessment in his department of the tax situation in this province - and I am specifically referring to gasoline taxes and income taxes - would the hon. minister advise if it is his intention to announce any reduction in these two fields this year?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I think I was quite clear yesterday ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Oh, oh!

MR. MINIELY:

... that this was a matter that was continuously under review ...

MR. LUDWIG:

That's what I said.

MR. MINIELY:

... and that when we had made a decision, there would be, at that time, an announcement of any decision we made.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, is the hon. minister advising that there will be an announcement as to tax reductions this year, or not?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for ...

MR. LUDWIG:

A supplementary to the hon. minister, because if he was clear yesterday, I didn't get the message, Mr. Speaker. What, in his opinion, is the target date for the studies that are being conducted in this particular area?

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member, in requesting an opinion, has expressly and literally brought his question within one of the prohibitions.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I know it's an ongoing process, but it's an ongoing refusal to provide ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Oil Revenues

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Premier. It concerns the present controversy over the disposition of oil revenues.

My question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, is whether or not the government has given any consideration to the option of changing both the royalty structure and the operation of the petroleum marketing board to shift Alberta revenue from royalties to profits made by a marketing board as one feasible way of maintaining provincial revenue?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I believe, by the nature of the question, that the hon. member is not aware of what is involved in the province. We have a royalty situation which is a return to the people of Alberta for their ownership interest. That is the appropriate way in which it should be looked at, and has continually been looked at as a return to the citizens. It is in no way a tax, nor should it be looked on as a tax.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier for clarification. The point I was trying to make, just in explanation, was related directly to the ownership question.

My question, Mr. Speaker, was whether or not the government feels that maintaining the royalty approach is the best, or whether they would consider profits from a marketing board as an option?

MR. SPEAKER:

In asking the hon. Premier to say what the government feels, the hon. member is literally requesting an opinion; and however interesting the topic may be, the Speaker is not allowed to deal with it in that way in the question period.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, let me just reword this by saying, instead of "the government feels", whether the government is considering.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, we have already passed that point in the December session of last year. I believe almost the identical question was raised by the hon. member regarding the debate on The Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission Act.

We said that our approach to it was that the appropriate way for the return to the citizens of Alberta for their ownership of the oil and gas was through the royalty structure; and that the Petroleum Marketing Commission served an important vehicle to assure that the pricing mechanism was not through international petroleum companies but under the jurisdiction of the province.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary to the hon. Premier. Is the government revealing, however, other options than the royalty structure in the light of current debate over federal taxation provisions?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, again I think the hon. member is having some confusion in his mind between taxation and royalty. We look at this situation as one that the province, owning the resources, has the right to establish royalty rates. I would hope I was not reading into his answer the feeling that the federal government should set provincial royalty rates.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Freight Rates

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce. Has the government received the freight rates that the Prime Minister promised at the western conference?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, we have received some of them, not all of them. It's an ongoing program and I think I have mentioned in the House prior to this that we should have all the information by the end of September.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary. I understand that the freight rates would not be made public. But is the government preparing a case based on these to submit to the Canadian Transport Commission?

MR. PEACOCK:

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray.

Bill 55 - Northeastern Alberta Commissioner

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Has the government reached a decision on whom they will appoint as commissioner for northeastern Alberta in the event that the bill is passed in the next few days, and when will such an appointment be made?

MR. RUSSELL:

We expect the appointment to be made at the earliest possible opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUDWIG:

A supplementary. Will they be waiting until after the July 8 election to see if they can get some good Conservative, defeated ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please.

[Laughter]

The hon. Member for Wainwright.

Meat Industry - Price Monitoring

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. I wonder if he is now setting up any special monitoring services on the price of meat as it relates to what may be happening?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, I have indicated several times in the House that we are monitoring the price of meat on a weekly basis with the Department of Agriculture. At this time we have no plans for monitoring it more frequently.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

QUESTIONS

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, could we have the question under my name on the Order Paper, Question No. 198, stand on the Order Paper, please.

MR. SPEAKER:

Is the House agreed to having Question No. 198 stand over until next private members' day?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, might I have the indulgence of the House to return to tabling? I have a return to Order No. 181 that I would like to file.

MR. SPEAKER:

Can the Chair assume that the hon. Deputy Premier has the leave requested?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS
(Third Reading)Bill No. 50 The Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 1974

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I would move that the Assembly not proceed with third reading of Bill No. 50, but that Bill No. 50 be referred back to Committee of the Whole for reconsideration.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion by the Hon. Government House Leader, are you ready for the question?

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, can the hon. Government House Leader advise whether it is the intention to leave the bill on the Order Paper or whether it is just a procedure to reconsider the bill?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, it is a small amendment and then we would see it going back into third reading.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could take this opportunity to speak to Bill No. 46, The Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Amendment Act, 1974. Yesterday, while the bill was in committee, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc raised the question as to whether there was absolute prohibition in the bill with respect to an interprovincial linkage by the company. I undertook to consider the matter and report back to the House. It may be that in light of that report a motion would be made with respect to the bill.

Mr. Speaker, the answer is relatively short. There is no absolute prohibition in legislation against the company having an interprovincial linkage of some kind. There is, however, a partial prohibition, contained in Section 14(b) of the amending bill, which restricts any linkage with respect to a pipeline transporting hydrocarbon, unless such a linkage occurred pursuant to the regulations.

I want to add, Mr. Speaker, that while there is no absolute prohibition against other types of linkage, in my consideration of the question I have concluded that if there were other types of interprovincial linkage they would not add to the federal government's capacity to legislate with respect to the company's hydrocarbon operations within the province of Alberta.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I believe that the Government House Leader didn't ask for consent to waive private member's day. That's a formality that should be followed lest we slip into the position of taking these things for granted.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member has a perfectly valid point of order.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the Assembly now proceed to government business until 5:30.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

I take it the motion by the hon. Government House Leader has unanimous consent.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the Assembly resolve itself into Committee of the Whole for consideration of bills on the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER:

You've heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader. Do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair.]

* * * * *

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Committee of the Assembly will come to order.

Bill No. 52 The Alberta Labour Amendment Act, 1974

MR. CLARK:

I'd like to ask the minister two or three questions and then, depending upon the answers that he gives, perhaps some more questions after that.

I'd like the minister to outline what he considers to be the fringe benefits that would be able to be negotiated by the prime contractor for Syncrude, above and beyond the provincial salary that is negotiated. On talking to people both from the labour organizations and from the construction field, one of the real concerns they've expressed to us is that in addition to the Syncrude plant going ahead on the basis of the same contracts as across the province, Bechtel, which is the prime contractor, will be able to add a number of fringe benefits. If these fringe benefits are sizable at all then, in fact, we'll have the whipsaw kind of thing; or there's a possibility of the whipsaw thing within the construction field itself. So that's really the first question, if the minister would elaborate in a bit of detail on the possible fringe benefits.

The second question, and it deals with the registration aspect, is, in light of the amendments that we are now considering, will tradesmen who are on the job in Fort McMurray also be registered? Once again, the concern here is that should there not be a settlement on an across-the-board basis, what happens then with people who would be on strike? If registration is not applicable to the Syncrude plant, can people who are on strike in other parts of the province then go to Fort McMurray and work on the Syncrude project while, in fact, other projects that have to compete for the same tradesmen are stopped?

If the minister could deal with those two specifics, it might well stop some of the questions later on.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Excuse me. May we have more order in the committee please?

DR. HOHOL:

The principles of the question are key, important ones. Just to summarize - the hon. leader placed the questions very accurately - in terms of the hard part of the collective agreements with respect to wages and wage related areas, these will be picked up if the parties to a possible agreement are able to do so. Then [there is] a second part, referred to in the industry as the soft areas but which, as the hon. leader points out, can become important in terms of amounts of money.

To place the question in that context, there are several areas that are monetary in the sense that they cost the employer money. There would be things that wouldn't ordinarily be found in the local contractor circumstance; things like camp conditions, travel pay, the distance to and from the camp - whether these are paid for in part, in whole or not at all. There are several kinds of things which are peculiar to a project, circumstances that are not in local contracting.

At the same time, some of those conditions are also covered in local agreements. While those won't have to be picked up, the point I should like to make very clearly is that some of those which are the same will be in the same range of cost. So the implication of the questions - they are important and we considered them at great length - is, how much more could a person make on the Syncrude site in terms of the rewards, if one can put it that way, from the soft areas to which the hon. leader referred, in contrast to those not being the case with respect to the local contractors.

I could supply him with a definitive list. It may amount to about eight to ten items. These would differ from site to site, depending on whether people live in or live out, whether they camp, the distance to the job site and several other kinds of conditions such as those.

Today I saw a list sent to one of our members from Calgary. It lists a cost of living bonus. I want to make it clear that the cost of living bonus is not in the soft area. It's part of the wage package. That is important because if that were in the so-called soft area you could build up quite a motivation for people to go to the Syncrude site. It's the judgment of our department, of the Board of Industrial Relations and I think of industry generally, that the cost of living bonus, where one could really develop an incentive, is in the wage package, not in the soft area [which is] amenable to movements up [and] down - mostly up - by the prime contractor on behalf of the client.

So the principle pointed out by the hon. Leader of the Opposition is a proper one. It's our judgment that the care, restraint and responsibility that management in this case will have to exercise, recognizing its responsibilities not just to Albertans generally but surely to its own industry, the construction industry, will be the kind that will not be overwhelming in the sense that a person would leave Edmonton or Calgary for that difference; that if he leaves there would be more compelling and more overwhelming reasons. Those would be found mostly in the wage package, which is a wage itself, which is picked up; the pension benefits, which are picked up; and vacation benefits - not just vacation pay, but sometimes benefits in addition to vacation.

I hope I've been clear. I've tried to be. If I can respond further, I would wish to do so.

With respect to registration, I would like to point out that all the conditions of The Alberta Labour Act, 1973 apply until and if an agreement is concluded under conditions of Bill 52. If that were not the case, then Bill 52, of and by itself, disappears from the industrial relations scene in Alberta and the conditions of the Labour Act apply. So registration - again, a key question and an important one - has been set aside for the purpose of permitting the principals to attempt to negotiate an agreement. That is accurate.

Should that clearance for the possibility of an agreement not be fruitful, then all those conditions referred to with respect to conciliation and strike settlement apply, because Bill 52 will simply not be operative. It becomes operative only - and there seems to be a good deal of misunderstanding, not by the hon. Leader of the Opposition but in some other quarters, that Bill 52 has the effect of protecting the site. That is simply not the case. I would appeal to the legislators to be clear on that and I am sure they are. It simply permits them to reach that kind of agreement if they can. If they can't, then, of course, Bill 52 is set aside and the conditions of the Labour Act apply.

Bill 52 becomes effective - if it is proclaimed - only if the parties to the possible agreement, in fact, get such an agreement.

I should remind you, Mr. Chairman, that the building trades contracts expire at the end of March, 1975, making that a pretty significant date because it would be reasonable to expect that the construction companies will soon begin bargaining with the trades, individually or in association, to get new agreements for April 1, 1975. Time is important here, and if the conditions of Bill 52 can be met, fine. Those will apply in that area and the Labour Act in the rest of the province.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, just two comments and perhaps one further question so that I understand this very clearly.

On the assumption that an initial agreement is reached, then Bill 52 applies as to oil sands developments. From what the minister has said, registration would not apply in the tar sands so that if, in fact, there is a strike as a result of no settlements at the end of March next year - a strike in the province - then workmen who are on strike will be able to leave, go up to the tar sands plant and work there.

Now that, it seems to me, is the most legitimate point some people in the construction field have. Here, in fact, is the whipsaw thing if there is no prior settlement. I think, you know, unless the minister has something to add, that's a very legitimate concern. I would have to say if that is the case, then the responsibility will clearly have to rest on the government's shoulders for going in this particular direction.

The other comment I would like to make is, is the minister now in a position to give us some indication of what areas can be included in fringe benefits other than camp conditions and travelling pay? What about holidays? What about overtime?

DR. HOHOL:

If I could respond in two ways. I don't think there is any question that you can't police the matter of the worker, even the one on strike, going where the work is. It is an overwhelming principle of the free enterprise system that the worker follows the job.

Having said that, I think there are some reasonable and legitimate expectations by government and the local contractors that Syncrude and the Building Trades Council perform responsibly in the matter of workers who have struck elsewhere and are then moved to Syncrude for work over there. I am not so naive as to assume that that would not happen or that this kind of thing could be policed, or that we would intend to police it. But I can say, Mr. Chairman, in all honesty, that we are going to stay close to the situation, not just because we as a province are partners with Syncrude, but because there has to be a responsibility in a unique situation such as this agreement.

While I can't claim government's capacity to police, I can assure the Legislative Assembly that we will be getting reports of people at all levels of activity on the Syncrude site; where they came from, what they are getting paid. We'll be staying very close to this and will be holding discussions. I can say that we've discussed this very matter and the hon. leader is right into the most important and the most complex problems we had to deal with. On second reading I made it clear that the judgment we made was not made easily because the circumstances are complex and difficult and those difficulties are very specific.

To repeat, in all fairness: the overwhelming principal here is that the worker follows the work. But within that kind of principle there is some onus on the prime contractor, the client and the building trades to make sure they are reasonable and fair; that they don't send permit people back and use their own people, setting up logistics which would permit this kind of thing to be a serious problem. If it is, we will try to do the best we can to stabilize it.

The additional point I should make, which I think is important, is that things have turned around a bit since condition (a) of the Syncrude agreement was written. At that time there was an unemployment situation. I well recall having to respond to the hon. members of the Opposition why we had unemployment rates of 5.8 and 5.6 and what we were doing about it. That's no longer the case.

It has to be clear that Syncrude is not going to be the only employer because, as has been pointed out to me in briefs and at meetings of which I had a considerable [number] last week - I spent literally hours with the industry as did some other members of government and senior officials - more than half the employment capability in Alberta is going to be outside Syncrude.

There are many people who will support the proposition that not every tradesman, not every labourer, not every designer, draftsman and management type of person is going to go

to Syncrude as soon as he is struck or unemployed here, because there are many reasons why people wouldn't leave Edmonton, Calgary, Camrose or wherever and go to Syncrude. So I believe it's important to place this in perspective, at the same time conceding that it will be a problem to a degree. However I contend, sir, that a lot of these problems will be there whether or not Syncrude is protected.

That we would wish condition (a) met is clear. That's why it is there. If it is not met, I should like to submit in all seriousness - and I'll be challenged on this on the floor, have been elsewhere - that other forces and other influences will move the cost of industrial and resource plants in terms of cost more than will the fact that this site will be protected - if it will be. It may not be. I think it is important to put it in that perspective. I personally am very convinced that that is the case. I could be shown wrong, and if I am, in months or a greater period of time, I'll stand in my place and say that I was wrong. But the studies we made, the consultation we had, which was extensive, lead us to believe that Bill No. 52 is reasonable, that it makes sense, that it does not offend the concept of registration in part of Alberta and some other kind of arrangement in Alberta.

I submit, Mr. Chairman, that if we are not prepared to deal in new ways with new circumstances and maintain a sort of Freudian attachment to one way or old ways when other things are changing, the risk is greater in that kind of attitude. I'm just saying this generally because the questions as put by the hon. leader are very proper and excellent. I simply say this as a person who has lived with this problem since August.

I think there was a second part to the question - I have been so long on the first one that I forget the second one, if I might get it, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CLARK:

Well, I asked the minister if he could be somewhat more explicit on what these fringe benefits are going to be, or can be.

DR. HOHOL:

Yes, sir, I will try. Certainly an additional one mentioned by the hon. leader was the matter of hours of work. Those are going to be circumscribed by the Board of Industrial Relations, by orders of the board. What will be permitted at the Syncrude site will be, by and large, what will be permitted elsewhere.

Without making an official statement, the industry appears, as does the Buildings Trades Council, to be looking at the possibility of 48 hours in remote areas where people simply need the contractor on behalf of his client, and the employees want more [working] time because they haven't much else to do with it but work. It gives them a chance to earn more. Others include travel to and from the project, which I mentioned before.

Standard working conditions, such as the same hours of work for members of all trades, I repeat that these will have to be negotiated, these aren't going to be set down, they are not set down in Bill No. 52; shift premiums, it could be that what we commonly refer to as the night or the owl shift could have a premium; common precedures established for settlement, for example, disagreements on agreement interpretation or if you wish, grievance procedure, also, under the same topic of common procedures; work jurisdictional disputes, as in the case locally here which of two unions, say sheet metalworkers or insulators, has the right to do this particular job, they will be able to negotiate this; hiring practices with respect to the use of the hiring hall; room and board; arrangements to return employees to and from the project, for example, from Edmonton.

These and such others as I have mentioned before would, to the best of my knowledge, include all - I may have missed one or two - which would be left for the prime contractor and the trades to negotiate a settlement on.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, just one comment and one last question. The minister said he didn't feel that these soft areas were going to be responsible for sizable increases. He said that he would be prepared to stand in his place and say that he was wrong in a few months or a year, if he is. I think he will be, and in saying that, I suppose that I should say I'm prepared to stand in my place and say that I was wrong and you were right. I hope you are right because if you're not, or if the minister isn't right, it's going to have a very profound effect across this province.

The question I would like to ask the minister is: in light of the fact that you are making this special legislation as far as the oil sands are concerned, and that that is a form of energy, has the government at this time given any consideration to applying the same principle to the Calgary Power Sundance project? Have you given any consideration to applying the same kind of principle to, let's say, the Alberta Gas Trunk Line-CIL project, assuming it goes ahead? Have you given any consideration, let's say, to applying the same

principle [to the] construction of fertilizer plants? The minister knows very well, better than I do, that once the foot is in the door, it's awfully hard to keep the door closed.

DR. HOHOL:

If I could respond. I certainly appreciate discussion that permits us to place some of these very crucial things in perspective. I want to comment on the soft area effect. I want to be clear on that. That there will be some effects and influence is a fact. I say it now. What I want to be clear on, you know, is what incremental difference the negotiations in the soft areas between Bechtel and the trades will add to what will normally be an increase in the same areas across the province. This is what I want to be held to, not the whole of the negotiated areas in the soft areas in the future.

I say right now that there will be some increase. I am not waiting six months or a year. What I am saying is that the incremental increase above those normally negotiated will not be predominant. It will be a factor. It will not be the overwhelming factor in increasing costs on the Syncrude site. That's what I wish to be held to, Mr. Chairman.

I hope, and I agree with the hon. leader, that I am wrong. It's going to be a little ...

MR. CLARK:

You hope you're wrong?

DR. HOHOL:

I'm sorry. That I'm right. That I'm right. Right.

MR. CLARK:

I think you were closer to the truth when you were confusing yourself there.

DR. HOHOL:

It might have been a Freudian slip in advance, who knows?

With respect to Calgary Power, Alberta Gas-CIL and the fertilizer plants, certainly we thought about that. There isn't any question in our minds that other areas will ask for this kind of consideration. But I say, Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen of the House, that at the present time our response is clear. As we have a unique circumstance and have made other unique arrangements and steps in this area, this is one more.

We do not intend to do this plant by plant, enterprise by enterprise across the province. We intend to maintain this position firmly with respect to the definition, as we have it, for the area, the industry and the construction phase, and that's all. The rest of the province, entirely, will continue to remain, negotiate and work under the concept of registration.

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 52 be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

Bill No. 57 The Alberta Heritage Day Act

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 57 be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

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

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. PEACOCK.

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 59 be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

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

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I move Bill No. 65, The Emergency Medical Aid Amendment Act, 1974, be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

Bill No. 50 The Municipal Statutes Amendment Act

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The amendment is before us.

MR. STROM:

I have a comment to make on municipal legislation. It's an observation I've made over a number of years. I think we find more amendments in municipal legislation than in any other legislation. We find more changes of mind even within a current session than we find in any other legislation. I don't know what it proves except that municipal people have a hard time agreeing among themselves as to what changes they want. I just make that observation after many years of observation.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, with the minister nodding his head like he was, I am pleased he appreciates that much more now than when he used to sit over here. I recall he used to harangue the former minister for bringing in amendments at the last minute. But I am pleased that he is more broad-minded now.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to state that the hon. minister is broad-minded enough to realize that it's never too late make amends. He has a lot more to make, I believe.

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. DOAN:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 50 be reported as amended.

[The motion was carried.]

PRIVATE BILLS

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

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the sponsor of that bill whether in having the Alberta Motor Association sponsor and become involved as an insurance company, it is, in fact, in a preferred position compared to other insurance companies?

MR. KING:

Mr. Chairman, I didn't get the first part of the question, but I think I understood what the gentleman was asking. It may have been exactly because of that concern that the bill was introduced.

The Alberta Motor Association has been involved for some years in the automobile insurance industry in the province. They have administered that insurance through the organization itself, which is a non-profit organization. They were recently ordered by the Department of National Revenue in Ottawa to set up separate corporate entities for their profit-making activities, including their travel bureau and their insurance operations, so that they wouldn't continue to have any unfair advantage, particularly in terms of taxes.

This act is being done in response to a directive of the Department of National Revenue. It is being done to achieve exactly what the hon. member refers to, that is, to put their insurance operation on an exactly equitable basis with every other insurance operation in the province.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that answer and I think it's a very valid one. But I am under the impression that some of the other insurance companies which handle automobile insurance must feel that an association that gets memberships by way of providing some small service is now in the insurance business. Were there any representations made by other insurers with reference to this bill?

MR. KING:

As the sponsor of the bill I have had no representation whatsoever from any insurance company.

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. KING:

Mr. Chairman, I move that the bill be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

Bill No. Pr. 2
The Alberta Stock Exchange Act

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. Pr. 2, The Alberta Stock Exchange Act, be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

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

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. Pr. 3, An Act to Incorporate The Calgary Convention Centre Authority, be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

Bill No. Pr. 4
An Act to amend An Act to Incorporate the Canada West Insurance Company

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. Pr. 4, An Act to amend An Act to Incorporate The Canada West Insurance Company, be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

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

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. Pr. 5, An Act to amend The Edmonton Community Foundation Act, be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

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

[All sections, the title and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. Pr. 6, An Act to amend The William Roper Hull Home Act, be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

Bill No. Pr. 7
An Act to Incorporate Stockgrowers Insurance Company of Canada Ltd.

[All sections as amended, the title as amended and preamble were agreed to.]

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Chairman, I move Bill No. Pr. 7, An Act to Incorporate [The Livestock] Insurance Company of Canada Ltd., be reported as amended.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

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

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[Mr. Diachuk left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration the following bills: Bill Nos. 52, 57, 59 and 65, and Bill Nos. Pr. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, and begs to report same.

The Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration Bill No. 50 and Bill No. Pr. 7, and begs to report same with some amendments, and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS
(Third Reading)

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, just on a point of information by way of explanation, we'll be proceeding through third readings in numerical order which means that we will include those bills, just in Committee of the Whole, as they appear. In other words, after Bill No. 51 which is under third reading, we'd go to Bill No. 52 which stands on the Order Paper under Committee of the Whole.

In that connection, I would ask unanimous leave of the House to proceed to third reading of those bills just completed in Committee of the Whole, notwithstanding the fact that a day has not intervened between readings.

MR. SPEAKER:

I take it there is unanimous consent to the request by the hon. Government House Leader.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[It was moved by the members indicated, that the following bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried.]

No.	Name	Moved by
1	The Queen's Counsel Amendment Act, 1974	Leitch (for Loughheed)
3	The Appropriation Act, 1974	Miniely
4	The Agricultural Development Amendment Act, 1974	Horner
5	The Industrial Development Repeal Act	Peacock
6	The Local Authorities Pension Amendment Act, 1974	Hohol

Bill No. 7 The Public Service Amendment Act, 1974

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 7, The Public Service Amendment Act, 1974, be read a third time.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to make a long speech on Bill No. 7, but I would simply point out to the government that provision has been made in the act to maintain pensions at the current level by allowing for the cost of living increase. I would hope that the government take under serious consideration the fact that a gradual erosion of pensions is taking place, and take the earliest opportunity of making the necessary adjustments to see that it is kept in line.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to Bill No. 7. I consider this one of the sort of subtle amendments that come before the Legislature, in that all it says in one section is, "Section 9 is struck out."

In reading it carefully, it indicates to me that it's a further encroachment on the duties and powers of the Legislature. I do that specifically because it presently reads:

9. (1) Each department shall have a staff establishment consisting of those positions in the department for which salaries are authorized

(a) by vote of the Legislature, ...

Mr. Speaker, this is removed, so I submit that this is a further encroachment on our duties as legislators.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. Member for Cypress's discussion, on behalf of the government I should like to say that the matter of pensions is being given careful and positive consideration with respect to the circumstances in which pensioners have found themselves over the past few months.

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

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried.]

No.	Name	Moved by
8	The Public Service Pension Amendment Act, 1974	Hohol
9	The Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation Amendment Act, 1974	Miniely

Bill No. 10 The Fuel Oil Tax Amendment Act, 1974

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 10, The Fuel Oil Tax Amendment Act, 1974, be now read a third time.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, commenting on third reading of Bill No. 10, I'd like to make a few remarks concerning the manner in which the hon. Provincial Treasurer handled this situation.

I don't think the people of Alberta are overimpressed with what is happening. First, the hon. Provincial Treasurer made a statement which I think was certainly not a statement that ought to be coming from a Crown minister. His main concern is to have the lowest gasoline prices in Canada. Then they fumbled around and stated, we don't know what is happening. The whole situation is in a state of flux and who knows what can happen. Let's wait for the prices to level off.

I compare this position taken by the Provincial Treasurer to the situation taken by this government with reference to propane prices. It affects a great number of people. I didn't oppose the position taken by the government on propane prices because it needed to be done. But we are dealing with necessities of the people of this province when we talk about gasoline prices, diesel prices and all these other prices. So the comparison is

very proper. To compare what the government did when it appeared to be what I said was a politically expedient thing to do, they had the minister get on the air and state, we have legislation that can peg this whole situation. But if there is any increase in prices, if they don't volunteer - they held a gun to their head and said, if you don't volunteer we'll blow your head off. So that appeared to be the right thing to do.

We have a similiar situation with gasoline prices, Mr. Speaker. The government is going to wait and see. Well, they can take a firm position and I would advise that perhaps the Provincial Treasurer and the hon. Minister of Agriculture ought to take a hand in this. I have very little faith in the Minister of Consumer Affairs doing anything constructive in this particular area, Mr. Speaker. So we have to do something and the Opposition would be remiss in permitting the government to sort of twiddle its thumbs hoping that somehow Providence will intervene and everything will be fine. I'm saying that the government has an obligation to either convince this House or convince the people of this province that we need that money, we must have that tax. If they don't need the money they must not keep the tax on. I'm sure if the Social Credit government were in office today the Conservatives would be on its back demanding a tax reduction like they did before, even during a tight money situation.

So I'm not at all concerned about the minister saying, well, it's an ongoing process. In every ongoing process some minister ought at least to have the knowledge to tell us the gestation period of all this. When do we expect something to happen, or will it happen when it's politically convenient? If that's the game they are playing then let them stand up and say so and perhaps we could let them pass.

There is no indication from the hon. minister or the government what they intend to do. If all the minister is concerned about is having the lowest gasoline and fuel prices in Canada, if you remove the 10 cent tax they would be the lowest for the time being. So that isn't an insurmountable problem. He'd have no problem with public opinion and no opposition from this side.

So let's quit playing games. Let's do what is right. Unless we can justify the maintenance, the continuation of a tax - a sales tax - I like to use that word because the hon. Deputy Premier made such a tremendous point that it is a sales tax.

We haven't made a case that we need the money. I think the argument that it might be inflationary doesn't hold water because if it is inflationary why was the 5 cents taken off? What is so inflationary about this tax if you take another 10 cents off? If the first 5 isn't inflationary, the other 10 can hardly be. And I believe there are schools of thought that consider reducing taxation is not inflationary, especially with regard to income tax. I believe Dr. Bladen made a recent announcement that the reduction of income taxes at the present time would, in fact, have a tendency to cool the inflationary spiral.

So I believe the hon. Provincial Treasurer ought to explain just what is going on. Why can't they reduce the gasoline tax by 10 cents a gallon? I'm talking about diesel fuels and other motor fuels - reduce it by 10 cents a gallon now. There is no case made at all to continue this thing. To say that we will wait and see is not a satisfactory discharge of one's responsibilities. I think that if the government is afraid, by reducing the tax by 10 cents a gallon, that the retailers will move in and take up the difference, then the government has a responsibility to act within its powers. If they say they haven't got the powers, we'll talk to the hon. Minister of Telephones and Utilities - he'll tell you how to do it. He'll tell you how to make these people keep these prices down voluntarily.

It was rather humourous when he got on the air and said they have agreed to keep it down, and if they don't I'll name them. I'll name who they are. I felt that was somewhat stretching the meaning of the word voluntary.

I believe in other areas of taxation the Provincial Treasurer has not displayed that quality of leadership which is expected of his position at the present time. There is no reason whatsoever why Alberta should be paying 36 points of income tax at the present time when other provinces whose economic situation certainly doesn't compare to Alberta's - I am talking about B.C. and Ontario - although they are wealthy provinces, their costs are high. They haven't the windfall profits from an industry as we do. There is no justification whatsoever for not standing up in this House and telling us, we are looking at reducing income tax. It is the Opposition ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Possibly the hon. member might wish to direct his remarks toward the type of tax which is referred to in this bill.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to challenge your ruling, but it has been customary at all times that when you deal with third reading of a bill you can address yourself to any part

of the department. This was established by years and years of tradition in this House, Mr. Speaker. This has always been so ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Social Credit government.

MR. LUDWIG:

... and if the hon. members on the other side say, no, I'd say they either haven't been here long enough or they have short memories, Mr. Speaker. This has always been done. On third reading, one can get up in this House and review whatever problem one has with the particular minister who is moving that bill, Mr. Speaker.

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair is unable to debate with the hon. member concerning what may have been past practice, except to the extent that it may be recorded in the Journals.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, there were no records kept in this House until some time in 1965 when the hon. member, Mr. Johnston, who is no longer here, and I moved that we have a Hansard. I believe these rulings tend to be restrictive, Mr. Speaker. The ruling you made now restricts an hon. member from making remarks with reference to a department. I deliberately withheld making my remarks at an earlier time because I knew I would have the right to make them when third reading of the bill was called. There is no use having some of the prima donnas on that ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Order please. This is scarcely the occasion for the hon. member to debate a ruling by the Chair. Perhaps we could proceed with the debate.

MR. HENDERSON:

On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Did I hear the member say that he withheld something in previous debate in the House?

[Laughter]

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I withheld making remarks in this session on taxation [in order] to deal with this bill when it came up. I will revert to gasoline taxation. But I must admit this is a surprise. This ruling was never made in the last 15 years in this House, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, to get back to gasoline taxation, I would like to invite the hon. Provincial Treasurer to explain why the government needs to continue this tax, to explain why the government is afraid to make a move at the present time even though everything points to the removal of this tax.

It has been brought to my attention by a number of people that this is a serious issue throughout the whole province. The people are, in fact, disappointed that we are the greatest producers of petroleum energy in this province - we refine it here; we do not need the revenue, but we have the tax.

The only conclusion I can come to is that the Provincial Treasurer is not doing his job with reference to fuel tax or he is afraid that the benefits of it might not accrue to the people. If they do not, then they have a job to do. They haven't done their job, Mr. Speaker.

Thirdly, they are playing political games with the people of this province. If the minister can convince me they need the revenue, that will settle that part of it. If he can convince me they have not the authority to remove this tax, if he can justify it on economic grounds, then that makes the whole situation a lot different. But if he cannot, then all I can say is that the whole issue is based on political expediency, Mr. Speaker. If it isn't, let the hon. Provincial Treasurer respond and explain why it isn't done. If he cannot give us any indication what he is going to do with this tax at the present time,

then let him discharge his responsibilities properly and give us some indication when we can expect an answer. Because governments - and this one is no different - have been known to make very convenient political adjustments at expedient times. I think, if they do that, we ought not to let them get away with that kind of action, Mr. Speaker.

The Provincial Treasurer can ignore the position I am taking, but I am sure the public is aware of the problem. I am sure there is not an hon. member in this House who has not had some representation to reduce gasoline taxes, particularly on the basis that if they ought to be lowest any place, they ought to be lowest here.

Let me re-emphasize that gasoline taxes in this province are not the lowest in Canada and there isn't a solitary reason why they ought not to be, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I hadn't intended to engage in the debate, but I would just like to offer one or two brief comments on the bill before the House. I would like to suggest it's indeed in the best interests of all members of the House and the people of Alberta to support the bill as it now stands.

I look with increasing concern at the propositions which are forthcoming to spend a lot of wealth we do not as yet have. I suggest to the members that, in light of the instability of the proposed federal legislation, which is now somewhat up in the air because of the federal election - if it becomes a reality we may not have all the money the hon. members think will be forthcoming.

I think it would be highly irresponsible on the part of a government to be taking steps at this point in time to deal with a further reduction of taxes, based on a hypothetical proposition of wealth which political uncertainty suggests may well not materialize. By suggesting otherwise, Mr. Speaker, one could be creating a lot of false hopes in the breasts of a lot of taxpayers in the province of Alberta.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make one comment. It deals with the amendment the Provincial Treasurer agreed to bring in after we were in committee. The Provincial Treasurer agreed to hold this bill in committee and then brought in the amendments in light of the reduction of 5 cents per gallon which is included in the budget.

I would hope the Provincial Treasurer, in the course of concluding his remarks on Bill No. 10, would indicate to the House that when there is a further reduction of the gasoline tax in Alberta, he would give an undertaking to the House that if that happens before the fall session, starting October 23, he would undertake to bring in amendments to the act in the fall session, so that in fact the taxing authority rests with the Legislature, not with the executive.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, in reply to the question from the hon. leader, I believe when I introduced the amendment to The Fuel Oil Tax Act in committee, making the 5 cent reduction statutory, that we wanted understanding from the other side that if it were necessary to move between sessions with respect to the fuel oil tax, we would do so, but that we would subsequently amend the statute to reflect any reduction we made.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 10 was read a third time.]

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried.]

No.	Name	Moved by
11	The Corrections Amendment Act, 1974	Hunley
12	The Public Works Amendment Act, 1974	Backus
13	The Assessment Appeal Board Amendment Act, 1974	Chichak
14	The Beverage Container Amendment Act, 1974	Yurko
15	The Alberta Housing Amendment Act, 1974	King
16	The Forest Development Research Trust Fund Act	Trynchy
17	The Coarse Grain Marketing Control Repeal Act	Horner
18	The Clean Air Amendment Act, 1974	Chambers
19	The Clean Water Amendment Act, 1974	Chambers
20	The Interprovincial Lottery Act	Schmid
21	The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 1974	Topolnisky
22	The Public Service Vehicles Amendment Act, 1974	Copithorne
23	The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1974	Leitch
24	The Social Development Amendment Act, 1974	Ashton
25	The Highway Traffic Amendment Act, 1974	Copithorne
26	The Off-highway Vehicle Amendment Act, 1974	McCrimmon
27	The Agriculture Statutes Amendment Act, 1974	Fluker
28	The School Amendment Act, 1974	Hyndman
29	The School Election Amendment Act, 1974	Paproski
30	The Wildlife Amendment Act, 1974	Warrack
31	The Alberta Art Foundation Amendment Act, 1974	Ghitter

Bill No. 32 The Alberta Energy Company Act

MR. GETTY

Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 32 ...

MR. HENDERSON:

Whoa, whoa.

MR. GETTY:

Don't I get to move it, at least?

MR. HENDERSON:

I just want to make sure you don't get ahead of me.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 32, The Alberta Energy Company Act, be now read a third time.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to offer a few comments on the bill, largely in view of the fact that at the time of second reading I voted in principle for the bill because I concur with the government; there is a desire on the part of the public to have an opportunity for more direct participation in the development of the oil and gas resources within the province.

However, I was concerned about the provisions of Section 22 in the bill, notwithstanding the general support in principle. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that the amendment, which was made to Section 22 of the bill, did little to alleviate my concern. In fact I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that the amendment and the announced intentions of the government make the bill unacceptable in its present form so far as I'm concerned.

I say this, Mr. Speaker, primarily because of the concerns I have over the provision of the bill on the manner in which Crown leases and Crown properties can be transferred to the Alberta Energy Company as a result of private negotiations as to the sale price of the property. In my view, Mr. Speaker, this very clearly is not in the public interest, particularly if there is any desire, in the long term, on the part of the government to maintain private enterprise within the system.

I mentioned in committee, Mr. Speaker, that I witnessed a similar exercise in the province of Saskatchewan some 20 years ago. The Province of Saskatchewan decided by similar means to dispose of Crown acreage other than by means of competitive bidding. They chose the co-op as the vehicle in the province of Saskatchewan, and made some friendly deals with the co-op in which Crown mineral rights were transferred to the co-op. Fortunately, the Government of Saskatchewan, under the CCF party at that time, got its fingers burnt on the first major transaction in which they practically gave away to the co-op a lease that looked like a sure thing. The co-op took it and drilled a number of dry holes on it. As a consequence, the government soon realized they had deprived the people of the province of Saskatchewan of several thousands of dollars that would have been forthcoming as a result of competitive tendering.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that I think the same principle proves objectionable in this bill. The proposition by which the government will transfer semiproven or proven acreage to the Alberta Energy Company outside of the procedure of competitive bidding is not in the best interests of the people, particularly if there is any desire to retain the private enterprise element in the development of the resources within the province.

During committee, the minister first indicated that this was just to cover the Suffield gas proposition. But in the process of questioning it became clear that the government also wished to leave the door open so they could conduct similar transactions in the future.

I fail to see, Mr. Speaker, how the government can expect to encourage private enterprise to stay in the business when they have the vehicle before them through which they can transfer the more choice properties to the Alberta Energy Company and leave the industry with the less attractive opportunities for investment. I think, Mr. Speaker, surely one has to realize that the incentive to the industry is the hope of making a profit. If the government, through this legislation, is going to avail itself of the opportunity of depriving the private sector of competitive bidding in acquisition and development of those leases, Mr. Speaker, I think it has to be a 'disincentive' to the industry. I also think that in the long run it will prove not to be in the best interests of the people of the province of Alberta.

The minister commented to the effect that they won't go for competitive bidding because they might be outbid. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, any magnitude by which they would be outbid represents a loss to the people of the province of Alberta who own that resource. Rather it would be a transfer of revenue to those who have the wherewithal to participate in the stock ownership of the company.

It seems to me that the policy of disposition of Crown acreage by private negotiation is unacceptable on those two counts, and I do not believe it to be in the best interests of the people of the province of Alberta.

The answer to the question of whether it was appropriate for MLAs to purchase this stock was in the affirmative. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that in purchasing this stock once it is on the market, an MLA does place himself in a conflict of interest position, notwithstanding the law. Under the proposition we have before us, and the manner in which the government will transfer Crown owned acreage to the company through non-competitive bidding procedures, the government, quite logically, by virtue of its 50 per cent ownership, is going to have a responsibility to see that the company is economically viable and attractive on the market. Overpayment to buy one piece of acreage in transferring mineral rights from the department to this company could very easily be compensated for by a lower price on the next transaction.

I suggest the company will not at all be operating in a competitive sense relative to the rest of the oil industry in the province. Automatically there will be pressure upon the MLAs who buy the stock to encourage the government to negotiate better deals for the company in order to be sure that the investment in the company is a sound one.

I have no doubts about those investing in the company having a sound investment. It cannot be any other way in light of the lack of competition and the unfair competition

that this company will represent relative to the rest of the industry in the province of Alberta.

I therefore repeat, Mr. Speaker, as I said at the opening, that while I supported the bill in principle in second reading, in recognition of the desire on the part of the citizens of Alberta to have the opportunity to participate more directly in the development of the resources, the manner in which the government proposes to transfer Crown mineral rights to the company, by private negotiation in a non-bidding manner, renders the bill unacceptable in principle in my view. It will not be in the best long term interest of the people of the province of Alberta under those conditions. I, therefore, will vote against it at this time.

MR. HINMAN:

Mr. Speaker, there are just two or three remarks I would like to make at this time. The only way, of course, that members on this side can express a protest and leave it on record is, perhaps, to vote against the bill even when the principle may be perfectly all right.

I think most of us are quite concerned over just two things. One is the limit of 1 per cent which means that 50 people can eventually control half the company. We think that if you had adopted 5,000, it then would have necessitated 10,000 people to hold completely half of the shares which will be available to the people.

The other point, of course, is that there is no provision in this act to do what we all know is the intent of the act, and that's to make sure that every Albertan does get a share. Now I realize with the government owning 50 per cent, if they make known their wishes to the directors they appoint this can be looked after by the company itself - and I very much hope that will be the case. But suppose sometime in the future by, you know, a moment's bad judgment, this government is put out of power or if, not having investigated thoroughly, they get some Social Crediters on the board, the people's interests would not be fully protected.

[Laughter]

AN HON. MEMBER:

No danger of that.

MR. HINMAN:

Well, it just might happen. But I only express the concern hoping that the minister will make sure that when the company is formed and the directors are there, there won't be any doubt left about the intent, and the board of directors of the company itself will devise the means of being sure that nobody gets too much stock and that all Albertans truly get a share of the stock.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister conclude the debate?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd only add to the comments by the hon. members by expressing my feeling that they have both raised legitimate points of view regarding this legislation. I would say that it is my intention, and I know [it is] the government's intention, to be very alert to the problems they have raised and to try to do everything possible to make the company work in the best interests of the people of Alberta.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 32 was read a third time.]

Bill No. 33 The Provincial Parks Act, 1974

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 33, The Provincial Parks Act, 1974, be read a third time.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, a few words on third reading of Bill No. 33. In second reading of the bill I believe the minister indicated they would proceed with a full rewrite of a completely new provincial parks act. During committee study on that I don't think I was satisfied that there was anything in this act that wasn't in the previous act, with the exception of the provision for the urban parks and payments to urban municipalities. Incidentally, that, was brought in as an amendment following the introduction of Bill No. 33 itself.

It's rather interesting to see in the discussion on second reading of the bill and in committee that the minister referred to a lot of words such as concept and so on. I think I would say that in the bill there is further overriding of the powers of this Legislature, admittedly, within the parks area only, but certainly it has been used in this session as an excuse for doing further things in much further fields.

I think in the announcement of the Capital City Recreation Park they were probably endeavouring to take some credit of some of the city fathers and city officials who had worked over the years.

During the consideration of the estimates the question was raised by myself to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs as to the cost of the advertisement that was put in [the paper] to advertise this park. I might submit, Mr. Speaker that there was certainly adequate coverage given in the local paper with full maps of this thing the government chose to go ahead [with]. I received from the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs the following cost of this ad.

Edmonton river valley park advertising costs were as follows. space in Edmonton Journal, \$2,976, copy layouts, agency service, \$795 photography typesetting, prints and finished artwork, \$622.22, for a total of \$4,393.32.

Mr. Speaker, as a private citizen, I phoned The Edmonton Journal for the same space and I was quoted, instead of \$2,976, some \$3,472. I just point this out, Mr. Speaker, to show that while we have what the minister termed a completely new, rewritten parks act, he referred to the word "concept". I think there are some concepts here that are not in the act.

The thing that I think the people of Alberta should be aware of, I would submit, Mr. Speaker, is the use of funds. The way they are used here to advertise the Capital City Recreation Park in Edmonton could be termed fraudulent use of public funds for

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh.

MR. RUSTE:

... political purposes.

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, I can certainly be brief. Most of those comments ...

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, most of those comments were made by the hon. member on second reading. I answered them. They were again made by the same hon. member - the same comments - on third reading. I gave the same answers. He is now making, for the third time, the same comments. I'll spare you a third time of answering the same things.

I can understand the member's sensitivity in recognizing that some of the things that should have been done when he was the Minister of Lands and Forests were not. They are now done in Bill No. 33.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the hon. member's congratulation to the government for effective communication of the Capital City Recreation Park.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 33 was read a third time.]

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried.]

No.	Name	Moved by
34	The Municipal Election Amendment Act, 1974	Batiuk
35	The Common Parties Contracts and Conveyances Act	McCrae
36	The Students Finance Amendment Act, 1974	Hyndman (for Foster)
37	The Financial Administration Amendment Act, 1974	Miniely
38	The Agricultural Pests Act, 1974	Appleby
39	The Agriculture Statutes Amendment Act, 1974 (No. 2)	Fluker
40	The Alberta-British Columbia Boundary Act, 1974	Leitch
41	The Expropriation Act	Koziak

Bill No. 42 The Wage Assignments Act

MR. LEE:

Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 42, The Wage Assignments Act, be now read a third time.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, we had quite a lengthy discussion on this bill in the Committee of the Whole. There are two or three points I would like to make. I think the bill is ill-advised. It's done to correct certain abuses in connection with bad loans, but it's going to prevent a lot of good that was done from the majority of loans which I and many people considered as good loans. I would hope that the government - if this bill does pass third reading - will take a look at this and possibly bring it in for further amendment, because there is considerable concern about the bad effect this is going to have on institutions that have been conducting their businesses on a pretty high standard, and as a service to the people.

For instance I have in my hands a letter from the CN Credit Union Limited, and I think the same would be applicable to many, many other credit unions. This letter points out that for the past ten years their credit union has used wage assignments as security on loans. They felt that we have always used great discretion in registering these assignments. We have never abused the responsibility and we have gone to the extent of lowering the assignment amount in order that individuals do not suffer any hardship.

During the Committee of the Whole I outlined how I, personally, had used wage assignments advantageously several years ago. I think the bill, while its objective may be good, is going too far in preventing assignments. I think the same result could be secured by limiting the percentage of a wage that could be assigned - say 25 or 35 per cent of that wage could be assigned. This is not done by somebody holding a club over the head of the wage earner, but this is done of his own volition in most cases and for his own advantage; also by limiting the maximum amount of wage that could be assigned to \$100.

If these two amendments had been carried out rather than prohibiting it, as is done in the bill, we could have continued the good points of the bill and eliminated the abuses. So I raise these points now in the hope that the government will, even at this stage, consider these changes and if not at this session, at the fall session consider bringing in the bill for amendment to make the use of wage assignments, when done in a responsible way, still legal.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. member conclude the debate?

MR. LEE:

Just in brief response I might note that this bill was brought in in response to the abuse of wage assignments. The points made by the hon. Member for Drumheller are well taken. I might just point out, as I did at second reading and committee, that less than 1

per cent of loans use wage assignments as a primary security. However, this is one area that will be constantly monitored by the Consumer Affairs Department, and if amendments are required they certainly would be brought.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 42 was read a third time.]

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried.]

No.	Name	Moved by
43	The Nursing Homes Amendment Act, 1974	Young
44	The Department of Industry and Commerce Amendment Act, 1974	Jamison

Bill No. 45 The Coal Mines Safety Act

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 45, The Coal Mines Safety Act, be now read a third time.

MR. DRAIN:

I have no desire to put a kink in the assembly line and rehash old battles or dig into old wounds. I realize, Mr. Speaker, that this Coal Mines Safety Act represents a skeleton on which much fleshing out will have to be done by mine safety regulations.

It is my sincere hope that this fleshing out of regulations will include research by the Environment Conservation Authority in the matter of technological steps that will enhance the progress of underground mining, having regard for the fact that as the price of this product goes up, it will be in the interests of the people and necessitate the Environment Conservation Authority to insist on deeper mines. Every 500 feet you go down, of course, increases the hazard considerably. Also somewhere down the line when the production problems in coal mining are solved, which they will be, recognition shall be given to those miners and to the attrition and wear and tear on people represented in underground mining, and at some time in the future, as a result of technical progress, it will be accepted that 20 years underground in any mine should be all that society should ever ask of any miner.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister conclude the debate?

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to assure the hon. member and all hon. members in the House that when The Coal Mines Safety Act regulations are proclaimed they will have gone through an extensive communication with members of industry, various departments of government and also agencies of government.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 45 was read a third time.]

Bill No. 46 The Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Amendment Act, 1974

MR. HARLE:

Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 46, The Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Amendment Act, 1974.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address myself briefly to third reading of the bill and point out that I supported the bill on second reading in principle, since I share the government's objective of establishing a petrochemical industry in the province of

Alberta, and the original proposition that Alberta Gas Trunk Line represented a reasonable instrument towards achieving that objective.

I did at second reading, however, express some concerns about the constitutional implications of expansion of AGTL's sphere of activities. While the answer from the Attorney General earlier this afternoon alleviated my concern somewhat, I conclude however, Mr. Speaker, that I don't think the advantages in expanding the sphere of Alberta Gas Trunk Line activities, in my mind at least, adequately offset the possible implications that that expansion represents.

In the first instance I think it raises the spectre of unfair competition on the part of AGTL when they expand from being a transporter to that of being a processor of the products on which they have a monopoly to transport within the province of Alberta.

But of even more concern to me, Mr. Speaker, are the implications of the possible constitutional challenge of the Alberta Gas Trunk Line. There is an expanded opportunity for challenge when we expand the opportunity to the company, particularly when it is authorized to extend its activities outside the province of Alberta.

As I said in committee, Mr. Speaker, we have an all-out battle under way with the federal government, a government which intends to use its taxing powers, very obviously, to circumvent the provisions in the BNA Act which grant ownership of the resources to the people of the province of Alberta. As I expressed at that time, it appears to me they are out to subvert the intent of the BNA Act in that regard relative to the ownership of resources, just as they used their spending powers to circumvent the provisions of the BNA Act on issues such as Medicare.

While I support the objectives of the government relative to the petrochemical industry, I cannot but think there must be ways of doing it other than expanding the sphere of influence of AGTL and providing any opportunity for the federal government to interfere in the internal operations of that company within the province of Alberta.

I am also, Mr. Speaker, concerned about the somewhat laissez-faire attitude demonstrated by the Minister of Mines and Minerals in committee discussion on the bill. AGTL was assigned a very specific purpose, was established for a specific purpose by the Legislature in bygone years. AGTL represents an instrument of public policy within the province of Alberta. What is in the best interest to AGTL, as viewed by the board of directors of AGTL, is of no particular consequence to me, as long as it's not in keeping with the continuation of utilization of that company as a policy of public purpose in the province.

I would again say that I think by expanding the authority of the company to operate in areas outside the company one simply weakens the effectiveness of that company as an instrument of public policy, or may weaken it. My concerns may, I think, exceed the positive aspects of the bill. I'm convinced, however, that the objectives could be attained through other channels without raising these spheres.

I would also like to say, Mr. Speaker, in trying to examine the pros and cons of the bill, I think one of the significant things is who owns the company. I put a question on the Order Paper. It was sent back because I was informed I could get the information from the Companies Branch. I then phoned the Companies Branch and was informed they wouldn't give information over the phone. I said, I don't want it over the phone, I just want to know who owned the shares; send it to me in writing. [They said], do you have an account here? I said, no, I don't have an account here. They said, well, unless you open an account or send a dollar, you can't have the information. Well, I was burning when I got off the phone after that exercise.

I must confess, Mr. Speaker, that it had been my intention to pursue that particular point in committee. The ownership of the Class A shares is highly relevant to the extent to which AGTL will serve as an effective instrument of public policy, a continuing public policy on the part of the members of this Legislature and the people of the province of Alberta.

I must say I have no one but myself to blame for not having looked closer at my notes on that point when we were in committee. The absence of that information, as well, Mr. Speaker, gives me cause to add to my concerns about the extension of the sphere of influence and operation of the company, the extent of which offsets, in my mind, the possible plus factors that might exist.

I therefore go on record, Mr. Speaker, as not favouring the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. member conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HARLE:

Mr. Speaker, in closing debate on this bill, may I first of all thank all members in the House who participated through the various stages. I would particularly like to thank the Minister of Mines and Minerals for handling the matter in committee when I had to be away.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that the ownership of the company is such that it can be said that the majority ownership is here in Alberta. Now, there are some 16.8 million shares out. These shares are split, of course, across Canada. The information I have indicates that some 66 per cent of the Class A shares are owned by shareholders in Alberta, 8.5 per cent are held by people in British Columbia, 1.9 per cent by people in Manitoba, .6 per cent by people in Nova Scotia, 13.9 per cent by people in Ontario, 4.08 per cent by people in Quebec and 1.28 per cent by people in Saskatchewan. Some 2.1 per cent of the shareholders are in the United States and some 56 per cent in other countries. So this is very much an Alberta company.

Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder, before the question is put, if I might ask the member a question?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HENDERSON:

Could the member advise as to how much of the 66 per cent of the Class A shares held in Alberta are held by private citizens as opposed to trust companies, corporations or firms? I would appreciate that if the member has it.

MR. HARLE:

Mr. Speaker, I probably have that in the information I have. It will take me a few minutes to locate it. Perhaps I could give it to the member later.

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 46 was read a third time.]

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried.]

No.	Name	Moved by
47	The Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority Act	Dickie
48	The Improvement Districts Amendment Act, 1974	Moore
49	The Electric Power and Pipe Line Assessment Amendment Act, 1974	Zander
50	The Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 1974	Doan
51	The Government Land Purchases Act	Miniely

 Bill No. 52 The Alberta Labour Amendment Act, 1974

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 52, The Alberta Labour Amendment Act, 1974.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I don't plan to continue the debate we've had on second reading and in committee. To simply make three points will suffice.

I believe it's regrettable this legislation came in as late as it did in the session. The minister in second reading explained to us, from the government standpoint, why it was essential that this legislation come in at the very end of the session. Nevertheless, I think it's regrettable that the legislation had to be dealt with as quickly as it was.

The second point I'd like to make, Mr. Speaker, is this: I've had representation from the Alberta roofers association wherein they express a great deal of concern about a letter they received from the government on March 8, indicating that the government expected no amendments to The Alberta Labour Act during this particular spring session. I emphasize once again that during second reading the minister outlined to us why he and the government felt it was essential they bring in this legislation in the manner it was. I simply stand in my place, Mr. Speaker, and say that with legislation which has the potential of having the effect that this legislation has, I think it's unfortunate there hasn't been an opportunity for this legislation to be more widely perused, not only by people in the labour organizations in the province, but also by people in the construction field.

The last point I want to make is that the minister indicates he doesn't think the fringe benefits are going to have a substantial effect on inflated costs of construction, as far as homes and business are concerned, across the province. I have indicated that I think the fringe benefits and the whipsaw effect that may develop from this legislation will have a very substantial effect on the costs of housing, small business building, renovation and so on. There is no sense in pursuing that argument at this time, other than to say that at the fall session - and I'm sure at the spring session again next year - that the spring session may well be the real acid test for this legislation because at that particular time the agreements, some 57 I hope, will have been negotiated and we'll be able to see at that time what the results really are.

MR. NOTLEY:

I accept the reasons advanced by the hon. minister during second reading for the necessity of introducing the legislation at this time, although I share the concern expressed by several members during second reading that it would certainly have been better if we'd had a little more time to look it over. I accept the arguments advanced by the minister for the necessity of introducing the legislation.

The only point I would make at this time, Mr. Speaker, is to express the wish, and I'm sure it's shared by everybody, that in fact the legislation will work, that we will achieve an on-site agreement and that the government will not be forced to take any further legislative action.

I think what is very important in this legislation, Mr. Speaker, and one of the reasons I can support it is that the principle of free collective bargaining is maintained. I would hate to see the day come in this province when, in the name of efficiency or expediency or what have you, the right to collectively bargain for Alberta workers is jeopardized.

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

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried.]

No.	Name	Moved by
53	The Municipal Government Amendment Act, 1974	Stromberg
54	The Natural Gas Rebates Act	Farran

Bill No. 55 The Northeast Alberta Regional Commission Act

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 55, The Northeast Alberta Regional Commission Act.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment on Bill No. 55. I don't plan to take a great deal of time. I simply want to point out once again, as has been pointed out by a large number of members on this side of the Assembly - similar points have been made by members of the media across the province and similar points of view have been expressed by a number of organizations across this province - that, in fact, in giving third reading to this legislation here this afternoon, at 4:55 o'clock, it's indeed a black day as far as this Legislature is concerned.

We are really being asked to approve the formation of a northeastern Alberta commissioner, commonly referred to in the course of this legislation as a northeastern Alberta czar.

I think it's significant, Mr. Speaker, that repeatedly, in the course of committee study and in the question period, we asked the government if, in fact, it would be prepared to have a committee of the Assembly hold public hearings and have representations, not only from northeastern Alberta but from other parts of the province, come before a committee of the Assembly to give us the benefit of their judgment. For whatever reasons the government has, it has refused to do this. It chose not to follow up that request.

It's interesting also, Mr. Speaker, that the cabinet is making a tour of northeastern Alberta but, in fact, Fort McMurray and that area is not being considered as part of this particular tour. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, there is some relationship between not going to Fort McMurray at this particular time and this particular legislation.

I've said on numerous occasions that this is indeed a dangerous path for us to follow. It was rather amusing during the course of second reading, also during the committee on this legislation, that a number of members on the government side attempted to use the northern development commission legislation and the Human Resources Development Authority legislation as examples where the same kinds of powers were included for legislative approval. But on every occasion, Mr. Speaker, it was pointed out that on every occasion there was a cabinet minister who was directly responsible to this Assembly. And therein lies the real acid test as far as this particular piece of legislation is concerned.

We're passing legislation at this time which gives to the cabinet the power to appoint one person to have the power to run northeastern Alberta - that portion of the province where Alberta's tar sands are, where there are the largest known crude oil reserves yet on earth. We're being asked to give the power to the cabinet which is then going to give the power to one person who will then have the opportunity to really run roughshod over any type of local government now up there.

It's been pointed out by the minister and some other individuals that, in fact, there is no local government in that area now. That's just undiluted baloney. There is a new town board which, with one exception, is made up of people in the local area, elected by people in Fort McMurray. There is a duly elected public school board and a duly elected separate school board. There is a hospital board that operates in the area. Now if these aren't forms of local government, I don't know what they are.

It's also been suggested in the course of debate on this legislation that the three most vital portions of the bill that must be of gravest concern to all members of the Legislature have to be Section 7, Section 8 and that section which appoints a commissioner, someone who is not directly responsible to the Assembly.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the Civil Liberties Sub-Section of the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch would point out Section 7 and Section 8 as being areas of sufficient concern to that organization that they would ask the government to hold passage of this bill until an opportunity was had to determine the full force and effect of Bill No. 55 and, further, to determine whether the said Bill No. 55 should be assented to in its present terms.

Those are comments, Mr. Speaker, not from the Independent Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc, not from the Member for Spirit River-Fairview, not from the 25 Social Credit members in the House, but from the Civil Liberties Sub-Section of the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch.

It's been pointed out on several occasions that there has been a wide amount of editorial comment as far as this bill is concerned. We also, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, proposed a number of what we considered to be very realistic amendments. Without exception, Mr. Speaker, those amendments were defeated. After the hon. the Premier had indicated that a cabinet minister was not acceptable in any way, shape or form, those amendments included at least guaranteeing some local input in the form of a people's services commissioner, in the form of some stipulations as far as advisory committees were concerned, and other members had additional amendments which were also good amendments. The fact is that the government had made up its mind. It wasn't prepared to listen to amendments from whence they came. It wasn't prepared to listen to requests to deal with this particular kind of legislation, whether they came from inside the Legislature or outside the Legislature.

I'm under no illusion, Mr. Speaker, that after nine hours of debate in committee, and moving amendments; after I believe it was almost two days of debate as far as second reading was concerned, the government, regrettably, isn't going to change its mind at this particular time as far as this bill is concerned.

I think it's easy for someone across the way to say, agreed. But just before they say agreed too quickly, I would suggest that once again they think very, very seriously about the request to hold this legislation until the fall so there is an opportunity to have a much broader input than there has already been.

If it's the decision of the government to move ahead today on this legislation in third reading, despite the comments that have been made both inside and outside this Assembly, then, in fact, I see this as a black day as far as the province of Alberta is concerned.

It will be rather interesting to see and hear the responses and reactions of people from other parts of the world who come to see Alberta's tar sands, Alberta's oil sands, and find out that in the great country of Canada we have thrown out local government in one-eighth of the province of Alberta. We have thrown out the legislation approved by the Legislative Assembly and we have resorted to executive rule by the cabinet.

MR. NOTLEY:

I don't welcome the opportunity to take part in this debate. Like many members, I had hoped that, over the course of the last few weeks, the government would have given serious consideration to the concerns expressed both in this House and without and would at least have considered holding the legislation over until the fall session.

Mr. Speaker, no one in this Assembly fails to recognize the need for coordination of government activity in the oil sands region. That is not the dispute. The dispute in this Legislature and in the province is whether or not the government requires legislation which has such sweeping powers, as it probably constitutes one of the most dangerous pieces of legislation ever put before any legislature in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation in saying that I am going to oppose this legislation on third reading as I did during second reading and in the committee stage.

There are a number of very serious implications, Mr. Speaker, in Bill 55. One of the greatest concerns I had, as I listened to the debate and as I read over the bill, was that there is really very little effective accountability incorporated in this legislation. Oh, the minister can point out, as he did during second reading and also during committee stage, that the commissioner will meet with the cabinet once a month and that during the estimates of the Department of Municipal Affairs the subcommittee will have an opportunity to grill the commissioner.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, this isn't effective accountability at all. At best, it's accountability after the fact. When you consider the multitude of decisions this individual is going to have to make, the suggestion that somehow a busy cabinet meeting once a month or a legislative subcommittee meeting once year can, in any meaningful way, make that individual accountable is just complete and total nonsense. We don't have effective accountability, Mr. Speaker. In my judgment that is one of the major defects in this legislation.

It seems to me that what the government has to do and what they have failed to do, Mr. Speaker, is not to point out that there is a problem in the oil sands region. Everybody in Alberta recognizes that. But they have to point out why it is necessary to take this route, why other options aren't possible.

During second reading debate and again in committee stage, we had many points raised, but they were points about the problems in the area. But no one on that side of the House clearly demonstrated why it was necessary to appoint a super czar with super powers in order to resolve the problems. Just simply reciting the problems, Mr. Speaker, is not a justification for the members of this Legislative Assembly to pass legislation which has

such potential for arbitrary and dictatorial abuse of power. And so, Mr. Speaker, as I view it, the government has failed to make the case for 'Bill 55.

There are many other dangers in this legislation, the danger of back room deals. I am not suggesting the person they are appointing is going to be that kind of individual. But I do say that when you have the kind of closed door, back door, back room proposition, which inevitably will result with this legislation being passed, the possibility for corruption, the possibility for abuse of power is far greater than where you have an open, accountable situation. So, Mr. Speaker, that is another concern I must express on third reading of this bill.

The Leader of the Opposition has already discussed the impact on local government; the section, where, if local government - the town board, the separate school board, the public school board in Fort McMurray - doesn't agree to surrender any or all of its powers to the commissioner, the commissioner can go to the Lieutenant Governor in Council and get those powers. This is rather a sad commentary, Mr. Speaker, on the performance of a party which, during the last provincial election, talked incessantly about the need to protect the rights of local government in this province.

There is also, in my judgment, the more serious danger, the more grave danger to civil liberties in the section which permits the commissioner, with the consent of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, to vary or to change statutes which have been passed by this Legislature. Mr. Speaker, this provision, this section of the act, strikes at the very heart of our parliamentary system, which is the supremacy of parliament, the supremacy, in this case, of the Legislature. It is in my judgment not something which we can lightly surrender.

Mr. Speaker, in asking us to surrender that power to the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the government has to make a much better case than they have made to date. They have to make that case not only to this Legislature, but they have to make that case, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Alberta as well.

We find, too - and this is alarming - that there has been very little input into the decision to proceed with this legislation. We find, too, that there is a good deal of local opposition to it. The minister, when he discussed this during committee stage, pointed [out] with some pride that the local chamber of commerce had passed a resolution supporting Bill 55. He forgot to point out that one of the amendments, very similar to an amendment proposed in this House, was defeated by the margin of 15 to 13. He went on to cite the local newspaper supporting Bill 55. But on the other side, Mr. Speaker, we have just learned this week of a petition which was taken in just two and one-half short days. Some 625 residents of Fort McMurray signed the petition opposing Bill 55.

Mr. Speaker, we have already heard the concern which has been expressed by groups in this province - the Civil Liberties Sub-Section of the Alberta Branch of the Canadian Bar Association. The Business and Professional Women's Association has also, at its meeting, passed a resolution condemning the provisions of Bill 55.

We have then, Mr. Speaker, a dangerous bill which, in my view, must be opposed by every Albertan who values the democratic process. I want to say that this is not a bill which the government can claim was really foisted upon them by civil servants, that the civil servants have developed this kind of policy and they are acting as innocent lambs in the process. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the truth is exactly the opposite. The civil servants' report, which was an excellent analysis of oil sands development strategy, looked at this alternative, specifically ruled it out as a viable option and suggested instead an integrated approach, but one which is more in keeping with our democratic style of government.

Mr. Speaker, the final comments I want to make relate not to a concern that there is a conspiracy afoot here, that somehow the government is composed of evil people who are going to ram this bill down our throats for some nefarious purpose. That is not the issue here at all. I have no doubt about the integrity of the minister, no question about the concern of the government. But I do fear any move which, in the interests of getting the job done, throws our democratic traditions out the window. Whether that is brought in by well-meaning people or whether it is brought in by people who have ulterior motives is irrelevant. The net result is the same.

And what perhaps is even more serious is that when you have a pattern developing, people have to question that pattern. We have seen examples, Mr. Speaker, in this Legislature where the government has brought in legislation which allows cabinet the right to vary legislation passed by the Legislative Assembly. It is not good enough, in my judgment, to argue that this kind of thing has been done in the past; the Social Credit government did it with X bill and Y bill and so on. That is not an argument. You know, two wrongs never make a right. The point which has to be made is why this government requires this kind of legislation. And the pattern of development, as I mentioned a moment ago, is the thing which concerns me.

Gradually we see a government, Mr. Speaker which is taking more and more authority into its own hands, which is relegating the Legislature to little more than a rubber stamp and in the process as the Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc pointed out in the committee stage of the debate is drifting dangerously close to the presidential concept of government. Mr. Speaker I think a good many Americans sometimes wonder now whether that is the right course. I have no question that it is the wrong course for Canada.

Mr. Speaker, in summary, Bill 55 is a bad piece of legislation. Despite the efforts which have been made to amend it, the government has refused to consider those amendments. And now, Mr. Speaker, they must accept the full responsibility for an outrageously arbitrary dictatorial piece of legislation which is not in keeping with our democratic traditions of government.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. BENOIT:

I only intend to speak once this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, but what I'll say applies in principle to four or five of the bills that have been passed which I have voted against. I wanted to say, if only briefly, there is a principle involved in this bill that I feel very strongly needs to be opposed if we're going to maintain the exercise of democracy, maintain the authority and supremacy of the Legislature and retain the equality of the representatives who come to this Legislature on both sides of the House.

If we're going to uphold the traditional freedom and free enterprise of our country, I feel that we cannot permit legislation to pass which gives the cabinet and individual ministers authority which supercedes that which has been given by the Legislature as a whole. There is no way we can pass legislation that will permit a cabinet or ministers, or others, to make regulations which can override the legislation and statutes which have been passed in this Legislature and say that we are doing the right thing. If we are going to maintain this supremacy, we must do it rigidly.

I do not like to have to do this kind of thing because I always hope that our democratic system will continue to function and that we will do everything we can to jealously guard the freedom we have. It is argued that the end justifies the means, but, Mr. Speaker, no matter how good the end is, if the means are going to open the door to the destruction of our freedom or provide licence in the future for the destruction of our democratic system of government, then I say that no end justifies the means.

For that reason I feel compelled in this bill, as I have in others this afternoon - and it is unfortunate in my opinion that there are as many as there are this session to which Royal Assent will be given - I feel compelled to vote against the bill in this third reading and to say that if we're going to guard the freedoms of the people of our country and the supremacy of this Legislature, it's essential that we stand up and be counted in this respect.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I concur with the remarks made by the previous three speakers. I doubt very much whether this government is really pleased with this type of legislation. Certainly some hon. members on that side must have had some grave doubts about whether this is the only way to go. Certainly one would not deny the fact that there are perhaps other ways to handle this problem. Perhaps much more serious problems than this have been handled without [giving] such overriding powers to the Executive Council.

I raised this issue before and I'll very briefly raise it again. There is a difference between delegation of authority by this legislation and perhaps abdication of legislative power. It's a question of fact. I believe that when the body has the right to add to legislation or to suspend legislation we are certainly treading awfully close to handing over the responsibilities of this body to the cabinet. In particular when you say that they can add, they can, in fact, legislate.

I know there are many, many opinions on this particular point, but I believe there is a fine line between broad delegation of authority and abdication of what we are here for. I believe it is a convenient way of doing it, but the hon. members on that side did not attempt to show that this is a situation so urgent that we do not dare go any other way, that they feel they might have better control of the situation by proceeding with one commissioner. That might well turn out to be the case. Even now, under this legislation, they do not assure us that this is going to turn out exactly the way the government wants it.

So for those reasons I express serious concern about the need to go this way and particularly some disappointment over the fact that the hon. members on that side have, in a very short time in office, reversed their concern about the supremacy and the true worth

of this Assembly. There were a lot of champions of the cause of the supremacy of the Legislature on that side just a short time ago. Immediately they got into office, Mr. Speaker, they reversed their position. That is an unhealthy sign because it indicates that this government will move in an expedient way. Let the democratic principles sort of fall by the wayside. If it's expedient and they can get away with it, they will ram this thing through with their majority.

I've often admired some hon. members on that side for being concerned about too much government by regulation, too much government by the Executive Council and not enough input by the Legislative Assembly. What has happened to that? Certainly there is at least one person on that side who has the courage of his convictions; to stand up and say, I really don't believe this is the best. But those are serious concerns, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that this government will be hard-pressed in the not too distant future to justify this drastic type of action.

I have had communication with some representatives in Ottawa and the war measures legislation came into discussion. There is no such situation here. We are remiss in letting this thing go through without showing that there is just simply no other way, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HENDERSON:

I don't know whether I can think of some adjectives dastardly enough to describe the contents of this act, Mr. Speaker, but I'll try, in case we haven't covered all of them.

The only real reason I'm rising to my feet to speak, Mr. Speaker, is to go on record with the fact that I supported the bill at second reading in principle, in recognition of some of the unusual problems that the government is going to face. I did express some reservations at that time about the manner in which the bill was drafted and the manner in which the power would be utilized and accounted for.

I don't think it was unreasonable at all, Mr. Speaker, that the Opposition should call upon the government to convincingly demonstrate publicly the need for such unusual powers. Therein I think lies the failure of the government in this regard. They may well need the powers. But I must confess, Mr. Speaker, that I could not find any convincing arguments in any of the answers given in committee study of the bill. In fact, as I said even in second reading at that time, I thought the government had lost some ground on the part of the minister even when he moved the bill at the time of second reading. I think the government continued to lose ground and credibility as examination of the bill continued in committee. I don't intend to repeat what others have said but, very clearly, it was a mistake on the part of the government to try to justify the bill with the argument that there is no local authority in the area, because there very well is.

I suggest it was a mistake on the part of the government to try to publicly convince the members of the House and the public that there were precedents in the province of Alberta for these extenuating powers, because the government failed to do that. There are no precedents in this province where power has been granted to the closed chambers of Executive Council to rewrite provincial statutes and, by executive decree, delegate the execution of those powers to an individual as opposed to the local authority which would normally exercise those powers.

I think it was a mistake on the part of the government to try to say that this man is not a czar or a dictator - the words are undoubtedly extreme. Nonetheless, it was a mistake to try to argue that the man was a coordinator when it's in the bill, Section 7(2)(a)(iii) that the commissioner once appointed and functioning can "... by his signature alone ..." execute documents which will bind the people of that area to long-standing commitments and bind the people of the province of Alberta to long-standing commitments.

Obviously the powers go way beyond the definition of a coordinator. I must confess I never did figure out what a coordinator was. I never could figure out whether a coordinator sits between two expeditors or an expeditor sits between two coordinators. But I'm quite certain I've never heard of anyone trying to apply the word "coordinator" to an individual who would have the executive powers that are delegated to this particular individual in this act.

So I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that I know the government is unable or unwilling to demonstrate publicly the need for these powers. Had they done so, Mr. Speaker, I think I could with a clear conscience have voted in favour of the bill. But since they have not, I think in view of the far-reaching precedent that is contained in the bill, it is incumbent upon all members to seriously consider the merits of the bill. I have to join the other speakers in suggesting the government itself should reconsider whether it has to have the powers contained in this bill in order to get the job done.

The fact that the government may come back after the fact and say, well, look, what were you hollering about, we didn't really abuse them, I think is somewhat secondary to

the basic question of asking for extenuating, broad sweeping powers, which I think are contradictory to the principles of democratic government. It's of little consolation to come back a year or two later and say we didn't use them. What concerns me is not that the government is necessarily going to exercise unintelligently the authorities which are granted to it under the act. What concerns me is the fact that the government has tried to justify what has preceded this act in the form of The Human Resources Development Authority Act, The New Towns Act, The Northern Development Act and so on, and used those arguments to justify the unprecedented weakening of the powers of the Legislature contained in the bill.

It is exactly that issue which gives me concern for the future. Once this bill is on the statute books - and it has not been convincingly demonstrated publicly that the government had to have these extraordinary powers to carry out its objectives - it's a simple step to go one step further another time.

I have to say also, Mr. Speaker, that my concern over the bill grew when I witnessed the attitude the government displayed in putting the bill through committee. Because I suggest that was a mistake. We witnessed government members, including cabinet ministers, setting up straw men and shooting them down before the Opposition had really got into the discussion in detail in the committee. It displayed to the Legislature, and I think the public, that come hell or high water the government had made up its mind, behind closed doors in caucus, that they were going to shove this bill through the House and that was it.

Obviously when a government approaches a bill of this type with that attitude it demonstrates, it leaves the impression that it views the Legislature as nothing other than a rubber stamp. I must say, Mr. Speaker, when that attitude has become apparent, or certainly impressions have been made in that regard, it is of little consolation to have a clause in the act that the House is going to have the opportunity of verifying any changes in legislation after the fact. When a government is not prepared to allow an objective examination of the legislation before the fact, certainly it makes an academic, useless exercise out of a proposition to examine it after the fact. So my concerns increased as the bill went on through committee.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I have to say I think the government may very well need the powers in the bill. I do not think they have effectively, publicly demonstrated the need for those powers. It concerned me further when I heard a cabinet minister suggest that in interfering with the cabinet's right to rewrite a provincial statute was an effort to usurp or interfere with the prerogatives of cabinet. That bothered me no end, Mr. Speaker, because I think the shoe is on the wrong foot. Very obviously the cabinet has only the powers granted to it by this Assembly and not vice versa.

So I have to say, Mr. Speaker, in total, I think the government made some very serious errors in political judgment in the manner in which they handled the bill. They have signally failed to demonstrate publicly the need for the extensive powers in the act. They raised many doubts in the minds, I think, of all members on this side and I'm sure many people in the public at large as to the 'worthwhileness' of reviewing the exercise after the fact.

In light of this, Mr. Speaker, I have to suggest the government, by virtue of the fact that it has not convincingly demonstrated the need for the powers in the bill, and the dangerous precedent that's contained in the bill and the easy effort that will be involved to take the next step beyond it, compels me, Mr. Speaker, to say that I cannot support the bill. I was mistaken in my judgment at the time of second reading and I do not believe it is in the best interests of the people of Alberta now or in the long-term future to vote for the bill.

It took the peoples associated with British government hundreds of years to win the powers from monarchs to draft legislation in some way, shape or form through the democratic political process, to have something to say about their own destiny. I suggest we are moving backwards, Mr. Speaker, when we now turn around and delegate those powers back to an Executive Council behind closed doors to once again start drafting legislation that has not first received the scrutiny of the public and receives the endorsement of the public prior to the fact.

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I have, of course, no intention of repeating all the arguments that have already been given this afternoon, except to say that I agree with everything that has been said by the speakers who have spoken before me.

However, I have to say that I haven't been convinced that this bill is the only way to accomplish the things that have to be done in northeastern Alberta. I am not even convinced that it's the best way. The only arguments we heard from the government side of the House during the debate on second reading and during the committee stages were really confessions from the government of its shortcomings in the area that had taken place up to

now. Although they asked for suggestions, they were obviously not prepared to accept any and they didn't. I think we made some useful suggestions, although we were handicapped in that we had to make them within the framework that had been established.

We can only hope, Mr. Speaker, that the debate on the bill will serve at least to steady the hand of the government as they implement this legislation, and when the commissioner is appointed he will take cognizance of the fact that there are some pitfalls, we have pointed them out. If the attitude is correct then possibly the job that has to be done can be done. However, I hope that the attitude of the commissioner will not be that of the minister who piloted this bill through the House and that he will adopt a more diplomatic attitude. Because the decisions he is going to have to make are going to be hard to take by the people of northeastern Alberta on many occasions. The way they are presented is going to be very important, probably more important than the decisions themselves.

I will oppose the legislation, as I have stated, but I want to assure the government that I will, in my capacity, cooperate with everything that is going to be done and hope to try to make the legislation work. Since it's going to be the best we have, then I will certainly not be in the position of trying to obstruct it in any way or obstruct the work of the commissioner.

I will, however, be watching what the commissioner does. I realize there is very little effective way of opposing what he does, but whatever means there may be, we will certainly use them if, in our opinion, of course the decisions that are made are wrong and the method [by] which they are arrived at are wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to assure the government that I will cooperate in my capacity and try to make the legislation work.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I want to make my position clear as the elected member for the constituency of Drumheller. As I said in first reading, I support a one-man commissioner. In my view, a one-man commission or commissioner can get the job done much faster. Without going into the arguments I gave before I think a one-man commissioner can do an excellent job. If a man is dishonest, he will be dishonest whether he is on a one-man commission or a three-man commission. I think we have to assume that the man is going to be honest and that he is going to do the job for which he is appointed. In my view ...

MR. SPEAKER:

I must draw to the hon. member's attention the present position of the clock.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move the clock be stopped.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, is there unanimous consent?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The movement of the clock henceforth will be an illusion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It's still going.

MR. TAYLOR:

In my view, the situation in the northeast part of Alberta requires fast and accurate work, a vast amount of planning and, in my view, a one-man commission is the way to do it.

The second point I would like to make is that I believe there is responsibility and accountability. If I felt otherwise I could not support the bill. When a cabinet appoints a man, surely that man is responsible to the cabinet. The cabinet is responsible to the Legislature both in responsibility and accountability. In my view, the cabinet is being held responsible and accountable and they must answer for the actions of the man. Consequently, in my view, there is accountability and responsibility.

The third point I'd like to make is that I believe a commissioner who is worth his salt will work closely with local authorities and the local people. He should be most active and most anxious to get input from the people, and then to recommend policies that will solve the problems facing the people there.

For those reasons I am supporting the third reading of Bill No. 55. I want to reiterate that I violently oppose Section 8 of the bill. I urged the government, in second reading, to remove this. There is far too much disrespect for law throughout our country now. When we give authority to people in high places to vary, to make inapplicable, to change and to add to law, then we simply make our people who are not in high places feel that the law is for the rich and there is a law for the poor.

I think it is wrong for any government to take unto itself powers to change, vary, make inapplicable and add to the law as written. I believe, as I've said before, that the government is making a very serious mistake. In my view this commissioner and the government could have faced the problems in northeast Alberta and said, we are going to [deal with] them within the law. If we can't [deal with] them within the law we will change the law. The law that's applicable in northeast Alberta will be applicable everywhere else in the province of Alberta. I think the government would have placed itself in a strong position had it taken that stand and wiped out Section 8 of the bill. I violently oppose Section 8, but I support the balance of the bill. Consequently I am voting in favour of the third reading of Bill No. 55.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. RUSSELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate very much the last comments we have heard. I know there has been extensive debate on this bill. It's a very serious one and it carries a great deal of responsibility with it. I believe that the speakers who have preceded me have outlined very well points for and against, having concern about the bill. I must say, as the minister responsible for the bill, that at the present time I have to have a positive attitude about it. I believe that the potential for the commissioner and his office in meeting the challenges and the opportunities in the oil sands region is rather significant. If we are successful in getting the right person, if the local people continue to show the spirit of cooperation toward the concept of this commissioner which they have to date, since the bill was introduced, it will probably be successful.

I don't pretend to say that this is the only way this could possibly have been done. I don't know of any member of the Legislature who could say that about any piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. But I think it is a very logical and good way of getting things done. Certainly the need for this kind of office has been demonstrated - I submit very strongly - over the past two and a half years of experience, and particularly over the last winter in Fort McMurray and the surrounding region, especially since the day on which Syncrude announced it intended to proceed.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would only ask the hon. members to do one thing - and I think it's very straightforward - and that is to put aside for a few moments the emotional arguments that have been presented and examine the facts. Now, the facts are that we're dealing with a region that although it contains about one-eighth the area of the province, contains slightly more than 1 per cent of the population. As a result of that, there is very little organized government with the experience, facilities or means to cope with the pressures and challenges that are going to be placed before it. Insofar as the bulk of the region is concerned, it's what is referred to in Alberta as an improvement district. It has no elected government. The only elected person it has speaking or working on its behalf is the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

If you then go to the new town of Fort McMurray and examine The New Towns Act - and I'd like members to consider this, what could be done and what we're proposing - under the existing New Towns Act, it would be possible to appoint seven employees of the Sun Oil Company living in New York City to carry out all the functions and responsibilities and have all the authority of an elected council. If you read The New Towns Act, you'll also find out that by order in council ...

MR. LUDWIG:

Would the hon. minister permit a question?

MR. RUSSELL:

When I'm finished.

MR. LUDWIG:

What are the possibilities under this act?

MR. RUSSELL:

When I'm finished.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Sit down.

MR. RUSSELL:

I know the facts disturb the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View. He's not usually very interested in them.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, that's a lot of nonsense.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Sit down.

MR. RUSSELL:

But I'm saying what could be done under existing legislation. We could appoint ...

MR. LUDWIG:

... [Inaudible] ...

MR. RUSSELL:

I'm going to tell you if you're interested.

MR. LUDWIG:

Tell us please.

MR. RUSSELL:

We could appoint seven employees of a foreign-based company living outside the country who would have all the authority of a local elected council. They would have the authority to come to cabinet and, by order in council, have any regulation or any provision of any act in the statutes of Alberta not recognized or suspended in order to carry out their wishes or desires. I don't think that's a very good way of proceeding.

We said in the House that we would hope that the elected board of Fort McMurray would continue in office. In fact, since the introduction of this bill, some citizens have evidenced their interest in running for elected office and working with the commissioner. I believe that this bill which establishes the accountability and the responsibility of the commissioner, as the hon. Member for Drumheller outlined; the method by which he can work with an elected town board in Fort McMurray; the 12 specific acts that may have to have alterations to them by way of regulation and then brought back to the Legislature at the next ensuing session, is a far better system than what we could do without even bringing the act in. Those are the facts.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to conclude by saying that I'm confident from the people we have interviewed to date that there are several Canadian citizens of excellent reputation willing and eager to take this job - with the right spirit, with a cooperative town board in Fort McMurray, with interested citizens serving on a local advisory committee and with the support of a government that is interested in seeing services for people provided in the best possible manner as industry develops in the oil sands region of Alberta.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I wanted [to ask] a question of the hon. minister. He indicated what could have been done before. What are the limitations and what can be done under this act at the present time? What are the limitations on the powers of the commissioner?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is clearly asking for a legal opinion, not a matter of fact or information.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put another question to the hon. minister. How can he expect a commissioner to be responsible ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Out of order.

MR. LUDWIG:

The question is in order, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

No, no.

MR. LUDWIG:

Why not? I haven't started, already they're yapping ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is entitled to be heard in silence.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, how can one expect a commissioner to be responsible and accountable to the Legislature when we've had a display of irresponsibility by the government?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Out of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is clearly asking a rhetorical question in the form of continuing the debate.

[Mr. Speaker declared the motion carried. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung.]

[Three minutes having elapsed, the House divided as follows:

For the motion:

Adair	Doan	Jamison	Peacock
Appleby	Dowling	King	Purdy
Ashton	Farran	Koziak	Russell
Backus	Fluker	Lee	Schmid
Batiuk	Getty	Leitch	Stromberg
Chambers	Ghitter	Lougheed	Taylor
Chichak	Hansen	McCrae	Topolnisky
Cookson	Harle	McCrimmon	Trynchy
Copithorne	Hohol	Miller, J.	Warrack
Crawford	Horner	Miniely	Young
Diachuk	Hunley	Moore	Yurko
Dickie	Hyndman	Paproski	Zander

Against the motion:

Anderson	Cooper	Hinman	Ruste
Barton	Dixon	Ludwig	Sorenson
Benoit	Drain	Mandeville.	Speaker, R.
Bouvier	French	Miller, D.	Strom
Buckwell	Gruenwald	Notley	Wilson
Clark	Henderson		

Totals: Ayes - 48 Noes - 22]

[Bill No. 55 was read a third time.]

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, isn't the hon. Premier going to stand up and say, long live the republic.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

Bill No. 56 The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Amendment Act, 1974

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move for third reading Bill No. 56, The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Amendment Act.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I suppose by now some hon. members are wondering what I am doing standing up again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. LUDWIG:

The real question ought to be, how is it that some hon. members in this House are not standing up and speaking for their constituents, Mr. Speaker. That is the real problem.

I am saying this bill has brought what I refer to as inequality to many home-owners. The hon. minister had promised to give us some facts and figures as to what taxes people have paid and what they will be getting. As usual, a promise from a minister in this House isn't worth very much, Mr. Speaker. I didn't get any facts or figures. So, to that extent, I believe the minister is still indebted so far as his promise is concerned.

But I would like to know seriously whether some people under this legislation will be getting less money this year than they were getting under previous tax grants. If this is the case, we are remiss in moving in this way. It's possible I am wrong. It's possible nobody will get less than he got last year. But if anyone is getting less, we're penalizing the wrong people. I think we ought not to tolerate inequality in treatment of home-owners.

I'm saying that a lot of hon. members on both sides of the House have people in their constituencies who need some financial help. For anybody to stand up and say there is no poverty in this province just doesn't know enough to be in this House. There is poverty and many home-owners are hurting because of inflation. Because, perhaps, of being on fixed incomes they need help. I thought this legislation from this government would provide that help. But when I find that under this legislation some commercial ventures, some multi-million dollar apartment rental businesses will be getting much more than pioneer home-owners, then I am not at all in agreement with this.

I feel that some hon. members must have some concern about the fact that we are having a distribution of the general revenues of this province in an unequal and therefore unfair manner. Certainly some hon. members on this side of the House may disagree with me. This is not the kind of issue on which one would expect unanimity and, by the same token, Mr. Speaker, this is not the kind of issue where all hon. members on that side must be happy with it. There must be some concern by someone that perhaps those people on the lower level of income and wealth are going to get less.

For that reason, I would like to urge the hon. minister - who indicated this in his remarks previously - that the door is not closed for raising the bottom level of grants. You might call it a tax discount. What were we doing before? What was wrong in the distribution of the general revenue of this province to have need as one of the factors or the yardstick in distribution? When government taxes people it taxes because it needs revenue. When it gives the money back it can call it anything it likes. It can put it under any label it likes. You can't divorce the fact that we are distributing general revenue which came in through a source other than property. We are distributing this property unequally and I just will not become reconciled to the fact that we will be supporting legislation which will give more money to those who have more.

I'm surprised that there is not more concern on behalf of some of the Conservative members in this House, Mr. Speaker, who were preaching that they were a people's party. I believe they should drop that term. They are no more a people's party than any typical

capitalistic party. They are helping those who have more with more money. In this day and age, this should not be tolerated.

I know that some would want me to wind up. But the reason I am speaking, and I am determined to pursue this issue and present it to my constituents in the best way I can to indicate that this government says, well, we have money. We have many millions of dollars that we got rather easily. We're going to distribute them in such a manner that we'll try to make everybody happy. But when a certain segment of our society that needed help last year and the year before and got it by way of certain grants as high as \$200 - and this year some might get less - I don't think the minister can justify it. The only way he can bail himself out from this position is to stand up and say that the bottom level of grants under this scheme has not been determined.

I'm stating that \$350 as a minimum to every home-owner in Alberta is not too much, and that \$450 per home-owner for those who are receiving supplementary allowances in this province is not too much compared to what they were getting last year, the year before and the year before. I feel that it wouldn't take much discussion to convince a senior citizen and his spouse that they could buy more groceries four years ago for \$75 than they can today. It's one of their basic expenses. The Conservatives may well laugh because they are in office now, and a lot of their friends are perhaps better off, but the majority of the people in this province, Mr. Speaker, are not getting a fair deal out of the tremendous distribution of the wealth of this province.

Now it may be more logical to say, it's a tax reduction and if the rich are going to get richer and the poor poorer what can we do? When this government has the authority to do anything, [when] they can appoint a man who can virtually take over a great portion of this province and run it the way he wants - they can adjust these figures. It's hollow comfort for people, small home-owners of whom I have many in my constituency, for them to say, well, it's a tax reduction, sorry you don't qualify. We are giving money away by the sackful, you're not going to get very much, but we are helping you in some other way.

I'm saying it's time the hon. minister stood up and stated he will revise the figures and adjust them to the level I said. If he stands up and says we can't afford it, Mr. Speaker - if we can't afford to give the poor people more, we can't afford to go into this program.

As far as I'm concerned I shall continue on this vein. I'm not at all concerned that somebody might feel that I've been up on this before. I will be up many more times because apparently some of the hon. members opposite simply don't give a darn, Mr. Speaker. They will not speak one way or another. I would like to know if they went door to door in their constituencies and thought of the last election to find out how they are going to help them. Of course, they have helped them in little bits here and there, but when the major distribution of income is taking place in this province, I'm saying that I would much sooner support, if I were in government, the dividend system. We can't do any better than give every home-owner an equal share. There are others who are also entitled to share in the wealth of this province. One might say that what I'm saying does not take care of everybody equally, I don't think you ever can. But it would be a lot more equitable than what we are doing now.

One might stand up and say that multi-million dollar apartment corporations will pass the benefits on to the tenant. They will if they feel like it, Mr. Speaker, but I doubt whether they will. They've been waiting a long time to sort of edge up their rents because of inflation and already a lot of them have. A lot of the corporations, a lot of the owners of huge apartment blocks have already raised their rents. We're not helping the tenant.

I would much sooner the government declared - took the total sum of money and distributed it as a dividend. Maybe you don't like the word but call it what you may. The inequality of the thing we're doing now is obvious and I shall continue to oppose it. I believe a lot of the rate payers, a lot of home-owners are going to have something to say about this, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make two very brief comments on Bill No. 56. I make these comments as a result of a survey which has been done in a municipal jurisdiction, rural jurisdiction in central Alberta. These are concrete examples of what will happen in that particular jurisdiction. The mill rate involved was in the vicinity of 72 mills last year. The proposed mill rate this year is something in the vicinity of 93 mills. The 93 mills will take into consideration a very modest expansion in a road building program, that oiling for oiling programs have doubled, that labour costs have gone up 30 per cent and that gas, oil, antifreeze and repair prices have increased.

As I say, for a modest expansion in their road building program, they are considering the vicinity of 93 mills. The effect this will have on a person who is over 65 years of age - and these are all examples of a variety of farm situations within the jurisdiction

- who has seven quarter sections of land valued at \$5,000 a piece, last year that person paid \$1,440 in property taxes, this year he will pay \$2,376, a 64 per cent increase.

On the other hand, a person under 65 years of age who has the same seven quarter sections of land at the same value, assessed at \$5,000, will pay \$72.50 more tax this year than he did last year, or a 3.1 per cent increase. A person who has one quarter section of land in the same situation, assessed at \$5,000, will have a 64 per cent increase in his property tax this year. A farmer who has a half section valued at the same amount will pay \$175 more in property tax under those circumstances this year, which is a 34 per cent increase.

But it's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that a person who has nine quarters will pay 1 per cent more this year than he paid last year.

A person who has 11 quarters will pay \$10 less this year than he paid last year. So I pass these figures on, Mr. Speaker, to the minister, emphasizing the points that have been made by a number of members on this side of the House earlier during this session that, in fact, this program isn't going to give the kinds of benefits that have been alluded to both inside and outside the House.

I might also say that as far as this particular municipal jurisdiction is concerned, when they look at the administrative procedure that is outlined in Bill No. 56, in addition to the effects I have said this is going to have on the taxpayers involved, that particular jurisdiction indicates it's going to have to hire two more staff to handle the government's property tax reduction program.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 56 was read a third time.]

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried.]

No.	Name	Name
57	The Alberta Heritage Day Act	Schmid
58	The Department of Agriculture Amendment Act, 1974	Horner
59	The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 1974	Peacock
60	The Forests Amendment Act, 1974	Warrack
61	The Department of Public Works Amendment Act, 1974	Purdy
65	The Emergency Medical Aid Amendment Act, 1974	Crawford

PRIVATE BILLS

No.	Name	Moved by
1	An Act to Incorporate Alberta Motor Association Insurance Company	King
2	The Alberta Stock Exchange Act	Koziak
3	An Act to Incorporate The Calgary Convention Centre Authority	Ghitter
4	An Act to amend An Act to Incorporate The Canada West Insurance Company	Koziak
5	An Act to amend The Edmonton Community Foundation Act	Koziak
6	An Act to amend The William Roper Hull Home Act	Ghitter
7	An Act to Incorporate The Livestock Insurance Company of Canada Ltd.	Ghitter

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

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

Be it resolved that, when the Assembly adjourns for the summer recess, it shall stand adjourned until 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, October 23, 1974.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move that when the Assembly adjourns for the summer recess it shall stand adjourned until 2:30 o'clock, Wednesday, October 23, 1974.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, would all those in favour please say aye.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, His Honour The Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor will now attend upon the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER:

I might, just before His Honour comes in, draw attention to hon. members that this is the last sitting for which Mr. Graves, our Clerk Assistant, will be with us.

ROYAL ASSENT

[His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor entered the Legislative Assembly and took his place upon the Throne.]

MR. SPEAKER:

May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly has, at its present sittings, passed certain bills to which, and in the name of the Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

CLERK:

Your Honour, following are the titles of the bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

[The Clerk read the titles of all the above bills to which third reading had earlier been given.]

[The Lieutenant-Governor indicated his assent.]

CLERK:

In Her Majesty's name, His Honour The Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor doth assent to these bills.

HIS HONOUR:

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Mr. Premier, hon. ministers and members.

I'm not sure if this is constitutional or not, but men reach the age and the stage where they are inclined to take some licence - be a little reckless. Perhaps I've reached that stage. Nor am I sure that this would be very popular, coming at 6:20 p.m. at this late date in the session.

But there are just a few things I want to say. I want particularly to tip my hat for the last time to people in this House, people I admire very much.

It was 13 weeks ago today that we opened the session. It's been a long session. I think it speaks awfully well for the dedication of the elected people of this province when, at the end of 13 weeks, practically every chair in the House is occupied at this late hour of the day. I wonder if any Legislature, any House or elected body anywhere can show as good a record as that.

Inasmuch as it is 13 weeks ago today that we opened the House, this is an historic occasion in another respect. It has no relation whatever to my purpose for being here, but I can't overlook the fact that it was 100 years ago today that 217 rookie Mounted Police and officers and 244 horses left Toronto for the far West. This moment might be a sort of climax to a program which has been celebrated in the province for two years. There may be some significance in the fact that this session is terminating at this particular point.

My main reason for wanting to say just a word is by way of thanks to those who have made my sojourn in the office I've had the honour to occupy so very pleasant indeed.

This is the last time I'll be in this particular spot. I will lose none of my interest. Perhaps the next time I appear here I'll be in the gallery, where I have not been permitted to sit for eight and a half years. I'm not quarrelling with that principle or that rule. I believe in change, but still I think we should be very hesitant about throwing overboard the traditions which have been passed down to us. I think they can be examined in a time of change such as we're living in. We should indeed examine carefully and make sure we preserve the best of the past.

I leave office with a great sense of debt to the people with whom I've had the privilege of working in this building and throughout the province. I have many happy memories about the scouts, guides, veterans, the old people and the others. Nothing would give me any greater joy than thinking back to my associations with the members of government, the members of the elected bodies in this province.

I'll say again, and again, I have very great confidence, notwithstanding a popular pastime of criticizing elected people, that this province and this country have been very well served by the people who have been elected.

So I say thank you so much, Mr. Premier, members of the government, elected members all. And God bless.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:

Order!

[The Lieutenant-Governor left the Assembly.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move that this Assembly do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion for adjournment by the hon. Government House Leader, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Assembly stands adjourned until Wednesday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock on October 23, 1974.

[The House rose at 6:27 o'clock.]