

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Friday, February 14, 1975

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

## PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

## Bill 230

The Alberta Government Intervention in Private Enterprise Reform Act

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill 230, The Alberta Government Intervention in Private Enterprise Reform Act.

The proposed legislation would prohibit the cabinet from spending public funds for the purchase of controlling interest in a privately-held corporation.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. WILSON:

Permission to nationalize a company would require specific authorization by the Legislative Assembly.

[Leave being granted, Bill 230 was introduced and read a first time.]

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly, 23 air cadets from the Winfield Squadron in Jasper. They are accompanied by their commanding officer, Capt. Tom Hamilton and his son, Lt. Tom Hamilton; Lt. Wayne Thomson from Canadian Forces Base, Edmonton; and parents, Mrs. Whiteman, Jack Loftus and Bud Seeley. They are in the public gallery and I would ask them to rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. BATIUK:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Legislative Assembly, 35 Grade 8 and Grade 9 students from the Chipman school in my constituency. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Safronovich and Miss Batiuk. They are in the members gallery and I'd ask them to rise and be recognized.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and to the members of the House, Alberta's Agent General from London, Mr. Herb Pickering. I'd ask him to rise please and be recognized.

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure this morning to introduce to you and through you to the members of the House, some 50 Grade 6 students from High Park school who are in the public gallery with their teachers, Mr. Adams, Mr. Eshenko and Mr. Gunderson. I would ask them to rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

#### TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Motion for a Return No. 117 and in so doing I would draw members' attention to the points of clarification made at the time the motion was accepted.

#### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Megavitamin Therapy

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question either to the Minister of Health and Social Development or the Solicitor General. It deals with the question of megavitamins. I would like to start with perhaps the Solicitor General and may go over to the Minister of Health and Social Development.

I would like to ask: what is the reason that the use of megavitamins would be determined as an experimental procedure by Alberta's Health Care Commission when, in fact, in every other province in Canada it is recognized?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, our reason for considering it as an experimental procedure was based on advice from the College of Physicians and Surgeons which expressed concern that, in fact, at times this treatment could be detrimental to curing some of our citizens. But because we were so very interested in determining whether or not this is valid and whether we should be encouraging its use rather than discouraging its use, whether we should be trying to discourage people or whether we should be monitoring it - which we feel is a very strong obligation on our part to care for the health of our people - we decided we should do a research project on it.

In the meantime we have considered it as being experimental. I have explained earlier in the House how the payments are arrived at and no doubt the hon. member remembers that explanation.

MR. CLARK:

Supplementary question to the Solicitor General. Will the hearing that was announced by the government regarding the use of megavitamins be a public hearing, where will it be held and when does the government expect the results of the hearing to be put into action?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, it will not be a public hearing in the way that many people interpret public hearings. It is our intention that the opponents and the proponents be in a position to state their case and their beliefs. We expect that to be heard by the research group.

I cannot give a date because we first wish to assess the available material from the study-and-review point of view. We expect to be taking some action to develop a format whereby the oral presentations and the private submissions can be reviewed. This is under active consideration at this time.

MR. CLARK:

A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister in a position to indicate the make-up of the research group and when the minister expects the hearings will commence?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, the research group is the deans of medicine from The University of Calgary and The University of Alberta. The third person I believe is the dean of pharmacology - if that's pronounced correctly - which is the main portion of those who have agreed to undertake the research.

The time frames will depend upon work with them. We'll be working with them in trying to arrange the rest of the plans we have in order to determine this very important question.

MR. CLARK:

One further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Have any of the hearings been held yet?

MISS HUNLEY:

No, they have not. The Minister of Health, I know, has met with many of the proponents of megavitamin therapy. I have met with them. I believe they've met with various other people. But this has been something that's been going on for a long time. I stated earlier in the House that I don't expect it will be resolved quickly. I think it's incredibly important that it be done well and I just don't think we should be stampeded into trying to do something that affects the health of our people in too rapid a way.

I think the researchers will want to proceed and do it thoroughly. It's our intention that they should, and we will be moving towards a resolution of this as soon as we possibly can, keeping in mind the great responsibility that we have that it must be done in the interests of our people.

#### Land Titles Amendment Act

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, a second question to the Attorney General dealing with the amendments that went through the House at the fall session, The Land Titles Amendment Act. In light of the fact that the monitoring process, that portion, has not been proclaimed yet, when does the government anticipate proclaiming that section so we can get on to monitoring the transaction of lands in the province?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I anticipate a proclamation on that in the very immediate future.

#### Alberta Energy Company

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Provincial Treasurer. In light of the fact, Mr. Minister, that the people of Alberta have put \$75 million into the Alberta Energy Company, is the minister in a position to advise us what the salary of the chairman of the Alberta Energy Company would be?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague, the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, has indicated that that is a board of directors decision - a management decision - the \$75 million. We sit as shareholders and hold shares in the public treasury as shareholders but not as managers, not running the company on a day to day management basis.

DR. BUCK:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In light of the fact that the minister doesn't have that or can't disclose it, can the government disclose whether the chairman will have stock options?

MR. MINIELY:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that question is of the same nature, that that would be an arrangement which would be made between the board of directors and the president of the Alberta Energy Company. It's of the same nature, Mr. Speaker, as the earlier question and one on which the government's position is identical.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Incredible.

DR. BUCK:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, then to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Does that mean that the government will not have any control over what the board of directors pays the chairman and what stock options would be available - no control at all?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, the government has the responsibility, the public interest of the people of Alberta, in relation to the Alberta Energy Company ...

[Interjections]

... the government has the responsibility to make sure that the Act passed by this Legislature, which controls the Alberta Energy Company, is lived up to and that the

government's policy statements with regard to the Alberta Energy Company are lived up to. And, Mr. Speaker, the government has placed its confidence and trust in a group of very qualified Albertans to administer the day to day and management decisions of the Alberta Energy Company.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could ask a supplementary question of the hon. minister. When can we expect public participation by way of private investment in the Alberta Energy Company?

MR. GETTY:

The Alberta Energy Company, as I am sure all members are interested, would like to have as wide a distribution as possible in light of the government's policy statement and the debate in this House, as soon as possible, and they are directing their efforts in that regard.

MR. LUDWIG:

Supplementary. Is the hon. minister telling us that the company will reflect government policy views on distribution of shares?

MR. GETTY:

Inasmuch as it has been stated in the House and is covered in the Act, Mr. Speaker, definitely yes - that is every Albertan who wishes to have shares in the Alberta Energy Company and is qualified to do so, will have an opportunity to purchase them.

MR. LUDWIG:

What is the government policy on the matter of distribution of shares, in light of the minister's answer?

MR. GETTY:

I just gave it, Mr. Speaker. There is a policy statement that has been tabled in the House and the matter is dealt with in The Alberta Energy Company Act, which was passed by this Legislature last year.

MR. LUDWIG:

Could the hon. minister explain to the Legislature his reversal of position when two days ago he said it's a hands-off policy, and now he says the policy of the government will be reflected in the Alberta Energy Company decision?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I don't consider it a reversal at all, as a matter of fact. One was dealing with a day to day management problem as to whether or not an advertisement in the paper cost a certain amount of money; the other is something that is very important to Albertans and naturally the government is going to take a great interest in it.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for clarification. Can the hon. minister advise the Assembly whether or not a target date has been established for the sale of shares to Alberta citizens and residents and, if so, what is it?

MR. GETTY:

The target date would be as soon as possible, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUDWIG:

Supplementary to the hon. minister ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Perhaps we could come back to this topic. We have a number of members waiting to ask their questions.

#### AVC - Student Unrest

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to either the hon. Minister of Advanced Education or the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development.

Can either one of the ministers advise the Assembly whether or not the government has received reports that an entire class of X-ray technicians at the Alberta Vocational Centre walked out last week in protest over what they considered an arbitrary expulsion of one of the students by the school director?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, that did occur. My understanding is that there have been some meetings between members of my staff and the students. If I'm not mistaken, the students did

return but I am not positive in that respect. I do know that there is a get-together this afternoon. Whether it is considered a negotiation of any sort, I'm not sure. But there is a meeting this afternoon between senior staff of my department and the students.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Can the hon. minister advise the Assembly whether it's true that the expulsion of the student in question took place because she was absent to meet a previously arranged doctor's appointment?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information. If it becomes a matter that should be reported to the House in some detail, that could well be one of the details we could look into.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Can the hon. minister advise the Assembly whether or not either he or his department has received any written complaints from other members of this particular class concerning previous incidents?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I don't know about previous incidents. My office did receive, at the outset of the present difficulties, a written complaint in the form of a telegram. It was based on that that we began the discussions that have since been held.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question that I suspect is somewhat academic. Can the minister assure the House that he will give a report to the House on the results of the investigation?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I think I dealt with that and indicated that if it is a matter which upon investigation should be reported to the House, I'd be glad to do that.

#### French Language Training

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Speaker, this question is to the Premier. Because of the clarion calls being heard from eastern Canada at various times for the hon. Premier to follow the pathway of Sir John A. Macdonald, R. B. Bennett, Arthur Meighen, John Diefenbaker and Robert Stanfield, my question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier is: is he contemplating a crash course in French in order to open the key to the other door in Canada?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I'll make some humble effort in that regard.

[Laughter]

#### Election Funds

MR. WYSE:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the hon. Premier. Is this government considering introducing any kind of legislation imposing a ceiling on candidate spending in provincial elections, and to disclose the names of donors of contributions over a certain amount?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, not at this time.

MR. WYSE:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Ontario Legislature introduced this yesterday. Is the government aware that people are requesting this kind of legislation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. NOTLEY:

Can the Premier advise the Assembly whether any action is proposed to implement the recommendations of the report of the special committee of the Legislature established to review The Election Act?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, not at this time.

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Alberta Gas Ethylene Plant

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. Can he advise the House if land has been acquired or option taken on land for the proposed Alberta Gas Ethylene plant in the County of Lacombe or the County of Red Deer?

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, these subjects are basically ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Embarrassing.

MR. PEACOCK:

... from the private enterprise sector and they are under negotiation. I think there are a number of areas and sites which the various companies associated with the petrochemical complex contemplated in Alberta are looking at.

## Crop Insurance and Wildlife Damage

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. Will crop insurance and the Wildlife Damage Fund be administered under the same office? Can we expect any notable changes there?

DR. WARRACK:

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have been doing some review, both with respect to the nature of administration of that area, as well as the level of compensation that would be available. At the present time, the Hail and Crop Insurance Board does the evaluation that's necessary on damage situations for crops, and that in fact is the way it's done.

MR. SORENSON:

Supplementary. When will the 1974 wildlife damage claims be paid?

DR. WARRACK:

My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that they are in the process of being paid at the present time.

## Petrochemical Feedstocks

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question today to the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals. It's regarding the concern of the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board on the drop in demand for feedstocks, you know, pentane plus and concentrates. I wonder if the government has this under advisement at the present time, and any solution to it?

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I think what the hon. member is referring to is a problem that related to pentanes plus or condensate. The traditional market for pentanes plus has been long during the winter months, and as the demand for gasoline accelerates the supply decreases. There was an added problem this year however, and that arose as a result of the federal energy administration in the United States. In their entitlements program for crude oil they did not include condensate, and this presented a problem in December.

Representatives of the Energy Resources Conservation Board met with representatives of the National Energy Board. They discussed the problem and had discussions with the United States representatives, and I'm informed now that, as a result of those discussions in the latter part of January, an amendment was passed to permit condensates to be included under the entitlements program. As a result of that, that should assist in the problem they experienced in the marketing of pentanes plus or condensate.

In addition to that, I was advised the other day ... On the question of the export tax for the month of March, I can't recall the figures exactly, but on the crude oil itself, the export tax has been increased to \$5.20, but they left the condensate to \$5.20 and heavy oil at \$5, and Lloydminster crude is, I believe, \$4.40. So I think with the changes in the export tax plus the amendment to the federal Energy Administration Act, those two situations should rectify the plan.

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Petrochemical Industry - Tariffs

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, in view of the hon. minister's question that Alberta is ready to branch out into a world-scale petrochemical industry, have there been any discussions with the federal government regarding tariffs as they would affect the petrochemical industry we plan to build in our province?

Maybe the hon. Premier is in a better position to answer it because he has probably talked this over with the Prime Minister or with government officials.

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Speaker, we have had some preliminary discussions with the federal Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, also the Treasury Department, and have taken a position in relation to our department regarding those tariffs.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. minister could inform the House what position the Alberta government has taken regarding the tariffs, the position you mentioned, hon. minister?

MR. PEACOCK:

Well, Mr. Speaker, once again it's a very very complex question. If the hon. member would put it on the Order Paper we would be glad to submit to him a copy of our submission to the federal government.

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Mannville Hospital

MR. COOPER:

Mr. Speaker, my question, along with a few supplementals, is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Development.

Mr. Speaker, has the hon. minister considered action to dismiss the hospital administrator and the board of the Mannville Municipal Hospital District No. 1, as requested by the petition of the people presented on Thursday?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I understand the position is that when that sort of proceeding is undertaken, under The [Alberta] Hospitals Act it requires the dismissal of the board and the appointment of a provincial administrator, and that the board cannot be dismissed without cause.

In those circumstances, the answer to the hon. member's question is that the government has not, of course, considered dismissal of the administrator who is an employee of the board.

MR. COOPER:

A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Has the hon. minister considered the appointment of a hospital administrator to replace the present hospital board and the administrator as requested by the petition?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, certainly consideration has been given to that because the request was made. But in fairness to the board and to the petitioners, I should say that the view of the government has always been that if possible the dispute they are having, being a local dispute - which it clearly is - should be decided locally. There are many many difficulties that are apparent to everyone who knows the circumstances in having it resolved locally.

I still think it is possible to do that and have had a number of meetings with the various parties involved. In particular, I believe that a meeting of the principal adversaries in the dispute is being held again today with the commissioner for hospitals of the Alberta Hospital Services Commission. We hope that providing good offices in this way will assist in resolving the matter.

MR. COOPER:

A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister given consideration to the request that the doctors serving the Mannville hospital district have their hospital privileges fully reinstated?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I think the hon. member would know that that is not a matter of jurisdiction of the government while a board exists. At the present time the board still exists.

MR. COOPER:

A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Has the hon. minister considered the making of provisions for an election of a new hospital board in the eventuality that the present

board resigns or is dismissed? No such provision appears now until the time of the next election in 1977.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, two of the five members of the board were, in fact, elected to their offices in October 1974. The other three were appointed by resolution of the county council which, of course, was elected at that time. In the event of resignations, the county council I believe would have the jurisdiction to appoint replacements for the three they appointed in the first place.

MR. COOPER:

A final supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Will any of the recommendations of the hospital visiting committee which spent several days investigating the situation at Mannville be acted upon?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, that's a difficult question in that I remember the report of the Hospital Visitors Committee which was submitted in December after about a two-day visit. It seems to me the recommendations were several, about 11 or 12 short recommendations. So I would have to review them before responding to that to the hon. member.

#### Syncrude - Production Distribution

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. the Premier. Would the Premier advise if the private-sector participants in Syncrude have a first call on the production in excess of their equity percentage?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, that matter has not been dealt with. My recollection would be that the matter has not been raised. So I think it could be a matter of discussion and negotiation. But certainly it's not something that has been settled at the moment.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Premier advise as to the agreed-upon distribution of production from Syncrude at the present time?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would presume that at the present time - if I'm understanding the hon. member he must be referring in advance to the new arrangement and the new participation - I'd have to check the agreement between the partners as to whether or not there are some arrangements there for one partner to have a distribution position different from another or different from their percentage interest.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Then do we take it from the Premier's answer that at the present time all of the production from the Syncrude project goes to the private-sector investors, and the governmental-sector investors do not have a first call on any of the production?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, no, the hon. member cannot take that from my answer. I think it's clear that in the first instance the interest of the participants with a call on production would be in relationship to their investment, but the matter has not been fully resolved.

As far as the Government of Alberta is concerned, of course under the laws of Alberta and the many very statutory provisions that are involved and regulatory provisions, the Alberta government is in a very significant position relative to the control and distribution because Alberta needs will be met first.

#### Meat Packing Industry

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the government made any studies of the packing plant industry in the province of Alberta?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I'm not quite sure what the hon. member ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Oh.



DR. HORNER:

... would mean in the question of the study of packing plants. We have done and are doing some feasibility studies in relation to the need for additional processing facilities. These are ongoing.

AEC - Shares

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. What assurance can he give us that the Alberta Energy Company will give preference to the distribution of its shares to the individual rather than to block sales, large sales to individuals or corporations?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will recall the debate and the discussion that we had regarding the Alberta Energy Company last year, we certainly made it a statement of government policy that individual Albertans would be assured an opportunity of purchasing shares should they wish.

MR. LUDWIG:

What medium or what mechanism does the minister use to direct his views and government policy to the Alberta Energy Company? What is the line of communication in this regard, Mr. Speaker?

MR. GETTY:

It's by word of mouth, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUDWIG:

Does that mean that there is still a hands-off policy, Mr. Speaker? You don't expect us to believe that, do you?

Valentine's Day Announcement

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, my question today is addressed to the hon. the Premier.

Mr. Premier, in view that I find it very difficult to contain my curiosity and my feeling of suspense, could the hon. minister advise whether or not this House might be in store for a special Valentine's Day announcement today that would be of particular political significance to all?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will have to hold his attention. I must admit the flower came from my wife because it was Valentine's Day.

Petroleum Marketing Act

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Premier. It is a follow-up question I asked the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs the other day. It concerns PART 4 of The Petroleum Marketing Act.

My question is: was PART 4 of the Petroleum Marketing Commission Act discussed at the meeting with the federal Prime Minister?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, not specifically, although matters of that nature have been the subject of discussion between myself and the Prime Minister on other occasions.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Can the Premier advise the Assembly whether or not the government has made any decision as yet with respect to proclaiming PART 4 of the Petroleum Marketing Commission Act?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is that we have not made any decision. We are aware of the implications of that part. The possibility of arrangements with regard to the federal government and having it within our legislative framework is something we will be very conscious of as matters develop in the ongoing months.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Can the Premier advise the Assembly what the response of the federal government has been to PART 4 of the Petroleum Marketing Commission Act? Are they entertaining the idea with some sympathy or do they reject it out of hand?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I would have to describe their reaction at this time as not conclusive.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Has the provincial government discussed PART 4 of The Petroleum Marketing Act with other provincial governments, and can the Premier advise the Assembly what response he has received from other provincial governments on this particular proposal?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, from memory I believe it has been raised at a first ministers' discussion, but I would have to take that matter under advisement and check.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the Premier regarding oil marketing. Mr. Premier, in your remarks you state there is a 7- to 10-year supply left, and yet your energy board sees a supply a long way in the distance. Are they referring to just Alberta or to Canada?

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. the Premier could inform the House as to what, in his opinion, the life expectancy is of the present conventional oil production?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I would rather deal with that matter in my remarks on the Budget.

#### Ontario Wagon Train

MR. WYSE:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. What communications has the minister had with the group of Toronto area-based residents who recently were planning to travel to Alberta by wagon train and settle in northern Alberta, I think it was?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, the short answer is: extensive. What is involved is a group of people who I think - and I sympathize with their aspirations to escape the asphalt jungle and also to share in some of the great opportunities in Alberta. We, for our part, when these are people who want to apply themselves, their energies and initiatives to the opportunities in Alberta, welcome them.

At the same time, we have been careful not to let any of them be misled with respect to the circumstance they might face when they come here. To that end, we have issued a news release which has been carried across Canada. I have talked to the people themselves and had a number of discussions with various people about this matter.

MR. WYSE:

A supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker. Is the group still planning to take up residence in Alberta, and did they file for homestead land there?

AN HON. MEMBER:

In Redcliff.

DR. WARRACK:

No, they have not filed for homestead land. They have made one application for grazing lands and have been informed that local district farmers are given preference over anyone else, be they from Alberta or elsewhere outside the district insofar as land availability is concerned.

It remains to be seen whether, on their target date of April 1, they decide to actually come or not by wagon train, presumably along the busy Trans-Canada Highway from Ontario to Alberta. The last information I have is that they were having some very serious discussions with the Humane Society of Canada on their contemplations.

MR. WYSE:

One last supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister has tried to discourage them from coming from Ontario to Alberta?

DR. WARRACK:

No, that's not a correct reflection of what I have said, Mr. Speaker, but let me repeat so it is clear.

With respect to people who would like to come to Alberta and apply their energies and initiatives to the opportunities available, in some sense uniquely in Alberta these days,

we welcome them. At the same time, we do not welcome them dictating any specific terms under which they come. We would not want them to be under any illusion about any special circumstances they might have waiting for them as compared with what anyone else from Canada, or anyone else from another part of Alberta for that matter, would reasonably expect.

MR. WYSE:

One last supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker. Homestead land priority is given to Alberta residents. Did the minister indicate this?

DR. WARRACK:

On that specific matter, Mr. Speaker, the circumstances are these: someone in applying for a homestead in Alberta must either be a Canadian citizen or be planning to become a Canadian citizen and have taken action to execute that, and must have been in Alberta for one year during the course of the last three years.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. I would ask him whether or not his department has reviewed possible changes in the homestead regulations or modifications which would make it easier and perhaps provide more incentive for people to settle in the still arable sections of the province of Alberta.

DR. WARRACK:

As a general policy matter we have been reviewing that particular instance. At the same time, if the hon. member is suggesting that we make special provisions for people from Central Canada, from Toronto, to come to Alberta, we have not considered that.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question just to set the record straight. I was not suggesting special conditions for anybody. I'm asking whether or not there has been a comprehensive review of all the regulations as they relate to the present homestead policy in the province of Alberta for Albertans.

DR. WARRACK:

I answered that in the first part of my answer, Mr. Speaker.

#### International Women's Year

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Education. Would the minister advise the date of the Department of Education's sponsored seminar with teachers and trustees regarding meaningful observances, events in historical undertakings relative to women's contributions to the history of Alberta?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, that has been ongoing and will continue to be ongoing during the course of this very important year.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I missed the date that the minister had referred to for the seminar.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, there is no particular date I think that was referred to, and whether it will take the form of a seminar I couldn't say exactly. But there are ongoing discussions between the various groups involved on this subject and have been for some months past.

#### The School Act

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. minister advise when the minister might be introducing amendments to The School Act to ensure sick leave for reasons related to pregnancy?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, the honorable gentleman will have to wait until The School Act amendments are introduced to assess what the government is doing in that regard.

## International Women's Year (continued)

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. minister advise what other actions or events the Department of Education will initiate this year regarding International Women's Year?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I think a thorough discussion of that might take some time. It might take more than I have available at this time. However, we are participating, in conjunction with the other departments involved, in making the year a meaningful one from the point of view of education in the schools of the province.

## School Boarding Grants

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Education as well. Is the government considering any changes in the boarding allowance grant from its present structure?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, all the grants are under continuous review with a view to ensuring that they are fair and equitable and also bear a continuous relationship to inflation. That is one which would be within that category.

## Meat Packing Industry (continued)

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, my question refers to a serious charge that was made by the hon. Minister of Agriculture the other day, that the packing plants in Alberta, many of which are located in my particular constituency, have manipulated the market.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I've got more.

MR. DIXON:

I wonder if the minister is going to take any action and turn these so-called charges over to the Department of Consumer Affairs for investigation?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, what I said was that all segments in the livestock industry have some responsibility in the matter of supply and the matter of marketing, and that includes the processor, the wholesaler, the primary producer and indeed others which are involved in the chain. What I said was that the processors have to take their responsibility in maintaining that kind of supply by having a stable market.

MR. DIXON:

Further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, of importance to my constituency: is the provincial government, Mr. Speaker, going to continue loaning money and giving grants for further packing houses in Alberta when we already have a situation of layoffs within the industry in our major cities?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, we don't make any grants to any packing industry, and the others are dealt with on a commercial basis.

## School Bus Operators - Pay Rate

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the hon. Minister of Education. In light of the fact that the Department of Education pays a major portion of the busing grants, is the minister in a position to indicate if he is moving towards making a uniform pay rate for school bus operators, or is there a possibility that it can be done that way?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, that's a matter which is negotiated between the local elected school board and their employees. We are in the final stages of developing, for a possible announcement this fall, a new transportation plan based on useful submissions that we shortly will be receiving from the School Trustees Association. I don't think that has

been one which they have made direct representations on. However, if they do so, we would certainly be prepared to consider it and see whether some alternative arrangements could be made in that way.

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, my concerns are for the school bus operators and my question is: is the hon. minister aware that there is a great disparity in pay rates between different counties, and a very wide disparity?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Well, there may well be a difference, Mr. Speaker, between the different pay rates, but I think it would be imposing a very large degree of overall government control and removing substantially local autonomy from the school boards if provincial regulations were to be imposed. So I think the locally elected trustees are the best judges of how they wish to enter into negotiations and to establish pay rates.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister in light of his first answer about a possible revision of transportation support in the fall of this year.

Is the government considering the possibility of making any adjustment, as government considering the possibility of making any adjustment, as far as transportation assistance to school boards, retroactive to the first of this year - January 1, 1975 - because of the fiscal year of the school jurisdictions in the province, in light of the fact that there has been a freeze since '71, with some adjustments?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Yes, that's certainly a possibility, Mr. Speaker.

#### Meat Packing Plant - Fort Macleod

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Solicitor General. It's a follow-up question to one I asked on Friday of last week concerning troubling reports about a packing venture in the Macleod area and the principal of that venture.

My question to the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker, is: has she had an opportunity to review the correspondence she's received on that matter, and can she report to the House?

MISS HUNLEY:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to review the correspondence and yes, I'm in a position to report that to the House.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Solicitor General. Is it the government's intention to pursue the matter any further, or is it closed as far as the government is concerned?

MISS HUNLEY:

At the present time, Mr. Speaker, we have no indication that there is any further action required on the part of the government.

#### AEC - Pipeline, Power Plant

MR. WYSE:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and it's a follow-up to some of the questions posed to the ministers this afternoon. Possibly the minister has already answered it.

Was it the provincial government which committed money for the pipeline and power plant and other Alberta Energy Company commitments, or was it the directors of the AEC who actually made the commitment?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, it was the Government of Alberta, and it will be the Alberta Energy Company who will be responsible for raising the funds.

MR. WYSE:

Supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker. So the directors of the Alberta Energy Company have not actually made any commitments; it is the government which has made all the commitments thus far?

MR. GETTY:

I'm not sure what he has now expanded the word "commitments" to cover, Mr. Speaker.

## Meat Packing Industry (continued)

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture for clarification. I wonder if I'm correct in assuming that the Alberta government gives no assistance to the establishment of packing plants in Alberta by way of grants or any other assistance. Does it come through another department?

I would like to have this clear because there is a concern in my constituency that the government is overbuilding in Alberta as far as the killing capacity for slaughtering cattle is concerned in our province.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I can be very clear. First of all, the government is certainly not building anything. Secondly, the government, as a matter of policy, has not made any grants nor will it make grants to packing facilities.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I can see the hon. minister has not quite got what I am trying to drive at. Are there any loans, is there any assistance, is land bought, is there any sort of assistance?

If there is, could the minister outline briefly what assistance is given so that I can answer my constituents who are concerned that we're overbuilding in Alberta at the present time?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier it's a commercial proposition. One or two plants have had to be relocated for environmental reasons and there may be some assistance in that area to relocate. One that comes to mind immediately is the one in Lethbridge.

Insofar as other loans made to processing facilities, they are either through the Opportunity Company or are guaranteed loans through the usual procedures and are done only after pretty intensive investigation as to the supply of facilities in the particular area, and a number of matters.

But I'm sure my honorable friend would appreciate that if we are going to maintain our packing industry in Alberta, it is essential that we have the kinds of returns to the producers that will encourage them to give the product for the producer to process.

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the hon. minister. Can he indicate to the House how many dollars of public funds were put into the lamb processing plant to assist it getting started?

DR. HORNER:

There are no direct public funds in the lamb processing plant outside of grants to the sheep association.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

2. Mr. Miniely moved:

Be it resolved that this Assembly approves in general the fiscal policies of the Government.

[Postponed debate: Mr. Drain.]

MR. DRAIN:

I confess, Mr. Speaker, with the 13 short minutes I have available to myself and my objectives of changing the course of government and steering it down the proper pathways that this does represent a challenge even to me.

[Laughter]

However, Mr. Speaker, I believe that when the debate was postponed I was going through the process of attempting to salvage the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud who was having difficulties in getting mired down in the areas of the situation. I referred then to the

difference that I wanted to enunciate between the position taken by the hon. members who are now on your right, who were then left-handed, who moved a motion which would have resulted in cutting the vote for the Department of Youth from \$3 million to \$1.5 million - probably the right thing to do at that time.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I remember that.

MR. DRAIN:

I can also recall the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud making very strong representations towards the idea of setting up an embassy in Washington, in which he would be there ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Peeking through the peephole.

MR. DRAIN:

... with the squirt gun of Alberta oil to fire it into the American economy at the first opportunity. Now the problem, Mr. Speaker, is how to shut off the squirt gun.

The point I'm trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a great difference between the 1971 Budget which was a cloth cut to fit the times, and the situation in which we are in Alberta today. Hence when the Provincial Treasurer uses the simile of referring to the provincial Budget of 1971, the only conclusion I can arrive at, Mr. Speaker, is that he is suffering from a benign benefactor fantasy. The hon. Provincial Treasurer therefore has problems, health problems. He is becoming disoriented. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, the proper course for the Provincial Treasurer at this time is to resign. He has difficulties.

But the man who poses the greatest problem and eludes me every time I get around to his department, is the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. He has disappeared into oblivion again - I always like to have a target in front of me that I can fire at. I don't like to shoot over the hills; you might miss.

That refers to the matter of housing. I recall the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs when he was in the opposition, Mr. Speaker, referring to the minister who was then handling that portfolio. What I inferred was a derogatory manner in which he suggested that the Alberta housing authority had laid an egg.

Now, what is the situation today in 1975, Mr. Speaker? We find that the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, despite his expertise, his technical knowledge, his understanding of the housing crisis as it exists today in Alberta and the potential for the future, has sat on this egg. And what has he hatched?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Cil.

MR. DRAIN:

A miscarriage, Mr. Speaker.

[Laughter]

[Mr. Russell entered the House.]

MR. DRAIN:

There he is!

Mr. Speaker, what I had hoped for and the people of Alberta had prayed for, and which I had discussed with the hon. member when he was the opposition, was that this is the era of innovation. He has a challenge presented to him.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. DRAIN:

He has the challenge of meeting the housing problems of the people of Alberta, not in the irrational manner of \$50,000 or \$60,000 or \$75,000 for a house, but with rationality, expertise, ability to solve the problem and innovation.

The hon. minister is a young man. I hope sincerely, Mr. Speaker ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

He has aged 10 years.

MR. DRAIN:

... that he, unlike the government he represents, is not suffering from premature hardening of the arteries.

[Laughter]

I'm getting serious.

The situation facing the province of Alberta brings to my mind an analogy that could be very appropriate. I'm thinking of one of the stories that I read from the tales of The Decameron, in which, as a result of a plague that travelled through the land, there was great 'disconcertation' in various areas. This prince took his court, fled to the countryside and put himself into a castle which was surrounded by a large moat. He posted guards at the four corners of this big building and said, we have saved ourselves harmless from what is occurring in the rest of the world. What is occurring in the United States or the eastern bastions of this country we live in, will not affect us because we will be held inviolate by the environment we are in.

So, in order to celebrate the ease, greatness and security that this prince felt, he gave a great ball. He invited to the ball, Mr. Speaker, all the retainers and fellow courtiers who dwelt with him in this particular castle. They had a masquerade. At midnight the masks were removed. The masks were removed till finally it came to the last person. They said, "Remove your mask." And he said, "I will not." They said, "You must remove it." So he said, "Okay", and he dropped his mask. This was the Red Death. One by one the courtiers around the king fell dead and finally the king died also.

The point I'm making by this, Mr. Speaker, is that we in Alberta are affected in every manner by what occurs in the rest of the world; the United States, eastern Canada and western Canada. If the slowdown that is clearly evident in Canada accelerates, and we have an island of good fortune, we will be faced with one of the greatest inter-country migrations that has ever occurred in Canada. Are we capable of meeting this challenge?

The problems in housing, schooling and the development of all of the social infrastructure, are going to be an awe-inspiring job. This calls for very astute planning on the part of government. It also calls for a programmed orderly process of growth into the future under the guidance of the Minister of Industry and Commerce.

These are some of the brief thoughts I can express knowing that, like the sower who went forth to sow, I planted the seed in fertile ground and that it will grow into great and better things, Mr. Speaker.

But I emphasize that housing is something that should be innovative, that there should be research in, and a new direction should be taken. Growth in the province of Alberta should be orderly and in no way can we separate ourselves from what occurs in the rest of Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, at the outset of my remarks in this Budget Speech, let me join with the others in paying respect to the institution of the monarchy and to the very gracious way in which the new Lieutenant-Governor, The Honourable Ralph Steinhauer, has assumed the responsibilities in this province.

Let me too, Mr. Speaker - and I believe I speak in this regard for members on both sides of the House - say to you, sir, how very impressed we are with the very effective way in which you carry your responsibilities as Speaker - in an impartial way, with judgment and with growing respect and eminence in that capacity throughout the nation.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I know that some hon. members have announced their decision to not seek re-election to the 18th Alberta Legislature. I would like to make a few remarks with regard to those members who have made such a public declaration.

I'd like to refer first of all, of course, to the former Premier of this province, the hon. Member for Cypress, and reiterate the remarks I made in this House at the time at which he relinquished his responsibilities as Leader of the Opposition and say to him that we on this side would like to wish him well. He will be well remembered for the public service, dedication, sincerity and integrity he has brought to public life in the province of Alberta.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I know, too, the hon. Member for Wainwright, the hon. member Mr. Ruste, has announced his intention not to seek re-election. We have had a number of years on opposite sides of the Legislature. We would like to pay our respects to him as well, for his work on behalf of his constituency and on behalf of this province.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I note too that the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking has made a similar announcement. I recall in my first years in the Legislature learning from him in his capacity as Deputy Speaker; perhaps learning, I recall, by being caught out of order on a number of occasions. But I recall, too, his fairness and impartiality. We, on behalf of all members on this side of the House, wish him, too, continued health and happiness and add our respect for the contribution he has made to the people of Alberta.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, it was not my privilege to be in this Legislature during the entire time the hon. Member for Cardston was here. But in the period that I have, we've all grown to



understand the imagination and the intellect he has exhibited here and in his life, the contributions he has made in the past at the front desks here in terms of the development of the School Foundation Plan, among other things. He will be going into retirement I am sure with a feeling of full satisfaction for the contribution he has made to the people of Alberta.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I know also that the Member for Hanna-Oyen, Mr. French, has tried valiantly to make me more aware of the problems of grazing leases and assessments over the course of eight years - and I realize I still have a way to go - but it's in that representation on behalf of one's constituency that makes real meaning come to the Alberta Legislature. We wish him well. We will miss not only him, but I think all will miss the tremendous contribution that his dear wife has brought to many very happy occasions. To both of them our best wishes.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I note that the hon. Member for Taber-Warner, Mr. Miller, is not in his seat. I trust the hon. Leader of the Opposition will pass on to him our comments and respects in terms of his contribution to this House.

I note, too, and with some considerable regret, that that seat in the far corner is not filled today by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc. The respective times in which we have debated across the floor of this Legislature, both ways, has been something that will [remain] in my personal memory.

I think all of us know that here not only is an Albertan who has a real feeling and understanding for the province in a national way, but in addition to that, [one who] worked extremely hard in the establishment and the setting up of very difficult departments in the prior administration. He has brought to the public life of this province something that we on our side will remember. And we will want to pass to him, through Hansard, to the citizens of this province, our admiration for his frankness, his courage and his integrity.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, we for our part on this side, have three members who are in a similar situation having made similar decisions for personal reasons.

The hon. Member for Calgary McKnight, Mr. Lee, has shown as a young and new member in his time in this 17th Alberta Legislature, great promise for the future of Alberta. In whatever chosen field he moves into, I'm sure he will recall these four years in the Legislature, as we do, as a very important time in our lives. We wish him well in the future too.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I have to the right of me a few seats, a dear old friend whom I knew well before we both came into this Legislature, although we came in at the same time. When it comes to writing the history books, or having memories of the time we were here of a personality that will be always, in our minds, a personality that so much reflects what's great in Alberta, I think we'll all very much miss Mr. Clarence Copithorne.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a number of remarks today with regard to energy and some difficult decisions. These decisions are made while working together under very intense pressure. It's been the privilege of all of us, and I think it's been to the great benefit of the people of Alberta, that over the last three and a half years we've had as a Minister of Mines and Minerals a man who has not only served this province as an alderman, as an MLA on both sides of the House, but particularly in the last three and a half years [one who] has shown a tremendous capacity for hard work, for composure, for coolness, for ability and for good judgment: the hon. member, Mr. Dickie.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for all members when I say that in our own memories the participation in this Legislature and being a part of it is something that we'll treasure, because I think we all consider it a great privilege to serve the people of Alberta and our constituents, here in this Legislative Assembly of Alberta, with all that it means to the democracy of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the Budget Address of 1975 in relationship to Motion No. 2. It is an extraordinary document and in my view is a milestone in the history of this province.

As we approached it, as members are aware, during the months of September, October, November and December in formulating it, and then in final decisions in January, we looked at the Budget in terms of our special circumstances in Alberta, in terms of how we could transmit to our citizens some immediate benefits, in a fair way, of the resources and

revenues that are coming to the province. For that reason of course we made the decision to reduce very dramatically the rate of income tax of Alberta by a full 28 per cent. Aside from its economic effects upon the province which I think will be very positive, it will also put the citizens of this province into a position of having the lowest personal income tax rates in Canada. I think that is a very important and significant development for us.

Secondly, and at the same time within this Budget, we said it was necessary for us to expand our support for what we've termed in the Budget, external programs. Those are programs where we have had transfer payments to schools, colleges and universities, to hospitals, to direct payments to citizens to reduce their costs, such as the natural gas rebate plan and the renter assistance. And in that area, the increase in expenditure has been quite significant. It has been as high as in the order of 26 per cent.

But we felt that in the third approach to the Budget, we could balance that in this 1975 Budget Address by controlling the expenditure of provincially administrative programs to only 13 per cent. That was the target when we set out on our budget process. I think it was a very worth-while one and certainly reflects, I know, the views of the members of our caucus, and I believe reflects very much indeed the views of their constituents.

We recognized there was a need to slow down the size of the growth of the public service of this province and felt that with the large reduction in income tax and the direct payments to citizens, this was a very appropriate year to make that important reduction. That reduction was done in terms of the civil service to 3.2 per cent.

All of this was accomplished, Mr. Speaker, from normal revenues, still providing the public of Alberta through their government with a significant surplus on both combined operating and capital account.

Yet in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we were able to set up an Alberta heritage trust fund and target for a sum of \$1.5 billion by December 1975. I would like, further in my remarks, to deal with that in some detail.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly a remarkable Budget for the people of Alberta. Its highlights, briefly, are the conclusion that: [first] it brings Albertans to the position of being the lowest-taxed citizens in Canada in every major individual tax area. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it brings a level of social and other government services equal to or better than any other provincial government in Canada. Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, it reflects the view of this government of a partnership with the private sector to sustain and diversify an economy which is already the most dynamic in Canada.

Also, Mr. Speaker, it has permitted us to reverse the financial position of the province in three and a half short years from a situation of concern in terms of dwindling reserves and increased borrowing requirements, to the strongest financial position of any provincial government in Canada today.

Mr. Speaker, I think it only appropriate at this time to spend some time to review the record of accomplishment of this administration in three and a half years. We are very proud and very pleased with what we have been able to accomplish, but that's not to say there isn't a great deal more to do.

I would like to pay particular tribute to a very hard-working group of ministers and our full team of 49 for pulling together in these difficult times and working as hard as they did. I think they deserve credit from the citizens of the province in terms of the effort they have made.

Mr. Speaker, many of the accomplishments of our administration in three and a half years have been overshadowed by energy matters. But I think many of us feel personally a greater sense of contribution in some of these less publicized areas, in some of these 'people programs' which I want to refer to.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to recall the first bill our administration brought forward, The Alberta Bill of Rights, where we made it an Act which took precedence over every other statute in Alberta. It's still a first and only in Canada as primary legislation. Its significance to the people of Alberta will, I am sure, grow in the years ahead. It gives the supremacy of the Legislature an important position in the province.

The companion act to that, The Individual's Rights Protection Act, with the equality provisions regarding race, religion, sex, color and creed; its emphasis on nondiscrimination which reflects the view of the very, very, very large majority of Albertans; its establishment of a Human Rights Commission; its recognition, as the Member for Calgary Buffalo pointed out to me at a recent meeting on human rights legislation in Vancouver, where they recognized Alberta leadership in this area of human rights legislation.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, in the area of workmen's compensation, a field I found, and I think all members found, whichever side of the House they had been on, and certainly I found in my years as leader of the opposition, was one of the areas where I had cases which I thought were probably the most justified of all that needed help. We've gone quite a way and we have more work to do. We have brought in new legislation. I believe we have brought in new attitudes. We've certainly substantially improved the benefits. They in fact have been doubled over the course of the four budgets.

I think it's easy for us to sit here in this Assembly and talk about these larger matters, but when you are dealing with disabled citizens who are working as part of the nature of society in Alberta, and through no fault of their own are injured, I think they certainly need to rate near the very highest of our priorities. I hope we have the continued support of members on both sides of the House and the citizens to continue to improve in this important area of public responsibility we all have.

Mr. Speaker, another area we have given a constant priority to over the period of three and a half years has been the positive approaches to the senior citizens of Alberta. I have spoken about this on many occasions outside and in the House. We felt it was important to move quickly when we came to office.

We moved quickly within four months to provide the situation where there would be free medicare for all citizens over the age of 65. We followed through on our election commitment in regard to school tax being relieved from our senior citizens; in terms of shelter allowances; in terms of lodge and accommodation programs following forward the past history in that regard, and to the more recent steps in terms of assured income and medical benefits.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest raised - and I think raised it well - when he said that if the inflationary pressures continue at the same rate they have, we can't stand still on this particular situation. We have the best package in Canada today, but we have to keep it that way. We have to respond to the future, and to the future as it develops in that sense.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, in terms of education we did what we said we would do and moved ahead with the provincial share in terms of the school foundation program from approximately 66 per cent in 1971 to 88 per cent in 1975. We started - and great credit, in my judgment, should be given and I don't believe he gets the credit he deserves in bringing in some important reforms in education - the one that was certainly overdue in this province, but because it was overdue the pressures to do it in a certain way were there, and on the Minister of Education. Yet we've moved with this early childhood program in a way that brings in the community, brings in the parents, is growing in acceptance and is a very important accomplishment of this administration.

Mr. Speaker, I deal too with the Education Opportunity Fund and the recent announcements by the minister regarding rural education and declining enrolments, which I know will be extremely helpful and members on both sides have spoken about.

In the area of advanced education, we have in the last few years put a heavy emphasis - and in our judgment rightly so - on the colleges and the technical schools. At the same time we've maintained the very high standards of our universities in the province, and will continue to do so.

In terms of health, I think it's undisputed that we have the best health system, overall, of any provincial government. But because of the vast commitment - probably in the neighborhood of half a billion dollars a year if you add the hospitals and health care in total, and others - there is still room to improve efficiency and productivity in this area, and to fill in some gaps that are needed in the system. But a great deal has been done.

We put a high priority in our first year on mental health. We've made a great deal of progress. We've reduced the number of our citizens who were in institutions. We've improved a number of facilities. We've carefully evaluated the recommendations of the Blair report. We've gone in our judgment - and I believe in theirs - a long way in the recommendations of the Blair report on mental health. We have further work to do, but I think we can safely say that the statement that bothered all of us in the Blair report - that there needed to be an end to discrimination of the mentally ill in the health system of this province - has in fact been realized.

In the priority of the handicapped, Mr. Speaker, I know members are aware of the strides that have been made, of the commitment in dollars - and I know it has to be more than dollars, but commitment in dollars is some reflection of judgment and also of priority - of 164 per cent increase in four Budgets.

In the area of Native and Metis citizens, we've moved with a program on housing. In terms of water, some 725 new water systems - and that may sound like figures we can talk about in the Legislative Assembly but its real meaning in the isolated communities of Alberta is very significant for those of us who have been there and seen it. We have more work to do with the Native associations in terms of training, in terms of opportunity for them and in terms of giving them a chance to participate in the growth of the province. We know it. We accept it.

In terms of the very basics of life in Alberta, we emphasized the water and sewer situations, found 55 communities that needed the facilities, and through the Department of the Environment have already accomplished that need in that area in 42 additional communities being planned now.

In terms of rural gas expansion, already 14,000 homes and farms and 10,000 more - and frankly in that area, Mr. Speaker, I believe we're significantly ahead of our own target in terms of rural gas and making life better for our citizens in outlying areas.

In terms of housing, I see that 14,000 units have been involved in terms of the provincial government in the last three and a half years, compared to some 7,500 in the previous four years. More needs to be done and more will be done. In future weeks I will have more to say about that.

Mr. Speaker, all of this has been accomplished not by increasing taxes but by reducing them. We have followed a mandate we received in August of 1971 that was a very full and complete mandate. When I was asked on August 30, 1971 about the magnitude of that mandate I said, it's a mandate for eight years. It's a mandate for two terms because of the amount that's there.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in my judgment, and I think in fair objective judgment, in a period of three and a half years we're now well over three-quarters-completed on that 8-year program. Certainly the very important move of having the provincial government remove itself to a very significant extent from the property tax field, which was one of the important elements of our mandate, and to take over the full health costs, need to be underlined.

Mr. Speaker, there is much more I could sketch in the social area in terms of parks, metropolitan life, rural services, recreation and environment. But in the future and as we look ahead in Alberta, the work is never done in government or in this Assembly. We can never stand still. Further improvements are needed. There are still areas that I've mentioned of overdue reform that is required. There need to be refinements and adjustments in these new programs, many of which have been brought in more rapidly than we would like. And that will be done.

In the weeks and months ahead I propose to expand upon various position papers that have been presented both here in the Legislature and outside on a variety of subjects including the justice system in Alberta, the welfare incentive plan presented by the Minister of Health and Social Development, some ideas that the Solicitor General and the Attorney General have regarding law enforcement, some approaches regarding rehabilitation, some extensive plans we have regarding housing, some thoughts in terms of improvement of life in metropolitan areas, some ongoing thoughts of strengthening the financial position of municipal governments, proposed policy with regard to science and research, a follow-up on the plan regarding recreation and community life and, more recently, the commission report on industrial safety which was raised with us by the Alberta Federation of Labour and has now been tabled here in the House.

There are many other social aspects of provincial programming that in addition to what I've outlined will require our attention in the future and will require our public comment with regard to the new directions we will go.

I hope - but it will not be, I'm sure, entirely within our control - that the situation with regard to other governments in the energy situation will be one that may stabilize. So I trust that in our next term of office events will permit us to give an even greater emphasis to these quality of life improvement areas for Albertans.

But Mr. Speaker, many of these social benefits are lost, in fact have little impact, if the citizen does not have a secure and meaningful job with good prospects for the future. Mr. Speaker, many of these social benefits could not be financially supported without a strong economy in Alberta and without sound management of the valuable resources owned by the people of Alberta.

I think it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that Alberta today is probably the only jurisdiction in North America not now in a recession but in a period of expansion and a dynamic positive impact.

It's due to a combination of factors of course: the presence of resources, the talent of people to find the resources, the talent of people to make use of the resources, and then after that of course to the management of resources by the elected representatives of the people.

The latest unemployment and employment data for Canada is most significant. Alberta is the lowest in Canada by a significant margin and has, and continues to have, the highest proportion of our population working. I think that one reason I want to emphasize that is that we do still have in this province, in my judgment, the work ethic. We do have in this province the idea of work. And the philosophy that rights are the rewards of responsibility is something that I think is held by most members of this Assembly on either side, and that's reflected in that statistic.

Mr. Speaker, you could compare our position with other provinces. Certainly one looks to the west of us with concern. Equally rich in natural resources - 100,000 unemployed today in the province of British Columbia; an oil and gas and mining industry that's in a shambles. It's important for us to observe that. Especially significant here in Alberta today is that there are 96,000 people - wage earners - more than there were in the last quarter of '71, in the last quarter of '74. That was the entire population of the city of Calgary when I grew up in it.

There are 30,000 more employed in January '75, in this year of alleged concern of investor confidence, than there were in January of 1974. Mr. Speaker, on a seasonally-adjusted basis, while we read the doom and gloom and hear the doom and gloom, [for] the fourth consecutive month we've had expanded seasonal-adjusted employment in this province, which is just the opposite of where it's going elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, the farmers of this province, in terms of their income - in terms of the dynamic effort that's been made by the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Agriculture in overcoming some federal policies and offsetting them and tangling with them and still struggling with them, in trying to get a recognition in Ottawa in that important field of the need for expansion of production to meet the needs of the world in terms of food, to meet the needs of the world in terms of the great agriculture potential that we have here in the west, well, we've moved on this in a situation where net farm income has more than doubled since we came into office. But what's important in a period of inflation, in addition to net farm income doubling, we now have in this province, on the aggregate, the lowest farm input cost of any area in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta government policies have not played the total role, naturally, but they have played a very significant role in this economic position. Our policies regarding taxation, regarding financing, providing of service facilities, welcoming people to come, creating a climate for investment, providing an attitude towards the private

sector, a balance of partnership between the private and public sector: that is in a very significant degree part of the answer to these very positive situations in the Alberta economy.

Mr. Speaker, we do not live in an island. We are subject to pressures from outside - economic pressures. We take no pleasure, and we have great concern in a lack of economic vitality in any part of Canada, in Canada as a whole, in North America and in the world. We will watch the gathering storm clouds this summer and fall, we'll judge our policies in relationship to our response to that, and we will work with the rest of Canada to stimulate this nation in terms of its economic position.

And one reason, Mr. Speaker, one very important reason - and let credit be appropriately taken - for the economy of Canada and the inflation rate in Canada to be better than other countries in the western world is because governments here, in Alberta, and people here in Alberta, understood what it was to go out and find energy and risk their money to do so and knew that governments couldn't do it. And we can only look east and west to see the proof of that.

Mr. Speaker, during the past three and a half years we have developed goals and objectives for Alberta economic development. We have developed an industrial strategy to support these goals and objectives. It's not my intention to repeat them on this occasion. As hon. members are aware, I outlined it at length in the fall sittings of the Legislature last year. We know the goals and objectives we have and where we want to go in an economic sense and, Mr. Speaker, we do not want to go in the sense of great growth of population. We want to go in an orderly growth so that the citizens living here now and their children have a quality of life unsurpassed anywhere.

Mr. Speaker, we know what's needed. We know that we have to overcome some obstacles that have been placed in our way by the nature of Confederation to this time in our history. We know that we have to do some other things in terms of governmental policy, and I'd like to mention three specifics.

Decentralization and balanced growth is the first. There were the sceptics who said in August 1971, that that sounded good but you just wouldn't be able to accomplish much; that there was a trend in the world today towards crowding more and more into large metropolitan centres. I forget what the "experts" said, but they were going to have us with 85 per cent within our two metropolitan areas in some period of time. I think the document the Leader of the Opposition was waving the other day entitled [Social] Futures of Alberta - it may have been in that document. In any event, that was the view of the experts: that we couldn't reverse the trend in terms of rural growth and decline in rural population; that we couldn't stabilize the population; that we couldn't bring opportunities to rural Alberta. Well, that's just not so, and that has in fact reversed; we now have a very strong and positive rural economy in Alberta today.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's only at stage one, and there's another stage about to begin. Last November I spent, with a number of the ministers, a long day with the Alberta Chamber of Commerce in working this industrial strategy and getting their ideas. We certainly had general consensus and certainly acceptance of the partnership with the provincial government that will be important to make it work.

The second area I'd like to deal with specifically in the economic side is the area of diversification. Mr. Speaker, I have said, and repeat again, that this will be difficult for Alberta. It will take us at least a decade to go from a province dependent upon primary resources to a more diversified province. It will change some of the basic economic structures within Canada as we've known it to date, and when there is change of that magnitude there will be tension. But it is our intention to press on; to recognize we will have some growing pains; to recognize we will have some problems, but to know that that has to be done if the decade of the '70s, in being in the Alberta Legislature, will have any meaning.

In the weeks and months ahead I want to expand specifically upon the progress and plans in transportation, agricultural processing, irrigation, petrochemicals, tourism and northern development, because herein lie some great opportunities for Alberta.

Thirdly on this area, Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to our taxation policy. Aside from the reduction in taxes, the Provincial Treasurer tabled a very significant document on January 29, a remarkable document. It is a position paper. There will probably be other position papers to go to a point of developing an incentive system so that the entrepreneur who is resident in Alberta and is an Albertan is able to offset the economies of scale of large companies and build a new business here. I think that of all the emphasis we want to place in an economic sense in the next term among our new directions, it will be to assure that this plan comes to fruition; [that] it pulls itself together and becomes a very important part of the economic strategy of Albertans. Because we think that that small businessman who lives here and wants to expand is going to provide jobs for young people in a secure and stable way, and diversify our economy perhaps even more so than big projects might, but that are very important in our thinking.

Mr. Speaker, before leaving the area of economics, the economic position of this province, obviously no discussion on the economic future of Alberta would be complete without reference to the oil sands and to Syncrude. Mr. Speaker, the decisions we arrived at in Winnipeg on February 4, 1975, in time - for a province - may be comparable to the nature of decisions that were involved in our history of Confederation relative to national railways. They have that much long-term impact.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased with the positive reaction outside this Legislature that we have received from the citizens on these arrangements. Mr. Speaker, they are excellent arrangements for Alberta: 10 per cent of the risk for 60 per cent of

the profits; the safety valve of 7.5 per cent of the gross if there are no profits paid by the other 90 per cent, and that amounts over the 20-year period to some \$845 million on present crude forecast - 8 times more than our risk investment.

Mr. Speaker, we didn't say to the private sector, take your \$1.4 billion and go elsewhere. We said, come here to Alberta and keep it here and spend it here. Bring your talent, bring your technology; we want it here, we don't want it elsewhere; we want it here and spent here as part of private sector investment. And I think that that is a good idea.

Mr. Speaker, we wanted in the oil sands - and I will refer later to the importance of the conservation of our resources - we want that back-up. We want that back-up for as long as we can look into the future of Alberta in terms of energy to assure that this province remains the energy province in Canada. Without the oil sands going ahead, that might have been subject to some question.

Mr. Speaker, I like that option of 20 per cent. I like very much that the Alberta Energy Company has, and as a shareholder I hope some day I will have the opportunity to exercise that option to appreciate the importance in building a project of this nature in these highly inflationary world times, to see what the final tag is and then make my decision with regard to that 20 per cent option. I like that kind of arrangement.

Mr. Speaker, I rather like the fact that the federal government is in at 15 per cent risk and the Ontario government for 5. That's 20 per cent compared to our 10. I think it is about time they got in at double the risk of Alberta.

I think when those shares go to the market for the Alberta Energy Company and they get an opportunity to participate in the resource future, then they look at the fact that they have a negotiated arrangement of a guaranteed nature in terms of a utility plant and a pipeline, I think that is a pretty nice arrangement. I haven't noticed very many of the pipeline and utility companies doing all that badly.

But what's really important, Mr. Speaker, is: of that \$2 billion in that plant, \$1.6 billion is going to find itself in the pockets of individual working Albertans, either through directly being involved through subcontractors, through suppliers, through engineers, through all the citizens of this province. Mr. Speaker, on this one, the critics are simply out to lunch and I can't ...

[Interjections]

You know, Mr. Speaker, there were four options for this. The first option was to let it drop with all that that meant in terms of the economy of Alberta, the momentum and perhaps a delay of a significant period of time. We weren't prepared to accept that option.

There was another one: that's to have all governments involved - with all their know-how in these areas and all their great record of performance. Well, Mr. Speaker, the federal government said, our maximum is \$500 million. That would have been \$1.5 billion of risk money that we would have been putting into this plant. That would have been quite a heritage fund. Mr. Speaker, I know where the technology would have gone under those circumstances. That was a second one and was rejected out of hand by all three governments and, I believe, out of hand by the citizens of Alberta.

There was a third option, it was pretty tough, and that was an option presented to us by Shell; keep the private sector in, but change the deal. Don't keep that deal. That deal you made in August-September 1973, Mr. Premier, was too tough. Change that deal and we'll come in. Mr. Speaker, we weren't prepared to do that because that deal was fair for Alberta and that deal stands.

Mr. Speaker the final decisions we've made and the benefits I've outlined. It also involves the very important cooperation with the major consuming province of Canada, of our energy, by the major producing energy province in Canada working with the federal government - and there are federal and intergovernmental relations.

Mr. Speaker, I could not be more pleased than to campaign on these arrangements in the weeks ahead, for every job in Alberta is more secure today because Syncrude is going ahead.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget indicates, as I have mentioned, a very strong financial position for the provincial government. Although this is good for Albertans, it's going to make life difficult for governments, for it will be very hard to resist the demands to control expenditure on the basis that the government doesn't have sufficient funds. I'm aware of that. Those on the other side are aware of that. That's the other side of the coin. Certainly we, for our part, will accept that. We'll put our emphasis on the disadvantaged; in working on things like the water programs to improve those areas where there is poverty in this province; to help the people who are hurt by inflation and by other costs, those citizens who are on fixed incomes. We will keep ahead of the nation and we will make the adjustments as necessary.

But this Budget, Mr. Speaker, purposely raises a fundamental issue for Albertans. Are we prepared as a province to put aside substantial sums of current revenues from the sale of nonreplaceable crude oil production, put it aside for our children and for our grandchildren and not make it available for current revenue needs; to use it for that day in this province that could well come when the revenues from the sale of depleting resources are no longer as significant, when some of the wells may have gone dry, when perhaps the discoveries of replacement reserves haven't worked out, and to diversify the economy of this province so we become less reliant upon the sale of oil to sustain our economy.

One can debate endlessly the details of such a fund, the parameters and the terms of reference, but the key is the basic concept of the fund. Do Albertans really accept the concept? I don't know. I think they do, but standing here today, I do not know. Are Alberta citizens prepared to do with somewhat less today, even though more than those in other provinces, so that their children and their grandchildren might enjoy at least the same level of prosperity that we have today when the oil wells do go dry?

Our mandate in 1971 did not involve such a concept as the Alberta heritage trust fund. We need to know. We need to know if the people in fact accept such a fund and want us to develop it. We will set out broad parameters. We will not though tie our hands in these rapidly changing times to specifics. We do need the endorsement of Albertans of the creation of such a heritage trust fund. During the forthcoming weeks and months we will further develop the parameters in relationship to terms of reference, the purposes and objectives of the fund, the necessary legislative review.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta heritage trust fund purpose is clear: to help assure that future generations of Albertans enjoy at least the same level of prosperity as we do now.

Mr. Speaker, this brings me to the energy policies of the government, why we have these revenues on hand, how long they will last and the value of our resources in the longer term - put another way, the energy policies of this government. What are the basic foundations of the policy? What is the significance of the policy decisions we have made? What are the results today, and what does the future hold?

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate the basic philosophy and foundation of our energy policies. First, that sufficient reserves be conserved for future requirements of Albertans, their children and their grandchildren. Secondly, that Albertans receive a fair return upon the sale to Albertans as owners, and that we strive as closely as possible in obtaining fair market value within Confederation. Thirdly, that the resources are used to the extent practical towards processing in Alberta to expand job opportunities for our citizens, our younger citizens in particular.

Mr. Speaker, what have we done in three and one-half short years in a policy-action basis to meet these objectives? We [took] a number of steps with regard to the question of the conservation of our resources in harmony with the Energy Resources Conservation Board: to establish this recent report of Alberta's requirements of energy and energy resources, 1975 to the year 2004; on the need or otherwise for the continuation or proration of Alberta crude oil production to market demand; on forecasts with regard to our crude production.

We maintained the policy of the previous administration regarding a thirty-year supply set aside for future generations regarding natural gas. We have been assessing, and are in the process of assessing, oil sands development and production in terms of the rates of production of conventional crude oil, to assure that they not jeopardize the long-term position of the province. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt we have conserved sufficient reserves at this point in time to protect the future requirements both in the oil and the natural gas area.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, when we came to office, on the question of pricing of natural gas we inherited a monopoly system, a monopoly buyer, TransCanada Pipelines. They were buying our Alberta-owned natural gas a way below its value. We called upon our Energy Resources Conservation Board to study the matter, to hear representations, and in November, 1972, here in the Legislature we presented our natural gas pricing policy that said that the average rate of natural gas at 16 cents per thousand cubic feet, that we wanted to get it up and get it up pretty rapidly. Well, Mr. Speaker, we did just that. We didn't get it up double, we've got it up four times already. And Mr. Speaker, it's now averaging three to four times in just over two years, because this government was prepared to take, not a hands-off view on natural gas pricing, but of saying "no more permits unless." Working with Alberta & Southern, working with Pan-Alberta, striving for fair value for our resources; that is a concrete accomplishment of great magnitude, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on the pricing of crude oil, we had a hearing here in May, I believe it was, of 1972. We were told by the industry that it would go up from a price it had been at for about 15 to 20 years, of about 10 cents a barrel a year. That's what the industry told us. Well, Mr. Speaker, we said we were going to get into the pressure of crude oil pricing as well as natural gas, and we let our views be known across the country. In one year the price increased from about a \$2.90 a barrel average to \$3.80 a barrel average well before the OPEC cartel made its move, because this government got involved in the pricing question of its resources.

Mr. Speaker, when the time came and the OPEC nations made their moves in the fall of '73 and early '74, and as this was developing, we said we would go beyond just simply pressure, we would go to the point - and I well remember the debate because I remember people saying the government is getting in where the private sector should belong.

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't disagree more. There are appropriate places for the private sector. But the private sector should not be in the position whereby in a province such as this they are controlling the pricing of the crude oil that is owned by the people of Alberta. And that is why we brought in The Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission.

Mr. Speaker, we pressed the energy conference of January '74 as hard as we could within Confederation for price without legislative dispute. We had a proposal made to us by the federal government in that conference of January 1974 that involved an approximate average of under \$6 - about \$5.90 a barrel. I met with the Prime Minister on March 4, 1974 and pressed the position as hard as we could, to convince him that our position would in no way be to accept a price in the neighborhood of \$5.80 or \$6 a barrel. He said that



as far as the federal government was concerned they would give consideration to a price of \$6.50 a barrel and, in that one March 4 lunch, 50 to 60 cents a barrel moved in this province. If you want to compute that in the millions it is very significant.

On March 27 we went as Canadians to work something out for a short-term, 15-month interim period while we saw whether or not we could sort out a relationship in Canada between the producing and consuming regions that would be in the best interests of this Confederation, working with the federal government. And I'll come back to that.

Mr. Speaker, another specific decision we made - and not easily - but one that had to be made, was that we inherited a system of a maximum royalty of one-sixth. Now Mr. Speaker, the conditions that existed in December of 1973 in no way warrant maintaining a maximum royalty. If you wanted to compute - and don't, because you'd weep if you had to - what it would have meant to this province in terms of dollars if we had stuck with the maximum one-sixth royalty is just a fantastic figure in the billions of dollars.

We had, Mr. Speaker, the courage to change that position. It was not accepted by some on the other side. But not to have done so when the price went - when they said it would go 10 cents a barrel in ten years, and it went from \$2.90 to \$3.80 in one year and then from \$3.80 to \$6.50, would not have been fair to the citizens of the province in any way shape or form.

Mr. Speaker, through this new royalty we brought in structures to provide a fair share to the owners and enough for operator risks. It's a balanced judgment on that; it always is. The revenue result is five times greater for the provincial treasury because of the price effort, the removal of the maximum royalty and the royalty structure - it's five times greater; from over \$200 million to over a billion dollars between 1971 to 1975.

Mr. Speaker, we know the importance of the viability of the petroleum industry to this province. We brought in a system of incentives on lower rates for new oil and lower rates for new gas. We brought in an exploratory drilling incentive system and we went further than that. When the federal government brought in their budget of May 6, and November 18, which is basically, fundamentally unfair to the petroleum industry headquartered in this province by taxing them on their royalties, taxing them on something they never receive - like adding to your income, as I explained once before, the rent you pay out - when they insisted on doing that, which in our view was a mistake for Canada and Canada's energy supply, this government didn't sit. This government said, we have an industry that is critical to this province, it's the key to this province. And we brought in The Alberta Petroleum Exploration Plan of December 12, 1974 to give the industry the lift they needed to get back drilling and going ahead as they are. Mr. Speaker, the emphasis was on the small companies, as the Minister of Mines and Minerals has so ably pointed out in this Legislature.

Now what are the results of all of these actions and decisions by this government, all of these hours of discussion and debate and study and negotiation and travel? Mr. Speaker, they have been very good for Alberta. We have not just talked about it, we have moved as a decisive action government in energy in the many ways I've just described.

We have taken very important steps in resource management in three and a half years, to the benefit of Albertans. We have prices much nearer value. I have already mentioned natural gas - three to four times in a period of two years. We have the price of oil doubled and we have new arrangements looming up ahead. I have mentioned the revenues - five times greater in four years. These revenues permit us to have a heritage fund; permit us to have an income tax reduction; permit us to provide the services to the people.

Mr. Speaker, we have been able to do both those things and still maintain in this province, because of balanced judgment, a healthy and viable key industry with investor confidence. The facts confirm it in terms of drilling in Alberta today, wheat sales in Alberta today, the stock market in Alberta today. Mr. Speaker, that's performance.

Mr. Speaker, it is also judgment in terms of balance, balance between extreme views, as represented here in this House from time to time. Probably no time in the history of Canada has a provincial government had to make so many hard decisions in such a short time - and I suppose the gray hair shows it.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, there has been much negative criticism of our energy policy by opposition critics in this Legislature. I am confident that these carping voices opposite do not reflect the views of the majority of Albertans. I'm disappointed, frankly. I've been in opposition. I appreciate the importance of presenting constructive alternatives. I appreciate the importance of an opposition to prod, to question, to push - and we accept that. But frankly, I had hoped that the remnants of Social Credit opposition would have put aside party politics - some have, but not most of them - and ...

MR. LUDWIG:  
You never have.

MR. LOUGHEED:  
... at least stood with us in our battles with Ottawa to get fair value as a producing province.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that many supporters of the former administration are disappointed and disenchanted with this lack of backing this government has received in its energy policies today.

Mr. Speaker, as far as the New Democratic Party is concerned ...



MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege to say that the Premier has misled the House. I want to make my point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. LUDWIG:

We have backed the government on its stand with Ottawa and the Premier knows. The Premier is deliberately telling a falsehood in this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. LUDWIG:

He has never ... [inaudible] ... in this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. LUDWIG:

The Premier does not ... [inaudible] ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Would the hon. member please resume his seat.

MR. LUDWIG:

I'm making a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member well knows from his many years in the Assembly that a dispute as to facts or as to opinions does not constitute a point of privilege.

The hon. member also knows that it is not in keeping with the traditions of this House for any hon. member to say of another that he has deliberately misled the House.

I would ask the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View if he would deal with that subject further.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I believe the record will indicate - and I have a right to speak on a point of privilege. I had not finished, Mr. Speaker. I will deal with the point you're talking about, but I'm entitled to make an explanation before I'm made to withdraw.

I'm stating that the record of this House will show that on the stand the Province took against Ottawa on oil, we supported it on this side. If the Premier doesn't think so, let's get Hansard out because I will not back off on that one.

#### Point of Privilege

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is making it still clearer that what he is in fact doing is disputing a matter of fact or of opinion. I would ask him now to come to the substance of a point of privilege which has just arisen and which is the hon. member's allegation that there has been a deliberate misleading of the House.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I must state that my remarks reflect on the lack of credibility of the Premier. There is no doubt about that. There is no doubt about the fact, Mr. Speaker, that my statement is correct. And I ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Withdraw the statement.

MR. LUDWIG:

Only if I'm forced to, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

There's no other way.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. I would respectfully ask the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View to deal further in such a way that it will not have to be dealt with by the Chair - the allegation that another hon. member of this House has deliberately misled the Assembly.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I have been in the House long enough to know that it would be most ungracious on my part not to comply with your instructions. Even though I'm doing it, it's tantamount more to compulsion than being voluntary. But I will make the typical Premier Lougheed apology that, I accede, Mr. Speaker. That is the end of my apology.

MR. SPEAKER:

It is my understanding then that the hon. member has acceded to the request to withdraw and therefore the incident is closed.

Will the hon. member please resume his seat.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I must make one more comment. That does not excuse the Premier for not ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Order please!

#### GOVERNMENT MOTIONS (continued)

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the statement that I have made in this debate, I am ...

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, it was true wasn't it?

MR. LOUGHEED:

... delighted to leave the matter to the Hansard record ...

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, please do.

MR. LOUGHEED:

... and that is where one should look, on March 28, during the December 1973 session and in many other places as well.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to this matter, I think too that it is important for all of us to recognize that we are coming down, in Alberta, on April 10 in Ottawa, to a first ministers meeting on oil and gas pricing. Mr. Speaker, we approach that meeting recognizing something that is extremely important. The federal government has before the House of Commons today a federal Petroleum Administration Act which purports to establish prices indirectly at the wellhead. This hangs above the head of this province today.

As a Canadian, I think it is desirable to try to reach an accord. I hope that on this occasion it can happen without the federal government responding later, in a matter of weeks, to what in essence were fundamental changes regarding taxation, and that we will have that assurance before the discussions get under way in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, I think this meeting of April 10 is one that other Canadians have got to appreciate that Albertans cannot expect to sell, a way below value, assets such as crude oil and natural gas that are depleting rapidly. Mr. Speaker, this April 10 meeting is all-important to the petroleum industry as well. It's headquartered here; it's based here in Alberta. It's facing a competitive situation in the United States and if President Ford's State of the Union message on energy goes ahead, it will be a very difficult competitive position for the petroleum industry in Canada with the effort by President Ford to raise prices.

Mr. Speaker, this April 10 meeting is crucial on two counts: first of all, the continued competitive viability of the Alberta-based petroleum industry; and secondly, on the return on the sale of part of our heritage in this province.

Mr. Speaker, at the meeting on April 10, Alberta could well be standing alone. The three maritime provinces have already declared that there should be no increase above the \$6.50. The other three western governments literally don't seem to care about the petroleum industry and want to move towards nationalization, or close to it. The two basic consumer provinces, Quebec and Ontario, are going to be in a very difficult position to convince their citizens that Alberta, with this heritage fund and with our tax position, is entitled to price increases for a depleting resource that will end up being paid for by the consumers of Central Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we will make the effort as hard as we can to convince them that unless we have prices moving towards fair market value, towards international prices, we're going to have a serious energy shortage in Canada in under seven years. But it will be a difficult position to put.

We're not unaware of the fact that the federal government has a recent mandate, and that that recent mandate comes largely from Ontario and Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, at a meeting with the Prime Minister three days ago we had some preliminary discussions. I got an impression that the Prime Minister and the federal

government aren't all that sure Albertans are solidly behind their government on these energy issues; that they are obviously listening to the negative criticisms we hear from the other side from opposition critics in this Legislature.

MR. LUDWIG:

You just said the opposite a couple of minutes ago.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, my feeling is clear that their own party, the federal government's own party in Alberta as well, is not supporting us in this position of energy; that there are some exceptions on the other side but that we are not getting the support we think Albertans should have in this important time.

So, Mr. Speaker, I've come to a conclusion that the Premier of Alberta must be sure that he and his ministers have the confidence of the majority of Albertans before going into that crucial meeting on April 10, 1975.

MR. LUDWIG:

That's b.s.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the time has come for us to find out: does the public of Alberta endorse this Budget and specifically the Alberta heritage trust fund concept - a dramatic departure from customary provincial government budgeting. And secondly: do the people of this province have confidence in their government's handling of the energy resources of Alberta. Mr. Speaker, it is a time for Albertans, it is a time for Albertans to stand together.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will now call upon The Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor to ask for immediate dissolution of the 17th Legislative Assembly of Alberta for the purposes of holding a general election on Wednesday, March 26, 1975.

MR. HYNDMAN:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Assembly stands adjourned accordingly.

[The House adjourned at 12:26 p.m.]

