

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, February 5, 1975

[The House met at 2:30 p.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege today regarding certain statements of the hon. the Premier on Friday, January 31, 1975 during the question period, and a contradictory statement made in the Legislature yesterday, Tuesday, February 4, 1975.

I refer first to page 230 of the Alberta Hansard of Friday, January 31, 1975 wherein I asked the hon. Premier: "... if the government has now received any or all of the assessment studies which they commissioned?" The hon. Premier replied, and I quote:

Mr. Speaker, we have not. We have, I think, received some draft or preliminary information, but not the studies. It probably will be during the course of next week or the week after before they are finalized.

Mr. Speaker, I contrast that with the statement made yesterday by the hon. the Premier when he said: "These assessments and evaluations were all received last week and have been carefully considered by the Alberta government."

Now my contention, Mr. Speaker, is that the hon. the Premier has either deliberately or inadvertently misled this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No, no.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, when last I ...

MR. SPEAKER:

There is some question as to whether the Chair can deal with this point raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow. I did in fact receive the notice of the question more than an hour before the opening of the sittings this afternoon. However, there was nothing included in the notice which would indicate which passages from Hansard might form the basis of the hon. member's allegations.

I would therefore suggest that although hon. members might wish to express themselves on the matter in a preliminary way this afternoon, it might be best if a notice giving particulars of the statements might be submitted which then could be considered, to be dealt with tomorrow afternoon.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the point raised by the hon. member, the facts are that we did have in our hands some of the drafts of the reports, but not the reports themselves. That was on Friday, I believe, that I was asked that particular question. During the latter part of Friday and on Saturday morning, the documents were received by the government, again some of them still in a draft form.

So if I can put it in a sequence of dealing with the four reports, my memory of the situation is this. With respect to the Foster report, we had received a draft of the Foster report on the Friday at the time I stood in my place in the Legislature, but it was not a final report. The final report was received on Saturday.

With respect to the Harries report, we had received it in draft. I believe I mentioned yesterday, we really still have it in draft, and have some finality we have to bring to it.

With regard to the Price Waterhouse report, we did not receive it until early Saturday morning; and with regard to the Loram report, we did not receive it until Saturday morning.

I think quite clearly both statements are accurate. On Friday at the question period we had not received the reports, other than one of them on a draft basis and the other on a partial draft basis. We received them all before the end of the week, and last I saw it, "week" ends on Saturday.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that you permitted the hon. Premier the opportunity of making a statement when the motion of privilege was not in fact proceeded with, I wish to also comment that ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Order please.

If we're going to get into a debate now on the question of privilege and then have another one tomorrow after the Chair has had a chance to check the texts, we'll be dealing with the same matter twice.

It would not appear to be inappropriate to permit an hon. member, placed in the position in which the hon. Premier has just been placed, an opportunity to make some explanatory statement.

There isn't anything in the Standing Orders which would require any hon. member under such circumstances to remain under any kind of real or supposed cloud while the matter was still pending. The matter is in fact still pending and my understanding of what the hon. Premier is saying is not that he is denying or agreeing that there's a point of privilege; he's merely explaining the statement on which the alleged point of privilege purports to be based.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, further to the comments I was making that you permitted the Premier to engage in a debate and you had stated that other members may make comment, I believe that the hon. Speaker is in fact now precluded from saying, well, we'll let the Premier get off the hook and weasel out of it but nobody can say anything.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order, order.

MR. LUDWIG:

Now is the time to deal with this and not ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Shame.

MR. LUDWIG:

You threw a block for the Premier, Mr. Speaker, and that's the position I take. I want the right to put my point of view across now as you permitted the Premier.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Shame.

MR. LUDWIG:

The Premier has not any special privileges in the House. And the hon. members can shout all they like ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Sit down.

MR. LUDWIG:

... but I think that when a minister stands in this House, or the Premier, he stands on his honor and we are entitled to take his statements at face value. Then when he comes out and weasels around and says, well I didn't mean that ...

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Order please. Order please.

The hon. member is not entitled to debate the point of privilege if there is one at this particular time. He may argue as to whether a certain course being followed in the House is correct, but he may not debate that point of privilege at the present time.

I would suggest to the hon. member that when he accuses another hon. member of weaselling, regardless of whether it happens to be the Premier or a minister or any hon. member - and I must agree with the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View that there are not special privileges in the Assembly - but when he uses that expression, the hon. member is simply compounding a situation which doesn't really require any compounding. I would invite the hon. member to deal with that expression further in such a way that it will not require to be dealt with further by the Chair.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I now rise on a point of order and I wish the privilege to speak under the same order, the same rule that permitted the hon. Premier to speak, whatever ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. That matter has been dealt with. We are now on the expression "weaselling".

AN HON. MEMBER:

Apologize.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Retract.

MR. LUDWIG:

The Speaker has ruled and I don't take my instructions from you.

[Interjections]

MR. HENDERSON:

Speaking to the point of order and the suggestion the Chair has made, I'd like to point out to the Chair, if he would check back, I think sometime earlier in the House the word was used by a member of the government side of the House directed towards myself and there was no such expression of concern forthcoming on that occasion.

I merely suggest to the Chair that if one wishes I will research the Hansard, but the word has been used previously. While I in no way particularly support the suggestions being made by the Member for Calgary Mountain View, there is a precedent in this House for the use of that particular word.

MR. SPEAKER:

With respect to the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc, the mere fact that an expression, which may or may not be appropriate, gets by the Chair on a certain occasion under some circumstances - sometimes I might say, because the expression hasn't been duly amplified by the sound system and heard by the Chair - that is really not a precedent that should be followed. As I think I have mentioned on previous occasions, in case of doubt the House should follow good precedents rather than bad ones.

I would respectfully ask the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View if he is prepared to deal further with the expression "weaselling", which in the opinion of the Chair is on a par with certain other expressions which hon. members sometimes utter in the heat of debate.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make another statement on a point of order that, although the Speaker makes rulings that may not be good precedents, the hon. members are entitled to rely on those rulings because then we will never know what the Speaker will do next.

I want to state that if the Premier is sensitive about the expression I stated, that he weaselled out of the situation, my statement is: I accede. That has to be accepted as a sufficient statement from me because the Premier was permitted a similar statement a couple of years ago, Mr. Speaker, as a precedent in this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

Would the hon. member please clarify what he is acceding to.

MR. LUDWIG:

I'd have to ask leave then to dig up a precedent and I'll let the hon. Speaker decide what the words "I accede" mean. Because one time, when I nailed the Premier for having been unparliamentary and having said, well, somebody was a master at distortion - I think you will recall that very clearly, Mr. Speaker - he had to back off and apologize. He got up and he said: I accede. Well, what's good enough for the Premier, Mr. Speaker, should be good enough for anybody.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Right.

MR. LUDWIG:

So I accede, and I'm not going to do any more about it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. I recall the occasion very clearly and if the hon. member would also like to recall it, what occurred was that the hon. member had asked the Premier specifically to withdraw the remark and the Premier then gave some answer which is the equivalent of "I accede" or "I agree". There has been no such request made, as far as I'm aware, to the hon. member on this occasion which would allow him to deal with the matter in those two words.

Would the hon. member, if he is going to deal with the matter further, do so as soon as possible - in other words now, because we're holding up the business of the House.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, in that regard you stated just this very moment that no request has been made to me to make any statement; therefore I should not be obliged to make any statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The request is from the Chair.

MR. LUDWIG:

Is the Chair asking me to withdraw the statement or to make some kind of statement, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair did not use that exact expression, wanting to deal with the matter perhaps in a more indirect way, but if that's what the hon. member is waiting for, then I ask him to withdraw that remark.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, could I do it this way, which might satisfy the Premier's ego. I used the word "weasel" and I will then change the meaning. I did not really intend it to be that harsh, but it was the easiest word that came to me under the circumstances. It means that someone has an opportunity to get out of a situation. So I will change my words to mean that the Premier took advantage of your generosity to get out of a situation which he was in, Mr. Speaker. I will take back the word "weasel", but the meaning was a little milder than the word "weasel".

MR. SPEAKER:

Perhaps we could consider the matter closed and proceed with the business of the Assembly.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 203 The Privacy Act

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill No. 203, The Privacy Act.

The bill stipulates: it is illegal to eavesdrop, watch or spy either by sight or sound on a person, or listen to or record a person's conversation, or use the name or imitation of a person's voice for advertising or promotion, or use a person's letters, diary or other personal documents without the consent of the person or the legally assigned authority. The bill also provides exceptions in order to permit the courts, press and law enforcement officials to operate.

[Leave being granted, Bill 203 was introduced and read a first time.]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you and to the Assembly, some 30 enthusiastic young students from St. Vincent School, Grade 5, in the constituency of Edmonton Glenora. They are accompanied by their teacher, Ms. Walusko. They are in the public gallery and I would ask at this time that they rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure for me to introduce someone from my district, but especially if they come from near my home town. Today we have eight members of the local NFU, Local 1260, from New Norway and I will ask them to stand and be recognized by this Assembly.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly today, some 61 students from Woodcroft School in my constituency. They are from Grade 4 which is now studying the Province of Alberta, and from Grade 5 which is undertaking a study of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Mr. Speaker, they are accompanied by their teachers, Ms. Frick and Mr. Chinneck. I would ask them to rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. TRYNCHY:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and to the members of the House, some 32 Grade 10 students from the Niton School. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Hansen, and their bus driver, Mrs. Huggins. I would like to commend them on their interest in local government, and on coming out on such a cold day. They are in the public gallery and I would ask them to rise and be recognized by the House.

TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table the annual report of the Department of Lands and Forests dating from April 1, 1973 through March 31, 1974. We shall make sure there are copies for all hon. members delivered to the Clerk's office for distribution.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I have three or four tablings for information of hon. members today. The first is required under Section 17 of The Financial Administration Act. The second is remissions and write-offs as required under The Financial Administration Act. The third is under The Self-liquidating Projects Act; the fourth, under The Co-operative Marketing Associations Guarantee Act; the fifth, under The Municipal Capital Expenditure Loans Act.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the 23rd annual report under The Public Contributions Act.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Syncrude - Public Funds

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Premier regarding the announcement he made yesterday. It concerns limits that the Government of Alberta will be placing upon the various forms of commitment of public funds to the Syncrude project, namely in the area of equity, the area of loans, the costs of the pipeline and power plant.

I'd like to know what limits the government has placed on public commitment of funds, either in the form of loans or guarantees, and the cost of the power plant and the pipeline?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether I'd be repeating myself, but perhaps for clarification the position with regard to the extraction plant and related facilities is: the government's commitment in terms of risk equity is limited to \$200 million. In addition to that, it has an undertaking to enter in due course into an arrangement on a debt basis, secured with an assured income, of \$100 million each to Gulf Oil and Cities Service. So there would be \$200 million of equity and \$200 million of debt.

MR. CLARK:

Further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. As far as the commitment is concerned on the pipeline, the power plant and the commitment by the Alberta Energy Company, what is the maximum the government has placed in this area?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, it would be difficult to assess maximum limits. There are assessments that would be made. The original commitment of the Alberta Energy Company was for 80 per cent of the potential cost of financing the pipeline. Assuming the pipeline was to estimate at \$100 million, the Energy Company would be responsible for an additional \$20 million.

The Energy Company had been originally committed to financing 50 per cent of the power plant, so their additional commitment by way of debt for this revenue-generating position would be roughly \$150 million. And there are some additional obligations regarding housing.

As far as any additional obligations are concerned, they work out to about \$205 million. Of that, the very large portion of it is of course a fully secured income revenue basis. So the risk position of the government is still limited to the \$200 million.

Fort McMurray Housing

MR. CLARK:

Further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is it the intention of the government, through the Alberta Housing Corporation, to make available to a company associated with Syncrude up to \$100 million as far as housing is concerned in Fort McMurray, on a loan basis?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that's the arrangement. I think the arrangement - and perhaps the Minister of Municipal Affairs may expand upon this - is to attempt to work out arrangements for housing for the citizens, as distinguished from the workers who were there, as distinguished from anything to do with Syncrude itself. If there is anything useful the minister can add to the situation as to the plan to provide housing in that area, it might be useful.

I think if I recall the way the question was made in terms of maximum commitment, I believe I responded in terms of estimated dollars. Of course on the risk investment basis by all parties involved in a project of this nature, it is a 10 per cent interest in the project. Of course that's something that as far as the government is concerned is a significant position relative to the Foster report.

MR. CLARK:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Is it the intention of the government to have the Alberta Housing Corporation make available up to \$100 million for housing in Fort McMurray for the Syncrude project? Will this money be made available through a subsidiary of Syncrude to individuals?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, the situation as it now stands is this: until about a year ago, Alberta Housing Corporation had been the only major land developer developing subdivisions in the Fort McMurray town area. It was also rapidly establishing a position as the primary lending agency for direct loans, but that's on a strict mortgage basis.

As a result of discussions we had with Syncrude, we agreed to let them act as a subdeveloper for us, and they set up a corporation called Northward Development. It's my understanding that they'd now like Alberta Housing Corporation to take back that farming out of the original subcontract, and at the same time continue to provide direct mortgage funds.

Syncrude - Public Funds (continued)

MR. BUCKWELL:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier on the loans to Gulf and Cities Service. In the explanation yesterday, I believe he said that should the costs go beyond the \$2 billion, it would be a percentage that the partners would pay and not extra dollars. So in these two loans of \$100 million, would these two companies come back on the provincial government for extra funds or just bear the \$100 million?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, that is an important question for clarification. No, that would not happen with regard to the convertible debentures. They are established at a maximum limit of \$100 million each. So if there was an overrun in the cost by the estimate beyond the \$2 billion, the partners, Cities Service and Texaco, would have to take up their share out of their own individual revenues. So there would be an upper ceiling on that. The provincial government as with the federal and Ontario government participation in the risk equity, there is not of course a limitation on the \$200 million. It's a 10 per cent participation as explained yesterday.

Loram Report

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Can the Premier advise the Assembly if and when the assumptions in the Loram report in particular will be tabled in the Legislature?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if there is any way, without breaching our agreement, that we can table anything further beyond the document that has been tabled involving conclusions and objectives.

Syncrude - Mannix Contracts

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct another question to the Premier. It deals with the report, especially the report done by Loram. I would like to ask the Premier if Mannix, a subsidiary of the Loram group, has any contracts with Syncrude at this time, or contracts as far as a pipeline or the power plant is concerned?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge they do not. They have had some involvement with the Great Canadian Oil Sands project but not with this one. But I would have to do some checking unless the Minister of Mines and Minerals can add to that.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. When the Premier is doing this checking, would he check especially as far as a bridge is concerned in the commitments already made by Syncrude?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm not acquainted with the contractual situation there, but if it involves the bridge - my basic understanding on that matter is that it is involved to a significant extent as a direct arrangement with the government. But I would have to check that question.

Loram Report (continued)

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question on the Loram report, and with the permission of the House I would just like a word or two of explanation. This is on page 1 of the report, Mr. Premier, and deals with the increase in the cost of the project. On the fourth line it says, including subsequent adjustments by Syncrude Canada Limited, and the figure totals \$1.53 billion.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier is: can he advise the Assembly of the size of the adjustments by Syncrude Canada subsequent to November 18, 1974?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. My understanding, subject to checking, is if the hon. member would continue to read the document, at the bottom of the page it refers as follows to:

Major additions to the Canadian Bechtel Limited estimates to cover preproduction costs, direct owner costs and working capital were made by Syncrude Canada Limited and presented in its report dated December 11, 1974. The additions, which amounted to \$516,623,000, have also been reviewed and were found to be within acceptable limits: however, it must be appreciated that the [Syncrude] additions were based on ... preliminary calculations. These raised the aggregate capital cost of the Mildred Lake Project and the Utility Plant to \$2,282,000,000.

So, Mr. Speaker, for the hon. member's benefit, to reach the \$2 billion approximately, it's the figure he referred to, together with the \$516 million figure at the bottom of the page.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, just a supplementary question for clarification. Perhaps this is getting too close on details, but my understanding is that the estimate of \$1.5 billion included subsequent Syncrude Canada adjustments. In other words, the adjustments are included in the figure of \$1.5 billion as opposed to the additions which are added in the clause cited by the hon. Premier.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, that's not my understanding, but it is certainly something I'd be prepared to check and report back to the House.

Syncrude - Private Investment

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Premier. I haven't had the opportunity of looking over all the documents, but I wonder if the hon. Premier could inform the House whether any of the governments, and in particular the Alberta government, would be able to sell any of their equity in Syncrude if private investors put forth an acceptable proposal?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, that was discussed and it was agreed that all participants, subject to the concurrence of the other parties, would be able to sell off, if you like, a portion of their investment provided it was not less than 5 per cent.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Cypress with a final supplementary.

MR. STROM:

My question would not be able to be answered in one supplementary, so I'd like to have it placed as a question if I may.

Hu Harries Report

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of the Syncrude report, or the Syncrude Impact Study, Hu Harries. While I haven't had a chance to digest it, I would just like to clarify the stamp that's contained inside. It says: WARNING: CONTENTS UNDER COPYRIGHT. DO NOT QUOTE OR REPRODUCE.

On the assumption this is a public report financed by the taxpayer, I would appreciate knowing the significance of that stamp.

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, that copyright was passed to the Province, and the Province, in tabling the report, has now made it public. So it is perfectly all right to use it.

MR. HENDERSON:

So do I conclude from that, Mr. Speaker, one can proceed to discuss the contents in and outside the House without fear of prosecution?

Bechtel Contract

MR. BUCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Premier. To his knowledge, is the Canadian Bechtel contract a cost-plus contract?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that in large engineering construction practice today, these contracts for engineering, design and management are pretty well always of that nature. There certainly are varying provisions. My understanding is that, to date at least, that has been the nature of the contract here, as it was in the Great Canadian Oil Sands project.

MR. BUCKWELL:

A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. What controls does the government know of that exist on this cost-plus contract?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, it's a specific question I have already raised with the participants and it was raised by other governments as well. I would presume in due course that matter would be reviewed and we would be pleased to report to the Legislature on the matter.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the hon. Premier also advise regarding Canadian Bechtel's contract. In addition to being a cost-plus contract, does it include bonus clauses?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'd have to take notice of that question and provide the member with some answers.

REA's - Power Takeovers

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to change the pace for a moment and direct a question to the hon. Minister of Telephones and Utilities, and ask the minister whether or not the government has considered legislation to freeze any further takeovers by the private power companies of rural electrification associations until an acceptable arrangement can be worked out between the companies and the union of REA's?

MR. FARRAN:

No, Mr. Speaker. The REA's are autonomous entities, masters of their own ship. Under our system they can vote as a board of directors or at a general meeting to do what they like with their assets.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In light of the resolution passed during the first session of this Legislature, has the government given any consideration to legislation, if necessary, to provide a central administrative agency for all the REA's in the province, separate and apart from the administrative services now provided by the power corporations?

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, in effect we have done that with the establishment of the rural utilities branch of my department.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Has the government made any decision with respect to legislation providing power at cost to consumers getting power from REA's?

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, there has been considerable controversy over the last 30 or 40 years in Alberta, anyway since the early '50s, over a definition of what is power at cost which is alleged to have been a verbal and not a written promise by the former regime to the REA's.

What we have done, Mr. Speaker, is to advance the proposition to the Public Utilities Board, to which they have agreed, to hold a special hearing on the whole subject of power at cost if the union of REA's should ask for it.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question for clarification. I take it from the hon. minister's answer there has not yet been a decision by the Public Utilities Board to hold this hearing, that it will have to require action by the union of REA's before the hearing is held?

MR. FARRAN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think that would be the position, that the Public Utilities Board could only act on a request from one of the parties involved.

Recreation Program - Grants

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation. It is with respect to the ministerial announcement, Friday last, on the new 10-year recreation program.

My question is: will a local authority be eligible to receive the full \$100 per capita of the full 10-year grant in the first year of the program?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, providing of course that at least 30 per cent of \$200 is allocated through a community organization or a service club, yes, they can apply for the full amount in the first year of the program - according of course to the number of people resident in the area at the time of application.

MR. FRENCH:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will it be possible for a local authority to defer receiving a grant for a number of years and then make application for the grant over that particular number of years?

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, certainly, of course, we expect and we know that most municipalities in Alberta are responsible and do their planning before they apply for funding under this program because after all it is a 10-year program. They are just as eligible five years, eight years or ten years down the road as they would be now.

Energy Corridor - Land Transfers

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of the Environment. Has any information packet regarding the energy corridor been developed and distributed to farmers whose land is located along the corridor between Fort McMurray and Hardisty?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, the consultants put together two documents which are freely available to anybody who asks for them. These documents were made public.

In regard to a pamphlet, the department is putting together a pamphlet which will identify all the conditions of sale as well as leaseback. This will be done in due course as land purchases during the establishment of the corridor is a long-term thing, and not something that will be done over a period of one or two years.

MR. SORENSON:

A supplementary to the minister. Could the hon. minister inform the Assembly of the progress of any negotiation between this government and owners of land along the corridor?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's question, unless the minister finds that it may be answered very briefly, would appear to be one that would be suited for the Order Paper as a question dealing with considerable detail.

MR. YURKO:

I think, Mr. Speaker, I can answer the question very quickly and simply.

A number of parcels of land were bought prior to November 7, 1974 and I can give the hon. member the acreages and the costs, I have them here with me. On November 7, I requested that all purchases cease. From then on, only those parcels that were spoken for with respect to the owner were carried through to completion, but no new negotiations were undertaken for any additional parcels of land after November 7, 1974.

Syncrude Plant Plans

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise if the plans and specifications for the Syncrude plant are now completed?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I believe the answer to that question in a project of this nature is that the basic design of the project has been completed for many months. But the nature of the engineering that's involved in a project such as this is ongoing and revisions are made from time to time. Certainly my experience is that there are revisions in these projects constantly and that they vary from significant to minor.

My understanding is that a fair portion of the engineering, somewhere in the neighborhood of 30 per cent, has been done in detail, which is normal in a situation of this nature in a multi-year project. But I'd have to check that information for the hon. Member for Cypress and report back.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question then. Would the Premier be in a position to advise the House as to the extent of purchase orders? I'm not thinking down to the finest detail, but the extent of purchase orders that have been made and whether or not down payments have been made on equipment?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to refer that question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, in the Price Waterhouse report, if the hon. member has it in front of him, it indicates that actual construction costs and preproduction expenses which were incurred - this was at the date of December 31, 1974 - totalled \$210,516,000. In addition to that figure, the commitments which might be indicative of purchase orders, in reply to the hon. member's question, outstanding at December 31, 1974 were approximately \$420 million.

Syncrude - Equipment Costs

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to either the Provincial Treasurer or the Premier. Has the government some individual or individuals who are examining the costs of equipment, the type of equipment, that is being purchased by the company or will be purchased by the company?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member could elaborate in terms of examination and in terms of the purpose he has in mind. There are three or four ways in which that examination may be made.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer the hon. Premier to the statement he made yesterday when I understood him to say to the House that the government would not necessarily be prepared to accept every cost presented to them by the plant; that a very close examination would be made. It is for this reason that I am posing my question as to who the individual or individuals would be who are making this assessment on costs.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, under the former arrangements, it would not have been our intention to proceed on that basis because what the position would have been is: when the accounting manual was established in terms of determining what the net profits would be for the project - to obtain the 50 per cent of the net profits by way of royalty to the government - then, as I explained yesterday, it would be a matter that the provincial government would have to agree that expenditures were in fact proper in relation to being charged to the capital costs of the project. It would not under those arrangements be something that would be of an ongoing nature, although there would be some general assessment of it from time to time, but not on a detailed basis.

However, under the circumstances of now being a direct participant of 10 per cent in the project, the situation is somewhat altered on two counts. There would be a continuation of the government in its position as the lessor under a royalty arrangement still not being prepared to accept costs charged against the project unless we felt they were validly charged. That would occur at or near the time the plant was completed and the first calculation made by way of net profit.

However, it would seem to me that under the existing circumstances of being a participant to the extent we are, and wearing a different hat relative to equity participation, following up the answer to the question from the hon. Member for Drumheller, it would certainly be our intention to keep an assessment during the course of the capital construction, because to that extent we would be a 10 per cent participant in any such costs that were in fact incurred.

So there would be an examination on that basis, but there would be the final examination, if you like, at the time the calculation of the capital costs are computed in relationship to the accounting manual to determine what the net profits in due course would be for the government by way of 50 per cent royalty.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary to the Premier. I am wondering if he could, at this time, advise the Legislature as to who has the direct responsibility of doing the work he has outlined to us at this particular time?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the arrangements in the position of the lessor, the arrangements we have established are that on an ongoing basis the Deputy Minister of the Office of Program Coordination, Mr. McFarlane, would have that responsibility.

But the ultimate decision in terms of whether or not a particular item was or was not agreed to by the Province of Alberta would be with the Deputy Provincial Treasurer, pursuant to the accounting manual.

Syncrude - Edmonton Research

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Premier. Would the Premier advise if Syncrude's Edmonton research project is part of the related facility in which the Alberta government is investing?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'd have to take that question as notice and check it.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. Premier advise now or later as to whether or not Atlantic Richfield, or ARCO, is still part of Syncrude's Edmonton research project?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I think that really is an illegal interpretation of arrangements between the partners.

Syncrude - Hiring of Personnel

MR. TAYLOR:

My question is also to the hon. Premier. With reference to employment, will all Canadians have an equal opportunity to get work at the Syncrude plant, or will Albertans and Ontario workers have some prior claim?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, certainly there is no undertaking or even discussion that Ontario residents would have any prior claim simply because they were participating. The effort has been made, and I think with some considerable success, to maximize the employment with regard to Canadian citizens. There is a special effort being made to try to involve, through the Department of Advanced Education and the Department of Manpower and Labour, Native people in the northeastern part of the province. That certainly will continue, and continue to accelerate.

I think I can say with regard to employment that with this project in the position it is now in and going ahead fully as we see it, we could be in the position of perhaps the only jurisdiction in North America in the next six months in a strong employment position.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary to the hon. Premier. Then workers from some of the provinces where the governments are making a lot of noise about this project could well find employment in this province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Right.

Syncrude - Mannix Contracts (continued)

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I do have some information ready that I might be able to answer with regard to the question by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I believe the Mannix Company has a contract with regard to the bridge.

MR. CLARK:

Further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the response from the Premier.

Earlier last week we asked about the report from the law firm of Macleod Dixon concerning the areas they were asked to look at. I wonder if the government would be prepared to reconsider its position. Last week the Attorney General said they wouldn't table the report from Macleod Dixon. Would the government be prepared to table that portion of the report from Macleod Dixon that deals with a summary of the commitments in excess of \$1 million?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think we are in a position to do that. If I understood the hon. member, perhaps there is another way that information could be made available to the question referring to the Price Waterhouse report and the summary there with regard to the outstanding commitments in excess of \$1 million.

My recollection of that situation is that one of the legal assessments being made was that in the event the project should not go ahead, what would have been the exposure that was involved, which I think at the moment is relatively redundant. But if the hon. member wants to approach the question in a different way to get the information, we will try to provide it for him.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, we will go the route of a motion for a return on it.

Syncrude - Pipeline and Power Plant

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Premier with regard to the pipeline and the power plant. Has the Alberta Government or the Energy Company determined the rates that will be charged for crude transportation in the pipeline?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, no, that would be the subject of negotiation by the board of the Alberta Energy Company and, of course, quite clearly it is an understanding that it is a cost-to-service basis. I think the history that we've had in this province and elsewhere with regard to pipeline financing, and also to utility power plant financing, shows that there is minimal, if not no risk, in this situation, a good income generation. It would depend to a large extent on the degree of leverage that we can place, or that the Alberta Energy Company can arrange relative to debt financing.

But if you can get in both situations the through-put contracts agreed to, the commitments with regard to the power and add on a cost-to-service basis and then establish that with a high debt leverage relationship, there is no question the Alberta Energy Company has two very attractive packages when it presents it to the potential shareholders in Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. Will the power plant service more than just the Syncrude project?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I believe I attempted to answer that question yesterday. My understanding is that this is a matter that is essentially designed for the one plant, but there is a potential in terms of design for expansion at a later date, and hence to serve a broader area of northeastern Alberta. But I believe that was one of the questions I was going to check and I will have to check and report back.

Syncrude Power Plant - Fuel

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. the Premier. Would the Premier advise what the government will be paying for the fuel for the power plant?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member repeat the question.

MR. WILSON:

Would the hon. the Premier advise what the government will be paying for the fuel to be used in the power plant?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, when you say "the government", the hon. member is perhaps not understanding this situation. The Alberta Energy Company will be involved in the power plant. It will be something they will be negotiating - both the cost of the fuel and the actual arrangements on the other side. Of course, as I mentioned yesterday, it could involve Alberta Power in addition to the Alberta Energy Company.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I want to address my supplemental on the question of the power generation for the project - the Alberta Energy Company is going to own the plant - as to whether the fuel is actually going to be coke, a residue from the plant, or is it going to be natural gas?

MR. FARRAN:

It will be natural gas, Mr. Speaker. Subsequent plants are being designed using coke. I think this one - it has been clear from the beginning that it would be natural gas. This is partly due to the pollution factor with it being so close to Fort McMurray.

DR. BUCK:

Supplementary to the hon. minister. Is this consistent with the policy that advised the City of Edmonton to convert to coal as opposed to natural gas?

MR. FARRAN:

Mr. Speaker, this is a comparatively small volume of gas and shouldn't be compared to the large power plants for consumers elsewhere in the province.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is this policy in the utilization of natural gas consistent with the policy of the Conservation Board?

MR. FARRAN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, it was recommended by the ERCB. In fact the policy was that although no further gas-fired power plants would be recommended, the ones that had already been recommended before the pronouncement of that policy should proceed, and this was one of them.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker ...

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair overlooked the hon. Member for Clover Bar who had already been recognized.

Round Hill-Dodds Project

DR. BUCK:

Now that we're on the subject of inconsistency, Mr. Speaker, thank you for remembering I had my name on.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to do with the proposed strip-mining operation around the Round Hill-Dodds area. Mr. Speaker, the hon. Premier and the Deputy Premier made the

statement that it would not go ahead. The hon. Minister of the Environment said it will go ahead at some date.

I'd like to know, Mr. Speaker, if any of the hon. members on the front bench can advise the people of the province what their stand is on the Round Hill-Dodds project?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, there has been no application from Calgary Power for a thermal plant in the Dodds-Round Hill area.

Crude Oil Prices

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Premier. Since your announcement yesterday, hon. Premier, some of ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Would the hon. member please address the Chair.

MR. DIXON:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry.

Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier. It's in regard to some requests I've had from my constituency since the Premier's announcement of yesterday, and my question, Mr. Speaker, is: now that governments are in it, are they going to reconsider putting a floor price on the oil from the Alberta tar sands in view of the fact that there is some uneasiness that if oil drops below a certain figure, the tar sands development may be slowed down or even stopped at a later date?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the majority of Albertans recognize the very important need for us to attempt to sell our conventional crude oil at as high a price as possible. If efforts were made by the Alberta government to establish a floor price for this project when we're involved here with relatively minimal risk, as compared to the importance of an increase in conventional crude, I think that citizens quite clearly under those circumstances would question our judgment in doing so.

From the federal government's point of view, now being a participant, I think that as I mentioned in my statement yesterday there will be some pressure on them to assure, not only to meet their commitment of full world prices, but also to recognize that we're now into an era of high-cost energy.

I think that when that recognition spreads across Canada, one of the most positive features that can come out in the longer term with regard to the arrangements made yesterday is a greater awareness and understanding by Canadians generally that energy, whether it comes from the northern part of our land, whether it comes from the deep part of the foothills, whether it's from the oil sands, whether it's offshore, is now an era of high energy cost, and because it's an era of high energy cost there's no reason Albertans should be asked to sell their depleting conventional crude oil at only 60 per cent of world value.

Syncrude - Shell Oil Withdrawal

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, in answer to the supplementary question to the hon. Premier - I wasn't too much concerned, we're all anxious that the project go ahead - but I wonder, during the discussions on Monday, Mr. Premier, Shell Oil indicated that they dropped out because a floor price couldn't be guaranteed. I wondered what reason the federal government gave that they couldn't put a floor price on conventional oil?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I would say the fundamental reason why Shell Canada Limited dropped out of the project is because they could not convince the Alberta government to change the arrangements for a 50 per cent of net profits.

It strikes me that very clearly there has been a failure, perhaps on my part, to communicate the importance of the 50 per cent net profits. In short, not only does the Government of Alberta in this arrangement get its share of equity, but in addition to that it is getting 50 per cent of the profits from all the other participants. Shell felt that those arrangements were too tough. They were not prepared to come into it unless we changed it, and Alberta refused to change the deal.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary question to the hon. Premier. What did Shell Oil think would be fair and they could go along with if they were opposed to the 50 per cent?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I understood Shell's position was that if the plant went on stream in 1978, they should have an arrangement whereby they would collect all of their entire return of capital back, or a substantial portion of it, before the people of Alberta received a return by way of royalty. We didn't think that was a proper arrangement and I would presume that Albertans generally would concur in our judgment.

Capital Gains Tax

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Provincial Treasurer and it deals with a resolution of the Assembly passed, I believe, last May. It is related to the capital gains tax, in its relation to the family farm and the changing of the evaluation date. Has the minister received any reply from the federal government on this representation?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I have not received any reply to my correspondence to the Minister of Finance.

Syncrude - Pipeline and Power Plant (continued)

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. the Premier. Would the Premier advise if he has seen any preliminary pro forma operating statements in regard to the pipeline and power plant which substantiate, or warrant, the \$400 million investment?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, that matter certainly, I think, the public of Alberta will be quite prepared to evaluate because if the hon. member is not aware of the history of projects such as Alberta Gas Trunk Line, of pipeline and utility projects relative to their profits, relative to their leverage and their return, clearly he does not understand the nature of projects and the benefit to Alberta to have projects of this nature.

It should be mentioned that the payment with regard to the pipeline through-put and the power will be 90 per cent by others and only 10 per cent by Albertans. As far as I'm concerned, I like that arrangement.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are there in existence, anywhere in the government, any preliminary pro forma operating statements in regard to the pipeline and the power plant?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, again I say that we are dealing with such a fundamental, obvious position that if the hon. member has some difficulty understanding these economics, I suggest he do a review of them.

[Interjections]

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of clarification. Is the Premier saying that they are building the pipeline and power plant without any economic studies?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Right.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the hon. member well understands that when we are dealing with a pipeline of this particular nature with an assured production ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. We are getting considerably off the questions.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition's question I believe has been asked. The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc followed by the hon. Member for Sedgwick-Coronation.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Premier. I wonder if he could advise the House if there was any connection in the government's approach to resolving the Syncrude dilemma, between the government taking over - receiving full ownership of the pipeline and the power plant - as related to the decision to put \$200 million of equity capital into the project? Was there any connection between the two as far as the government's position was concerned?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, that is a difficult question. I don't believe they can be unrelated in the sense that it involves a total negotiation. It was always the view of the Alberta government that out of this new situation there would be the opportunity for us to improve our position because we had wanted, in the original negotiations, to have 100 per cent of the power plant and 100 per cent of the pipeline. We did make an adjustment in that in the original negotiations at the request of the four original partners because they saw, as I'm explaining, the revenue generation potential and the nonrisk potential of these two aspects.

So in reflection overnight with regard to evaluating this total situation, I would say that factor on the plus side, together with the stronger commitment with regard to the federal government by way of prices, the stronger commitment by the federal government with regard to taxation including not deducting taxation for the gross royalties, the fact that the federal government is now a participant which will have some impact in backing it up, and weighing that against a \$200 million risk investment.

I think in balance the people of Alberta will assess that in the rather unusual events that have occurred the position of Alberta at the very least is the same, if not better than it was.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, just to clarify, I would like just to restrict the question of the \$200 million equity in the power plant as to whether it could be stated that the incremental risk represented by the equity capital has to some extent been offset by the nonrisk revenue received from the utility and power plant, that this was a factor in the decision-making?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I think that is certainly one way to evaluate it. On the one hand there is the assured income by way of an investment for the province in terms of its funds, a power plant and a pipeline in total; and on the other hand there's the risk investment.

I think over a 25-year period, depending upon the ultimate results and the breaking-even figure of the Foster reports, one could come to a conclusion such as the hon. member put.

Newspaper Purchase

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Is the hon. minister aware of any negotiations or move by a federal national press group to purchase an Alberta daily newspaper?

MR. GETTY:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. Would the government consider support of such a newspaper to forestall purchase by a national syndicate?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's hypothetical question might have to be stated more artfully.

Senior Citizens Complex - Calgary

DR. BACKUS:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I may take this opportunity to answer a question put to me by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View on [Friday] when he asked what price was paid for the property on 16th Avenue and 6th Street N.E. in Calgary for a senior citizens complex.

Alberta Public Works did not purchase any property for the purpose of a senior citizens complex at 16th Avenue and 6th Street. I believe the property he is inquiring about was either purchased or optioned by the local district board. So if he puts his question to the member three seats to his right he will probably get the answer there.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, in light of the hon. minister's answer, I'm surprised he was the last to know this.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CONSIDERATION OF HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

[Adjourned debate: Dr. Warrack]

DR. WARRACK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

In rising to take part in this historic, as well as important, Speech from the Throne, that of 1975, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address first of all some remarks to the historical significance of this occasion, with respect particularly, Mr. Speaker, to His Honour The Lieutenant-Governor Ralph Steinhauer who I suspect would in fact prefer still to be known as Ralph, in that it was his first Speech from the Throne.

It was also, as I thought, so very well pointed out by the mover, Mr. Koziak from Edmonton Strathcona, who addressed his initial remarks in Cree, commemorative of the fact that this speech was the first in Canada by a Native person.

Above all, I'd like to say that prior to his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor and certainly more so since, in my own personal opportunities to know this man, he is indeed a man, a citizen of Canada and of Alberta, and one to whom I think we all have had reason to express - and I do so now publicly - our admiration.

I suppose also in an almost opposite kind of way, I feel some particular identification with the Lieutenant-Governor in this way - and it may seem strange to some - the Lieutenant-Governor is clearly a member of the longest standing ethnic nature and origin of Canada and of Alberta.

As I take this opportunity - and I do so humbly in this House, Mr. Speaker ...

MR. LUDWIG:

That's a change.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Oh, oh.

DR. WARRACK:

... to say that as one who is a comparatively new Canadian, inasmuch as neither of my parents were born in Canada and they are excellent Canadians and excellent Albertans, I feel a special kind of identification to see this spectrum of opportunity that is there for all who are willing to apply their initiative to the opportunities here in Alberta to share equally, be they of the longest standing ethnic origin in Alberta or, like myself, among the shortest.

I would like also to take advantage of this opportunity to say a word of recognition and respect to those who will not be in this House after the next election, particularly my seat mate and colleague, the Hon. Bill Dickie, and my great friend and fellow kind of rural cowboy, Clarence Copithorne; also, Mr. Speaker, the former Premier of this province who I have had ...

MR. HENDERSON:

Just to clarify: are there anything other than rural cowboys?

DR. WARRACK:

... yeah, I've noticed a lot of drugstore cowboys walking around. ... also, Mr. Speaker, to express my respect to the former Premier, Mr. Harry Strom from Cypress, who I have very much come to respect. I wanted to add this because of having had at least some relationship with his son while I was at The University of Alberta and his son was there as a student. I wanted to say to all that for those members of the family of an MLA, particularly a premier, it is not an easy situation for a son to be in. I'd like to recognize that he was indeed a very respected young man at The University of Alberta.

To you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that my respect has been commanded. I very much appreciate your humor which cuts through the problems we sometimes have in getting too serious about ourselves. Certainly your fairness and certainly your very able discretion - that's very much appreciated. I think that's something that has been expressed and agreed by all sides. I would like to say that.

I also want on this occasion to express the delight I have had and the pleasant responsibility it has been to represent the people of my constituency of Three Hills, and also the happy opportunity to work with many of the people here, the servants of the public throughout the government, and of course particularly the people I work with in the Department of Lands and Forests.

In my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I intend to address three particular areas: first of all the 1975 priorities as they are stated in the Speech from the Throne. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address some of the questions of the basic objectives of the Government of Alberta as also stated in the Speech from the Throne. Then in particular, and as a part of the context of the responsibilities of the Department of Lands and

Forests, I would like to give some particular emphasis to a matter of great public importance, the matter of provincial parks.

First of all, with reference to the question of priorities, three have been outlined very strongly with emphasis: senior citizens, recreation and cultural facilities, and housing.

One of the interesting things I have found, Mr. Speaker, is the continuing effort throughout the period of time of many programs, starting in 1972 with the waiving of the Alberta Health Care Insurance plan and Alberta Blue Cross plan premiums for people over 65. Further to that, the matters with respect to prescribed drugs, the extended health care benefits plan of 1973 and the shelter assistance act for property taxes which first applied to senior citizens and so forth as outlined in a number of places and instances.

I would like to say that an interesting reaction to that is not only from people over 65 years of age, but from the sons and daughters, even the grandsons and granddaughters, who say thank you for this relief, for this assist to these people who built Alberta and have been a part of the format and opportunities which lie before us in Alberta and are particularly the good fortune of those of us who are young enough to have most of our lifetime before us to take advantage of those opportunities.

It's a good record, I think. I think the legacy they have left us qualifies them to expect the security we can now offer; also the legacy they have left to us as a matter of attitude in Alberta: that we have an incentive kind of system which we can now work within and take advantage of the opportunities which are there because of the people before us in Alberta.

Respecting the recreational and cultural facilities - and my remarks later on provincial parks will relate to this - I would like to take note of what no one can overlook, and that is the indefatigable minister who is responsible for this area of work. It's just a fantastic experience to see someone with that kind of dedication and enthusiasm do his job for the people of Alberta in the way it is done.

Certainly I think the ethnic pride from many sources, including those which cover my own background, is probably at a level of interest and attention that we have not before seen in Alberta. I think that's good. I think we can look forward to recreation facilities which in Canada, perhaps in other places too, are unparalleled. But aside from the physical facilities themselves, I think it is important to emphasize that it provides an opportunity for healthy activity, healthy minds, busy bodies and indeed - someone may say this is corny, but we have said it before; we said it in the parks position paper - a preventative contribution to the problems of mental health that in our hurry-scurry, high-pressure society are increasingly a problem. I think this has a preventative value to that effect.

In addition to that, I think the busyness of productive positive kinds of things for our young people to be a part of is a chance to do even better. Heaven knows we need them, as exemplified I think particularly by the remarks of the Member for Stettler in the area of law and order, which are so much a part of what we have and what we must preserve and, to the extent we possibly can, improve.

In the area of recreational and cultural facilities too, Mr. Speaker, I want to give brief, though warranted, emphasis to the matter of wildlife and the kind of recreation opportunity this provides. I think of my own fish and game clubs at Huxley, for example, where I will be tonight; of Wimborne, Olds nearby, where in fact I'll be tomorrow night; and in other areas of the province such as the excellent function organized by the people of northwest Alberta, the Dunvegan Fish and Game Association people, where I was last Friday night.

In the priority of housing, Mr. Speaker, it's certainly the case that I have two reasons to want to see this go forward. The housing starts situation in the United States is half of normal and in Canada is 18 per cent below normal. This has badly hurt our forest industry and I think the actions we've taken in that regard are well-known. At the same time, it looks like we will be in a position in this regard to have an exception in Alberta, the exception the Premier referred to in the question period as a matter of fact, that with the face of depression painting across North America there will be one bright exception and that's here in Alberta.

A great deal more has been done in rural Alberta. Let me point out that in my own constituency, in my initial contacts there, beginning in detail about 1969, 1970, 1971, the kinds of problems which were put were: we seem to be dying, what can we do. Can you help us. Can anything be done. Those questions were being asked out of the fact that they were being told by the government of the day that nothing could be done. Now when we go back to the same communities the kinds of questions they ask are: can we get some help to expand our water supply system, our sewage supply system, our subdivision plan through the regional planning commission. And we roll up our sleeves together and say, aren't these a fine and happy set of problems to have.

Overall, though much has already been done, there is much more yet to be done, as indeed has been often pointed out during the nature of the Speech from the Throne itself.

To the question of some of the basic goals and objectives, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that in the area of natural resources and in the area of individual initiative, there is much that has been said. I think it is literally impossible to say too much about the importance of these basic objectives we have in Alberta.

Certainly, as one who saw what was happening over this past weekend in Calgary, one is very much moved to speak for Alberta and therefore against the manifest for colonialism that was proposed in Alberta, in Calgary, over this past weekend. Bad enough with respect to the official opposition who submitted over the years to colony status by capitulation

in a passive way, but at least they have good intentions. But for our state control friends, Mr. Speaker, to recommend colonial status as a matter of policy is something which is in contrast with the history and the aspirations of the people of Alberta, and I for one reject it.

We hear one speaking as a visitor - and I hope we will never see the day when we are not hospitable to any visitor, including the right to say what you have to say. We hear from far left, all the way to British Columbia - I think that's the direction - we hear wild-eyed statements: get out. Syncrude, get out. To the positive building people, get out. My experience in talking to a lot of people from British Columbia who are initiative kinds of people is that they are getting out. To these people who want to have the opportunity to apply their initiatives and energies to those chances which are here in Alberta, I say come in.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What about the wagon from Ontario?

DR. WARRACK:

Hardly, Mr. Speaker, do the people accept the idea that we should stifle by nationalism, by state control all these kinds of opportunities which are here in Alberta. I think of the remarks of the Member for Calgary Foothills when he said, look, if you think you can do it so much better, start up your own deal and show us. You could call it the complainers' investment company or something, and do something and do it positive. But let's not stifle it. Let's not [centralize] and remove to the federal government. That's what was recommended this weekend by our visitor from British Columbia and by his left-hand man with him, I think it is fair to say, negative, shrill and disrespectful remarks - to centralize to the federal government the resources of Alberta and to supply these resources below value. Well, I can hardly wait to meet somebody on the streets with that one.

As a matter of fact on the question of Alberta jurisdiction, might I point out to the House that on a constitutional basis every constitution which was ever written anywhere includes provision for protection of the minority. We are, in Alberta and in western Canada, a minority in Canada, and a minority protection that is in the British North America Act is the opportunity for self-destiny and self-destiny by financial capacity to have as ours to manage our own affairs which is yielded from the resources we own. To suggest otherwise is to suggest a contrast with the intent of the constitution and to take away, to erase the minority protection rights that are there for those of us who are citizens of this province.

Going on, and being specific to Syncrude for only a moment, it is hardly a situation that the state control death wish - thank goodness it didn't happen, it was made not to happen. As a matter of fact I think the hon. Member for Drumheller was in a way suggesting the point that perhaps those very large numbers of unemployed, some one hundred thousand as I understand it, in the neighboring province of our left, British Columbia, who might also want to escape the financial mess over there would have the opportunity to come and take advantage of these opportunities that they have in Alberta, exemplified by the Syncrude project. By my rough calculation that is an expansion of the opportunities and of Alberta over the life of the entire project of more than 10 per cent. And that's got to be good for Alberta.

Certainly adding to that with respect to the question of individual enterprise I think have been the attitude and stature of Alberta that have given us the chance to build. It's a basic objective of this government and I hope of this Legislature - certainly I feel sure it is in my own constituency - that we should build upon that. It attracted people to Alberta, among them my parents and their parents. It's a place where you can advance yourself by applying your initiative and energies to the opportunities and not be stifled by the power structures that come from state control of such things that deprive you of the rightful future that you have.

I would like to see for my sons and grandsons and my daughter and granddaughters, perhaps, the opportunity for a person to utilize the maximum of his potential ability and initiative without having to leave Alberta. That has never been the case up to now, but I think that's an aspiration that we should have and it's built into the objective of the Throne Speech.

As a matter of fact, as a rural representative who has been very concerned and was in part motivated to enter the fray of which I am now a part in the public affairs of Alberta, I want to say that a corollary aspiration to what I've just stated is that if the young person in rural Alberta wants to stay in rural Alberta, I would look forward to the day when the opportunity to take advantage of all the abilities and initiative that person has, that that can happen and the potential of each future person be used in rural Alberta if they don't want to leave.

Certainly there have been strides made. The matter of agriculture is a very happy one with respect to the spur and the harness of potential that has taken place. Certainly it's well known, I think, that the 1974 net cash farm income in Alberta exceeds the 1971 gross cash farm income in Alberta. Now that is an achievement.

And there is more: rural natural gas, agricultural processing that's been expanding, small business development through the Alberta Opportunity Company and natural resource processing. I think in this way we can be in a position that those who follow us will be able to maximize their potential as to what abilities and initiatives they have, not only in Alberta but in rural Alberta if that's where they prefer to live.

I was very disappointed, Mr. Speaker, moving to the third major point that I wanted to put forward for consideration of members, that the matter of provincial parks was accepted in such a lukewarm way by the Leader of the Opposition in his initial response, and by the Member for Cypress in the remarks that were made. We seem to be reading the citizens of Alberta differently, in that I see provincial parks and outdoor recreation opportunity as a very high priority matter while these matters were rather, if I can use the term, "pooh-poohed" by those I mentioned as compared with their importance.

I would like therefore to emphasize what has been done, the importance of what we aspire to with respect to providing that recreational opportunity in the out-of-doors of Alberta, the beautiful areas not only of the mountains, the eastern slopes, but the lake-land area of northeast Alberta. I would like to do that in the context, Mr. Speaker, of the Annual Report of the Department of Lands and Forests tabled today and the theme we have: "Thinking about Tomorrow ... Today." I recognize that there is much that could be said about many areas of the work of the Department of Lands and Forests: in the area of forestry, certainly the expansion by way of development and the re-emphasis on reforestation that have occurred; the research and development that are now made possible through Bill 16 which was piloted through the House in 1974 by the Member for Whitecourt, Mr. Trynchy; and the multiple land-use policy and management work that's been going forward.

In the Lands Division there is certainly the re-emphasis and building in terms of the recreation opportunities and the input in that regard that is now a part of the active public land management policy we follow in the department; the expansion in grazing opportunity that fits with the agricultural programs and our direction of not only increased numbers but increased stability of numbers in the livestock industry that can support agricultural processing in a much more expanded and de-centralized way across the province.

Certainly there is also the Fish and Wildlife Division where the Buck for Wildlife program is now well under way and receiving nothing but good comment for those who are involved; our increased and steady re-emphasis on the area of enforcement, and I call members' attention to the 1972 amendment to The Wildlife Act as well as those in 1974 and the habitat development effort that we have made.

But out of that context I'd like to particularly emphasize provincial parks. I draw to members' attention the fact that we had approached this on a systematic basis, first of all looking at the situation and doing so with the help of an informal parks policy review committee chaired by the Member for Stony Plain, Mr. Purdy. As a result of that review we found what we felt were some very clear and serious inadequacies in the provincial parks position and policy in Alberta. Therefore, in May 1973 we brought forward the Provincial Parks Policy Paper, Position Paper No. 13.

I believe that time will not allow me to review in any detail the seven basic points that are in it, but I draw particular attention to the needs for expansion, larger parks and integrated planning that are three of those seven. Many of the other parts of it have already been accomplished.

Following that, the next year in 1974, the rewritten Provincial Parks Act was passed by this Legislature. It incorporates the policy laid out in the position paper and includes a number of different and continuing items in its contents. I refer particularly to the capacity for zoning that's so important for an expanded parks system and for larger parks such as two of the four that were announced in the Throne Speech.

When we look at what has been done, there's been substantial upgrading in a large number of parks. I refer members to the public accounts and to the annual reports of the Department of Lands and Forests for detail that they might wish to perceive. If they would do that, I think they'll find that there's been substantial upgrading of existing provincial parks. There were four announced just before the last election, announced but totally undeveloped. Without even a plan of any sort, these parks were announced.

These are now under way at Dry Island Buffalo Jump Provincial Park, that happens to also be in my own constituency, Calling Lake Provincial Park, Young's Point Provincial Park and Hasse Lake Provincial Park.

There's much that could be said, but to do nothing more than to emphasize one further time the access to people that is provided by the metropolitan provincial parks at Fish Creek in Calgary and the Capital City Recreation Park in Edmonton.

Further, I would point out that this puts us in the forefront in Canada with respect to that accessibility to people, and also that a conscious and systematic effort is being made throughout the detailed planning from the public hearings on through, to take account of access for those people who are handicapped, be it by economic circumstances, age or disability.

In 1974 two additional parks were announced: Young's Point near Cold Lake and a park near Drumheller that might possibly be called Coal Valley but I welcome suggestions from the public in that regard.

In addition we have now completed the parks workshop decentralization that we were committed to. Park workshops, instead of only and singularly being in Edmonton, have been decentralized to Valleyview, northwest Alberta; to Vulcan in southern Alberta - and these are being and going forward in the present fiscal year - and in the following year to Rimbey in central Alberta and to Lac La Biche in northeast Alberta.

In that regard I would like to give some special recognition to the people and the Chamber of Commerce of Rimbey to point out that they have done something that is an example of the kind of local community initiative that is so excellent and so a part of Alberta. They have written to all prospective residents of Rimbey as employees of the

parks division in Rimbey and said: please don't just put your children in your car and come down. Please call us first so we can welcome you and show you about and make you as welcome as we really feel. And I think that's one of the most outstanding examples that I have seen in my three and a half years of government in terms of the positive initiative, of acceptance of responsibility in a community and working together with people that might otherwise feel strange in coming into the area. No small part of this is also due, let me say, Mr. Speaker, to the MLA from Ponoka who has worked closely on this project, both with me and with the people of Rimbey.

In the Throne Speech, and my time is short, I would point out that the Notikewin River in northwest Alberta is a new park that was recommended not only by my colleague the Hon. Al Adair responsible for northern development, but also by the Northern [Alberta] Development Council, and will be a major asset to that area north of anywhere in northwest Alberta where we have previous parks.

The Wyndham Park near Calgary and accessible to it, will be developed with the Carseland Weir as part of the irrigation system. But I want to particularly emphasize the importance of the Kananaskis Lakes park and the Kakwa Falls park which are on the eastern slopes of the Rockies and, with some surprise, I heard some expressions of concern expressed from the other side in this regard, but I would refer all members specifically to page 75 where you will find that this kind of park is ... is this a point of order or what?

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, I believe according to Rule 28 his time is over.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER:

I regret I didn't hear the hon. member's point of order.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that according to Rule 28 (d) the member's time for speaking is over.

MR. SPEAKER:

That is a fact. Perhaps the hon. minister could finish in a phrase or two.

DR. WARRACK:

I would be pleased to do that.

The final point that I was making as a matter of fact, was that these parks are consistent with the recommendations of the Environment Conservation Authority report as all members can see for themselves in reading the report. In that way I urge all members to support this particular thrust, along with the entire 1975 Throne Speech as a major and vigorous contribution to the present and future of Alberta.

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity of taking part in the Throne Speech debate and as was the case with the other members of the Legislative Assembly, pay tribute to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor. I think there's no doubt that we are all very proud of the contribution Mr. Steinhauer has made to date in Alberta and are confident that during his term as Lieutenant-Governor he will be an outstanding person in that capacity.

Mr. Speaker, I must confess that I was rather amused at the comments of the previous speaker. They were comments, I believe. Mr. Speaker, all I can say after hearing the views of the hon. minister is that he was so confused about the events of the weekend, I can readily appreciate why we've got into such a muddle over the east slopes - if this is any illustration at all.

But I can suggest, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member that I'm pleased to hear his comments and I would just point out that I think it would be in the interests of both the Social Credit and New Democratic parties, perhaps even the Liberal party as well, to put the hon. minister on a speaking tour of the province, paid for by the other political parties. I think that would do more good ... [interjections] ... to strengthen our respective positions than almost anything else.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal today with the Syncrude affair. To begin, I think it's worth noting, Mr. Speaker, the comments that the hon. Premier made on January 30 - Thursday of last week - page 165 of Hansard. He says, and I quote:

I want to make it abundantly clear that one option is not open. That option is that the government in no way is prepared to bow to any ultimatum; that commitments to the extent that are being suggested can in any way be met by any deadline that is involved in the next few days, or in fact in any deadline that does not give the Government of Alberta, the federal government, Shell Canada and the Ontario government

a reasonable opportunity to evaluate the project and to see if it's possible to come up with an arrangement that is in the public interest of Alberta.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those were very wise words. But I must contrast those words with the results of the last few hours. At the beginning of the session, Mr. Speaker, we had the point of order which was raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow. Without commenting on the point of privilege, all I can say is that he did make a sound case as to the wisdom of the Premier, because on January 31 - and it is worth repeating both the question, Mr. Speaker, and the answer from the hon. Premier. From Mr. Wilson:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. Premier advise if the government has now received any or all of the assessment studies which they commissioned?

The hon. Premier:

Mr. Speaker, we have not. We have, I think, received some draft or preliminary information, but not the studies. It probably will be during the course of the next week or the week after before they are finalized.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have to examine those two statements and put them in the context of what has happened in the last few hours. What has happened is that we have signed an agreement which will commit probably the largest single commitment of Alberta government money in the history of the province of Alberta. We did so within a matter of several days after the Premier advised us that we were not going to bow to any ultimatum, that we would take our time to evaluate the reports. We did so after the Premier advised us on Friday that he hadn't received all the reports. Yet, in his statement yesterday, we were told that the government had carefully reviewed the reports.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I find it hard to see how anyone can suggest that a careful evaluation had taken place in what could only be at most a few hours over the weekend. I suggest that there was not a cabinet meeting to properly evaluate all the reports. I would wonder whether there was even a meeting of the energy subcommittee of the cabinet to review and evaluate all the reports in that period of time.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, we are being asked to buy this gigantic pig in a poke - this enormous commitment of public expenditure - on the basis of reports which the hon. Premier advised us, even today, were not even in the final form until the last few hours.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when this government was in opposition they said so much, and I agreed with them at the time, about the commitment of public money to the Bighorn Dam project, you know, the need to have a cost-benefit study to know exactly what we are doing. The members on this side of the House will well remember that debate and the decision to have a public hearing of the Committee of the Whole Assembly to fully evaluate it. But here we have a commitment, Mr. Speaker, of a magnitude unparalleled in Alberta history made, and at most [within] a few hours.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at some of these reports. I admit, that like the other members of the Assembly, one can reach different conclusions because when you have only a few hours to look over the comprehensive reports which deal with a \$2.4 billion project, it's a little naive to assume that within a short period of time we can assess and accurately evaluate all the nuances of the reports.

Let's take a look at the Loram report. I think it is rather interesting on page 2 of that report, Mr. Speaker, to read the C clause. "The July ...", I'm quoting now, Mr. Speaker, "...Appropriation of \$960,000,000 has been reviewed in light of the [Syncrude Canada] estimate of \$2,048,000,000." Then the report goes on to make this observation: "Although it is not possible to completely reconcile the two estimates, it can be shown there are justifiable reasons for increase in cost." What do you mean, Mr. Speaker, that it is not possible to completely reconcile the two estimates?

This is the kind of thing we should know as members of the Assembly. But when we ask for details, when we ask for a tabling at least of the assumptions that this consulting firm uses, the Premier advises us today that that would break the agreement on confidentiality and we won't have it at our disposal; nor will the people of Alberta be able to know on what basis the report comes up with that statement.

Then it goes on to outline three reasons as to why the cost has gone up: "severe and unanticipated escalation." What yardstick are they using there? "additional pre-production costs due to increases in duration in the Project and manpower requirements." Again, what yardstick are they using? "estimate growth as the engineering definition of the Project advanced."

Mr. Speaker, it perhaps sounds very good, but it would sound an awful lot better if we knew what the assumptions were, if we knew what the inflation rate was, if we knew what they are calculating in terms of increased wages, if we knew what interest rates they are using to come up with their predictions. Because, Mr. Speaker, without the basic assumptions we are in no way able to properly evaluate the kind of documentation that has been tabled in this House.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there is one other part of the Loram report that I'm going to come back to in a moment. On page 4 it talks about the impact costs of the environmental regulations. Is there not a danger now, with the new agreement, that if the cost of adequate environmental protection begins to skyrocket there will be an effort made to short-circuit environmental conditions?

MR. YURKO:
No way.

MR. NOTLEY:
Well, I hope not. I hope not. But this is one of the dangers ...

DR. BUCK:
You're not ... [inaudible] ... , Bill.

MR. NOTLEY:
... which, Mr. Speaker, we have to keep in mind and I think the hon. Member for Clover Bar's point is indeed all too true to be inaccurate.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that here is a very important "if," an important "if." The people of Alberta deserve some clear-cut answers before we get too enthused about this project.

Let's take a look at the Foster report. I compared the old Foster report, which was tabled in 1973 when the Syncrude announcement was first made, with the figures in the new Foster report. Now, Mr. Speaker, without casting any aspersions on the consulting firm itself, there are certainly some wide variations to put it mildly.

For example, Mr. Speaker, the Foster report predicts a price of \$35.25 a barrel by the year 2003. Now, I suppose that is conceivable, but on what basis do they reach that prediction? That's not the prediction which I'm sure would be substantiated by either the American government, or for that matter I doubt that even the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries would make that kind of prediction. But here we have this inflated figure compared, Mr. Speaker, I point out, to the report of 16 or 17 months ago which showed a price of \$15.55 a barrel at that time - more than double the price.

Well, that's very nice if it happens, Mr. Speaker, but you know before we start committing hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars of public money, based on the assumption that this price increase is going to take place, I want to know on what basis the consulting firm arrives at this conclusion. That's not unreasonable, Mr. Speaker. There isn't a member in this Assembly who should be ready to authorize the amount of money we are looking at today unless we have these questions answered.

Another thing that is rather interesting - the cost of the Syncrude project has risen very substantially, but as we all know our profit-sharing arrangement makes it crucial that we keep an eye on the construction costs because the company or the consortium can deduct the operating costs. It can deduct a guaranteed percentage on three-quarters of the investment capital. It can deduct the depreciation before computing any profits with the Province of Alberta.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the cost of building the project rises from \$1 billion to \$2 billion, their deductions go up very substantially. Let's take a look at the year 1982. Under the old formula the total interest allowance which they could deduct was \$51 million. Under the new formula, in 1982, the total interest deduction, is \$112 million or more than twice as much.

Mr. Speaker, the point I'm trying to make is that in order to properly evaluate whether this is a good or a bad deal for the people of Alberta, we have to know what increases have taken place in the construction costs, why those increases have occurred, why they have been so substantial. Mr. Speaker, with the greatest respect to the government, that information has not as yet been tabled in this Assembly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the deal itself. Yes, the Premier was correct when he said there would be a \$200 million equity investment in the plant that will give us a 10 per cent equity in the plant itself. But you know the expenditure of public funds is somewhat greater than that. We have the \$200 million loan. But, Mr. Speaker, that is not just the loan which will be paid back. It may be, but it's also a convertible debenture in the sense that it could be converted, if we choose, into equity in the plant. So that's another \$200 million.

Then we have the power plant costs, power plant costs of at least \$250 million, possibly \$300 million, which we are picking up. Then we have the \$100 million for the pipeline. We have the 20 per cent option and taking the 20 per cent option on the \$2 billion, Mr. Minister, less the investment of the province, already that's going to be another \$360 million.

Then we have a very interesting figure, infrastructure costs. There is a very, I think, useful observation made in the Harries report on page 4 of the introductory chapter, Mr. Speaker. It points out that: "Total provincial government expenditures for the Fort McMurray area to the end of 1980 may exceed \$330 million." Then it goes on to make this point: "Expenditures directly attributable to the existence of the Syncrude project are forecast to comprise 68% of that total." Mr. Speaker, 68 per cent of that total is an additional \$230 million. So now we have not just the \$200 million total, but a total of \$1 billion, \$390 million.

[Interjections]

Take off your \$200 million, Mr. Minister, and you still have a commitment of \$1.2 billion or in that ballpark, even if you discount the \$200 million which is being made available in the form of a convertible debenture.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That's a Conservative government.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, that is indeed a very substantial public commitment. Our windfall all of a sudden has been committed. As a matter of fact the commitment, Mr. Speaker, is \$802 per capita for every man, woman and child in the province of Alberta.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons of course for going ahead with it is the suggestion that we are going to create all these jobs. Well no doubt there will be a lot of jobs created. I read the Premier's speech in September of 1973 where he talks about all the jobs and points out there are going to be 1,600 jobs directly created by the Syncrude project. Fair enough, but you know the capital cost of 1,500 jobs, when you're spending \$2.4 billion, works out to the incredible amount of \$1.5 million a job. If the people put that money in the credit union every single person directly employed could have an income of \$15,000 a month.

Now, Mr. Speaker, even taking the direct figures ... [interjections] ... I notice that that upset some of my hon. members across the way. Even taking the figures in ...

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. NOTLEY:

Even taking the figures ... [interjections] ... they don't like hearing some of these points, Mr. Speaker, but that's fine, they'll hear them anyway.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Labor can hear you.

MR. NOTLEY:

Even taking the figures in this report, which include both the direct and indirect employment, we get a figure of 4,500 jobs. Mr. Speaker, that works out to \$.5 million a job.

So if we're looking at it in terms of creating employment there are a lot better ways to create employment than the Syncrude project. You know we're even going to create more employment with some of the projects suggested by the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation - I suggest many more jobs than the massive capitalization necessary to provide employment in the oil sands region.

So let's not use the suggestion that this is somehow going to solve the employment problems of Alberta. Anyone who makes that suggestion, Mr. Speaker, simply hasn't read the Harries report or at least evaluated it in any serious way.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think there are some rather interesting additional points that should be made. Who's going to control the costs of the project? How do we know that \$2.4 billion will be the total cost of the Syncrude project? If anybody had said in 1973 that the project would mushroom from \$1 billion to \$2.4 billion, there would have been absolute hilarity on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker. We would have been jeered and shouted down. How do we know now that it's going to stay at \$2.4 billion? Because Bechtel says so? Canadian Bechtel who are in charge of the James Bay project? Canadian Bechtel who have seen the price of this project mushroom from \$600 million to \$2.4 billion - because they give us assurance?

Oh, the Premier said the other day, we're going to be on top of it because we will be able to monitor it after the fact. When we draw up our accounting manual we'll be very very insistent that if we don't agree that a cost increase has occurred, it won't go into the accounting manual. Well, how do we expect people in Alberta to believe that sort of nonsense, Mr. Speaker. Once the expenditure is made, once we are committed to the project, now that we have substantial equity in that project, I think most of us know perfectly well that if there's a decision to be made, that decision will be made in favour of keeping the project alive and keeping the project going, keeping it operative. Just, Mr. Speaker, as it was made in the case of the Churchill Falls pulp mill under the old Tory government. Commitments had been made with all the best intentions in the world, but in order to follow through on those commitments, more and more public funds had to be shovelled into the project until finally the people of Manitoba discovered, and a royal commission confirmed, that the whole thing was a gigantic boondoggle.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that we need monitoring on an ongoing basis. We need some form of mechanism suggested, clearly defined, explained in this House, so that we can stay on top of the construction costs; not wake up a year from now with the people coming back and saying, well, hold on, we made a minor error. It's no longer \$2.4 billion, it's \$4 billion or \$5 billion, sorry about that. We need a little more money from the public purse or we're going to have to close it down, and wouldn't that be a terrible thing. Mr. Speaker, at some point - and I think that point is very clear and very close - the people in Alberta are going to insist that they have more information, and that before governments commit vast sums of money the information be laid on the table of this Legislature, not presumably just restricted to a few cabinet ministers behind closed doors.

We have other problems too, Mr. Speaker. What will be the impact of the deal on Canadian energy policy? Already the province of Saskatchewan quite properly is saying, look, if you people - the federal government - can allow Syncrude to deduct their

profit sharing in terms of computing their federal income tax, surely this same sort of thing has to apply to oil produced in the province of Saskatchewan. That's a very strong and reasonable argument. That's the kind of thing which will, in my view, just fragment Canada once again, create the sort of ongoing controversy we don't need in this country.

Also, we're inevitably going to be sucked into higher prices. Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to higher prices if the beneficiaries of the higher prices are the people who own the resources. But I have a little difficulty in accepting the proposition of continuously higher prices for crude oil when I know that the major beneficiaries of higher prices are companies which are not based in this country, are not headquartered here, and have just over the last three or four weeks conducted themselves, in my view anyway, in a completely reprehensible fashion by issuing an ultimatum not only to the people of Alberta but to the people of Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before I conclude, I believe there are some comments on the Syncrude project which have to be made in the context of just Alberta. For example, we are putting up the money for the power plant and the money for the pipeline. We have, in short, public ownership of power for Syncrude. But we're not prepared to commit ourselves to public ownership of power for anybody else. That's an interesting comment. We have 100 per cent ownership of the pipeline, and the Premier tells us that this was a desired goal. But we aren't going to have public ownership of any of the other pipelines in the province of Alberta, just the Syncrude pipeline. If ever there was an example, Mr. Speaker, of socialism for the rich, the Syncrude venture in Alberta is just a classic case in point.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Right.

MR. NOTLEY:

Then, Mr. Speaker, we have the proposal of loaning money to two poor underdeveloped companies, Gulf and Cities Service, loaning them each \$100 million. Mr. Speaker, every single federal report on foreign investment, from Gordon in 1956 through to the Gray Report in 1971, says that while it is okay for this country to bring in debt capital, our concern shouldn't be to acquire equity capital, because when you have debt capital you can pay off the debt and eventually own the project. What are we doing in Alberta? We're doing exactly the reverse. What we are doing is loaning the multinationals Alberta money so that they can gain additional leverage and control in the project. Now, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't strike me as a very sensible proposition, not a very sensible proposition at all. It's completely at variance with the mainstream in Canadian thinking, and I suspect the thinking of a large number of Albertans too.

In concluding my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Syncrude project, developing the oil sands, can offer exciting opportunities for Albertans and for Canadians. The real question is how we develop that project. I believe it is a fatal mistake to pour vast sums of public money to prop up a private consortium which will still have 70 per cent of the control. If we're going to undertake the degree of risk which we appear prepared to do, as a result of yesterday's statement, then we should control that project, we should own that project, we should be able to stay on top of the costs, we should know exactly what we're doing up there in the same way as we know what's going on with Alberta Government Telephones.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is wrong in principle, I think it is foolish in practice to commit vast sums of money without at the same time making sure that the public owns and controls this development.

I suggest in concluding, Mr. Speaker, that by working with the federal government in developing a Crown corporation to control and expand, as the opportunities allow, the extraction of the oil from the oil sands, we could have something that people many years hence would look back on and say, there was a national accomplishment.

You know, this is not just the view of a few people. I can give you the arguments of many. When I spoke last week on a private member's motion, I brought the comments of Bruce Willson, the former president of Consumers Gas in Ontario and the man who started with Northwestern Utilities in Edmonton, who has come out in favor of public development of the oil sands. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that there is no other route if we are going to commit this kind of vast expenditure than to make sure that we have public control.

So with those comments, Mr. Speaker, I bring my remarks to a close with the hope that the government even yet will reconsider its position. Let us not continually prop up large foreign controlled oil companies when we have, as the civil servants' report said a year and a half ago, an historic opportunity to change the pattern of foreign ownership and control in this country. We can do that through the oil sands if we act through a Crown corporation.

MR. PURDY:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to take part in the fourth throne debate of the 17th Alberta Legislature. I would be remiss if I didn't congratulate the Lieutenant-Governor for his well-presented speech. It is a pleasure to be a member of a government that has the first Native Lieutenant-Governor in the history of Canada.

In the Stony Plain constituency there are some people who are proud and they are the residents, approximately 2,000 in number, of the three Indian reserves which I represent. These people have told me that since Ralph Steinhauer's appointment, they feel proud to be true Canadians and now feel that they are a greater part of Alberta and Canada.

I must also congratulate the mover and seconder of this very important document which will serve Alberta in 1975 as our other three documents have served the people in the previous three years.

We just recently heard from the Member for Spirit River-Fairview telling the members of this Assembly that the Premier didn't make a good deal for Albertans. May I remind him that the Premier and his energy committee spent all weekend. As far as I'm concerned, and other members of this Assembly are concerned, the Premier did make a deal for Alberta that will benefit this province for years to come. Only today in the question period the Premier stated that maybe in six months time when the rest of Canada and the rest of the world is under a recession, Alberta is going to be the forerunner for job opportunities and so on.

During his remarks he also stated that he didn't like the employment opportunities that may be present for the Syncrude operation. Wait until the labor union leaders that he looks to favorably read those remarks in Hansard.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. GHITTER:

They don't read Hansard.

MR. PURDY:

Probably not.

It appears as if the figures given by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview has changed his schoolteacher status to that of economist. I think he better look at these reports and come up with more substantial figures. But it appears, Mr. Speaker, that this member wants to stagnate the growth of this Syncrude project, and stagnate the growth of Alberta. We as Albertans and Canadians can't afford that attitude.

The agricultural industry in Alberta reached an all-time record in 1974 with the gross farm income of approximately \$1 billion. Quite an accomplishment, as three years ago it was one-fifth that figure. I can remember on May 26, 1971 when the Stony Plain Progressive Conservative Association held its nomination meeting in the Stony Plain community hall. There was another meeting in progress on the lower floor of that hall and the guest speaker was the former Minister of Agriculture informing the farmers how he was going to raise the price of hogs and save the hog industry. At that time hogs were approximately \$20. Dr. Horner, who was at our meeting, knew this meeting had been called to discuss hog prices, and said to me, God help us if he knows a solution to hog problems. He will probably allow hog prices to drop instead of bringing them back to a figure where farmers can realize a profit. The former Minister of Agriculture gave no alternative to lower prices. It was only the August 30, 1971 election and the appointment of Dr. Hugh Horner as agriculture minister on September 10, 1971 that saved the hog industry and put agriculture in Alberta, in this province, in the perspective it should be.

At the present time cattle prices are down, and if the former minister was in charge, the agriculture industry in this province would have been bleak. But with the forward thoughtfulness of this minister, a plan was presented to allow farmers to hold cattle over winter thus obtaining an even market.

A group of people, our senior citizens, are very dear to my heart. They are the people who built this province and made it possible for us to have the rich life we enjoy today. More has been done for senior citizens by this government in the past three and a half years than during the past 20 years. Let's look at some of the benefits: no premiums for Alberta Health Care Insurance plan or the Alberta Blue Cross plan; benefits to persons over 65 years of age and their dependants for hearing aids, eyeglasses, dental work, drugs - senior citizens now only pay 20 per cent of the cost. Senior citizens property tax reduction plan and renters assistance. New benefits announced in the Throne Speech, free medical examinations for senior citizens seeking a driving licence. I questioned this a number of times.

Let's compare an auxiliary hospital in B.C. to Alberta. A patient in B.C. pays approximately \$500 a month and in Alberta he pays about \$90.

MR. RUSTE:

How about the staff?

MR. PURDY:

The NDP government made a play last year that the minimum income of senior citizens would be raised to \$230 on the guaranteed income supplement but no other benefits. I know many senior citizens who moved to B.C. to retire but since have returned to Alberta because this province has much to offer.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the benefits in Alberta for our senior citizens are very good as compared to other provinces in Canada. I say that Alberta should stay as a forerunner to provide benefits for our people who settled and homesteaded in Alberta.

The Minister of Lands and Forests pointed out a few minutes ago that I had chaired a provincial parks committee to study provincial parks in the province of Alberta and adopt a new policy. I was proud to be a member of this committee and this was accomplished in 1973 with a new parks act being passed. I am proud to say that this government has not followed the attitude of the previous administration by naming parks just before a

provincial election. We have announced new parks in Edmonton, Calgary and other areas of Alberta during the past three and a half years.

The announcement made by the Minister of Education on November 4, 1974 was welcome news for my constituency and also the province. I can refer hon. members to the budget debate of March 25, 1974 when I stated that we have a lack of school space and some consideration should be given to lowering the utilization rate. This was done in his announcement of November 4. I spoke about the large number of portable buildings being used in Spruce Grove and Stony Plain for school accommodation. During the cabinet tour of November 9 the Minister of Health and Social Development and I visited the elementary school in Spruce Grove. The minister saw first-hand the portables that were 20 years old, the decrepit condition these buildings were in and the distance a pupil must walk to washroom facilities and other facilities. I believe that he agreed with me that these units are not acceptable to our present-day society.

One community in my constituency was recently threatened by the fire commissioner's office that if the underside of a stage was not insulated, the kindergarten program would be shut down. This building meets all safety requirements and the portable school situation in Spruce Grove and Stony Plain goes unnoticed by the fire commissioner's office. These portable buildings have no exit doors. They have a gas furnace by the only exit door, or the main door. This is what the fire commissioner's office should be looking at.

I am confident that with greater liaison between the school committee of the County of Parkland and the Minister of Education this situation can be resolved and should be resolved immediately.

The Throne Speech outlined new programs for the handicapped and mentally retarded. Much has been done by this government in the past three and a half years by the respective ministers.

Education finance is based on the complete number of students eligible under the school foundation program. The handicapped child, especially in rural Alberta, did not receive the benefits that other children in our larger centres did. By the new programs presented in the Throne Speech, the handicapped in rural Alberta will have an equal chance as children in the larger areas. I must express my gratitude to the Minister of Education for this innovative program, as others have expressed this gratitude to me.

The Stony Plain constituency in the past three and a half years has had a number of classrooms added. We have added new classrooms in Winterburn. We have added new classrooms in the Brookwood School in Spruce Grove. We have added new classrooms to the Onoway Elementary School and [to the] new junior high school in Stony Plain. Woodhaven and Spruce Grove [schools] will be built this year. A lot has been done for schools in a rapidly growing area.

Yesterday I had the opportunity of meeting with the school committee of the County of Parkland and toured the opening of the first community school module-type in the province of Alberta. This is a very innovative type of structure. I would like to see this expanded throughout the province. We will not get into the situation we were [in] years before and especially in the 1970-71 era when we found, after taking over government, that we had approximately 900 empty classrooms in the province. Having a community core-type school will certainly alleviate the problems. You can move the portables around to serve the areas as need arises.

I'm sorry to hear that the Minister of Highways will not be seeking re-election. The minister has helped my constituency more in the past three and a half years for highway development and safety than ministers previously.

DR. BUCK:
Ah, come on.

MR. PURDY:
Mr. Speaker, approximately \$20 million in the past three years as compared to \$2 million has been spent for primary highways, overpasses and secondary roads.

Let me just outline some of the accomplishments: Winterburn overpass now completed plus six lanes from Edmonton to Winterburn; Devon corner overpass; Stony Plain corner overpass; Wabamun overpass; Kapasiwin corner overpass; four lanes from Duffield to Wabamun; repaving from Stony Plain to Duffield; Barrhead-Gunn highway completed and put into the primary highway system; repaving from No. 43 Highway to Alberta Beach; approximately 25 miles of secondary road completed including 18th Avenue and the road to Carvel; six miles of four-lane from No. 16 to No. 43 junction to Alberta Beach. I think, Mr. Speaker, that's an excellent record of three and a half years and shows the cooperation that an MLA and a minister can have.

DR. BUCK:
Either that or pork-barrelling, one of the two.

AN HON. MEMBER:
You haven't suffered.

MR. PURDY:
I should have probably included him in the agricultural picture of the province; he's talking about pork-barrelling.

But I do have one concern and that is in regard to highway signing. Some commercial developments such as ski resorts or camp grounds are allowed to have highway silhouettes but other developments such as golf courses or an operation of a power-toboggan development cannot have these signs. I hope when the study is complete for highway signing that these other developments will be looked upon most favorably.

Many community halls in Alberta were recently at the stage where they could have closed down if it hadn't been for the community hall improvement program announced by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation. This is really evident in rural Alberta. To date, 25 communities in my area have benefitted from this program. The program has been well accepted because it still leaves some responsibility in the hands of the local community. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we still require the valuable contribution of volunteer organizations for recreation life.

A new method was used over the weekend to raise money for the crippled and the handicapped children of northern Alberta. This was a telethon sponsored by ACT Associates and CFRN television. The people who provided the entertainment, the telephone personnel and others deserve much credit for making this event the success it was. Also people who helped this worth-while event are those who donated and pledged over \$450,000. I'm saying this, Mr. Speaker, because the crippled children's camp, the first one to be built in Alberta, is in the Stony Plain constituency located at Lake Isle. I want to commend ACT for the wonderful work they have done for our handicapped and crippled children in this province.

Mr. Speaker, during the debate of this Throne Speech remarks were made by the Leader of the Opposition in regard to policing in the County of Parkland. The remarks made by him were correct. As he stated, I am familiar with the problem. Because the problem still exists and has been raised in the House by the hon. leader, I must spend some time on this subject.

The history of this County of Parkland police force dates back to 1966 when The Municipal Government Act stated that a municipality must have at least one police officer. The force grew in number over the years and now has eight qualified men. I must state most positively that all eight men are qualified and have taken police training.

In 1969 the residents of Wabamun petitioned the County of Parkland for adequate police protection. In 1969 the RCMP policing was not evident in this area and when they were called, it took a considerable amount of time - this is still evident - for them to respond. Wabamun has been labelled in this area as a little Chicago and further in my remarks, I will outline some of the occurrences.

Let's look with perspective at policing and the problems that occur each and every day in this province. Shootouts in Calgary - a number in the past months - crime increasing in the city of Edmonton at an extremely high rate, crime increasing across our country and throughout this province at an even higher rate over the past number of years.

The lack of people interested in police work becomes more evident every day. I am sure that the cities of Edmonton and Calgary are having problems recruiting well-qualified men for training. The RCMP, as was evident in 1973, had to take married men into the force which was not allowed previously.

In the County of Parkland we have eight men who are willing to get into police work, and do work, and they are being stifled. Eight men who are qualified, committed police officers have been degraded to little more than by-law enforcement officers. The government has told me they can't have dual policing. This is a very weak argument.

Let me outline briefly the working relationship previously between the county and the RCMP. The two forces work very compatibly. It was an understanding that before 1973 the county had use of the Criminal Code and laid charges of a summary conviction, and a more serious charge of an indictable offence was turned over to the RCMP. Now with new policy the county cannot get involved.

Previously I spoke about dual policing and I can outline, Mr. Speaker, for the House a couple of examples. The county has jurisdiction under The Highway Traffic Act to investigate accidents. They are called to an accident and subsequently while investigating the accident find out that one person is impaired. They have to call in the RCMP to lay the impaired-driving charge.

Or they may be out on an ordinary routine check, come across liquor in an automobile and at the same time find a quantity of drugs. As they can't use the Criminal Code, they must call in the RCMP to lay the charges. Under the Criminal Code they then look after the liquor charge. This is what we call "dual policing" and there are many more cases that I could elaborate on.

Whom do we lay this blame on, the government or whom? I would submit that this report tabled in the Alberta Legislature in 1971 is the problem. The author of this report is a retired ex-commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Let me cite you an example, Mr. Speaker, out of Mr. Maxted's report which is discriminatory against small police forces. He says in this report: "These men are not trained police officers but are generally qualified to perform the limited duties associated with by-law enforcement." I will elaborate on this a bit later.

The government has now retained this man as the director of law enforcement in Alberta. First, I don't believe we need a director of law enforcement. I'll tell you why. Assistant Commissioner Seppala heads the RCMP. We have police chiefs in our major cities who employ their own forces and other forces have their own chiefs. No, Mr. Speaker, this position is not required. He has misled the government and the public by this report. He has been asked to visit the County of Parkland detachment to witness this

operation. He does visit the RCMP detachment in Stony Plain, but to date has not visited any detachment in the County of Parkland.

I stated earlier in my remarks, Mr. Speaker, that all [our] men are qualified and I would like to take this opportunity to outline the years of police service and training that are behind these men: the chief, a graduate of the City of Edmonton training school, nine years with the City of Edmonton, three years as a corporal with the Nelson city police force and three and a half years with the County of Parkland, a total of fifteen years; two corporals, one a graduate of the City of Edmonton, four years with the City of Edmonton, three years with the Fort Saskatchewan force and two years with the county, a total of nine years; the other corporal, a graduate of the Municipal Police Training School of Alberta, employed by the Drayton Valley town for five years, and three years with the county, a total of eight years experience.

There are also five constables. They all are graduates of the City of Edmonton police academy and their total experience varies from seven to two years.

The county will only hire trained men and if a good recruit is found with no training, he is then trained with the City of Edmonton. An agreement was signed two years ago.

What have we got, Mr. Speaker? We have a group of well-trained men, unable to carry out its rightful place in society.

This brings me to another point in my remarks on the same subject. In August of 1974, a further step was taken. These men had to take off sidearms, a step which I will not endorse and I don't believe many other people of this province will endorse. We have been told that the work they do does not warrant them carrying a restricted weapon. I would ask any member of this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, to differentiate for me an RCMP officer, a city police officer or a county police officer. These men are all in uniform and they all carry out the role of a police officer, no matter what their appointments may stipulate they do.

Every time these men step out of a car, they jeopardize their lives. I can cite many instances of infractions which have happened to armed policemen. We can look at the corporal who was shot to death in the Grande Prairie area a number of years ago. We can look at the other RCMP constable who was attacked by an axe-wielding person in the Grande Prairie area. The only way he could subdue this person was by the use of a sidearm. We can look at the RCMP constable who was shot in the county of Parkland during a routine patrol in that area that is supposed to be patrolled by the county. What does a constable in our area do if he comes across a situation where someone has a firearm and is endangering his life or the life of some innocent citizen. These men are very vulnerable and until such time as this inequity in the thought of some people is cleared, the problem is still going to be evident.

What makes the people who are aware of this problem upset, namely other police officers and members of the RCMP, is that special constable regulations apply to a police officer, a special constable may have a sidearm. This was pointed out by the hon. member of the opposition.

I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, at this particular time that all eight men in the County of Parkland are well-qualified in arms training. Three of them have their crossed revolvers - quite a record. Not 25 per cent of the city police or 25 per cent of the RCMP have this record. This force has held training courses in gun and sidearm safety and they have two instructors. But the problem still goes unnoticed.

I will take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to outline some of the problems that have happened in this area in the past year and a half. Recently a couple of members of this Assembly pointed out the infraction which happened when an RCMP constable was kidnapped, this constable being from the Redwater detachment. I have an occurrence report here from the county of Parkland which states that:

On November 27, 1974 the County of Parkland office in Drayton Valley detachment was called by the senior officer of the RCMP asking them to come out and give assistance to an occurrence which was happening.

This occurrence, Mr. Speaker, was when the RCMP constable had been kidnapped and [was] being held at bay by two armed people. This unarmed policeman from the county was asked to go out and assist the RCMP. He did go out.

This is an incident which took place in the hamlet of Wabamun before the firearms were taken from the county policemen. It happened about midnight on a Saturday night when the county corporal was walking down the street. He noticed that the bottom door of a hardware store had been kicked in.

As he crept down to look inside, five shots were fired at him by an unknown person inside. He was able to crawl back onto the street and ask for additional help. In the meantime, before the police removed this person from the store, he fired approximately 68 shots at this police officer on the street.

I feel this is one time when the person inside the store knew that the police officer was wearing a sidearm and this was a deterrent. The related facts that were found out afterwards are that:

The culprit had got into an argument with the hotel owner and had made the statement that he was going to get even with him. It is now apparent that he had broken into the hardware store, wishing to steal a gun and ammunition and go back to the hotel.

There would have been a tragic incident in our area if that had occurred. I would also like to point out that this happened approximately fifty feet from my house.

Only after the sidearms were taken off on September 14, 1974, the county office in Wabamun received a call from the RCMP dispatcher in Edmonton, saying a Native person had stabbed two people on the Paw Band Indian Reserve and was heading to Wabamun. The dispatcher asked the Wabamun corporal to inform his men and to see if they could subdue this person. The county corporal informed the RCMP detachment that his men were unarmed and this put them in a very awkward position. He pleaded with him and said there were no RCMP available in the area. The corporal then did relay the message to the two working constables who spotted a truck proceeding towards Wabamun, stopped the vehicle, quickly subdued, disarmed and arrested the man. He had in his possession a loaded .30-.30.

I have no argument, Mr. Speaker, with the role of the RCMP, but they are understaffed for the area they are responsible for. In the Stony Plain detachment of the RCMP there are approximately 30 men. There are four senior officers who primarily work day shift and look after court detail. Ten men are designated for highway work only. This includes Highways 16, 60, 33 and 43. That makes approximately 93 miles of primary highway. Four men are hired for town detail by the town of Stony Plain. This leaves 12 men to patrol 3 Indian reserves, the village of Onoway, Duffield, Westview village, 22 summer villages including Alberta Beach, 2 provincial parks, part of the county of Lac St. Anne and part of the county of Parkland.

No, I don't think we should kid ourselves, the County of Parkland and its citizens want this force. We have spent - I am talking as a taxpayer now - \$.5 million for buildings, vehicles, uniforms and training. The wages of the force were recently raised to a level over other police departments in Alberta. The annual expense for this force, including men, secretaries and cars, amounts to about \$100,000.

Petitions and letters have gone forward to the Department of the Solicitor General, but with negative results. It is not only the County of Parkland which is concerned with this, but also the summer village of Alberta Beach and eight other counties in this province. I worry about the protection of my citizens and the police personnel. It may not happen today or the next day, but someday, Mr. Speaker, some innocent citizen or one of these police officers will be injured because of the lack of government response to an issue important to 13,000 people living in my area.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Mr. Speaker, ...

MR. SPEAKER:

To use that same mixed metaphor, the hon. Member for Clover Bar caught the Chair's eye first.

DR. BUCK:

I would like to take the next 15 minutes or thereabouts, Mr. Speaker, to bring to you and the members of this Assembly some of the concerns the people in my constituency have indicated to me.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the hon. Member for Stony Plain. I think it is really one of the firsts when one of the government backbenchers has shown sufficient intestinal fortitude to get up and tell it like it is. It is really very refreshing, Mr. Speaker, to hear that. I know the hon. member is genuinely concerned about the problem he has with the municipal police force and I just wish, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. Solicitor General, the Attorney General and the members of the Fabulous Five would take this under consideration and rectify the situation.

Mr. Speaker, the reason we sit in this Legislature is to try to better the welfare of the people of this province. I know at times, Mr. Speaker, we get carried away a little and bring in petty animosities, small little things which may get our backs up. But I think we are all here with the same purpose in mind and that is to govern the affairs of the province in the manner we think best.

Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that cabinet rule is so strong over there that this government of the people, by the people, for the people seems to be falling by the wayside. But I won't carry on on that tack, Mr. Speaker. I think the people of the province are finding that out. When the hon. members go to the polls in the next two weeks I think they will find out all is not as rosy as they may anticipate.

Mr. Speaker, the first item I would like to speak on, to bring to the attention of the members of the Legislature - and I am pleased that the hon. Member for Edmonton Gold Bar, the Minister of the Environment, is here - deals with the green belt area that was so arbitrarily, without prior consultation, drawn on a map, following the river valley from approximately Devon down to Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to listen to the hon. minister at a public meeting in Round Hill-Dodds. When the hon. minister told us how nothing ever happened in this government without prior consultation, Mr. Speaker, I had a little trouble containing my dinner, because there was absolutely no consultation with the people in my constituency when the arbitrary pen that said "thou shalt not" was passed around the area.

But my main concern, Mr. Speaker, is, now that the farmers and the landholders in that area have had their land frozen, who is going to compensate these people?

I believe in the philosophy of the green belt ...

MR. YURKO:
Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member should be corrected. The land is not ...

DR. BUCK:
Mr. Speaker, I have the ...

MR. SPEAKER:
Order please.

MR. YURKO:
... hasn't been frozen.

[Interjections]

DR. BUCK:
Mr. Speaker, what really made it quite amusing is that one of the gentlemen who opposed me in the last election, who is a Tory through and through, his son wrote a big article to the local newspaper complaining about the lack of consultation. Now, Mr. Speaker, we do have a problem. There certainly wasn't any consultation when even my honorable Tory friend did not find out from the honorable Tory minister that there was going to be a caveat placed against his land.

But, Mr. Speaker, as I say, I believe in the philosophy of a green belt. The green belt area is going to be used by society as a whole, therefore society as a whole must compensate the people who are involved.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Agreed.

DR. BUCK:
I don't think that you can just arbitrarily say, this land will not be developed, this land will not be used for anything but green belt. Because if that is the tack that the government takes, Mr. Speaker, then we might just as well pack it in and get the comrades from the U.S.S.R. to tell us how to run this country.

[Interjections]

Mr. Speaker, speaking about my honorable friend to the left, it's very interesting to see the legislation that's brought into this Legislature. My honorable friend to the left will not have to amend too many of those acts, Mr. Speaker, if he ever gets to be Premier of this province.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Right.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Agreed.

DR. BUCK:
They're tailor-made, with apologies to the hon. Member for Drumheller, they're tailor-made. You'd almost think they came out of the socialist manifesto themselves.

MR. YURKO:
You passed the act.

DR. BUCK:
We passed the act ...

MR. YURKO:
Yes.

DR. BUCK:
Mr. Speaker, we passed the act.

MR. YURKO:
In 1970.

DR. BUCK:
Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton Gold Bar is the man who is enforcing the act. Because, in case he likes it or not, he has been a member of the government which has drawn the guidelines, which has drawn the area.

Mr. Speaker, the people who are involved and the people who have had their land frozen, one thing about it ...

MR. YURKO:
Not frozen.

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, one thing about it, as the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview said, when you have friends like that on the government side you don't need enemies. That's your best campaign manager, and the hon. [Member] for Edmonton Gold Bar would probably be my best campaign manager. We'd be pleased to have him come out there and speak to the farmers who are involved.

[Interjections]

And I'm glad the hon. minister's coming out, all his friends in Fort Saskatchewan will welcome him, I'm sure.

[Interjections]

Mr. Speaker, there's another matter that bothers me as a taxpayer and that is, does this government have credibility? Does it inform this Legislature of what it's trying to do for its people?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No.

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, I am still waiting with bated breath, but I'm starting to get a little blue waiting for that report the hon. Premier is going to bring into this Legislature, telling us what studies the government did to come up with a figure of \$35 million for the provincial park in Edmonton.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's just not good enough to say we have a figure of \$35 million picked out of the air, and that's what the park is going to cost. I just don't think that responsible governments can or should operate that way, otherwise this process here is redundant. We might as well leave it to the Fabulous Five entirely and the rest of us can stay home, look after small constituency matters and not bother wasting our time here.

It's the same thing, Mr. Speaker, this government being a government of press clippings, news releases. It was very very interesting to find out after the hon. Premier called the mayors, the councillors of the areas involved in the pipeline corridor area, Smoky Lake, Lamont, the areas down that way, to find out ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

... [Inaudible] ... left out the MLAs.

DR. BUCK:

... that already the people in Smoky Lake are beginning to fight with the people in Andrew, worrying about where all the workers in the plant that's going to be north of Lamont are going to live. Well, Mr. Speaker, I advised the people in that area: don't start worrying because nothing's going to happen for ten years. This government works on a 10- or 15-year projection, saying, look, all the great things we're going to do for you but they don't tell you when it's going to happen.

[Interjections]

It's the same way as this small business ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

We're still waiting ...

DR. BUCK:

... tax incentive program. The small print says 1977 ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

At the earliest.

DR. BUCK:

... at the earliest, but what a great press release. All the small businessmen in Alberta think, whoopee ding! This government is really really doing something for the small businessman.

And, Mr. Speaker, that brings up another subject when we start talking about the small businessman. Let's have a look at that Alberta Opportunity Company. I know the hon. minister apologized when he said, well the figure of \$131,000 was really a misconception; you know, we had just a few half-million dollar loans, but we had a lot of little loans. So the figure came up to \$131,000. You know I can understand this because I'm not really a statistical-analysis demon. But a \$131,000 average loan, to me is not helping too many small businessmen.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Right.

DR. BUCK:

If the hon. minister were to tell us that he had 131,000 people who took out \$10,000, \$15,000, \$20,000 loans to help the small businessman then I would say that my faith in the hon. minister had been justified when I voted to support the Alberta Opportunity Company.

But that's not the way it's working. And I feel so sorry for my long-suffering friend, Ron Southern from ATCO - a cool half-million dollars to help out a small company. And I'm sure my good friend Mr. Southern has been laughing all the way to the bank when he could get that kind of cheap money, a half-million dollars worth.

Mr. Speaker, that's not, to my way of thinking, what the program was set out to do. It was set out to help the small businessman. But in fairness to the hon. minister and the members of the department and the director in charge of that program, Mr. Clarke, I would like to compliment him because I think he and his people are doing a good job. They're trying hard, but I think they have to have a little bit more flexibility so they can expedite matters just a little more rapidly. If a man takes out an application he just can't wait six, eight or ten months. Because, gentlemen, I think over there you used to know what "now" was, "now" is right now. It doesn't mean three and a half or four and a half years from now. When a man wants a loan and he does have the backing and he does have a need and the board feels justified that that loan will be granted, then he wants it now, N-O-W, big N-O-W, blue and orange. They want it now.

Mr. Speaker, there's another area of concern in my constituency, and the concern of many people in this province, that is the problem the gas co-operatives are having. I just wasn't sufficiently happy with the minister's answer, saying that the Lamco gas co-op was in trouble just because they were trying to do it too cheaply, just because they were trying to provide too many services. It was a government program, the initiation under government, that said to the people: go ahead and do it. Our \$30,000 to \$40,000 a year experts have indicated to us that you can do it for under \$3,000 per installation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, because it was a government-initiated program, the government has no choice but to help the co-operatives. We tried to warn them on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that we didn't feel they had sufficient background information to find out if the \$3,000 figure would do it for them.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to see the government help the gas co-operatives. I believe the philosophy was fine. I believe the intention was good. But it just didn't work out that way. The costs escalated so rapidly and the farmers who initiated the program - it is not their fault, it was certainly no mismanagement that the costs escalated.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say once again to the government: you, the government, initiated the program. You got the people into trouble, so now you had better help them out.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a word or two about the senior citizens home program. I am pleased to see that my honorable friend from St. Albert was very anxious in his announcement about the Fort Saskatchewan senior citizens home. I just wish the Alberta Housing Corporation was as speedy about some action as the hon. member was about the announcement because we were told by the hon. member that the people would be in the home in November at the latest. Mr. Speaker, I guess they didn't say which November.

AN HON. MEMBER:
How's his \$100 million park coming?

DR. BUCK:

But the fact that the home has been announced, even though we sometimes wonder if the spoken word is as good as the action, I do believe that the home will be going. And the same with the one in Tofield.

I would like to compliment the government. I would like to thank them for telling me by letter that there would be an announcement in the new year. Then the delegation led by an aspiring politician in the area got the big headlines and the picture, but I mean that's part of the ball game, Mr. Speaker. The people in the area know who did all the groundwork. The people in the area will vote accordingly, Mr. Speaker. The Kodak film that was used - at least Kodak got a few pennies out of it.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the government will never ever be able to supply the need for senior citizens homes under the present program. There just will not be sufficient money to go around. I know that this has been mentioned before, that there should be more local input - the churches should be involved and the local citizenry should be involved. I think we just have to stop thinking about 50-bed senior citizen homes as being the minimum number you can build.

What has happened when we're doing that, Mr. Speaker, is that we are putting people into larger towns and towns that they do not really want to go into. They go into those homes because that's the only place they can go. I think we should have a look at our philosophy and say, let's try to keep these people - especially in the rural area - let's keep them in the area that they are accustomed to, where their friends are, where their relatives are. I can use this as an example, Mr. Speaker, in the area in the southern portion of my constituency - New Sarepta, Hay Lakes and Rolly View - they are all small communities that have been settled by German people and they have been there since the turn of the century. They do not want to go to Leduc to a senior citizens home. They do not want to go to Sherwood Park or to Tofield.

Mr. Speaker, I would beg the government to have a look at their philosophy and possibly put a 25-bed home in New Sarepta, which is the centre of the area involved. I don't think, Mr. Speaker, we can spend \$1 million, \$1.5 million for 50-unit nursing homes. We just will never ever be able to catch up or supply the needs.

These suggestions that I make, Mr. Speaker, are not mine. These are suggestions that the people make. If there is anything a politician should learn it is to find out what the grass roots are thinking.

That brings up another little topic, Mr. Speaker. This brings up the topic of the highly, widely publicized cabinet tours. Now, Mr. Speaker, you would think that the government had invented cabinet tours. They didn't, Mr. Speaker, but what they did invent is the big blaze of publicity that goes with the cabinet tours. That's what they invented. They didn't invent the cabinet going out to speak to the people because this government, the Social Credit government, the government that was in this province for many years, is the government that invented the cabinet tours to get back to the people.

There is another large difference between the cabinet tours of the former government and the present government.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Yours were every four years.

DR. BUCK:

In the present government, after the glitter, the tinsel and the television cameras have been turned off, nothing happens. You do not get responses. If the other members get responses then maybe they are picking on me because the people in my area have not received responses to some of their requests. So, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. members on the government side would like to learn something: it's fine to make the big publicity pitch but the action speaks louder than the publicity does.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation because after three and a half years of waiting for a policy, he has come up with a non-policy. He has come up with a non-policy ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

... [inaudible] ... our grant.

DR. BUCK:

... which many people are already saying, when do we get on the bandwagon.

Mr. Speaker, there are a few pitfalls which the hon. minister has in his program. The first pitfall is this: it's just human nature that if you have a five-year program or a ten-year program, when you expend a large amount of capital on a recreational facility, when are you going to grab it and how much. You are going to get it as early as you can and as much as you can. So what happens in year four, five, six, seven, eight, nine or ten? Whose fault is it going to be that there are no more grants coming from the government? It's going to be the government's fault, Mr. Minister. That is the shortcoming of the program.

At the same time not everything is good or everything is bad. The fact that they are trying to help the urban areas and the semi-urban areas, I think they must be complimented on this and I'm sure it is not because of the shortage of money in the provincial Treasury, Mr. Speaker.

But the other philosophy of ad hoc programs - here's the cheque, if you promise to take my picture, you get the grant. This other philosophy, Mr. Speaker, gets you into trouble as a government. Because if ten communities or ten areas ask for a grant ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Too many pictures.

DR. BUCK:

Not too many pictures, too many unhappy people, Mr. Speaker, because maybe only two communities will get the grants, so you have eight communities mad at you. As soon as the hon. Minister of Agriculture started on his program I knew exactly that this would happen. But the hon. Minister of Agriculture has a solution to that. He said, well we will write some orders in council, some more special warrants. We ran out of money after the first \$5 million, we ran out of money after the next \$5 million, so we'll just keep writing special warrants, and we'll keep everybody happy.

They're happy to a point, Mr. Speaker. Now the operating costs are coming in, and, Mr. Speaker, Her Majesty's government will have to have a close look at this. The hon. Minister of Agriculture - it's the operating grants that are going to kill the facilities, the agricultural societies and the recreational complexes, because the small communities just can't handle the operating costs. In fairness to the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation, they have embarked on a program to help with operating costs, and it's an area that you certainly will have to look at because I know that the hon. minister is aware that this is a problem.

There's another area, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to touch upon that affects my constituency and affects the hon. member for Sherwood Park's constituency. This is to do with the Robin Hood School. The Robin Hood School has applied for a grant to build facilities for people who will be living in. They've been put off and put off that something is going to happen. Well, Mr. Speaker, I hope something does happen because the people are getting a

little disillusioned waiting for promises of help. It's an excellent program. They have some dedicated people doing the work over there, so it behooves the government to move and help out with the dormitory facilities in the area.

Mr. Speaker, in the last few minutes I have left, I would like to bring the attention of the hon. members to the situation that exists in the Fort Saskatchewan jail. Now I think that it would be an education to all hon. members of this House if they were to tour the jail because, Mr. Speaker, it would be more than just promises about a new facility being built there if the hon. members would tour it. Mr. Speaker, it can be described very simply as being a zoo, as being a zoo. I think surely we have moved into a new century as far as correctional institutions go. The facility out there is so outdated that "outdated" is just putting it politely.

The female section - I think there is some hope there. Just as I was leaving the tour of the female section, Mr. Speaker, there was a young teen-aged girl carrying her schoolbooks. I asked the matron, where's the young lady coming from? She said, she is on day parole. She's going to high school in the Fort Saskatchewan high school. Mr. Speaker, - that touched me, that we are finally showing enough initiative, we as members of government, that we are trying to save people like this young lady. She was transferred from Kingston to Fort Saskatchewan so she could be on day parole.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure hon. members on both sides of the House can appreciate the problems of trying to get this young girl on a day-parole program, to get her into school because we as parents are always concerned about drug traffickers - will it affect our children? But I think that the people in our community are big enough and broad-minded enough that if they think that there is a young person who can be saved, we're certainly willing to help them.

Mr. Speaker, I'm running out of time, but the last thing I would like to mention about the situation in the jail is that the dedicated people who work in that institution are not being rewarded financially. We have known that, the present government knows that. They have got the funds, they have got the millions. Mr. Speaker, if we're going to keep getting people to work in institutions such as that, we've just got to pay them. It's just that plain and simple.

The last point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that I was very disappointed the government did not have some type of program for children who are in desperate need of dental services. I know it is possibly unfair for a member of the profession to say that but, Mr. Speaker, it's not a vested interest, it's a concern I have for children when I say that. I say that in this day and age when we do have the money I hope that program will come in in the budget.

Mr. Speaker, thank you and the hon. members for your attention.

MR. McCRAE:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. member adjourn the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30.

[The House rose at 5:30 p.m.]

