

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, November 19, 1975

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRESENTING REPORTS BY
STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEESStanding Committee
on Private Bills

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Standing Committee on Private Bills, I beg to recommend that the committee recommends that Standing Order 76 be suspended in respect to the late submission of a petition for a private bill by the Calgary Convention Centre Authority, and that the same be referred for hearing to the Standing Committee on Private Bills.

By way of explanation, Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out that the bill in question had been submitted prior to the spring session of the Legislature, and all necessary advertising, both in the provincial Gazette and in the local newspapers, had been completed. However, when the draft bill was brought forward to the Calgary city council for its final approval on April 28, a motion to approve the same was lost by a five to five vote, with certain members of council who favored the changes not being present. In view of that, the legislative time limit of May 2 was not completed for filing the petition.

The committee considered this matter at the spring session and, on the request of the Calgary city council as a result of a special vote on October 6, a request was made, through the Calgary city council once again, in order to have the Committee on Private Bills reconsider this matter, which we did this morning. As a result of a motion at our committee by Mr. Taylor, unanimously carried, the committee begs leave to suspend Standing Order 76 to allow this bill to proceed at this fall session of the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: I take it the hon. member is moving that the recommendation of the committee be accepted and approved by the Assembly. Is the Assembly prepared to deal with the motion now?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion carried]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the committee further begs to report progress, and begs leave to sit again.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. KIDD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, 22 students from the Springbank High School. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Carl Christensen, and by parents: Mrs. Boswell, Mrs. Copithorne, Mr. Fitzsimmons, and Mrs. Colborne. They have visited the Provincial Museum this morning, and are here now. They are seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask that they rise so they could be acknowledged by this Assembly.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I have real pleasure today in introducing to you, and through you to the hon. members of the Legislature, 17 lovely ladies from the Verdant Valley district, just north of Drumheller. These ladies are members of the Verdant Valley Women's Institute. The president is Mrs. Doris Wade, the secretary is Mrs. Judy Ewing, the treasurer is Mrs. Penny Dekeyser, and the tour organizer is Mrs. Doris Poland. Mr. Williams is escorting them today; one man among 17 beautiful, lovely women from Drumheller. How lucky can a man be. I would ask these ladies to stand and be recognized.

TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. GFTTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file four reports. The reports deal in one way or another with potential energy prices and policies in the U.S. and other parts of the world in the future.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Alberta Racing Commission, January 1, 1974, to March 31, 1975.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a new publication from the Department of Social Services and Community Health, Programs and Services for Senior Citizens in Alberta. Copies will be brought down for all members of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could clarify a quotation in Hansard; I believe it could have been misunderstood. There were not copies of the MacKenzie report for each member of the Legislature. It could have been construed

either way according to the Hansard reproduction. I'd like to clarify that.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

The Companies Amendment Act

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my first question is to the Premier. Has the Premier considered having public hearings on Bill No. 61, The Companies Amendment Act?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, no, we have not and will not be.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Premier. Will the Premier consider holding Bill 61 over to the spring session?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, we will not.

MR. P. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Premier. Were any studies or reports considered with regard to the subject of Bill 61 prior to the introduction of that bill into the Assembly?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, it was the collective wisdom of the government caucus in the best interests of the people of Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Premier. The Premier, from information, seems continually to oppose provincial initiatives in regard to foreign land ownership, as such initiatives . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order, order.

MR. R. SPEAKER: . . . would exclude Canadians not resident in Alberta from ownership of land in this province. Does Bill 61 indicate that the government is employing a double standard in excluding, presumably, certain Canadians not resident . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The hon. member has obviously planned his question to include a maximum amount of debate. Perhaps he might come to the question directly.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is: is the principle under Bill 61 consistent with the Premier's policy with regard to land ownership in the Province of Alberta?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, they are quite different things, and I would welcome hearing from the hon. member at the time we debate the bill.

Cow-Calf Industry

MR. P. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my second question . . .

[interjections]

Talk about the responsibility. The Minister of Utilities and Telephones had better review his position.

My second question, Mr. Speaker, is also to the Premier. Have he and the Minister of Agriculture met, since adjourning yesterday, with regard to the cow-calf situation, and reviewed the government's position?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I understand the import of that question. We've had ongoing discussions on a number of issues. I continually do with the various ministers. I'm not clear if I'm being asked to respond as to which ministers I discuss matters with over a particular period. If that is the nature of the question, I don't think it's a proper one.

DR. BUCK: Mr Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. Premier. Has the Premier personally made himself conversant with the severity of the cow-calf problem in northern Alberta?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, have the hon. Premier and the Minister of Agriculture asked a delegation, or have they asked leaders of the NFU, to come in and speak to them about the cow-calf problem?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I refer that question to the Minister of Agriculture.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, yes, indeed. As I've mentioned, I think on four occasions during question period over the last week, I met last Friday afternoon with the directors of Region 7 and Region 8 of the National Farmers Union. In addition to that, I had invited representatives, 8 or 10 people in number, from the Wandering River area to meet with me in my office, but they did not attend.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. In view of the urgency of the situation, has he considered making further representation himself to the Prime Minister, concerning early movement by the federal government on a cow-calf stabilization plan? In asking the question, Mr. Speaker, I realize the Premier did say he met with the Prime Minister, I think six six or seven weeks ago. The question really relates to, has he considered any further person-to-person action on this matter?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, we are taking into consideration the possibility of further discussions along those lines because, as the hon. Minister of Agriculture said yesterday, we are disappointed in the response of the federal government. I

believe I did, as the hon. member referred to, raise this particular matter, essentially, as the first item during our luncheon discussions on Thanksgiving Day in Ottawa on October 13. We will assess whether or not any useful purpose is served in further discussion of that nature or further representations by the Alberta government with regard to the livestock industry generally in the province.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Is he contemplating further additional assistance to farmers on an interim basis while we're trying to get the provincial government and the federal government together on the problem facing the cow-calf operator?

MR. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think I answered that question as well over the course of the last week. I indicated that our earlier discussions led to the reintroduction of the cow-calf advance program because there was no action, in fact, on the federal level with regard to national stabilization. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned last week, and provided hon. members with a copy of various programs available under the Agricultural Development Corporation.

We've made a decision there to continue to guarantee, beyond the period in which loans are due, the various loans taken out by beef producers from the chartered banks. Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, the decision on our \$50,000 loan guarantee program, and other programs that operate on the guarantee basis, must by necessity be made by individual bank managers. But we have told them that if it is their judgment that there is some possibility of those individuals in beef operations recovering, [who] want to continue and have a desire to stay in that business, we would like them to extend those loans for a period of at least one more year. We will continue to honor our guarantee on them.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of things we've already done. Needless to say, I remain very concerned about the fact that there has been no movement from Ottawa, and that there are some people in great difficulty. I guess I've had under consideration, throughout the course of each and every day in the last few weeks, any additional thing we might do for them, but I can't at this time elaborate on what it might be or if there is anything coming in the future.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Can the minister tell the House the reasons for a 7 per cent interest rate on the cow-calf loans this year, as opposed to the interest-free feature last year? What was the reasoning for the imposition of the interest rate in this particular case?

MR. MOORE: There were a number of reasons, Mr. Speaker. But basically, concern was expressed in this Legislature, and certainly among farm organizations and beef cattle producers across Canada, that any kind of

assistance program we might have, including the cow-calf advance of 1974 and this year, might be one that would be best applied in a manner that would assist those in the greatest need.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we were perhaps justifiably criticized to some extent in '74 for having brought in an interest-free loan in which some producers who apparently didn't require that for the purposes of their operation were able to put the money into a savings account or into some other use and draw interest on it. We assessed the interest rate we are applying this year, Mr. Speaker, and it amounts to a maximum, at 7 per cent interest on \$6,000, of \$420 per year.

It was our judgment that the other programs available through the Agricultural Development Corporation -- the guaranteed loans and the extension of loans that persons who bought beef cattle during the last few years were able to get -- were of more advantage to them than that particular offset of \$420 in interest. Our surveys and judgment were that that amount of interest money was not going to make the total difference of putting somebody out of business or keeping him in business.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, a number of farmers and farm organizations expressed the opinion to me that, indeed, what they wanted was an opportunity to be able to continue. But generally throughout this province, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair that farmers want, and have the desire, to pay their own way. Quite frankly, I haven't had that many complaints about the 7 per cent interest charge. Rather the complaints have been that we need to get some kind of stability into the market place and an increased price.

I want to say again to hon. members of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, that too often we forget about the long-term situation in an industry like this in dealing with the short-term problems. Certainly in my view, Mr. Speaker, the thing we need to be doing is working harder with respect to federal stabilization with respect to international trade and markets for our beef cattle producers.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for clarification. Do I take it, then, from the hon. minister's answer, Mr. Speaker, that -- to summarize -- the major reason for the 7 per cent interest this year, as opposed to the interest-free feature last year, was the fear that some producers would in fact abuse the system and would be borrowing when they didn't need to and taking advantage of the interest-free feature? Is that the principal reason for the imposition of the 7 per cent interest this year?

MR. MOORE: That was only one of the considerations. Perhaps it was one of the main ones, Mr. Speaker. Certainly one of the other considerations was the dollar factors involved. The program last year cost the government in the neighborhood of \$8 to \$9 million, I'm not sure of the exact figures yet. This year's program will cost some-

thing in excess of \$2 million just for the interest, and that doesn't take into consideration the guarantees on the funds going out, and the risk factor involved there, which could be several more millions of dollars.

But certainly it's my judgment that if we use in the beef cattle industry the kind of dollars we're talking about -- the difference, which is \$6 or \$7 million dollars -- there is a variety of ways, in terms of guaranteed loans, extensions through the Ag. Development Corporation, that might be more beneficial than applying those cow-calf advances interest free. I'm sure hon. members could think of indeed a number of things we can do with those kinds of dollars, in agriculture and in the beef cattle business, that would be more beneficial than an outright reduction to zero of that interest charge.

MR. SPEAKER: A further supplementary by the hon. Member for Drumheller, followed by a final supplementary by the hon. Member for Clover Bar. Then, if there's time, perhaps we can come back to this topic.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A further supplementary to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. What is the response of the farming community itself to the present cow-calf program?

MR. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's been varied. I think hon. members would know that, generally speaking, [in] the southern part of the province, I would say probably from Red Deer south, the farm organizations there -- the Western Stock Growers', Canadian Cattlemen's Associations, and others -- in fact advised us earlier not to do anything at all, not even to reinstate the program that we did, with the 7 per cent interest charge.

The opinions in the rest of the province are varied, Mr. Speaker. I think hon. members are aware that the National Farmers Union, for one, thinks we should've done more. My general feeling is that the program we brought in was a balanced one, still leaving the recognition that there are people out there in difficult circumstances who need individual attention and assistance, and that's what the Ag. Development Corporation is all about.

I might say as well, Mr. Speaker, that we might have some better indication later today of the general feeling across the province. At 3:30 this afternoon, I'll be speaking to the [Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties] here in Edmonton. I expect to get some reaction from them.

Farmers' Demonstration

DR. BUCK: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. About two questions back, the hon. minister said he didn't have very many complaints. That's because the hon. minister hasn't made himself available to hear these complaints . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker . . . [interjections] The Premier is in his finest arrogant mood today.

I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, from the . . . [interjections] . . . I would like to know from the hon. Solicitor General, if he'll come to, Mr. Speaker . . . [interjections]

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order.

DR. BUCK: Well, Mr. Speaker, does the front bench want to get involved in the democratic process, or don't they?

[interjections]
Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Solicitor General. I would like to know if the hon. minister has received any formal complaints from Alberta citizens about the democratic -- the cavalcade that's been going up and down the highways, by the NFU and the farmers.

AN HON. MEMBER: Democratic cavalcade?

DR. BUCK: Has he had any written formal complaints, or even unwritten ones?

MR. FARRAN: No, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: You did it, Mr. Big.

Cow-Calf Industry (continued)

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to either the hon. Provincial Treasurer or the hon. Minister of Agriculture. It flows out of an answer by the Minister of Agriculture to a supplementary question. A word of explanation, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Agriculture, if I recollect him correctly, said that one of the considerations was the cost of the program.

My question, first of all to the hon. Provincial Treasurer: was the cow-calf loan program, and the interest charges therein, considered in the light of the government's restraint program announced in September of this year?

MR. LEITCH: Well, Mr. Premier, Mr. Speaker, the announcement with respect to restraints was a global figure and referred to restraint on the grants in the specific areas mentioned in the statement, then made a reference to an overall global budget of the provincial government.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. Was it the government's determination, in the light of their restraint policy, that the additional moneys necessary to maintain the interest-free loans would be inconsistent with their overall policy of restraint, and therefore too costly?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I think they're totally separate issues.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. In light of the hon. Provincial Treasurer's response, will the government then reconsider the cost of at least maintaining the interest-free provision of the cow-calf loans?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, again I'm going to have to answer the way I have a number of times in the past. We have the entire matter under consideration day by day. I'm still hopeful we might be able to resolve the impasse between ourselves and Ottawa with respect to the agricultural stabilization program on a national level. I'm just not prepared today to suggest we might reduce the interest or change that program in any way.

MR. NOTLEY: A further supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Is the government prepared to advise this Legislature at this time of any timetable as to when farmers might expect additional assistance on this very question, in the event of unsuccessful negotiations with Ottawa?

DR. BUCK: They don't care.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I didn't understand the nature of that question, but I took it as very close to the previous one, and I would have to stand with the answer the minister gave: that the matter is under constant assessment by the government. Certainly, as I answered in my previous remarks, we will continue to press the federal government to assume appropriate responsibility, because it's a national matter.

Pork Sale

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. A short explanation is necessary first. I believe a sizable contract has been entered into with Japan for the sale of Alberta pork, and I believe that extends over a period of the next three years.

My question is: for what price did we sell this pork to Japan, and will the producers receive that total amount?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the sale, announced last week, of some \$41 million worth of hogs over the next 3 years was based on 2 different sales. I might first of all explain that the Alberta Hog Producers' Marketing Board was involved in providing producers an opportunity to bid on the price level at which they might wish to put hogs into this market over both 24 months and 36 months. The sale agreement contains an escalation clause based on the cost of production. It's mainly based on feed costs, and when feed costs rise or lower, the price the producer receives will rise or lower correspondingly.

For the hon. member's information, the present situation, with the price of supplements and feed grains today . . . [In]

the one contract, awarded to Gainers Ltd. for 10,000 hogs per month over 36 months -- that was the largest one -- the price was based at \$60.50, with today's costs to the producer. The second contract of some 2,000 hogs per month over 24 months, awarded to Swift Canadian Ltd., was on a base price of \$63 per hundredweight.

Now, to explain the difference, Mr. Speaker, the hog price trends are up and down depending on producer response. The reason the shorter contract pays the higher price is that producers expect that throughout the course of the contract, hog numbers will probably increase in North America, and the domestic price will therefore be going down. So there's some considerable advantage, some of them feel, to signing a 36-month contract at \$60.50 as opposed to a 24-month contract at \$63. Incidentally, both of those figures, based on today's costs, provide the producer with his cost of production plus a reasonable return for management and labor.

STEP

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. Could the minister inform the House whether any of the students who participated in STEP this past summer have not yet received their cheques?

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, there could be, just on the basis of probability. But to the best of my knowledge, every student involved in the program has been paid, with that one caveat of probabilities.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is STEP going to be an ongoing program for 1976?

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, the employment programs are planned in advance, and judgments and determinations are made, based on circumstances and conditions set out with respect to the unemployment of youth [in] any particular summer. Last year, for example, the unemployment rate for people between the ages of 14 and 25 was 5.5 per cent in July, and we predicted a 5 per cent unemployment figure for August. It turned out to be that way. On that basis, plus other criteria, the program went ahead. We'll be looking to conditions with respect to this group in the labor force in the months ahead and making a determination based on policy criteria in advance of that time.

Council on Admissions and Transfer

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. It relates to the question of the draft report of the Alberta Council of Admissions and Transfer.

In view of the expressed disappointment at the college level at the progress of the

committee, can the minister assure the House that before the end of the school year a final report will be available, so the students at colleges and other institutions will have a clear idea as to what the policy will be in the future?

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that as a direction to examine the circumstances. I've met with the committee, read their frame of reference, and examined their interim report. There are different value judgments that different institutions and parts of different institutions will make about it. On that basis, as a government we look upon the matter of transfer as one of the more significant issues in higher education, and will address ourselves to that problem accordingly.

Power Outage

MR. BUTLER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones. Could you give the House a report on the condition of the power outage in east-central Alberta, including the town of Hanna, that happened yesterday?

DR. WARRACK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. There was a mechanical failure at Battle River plant Unit No. 3 that caused other sources to have to come on to the grid system. But this was not enough to meet the peak period demand in the latter part of the afternoon and early evening yesterday, particularly throughout east-central Alberta. So there were power interruptions in those areas for a period of time in order that total load requirements could be met. As of the middle of this morning, my information is that the unit has now been repaired, and there should be no further problem unless a further breakdown occurs.

AEC Shares Sale

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and ask him to advise the House whether the government has received any preliminary statistics on the sale of Alberta Energy Company shares, and whether he can make a report to the House at this time.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I haven't received any preliminary advice from the Alberta Energy Company. I have been attempting to monitor the interest being displayed throughout the province in the Alberta Energy Company shares which, as all hon. members are aware, are being offered on a priority basis to Albertans. That priority period ends this Friday. The indications I have are that in the urban areas there has been very, very strong support of the offering of shares, but that in rural areas there are some problems, perhaps with dis-

tribution, perhaps with communications, regarding the offering of the shares.

I am very hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that all Albertans who are interested will have an opportunity and will take the time to avail themselves of the shares before the preference period for them ends this Friday. I agree with other hon. members in the House, it is a tremendous opportunity for them to invest in their province and in the development of resources in the province.

MR. COOKSON: I wonder if I could ask a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the communication problem that has occurred across the province, could the minister indicate whether any consideration may be given at some later date, through the directors, to extending the possible deadline of the sale of shares?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that would be a matter for the directors to consider. I imagine that in assessing the reception the share distribution is receiving within the province they would make that decision sometime. However, as of right now, I would say the priority or preference period ends on Friday.

Anti-inflation Program

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. It's for clarification with regard to the wage and price control policy that would affect the municipalities of the province, and this is a concern from the city of Lethbridge.

What effect will the policy have on salary negotiations, in that respect, between the municipal employees and a municipality? Has any type of -- I don't want to use the word "edict" -- but have directives gone to municipalities in this regard?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I think all municipal governments in this province -- and I mentioned this when I spoke just the other day to the municipal districts -- are aware of the position regarding the federal legislation, and aware too of the province's response. Certainly it's quite clear, as I mentioned in my remarks a week ago, that our temporary anti-inflation measures act will apply guidelines relative to income identical to the federal guidelines retroactive to October 13, 1975.

Liquor Licence Suspensions

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Solicitor General. I read in the paper where two of Calgary's favorite downtown watering holes have been given suspension for their Friday night happy hour activities.

I'd like to ask the Solicitor General if the Alberta Liquor Control Board has any intention of redrafting its laws to accom-

moderate a reasonable interpretation of overcrowding during the happy hour, which is caused, I understand, by both the bar patrons and those waiting to get into the dining room.

Secondly, if they have enough zeal to suspend the operations of these two for two and four days respectively, I wonder why the law was not enforced for closure during Grey Cup week.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I have received widespread complaints about lack of control by landlords of liquor dispensing outlets. They include continuing to serve intoxicated customers, overcrowding contrary to fire regulations, serving minors, drunken brawls, dirty glasses, dirty premises. All these are against the law.

As a matter of policy, the enforcement of the law in this regard devolves more upon the Liquor Control Board inspectors and the landlords themselves than upon the police. The very name of ALCB includes the word "control" for very good reason. Their objective is to encourage civilized drinking habits. They are now enforcing the law more rigorously than before. That's their duty.

The two examples the hon. Member for Calgary Glenbow referred to had previously been warned. One of them had 181 people in premises licensed for only 90. However, the board didn't think the punishment should be such as to penalize them during the week of festivities about to take place and therefore, I suppose, erred on the side of leniency and said the suspension would take place after the Grey Cup.

Parole

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the hon. Solicitor General. Does the National Parole Board invite representations when parole is being considered for Albertans in penal institutions? Are representations invited from the Government of Alberta and from your department?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, they naturally obtain information from our correctional institutions on the behavior and attitudes of candidates for parole, but the National Parole Board does not have provincial representatives at the present time. It is now based in Saskatchewan for the west, and concentrates more on federal than on provincial prisoners, although we have been promised that they will be directing their attentions more to those who fall under our jurisdiction.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary to the hon. minister. Does Alberta have a provincial parole board to deal with this matter, regarding prisoners in Alberta correctional institutions?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, no. Parole is handled by the National Parole Board.

Remuneration for MLAs

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to either the hon. Premier or the hon. Provincial Treasurer. It flows out of debate Monday night concerning the payment of members of the Legislature for what some people have unkindly called moonlighting jobs on government commissions and boards. My question, Mr. Speaker, is: can the Provincial Treasurer or the Premier advise the Legislature specifically what the ground rules are for the payment of expenses and per diems or remuneration for members of the task forces?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I think it's the sort of question that can more appropriately be dealt with under the legislation. Other bills are coming up that deal with that matter, and perhaps it could be directed at that time to the Provincial Treasurer.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could, however, put to the hon. Provincial Treasurer a supplementary question which does relate to overall government policy. Will the Provincial Treasurer give the House the assurance that during the time we contract into the anti-inflation program, there will be no changes in the remuneration for MLAs serving on boards and commissions?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Premier . . . Mr. Speaker, I . . .
[laughter]

DR. BUCK: We know it's going to change, Meriv.

MR. LEITCH: I don't know that anyone, at this stage of the development of that program, can say precisely what it's going to be applicable to. We have the federal legislation before us and know what's contemplated there, and the federal guidelines have been published. But there's much more to come before one can say with any certainty exactly what it's going to cover. In addition, there would be a question of interpretation of those guidelines, and it is still open as to what body will be doing that in all cases. All I can do, Mr. Speaker, is reiterate the general policy statement that has already been said, whereby we anticipate living within those guidelines.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. In light of the widespread public interest in this issue, when can the hon. Provincial Treasurer advise the Assembly in a definitive way as to the policy with respect to holding the line on remuneration for MLAs on government boards and commissions?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I thought I had said what the policy was -- the uncertainty as to the guidelines and exactly what they're going to cover. That will come, as

matters now stand, from the federal government.

RCMP Contract

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the hon. Solicitor General. Have there been any negotiations, within the last 24 hours, relating to the signing of the RCMP contract, and if not, when will these negotiations be going on?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, no, there have been no further negotiations within the last 24 hours. We're still assessing the proposal of the hon. Solicitor General for Canada and will be responding when we have finished our detailed calculations of the implications so far as Alberta is concerned.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is there a deadline by which we have to reply in these negotiations for the signing of the contract?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, no. The present contract expires in April 1976, but once before when there was some disagreement between the provinces and the federal government over a contract, the existing contract continued to apply for a further year of negotiations.

Freight Rates

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Transportation. Has the provincial government made any representation to Ottawa in regard to the recent freight increases by the rail companies?

DR. HORNER: We've made a variety of representations to Ottawa with regard to a variety of freight rates, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to be able to report that the one which was very important to the lumber industry in Alberta has now been turned down by the joint Canadian and American railway rate structuring people. That one was very important to our lumber industry, particularly in northern Alberta.

Other freight rates, as I understand it -- and that's not yet clear with relation to the federal anti-inflation board's reaction and because of the court action which refused the CTC the right to roll back rates -- [are] a matter which is under discussion now between Ottawa and ourselves and, indeed, through the anti-inflation measures to ascertain where freight rates stand in the whole picture.

Mentally Handicapped, Accommodation

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health, and it's with regard to a

meeting the minister attended, sponsored by the Gateway Association. Could the minister inform the Assembly of the plans the government intends to take with regard to accommodation for the mentally handicapped?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to respond to that question. The meeting I attended last evening was most informative, and a very useful meeting. The plans have been somewhat unformulated up to the present time, although some progress has been made. What we were hoping to achieve, and I believe we did last night, was an attempt to bring together the various groups which are, and should be, very concerned about the mentally retarded. There are a number of groups in Edmonton, so we get a number of conflicting opinions as to what type of facility would suit their child the best. We've been attempting for some time to get them together so that we might develop a long-range planning package. Some residential beds are presently being developed by the Sherwood Park association. That has been approved and is going forward. Other organizations are offering community living accommodation. Some others are in the process of development.

There is a genuine need in this city for a variety of types of accommodation. What we hope to do is develop a specific area and try to define clearly the needs, so we get the right kind of accommodation for the right kind of people. That's a subject of great debate among parents and those who are extremely interested, and rightfully so.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Does she see the completing of this plan in early 1976, and will the government be responding by increased accommodation?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I've already indicated that more beds will be coming into use. I don't know the exact date for those. What we did last night was get agreement from the group, I believe, that they would complete a questionnaire giving us specifics, which were very important and very necessary. Some children who are mentally retarded do well in a community setting. Other parents there wanted an institution similar to ASH in Red Deer, and spoke highly in favor of it. Others did not want that kind of institution for their child. Some only need some relief for weekends, so they can get away and get some rest; they wish to keep the child at home.

So you can see there is a variety of needs. We are attempting to meet those needs and will do so as far as our budgetary commitments will permit.

Anti-inflation Program (continued)

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Government House Leader, and ask whether he's in a position to advise the Assembly today as to when the bill authorizing agreement

between Ottawa and Edmonton on wage and price restraints will be introduced formally in the Legislature.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not able to give any definite date at this moment. That would depend on a number of matters and a number of pieces of information we are seeking through officials' meetings and through forthcoming meetings with ministers.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of the fact there have been hearings by a committee in Ottawa where groups could make representation, is the government giving any consideration to permitting either hearings of this Legislature as a whole, or committee hearings, so that interested groups could make representation to MLAs before they consider legislation?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, no, we are not giving consideration to that approach.

Land Ownership

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question of the hon. Premier. Last week he announced he would be making an announcement this week on the matter of foreign people buying Alberta land. Will he be making that announcement this week?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I had hoped, as I said in my remarks a week ago, that I would be in a position to attempt to have that statement this week. I am still gathering some information. It looks like it will be next week.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, I'd like to raise a question with regard to Hansard of November 14, 1975, page 1080, concerning remarks I made on the European mission. In the sixth paragraph of the second column, the Hansard reproduction states that "Poland is underselling Canada by \$35 a pound". That was incorrect on my part, and the figure should read "\$35 a ton".

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS (Third Reading)

Bill 60 The Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1975

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move third reading of Bill 60, The Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1975.

At this time I'd just like to express to the House my appreciation for the manner in which the House has enabled the bill to move through the Legislature, and also reiterate, as I said on second reading of this bill, that we consider the Alberta Energy Company will be playing a very important part in the future development of our province. As I indicated in the question period, there appears to be very strong support of the Energy Company from the people of Alberta.

As I understand it, people outside Alberta are poised, waiting to take any of the Energy Company shares not taken by the citizens of our province. I only mention that because of the short period of time now before the preference period for Albertans exists -- only a short period, until Friday. I think it would be a shame if Albertans, who have the opportunity to participate in the Alberta Energy Company, might miss that opportunity because of, for some reason, not being aware of the opportunity, or some other reason for passing it up. I would urge members of the Legislature to make sure that the constituents they represent have the information before them that the preference period is presently in existence and will terminate Friday evening.

Other than that, Mr. Speaker, I'd request hon. members to support this third reading of The Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take just a moment or so to deal with what I thought was real hogwash being peddled by the Liberal leader of this province in connection with Suffield. He indicated in a program last night that the people are buying back what they already own, and told only part of the story.

In my view, the people of Alberta, in this Suffield deal, are going to get every cent they would have got had it been advertised, and had oil companies been chosen to develop Suffield, plus the large amount of profit the oil companies themselves would have got in any deal like that. So Alberta people are benefiting in two ways through the way in which this is being handled, and those who invest in the Alberta Energy Company are having an opportunity to contribute towards the development of this province with their money.

I emphasize once again that those who talk with forked tongues about foreign ownership, and then want to deny the people of Alberta the opportunity to invest their money in the development of their own

province, are really not doing this country any good.

[Motion carried; Bill 60 read a third time]

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

ROYAL ASSENT

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

MR. SPEAKER: May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly has, at its present sitting, passed a bill to which, in the name of the Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

CLERK: Your Honour, the following is the bill to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

Bill 60, The Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1975

[The Lieutenant-Governor indicated his assent.]

CLERK: In Her Majesty's name, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor doth assent to this bill.

[The Lieutenant-Governor left the Legislative Assembly.]

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS (Second Reading)

Bill 49
The Attorney General Statutes
Amendment Act, 1975.

MR. POSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill 49, The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1975.

Mr. Speaker, this bill proposes to amend seven different acts of this Legislature. None of the amendments is major or significant, however.

The District Courts Act is being amended in an attempt to standardize the taking of judicial oaths, that is to say, the swearing in of members of that court, as indeed is The Judicature Act. The Oaths of Office Act, which is also part of this bill, is being amended in just the same way. The effect, Mr. Speaker, is that each member of the judiciary in Alberta in the future, in all courts, will be entitled to be sworn in in the same fashion, using the same oath.

This, I believe, is significant if we

are to get away from the concept of lower and higher courts, inferior and superior courts, et cetera. Now all judges of whatever court may be sworn in, in the way outlined in the district court amendment, before the Lieutenant Governor, the chief justice of the appellate division, or the chief justice of the trial division of this province. This, I think, while not recommended specifically by Mr. Justice Kirby in the Alberta Board of Review, is consistent with the spirit and intent of the report of that board.

The second amendment to The District Courts Act, Mr. Speaker, relates to a clarification of the jurisdiction of the court, with respect to the role of a district court judge as a local judge of the Supreme Court. Some members of the House will appreciate that a judge of the district court may function with the capacity of a Supreme Court judge in certain circumstances. This amendment is merely to clarify the role of the district court judge, when acting as a local judge, with respect to his jurisdiction and the issuance of what is referred to as the "prerogative writs".

The second act referred to in this bill, Mr. Speaker, is The Intestate Succession Act. This is a piece of legislation which deals with the distribution of the property of a deceased, when he dies in circumstances without a will. At the present time, the widow or surviving spouse of the deceased is entitled to the first \$20,000 of the estate. I'm not personally aware, at this time, how long this provision has been in the act. It's been here for some time. Given inflation and valuations in the last several years at least, it seems reasonable that this figure should be upward substantially, and my recommendation is that it move from \$20,000 to \$40,000.

The third piece of legislation being amended by this bill, Mr. Speaker, is The Judicature Act, one of the amendments I have already referred to with respect to the taking of oaths. The second is to increase the size of that court from 14 to 16 judges in the trial division, at the request of the chief justice of that division, Chief Justice Milvain. This recommendation is concurred in by my colleague the federal Attorney General. The federal minister will comply with our legislation, once it's amended, and make the appropriate appointments.

A third amendment is to comply with recent changes to The Judges Act. A final amendment, which is somewhat new, is an attempt to provide a procedure to deal with the matter of the bringing of vexatious actions before the court, and giving the court the power to prevent or stay such proceedings.

The next act being amended, Mr. Speaker, is The Land Titles Act. There are some typographical errors and an error in a previous amendment, which are routine and being amended. There is a provision to empower the registrar to reject certain documents, if they are submitted on conditions on which registration cannot be met.

A final amendment, which I think is perhaps significant, is that charge accounts have come to the land title system of Alberta. We are proposing to authorize the registrar of the land titles districts of both north and south Alberta, in appropriate circumstances, to enter into relations, mostly with law firms -- I'm sure almost exclusively with law firms -- to permit the use of charge accounts under certain circumstances.

The Oaths of Office Act I have already referred to. The very simple, straightforward, plain English oath is set out in the body of the bill.

The Summary Convictions Act is being amended, in several respects, to update the definition of a justice, in this case changing magistrate to provincial judge. Another amendment will clarify, or at least alleviate, any doubt as to the applicability to provincial offences of certain bail provisions of the Criminal Code. An addition to the act will provide, for provincial legislation, the same provisions that relate in Section 133 of the Criminal Code. These are provisions that deal generally with the escape, or being at large without excuse provisions of that section.

I think a small but most noteworthy amendment to The Summary Convictions Act, Mr. Speaker, is acceptance of a recommendation arising out of the Kirby report, and that deals with the power to order costs in provincial offences. It was the recommendation of the Kirby Board of Review that we do away with such power, and indeed, by this amendment, we have accepted the recommendation of the board.

I should point out that the costs are not significant. In many cases the courts are not awarding costs in this area, but some courts are. It's our assessment, as the Board of Review confirmed, that the costs of collecting the costs are more than the costs themselves -- if you're still with me. It's not a significant amount of money, in any event, but it's an important point.

The final act being amended by this act, Mr. Speaker, is The Uniformity of Legislation Act, which really does three things. It clarifies, and indeed changes the reporting procedures of the board under this legislation. It clarifies the new name of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada, as it's now known, and provides for a different way of paying the expenses of the board and the members who attend the conference, including the representatives of the benchers or the Law Society of Alberta, and provides that those expenses be paid from general revenue.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a brief outline of Bill 49. I welcome with interest the comments of other members of the House on this matter.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my comments would be with regard to The Land Titles Act. I can see the circumstances which are going to occur when the secretary or the clerk from one of the law offices comes to the Land Titles Office, gets certain work done, and says, will that be cash or

Chargex? It seems that is what we are working towards.

My question is with regard to the principle of the act itself. In reading the act, I don't see anything that empowers the registrar to charge an interest on delinquent accounts. It does empower the registrar to terminate the credit and take measurers such as that, but where there is a delinquent account, and it may be overdue for some time, there is nothing in there that empowers him to place an interest rate on it. Certainly, we have that kind of procedure in other acts. We look at the federal Income Tax Act, for example; there are procedures to take care of that. I was wondering if the minister had considered that in amending this act.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, certainly as far as this bill is concerned, no major amendments are proposed. So it's hardly a controversial piece of legislation.

I could ask the hon. Attorney General, however, and I hope within as much latitude as we can provide in this debate, perhaps to give us some indication of his feeling as to the pace the government considers in implementing the recommendations of the Kirby Board of Review. I realize we do have provision for this on the Order Paper, but we don't know when it's going to be called again, and I think perhaps it might be useful to the members if we had some indication from the government on the major recommendations of the Kirby Board of Review.

Most of the changes are really quite minor. It's rather amusing that in the Land Titles Office, we're now going to have the use of credit. As the Member for Little Bow has said, will that be cash or Chargex? I suppose we have now come to the ultimate in the do now, pay later situation, when the Land Titles Office itself makes provision for credit. But, Mr. Speaker, that is hardly going to shake the foundations of Alberta society.

I want to deal, however, with The Summary Convictions Act, Mr. Speaker. I notice that under Section 8.1 (6) we are still talking about imprisonment: \$500 fine, or imprisonment for 6 months or both.

I asked the Attorney General to respond generally about the Kirby Board of Review report. I'm particularly interested in his response on the Board of Review recommendation that, for most offences, we should get away from the concept of jailing people, and perhaps have them work out their fines if they aren't able to pay. There are just so many cases, especially among lower-income people, who have minor fines. But those minor fines may be just beyond their capacity to raise the money to pay. So the old adage of \$30 or 30 days becomes, in fact, for many people 30 days in a provincial centre. I think that is certainly inconsistent with the philosophy of modern justice, as I understand it anyway, and the Kirby Board of Review quite properly recommended we move to change that.

I'd just like the Attorney General, in responding, to give us some indication as to when we might see some major changes

introduced in the Legislature dealing with that matter, and in general, the pace of the other recommendations of the Kirby Board of Review as well.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. minister conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. FOSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the questions concerning interest on delinquent accounts, the section refers to the registrar, where he considers it appropriate, entering into an agreement. I note the hon. member who asked the question is now out of the House. I would anticipate that in such circumstances where we enter into an agreement with parties who want to establish charge accounts -- and, as I say, these will be law firms -- we will cover the matter of how you handle delinquent accounts. I have no hesitation in saying that we'll have that kind of arrangement written into those agreements.

In any event, were we not to do so, I am under the impression that a general debt due the Crown -- I'm not sure whether other provincial legislation dealing with moneys owing the Crown covers it or not. Certainly, we have the capacity to ask the court for interest on accounts that are in arrears, and the court has jurisdiction to grant it, if we choose to sue the individuals involved. But my intention is to cover it by the agreement.

With respect to Kirby, I would like very much, at some point in this House, in the not too distant future, to deal with Kirby at some length and in some detail. I have settled in my own mind those recommendations of Kirby which my department and I are prepared to accept, and would like to implement. I am in a position now where I've prepared a submission to go to my colleagues in cabinet, and subsequently to my fellow caucus members, in an attempt to gain support of what I would like to do, and therefore establish it as government policy.

It's a little difficult for me to stand here in the House and indicate what we are or are not going to do in major areas, because it is a government decision, although I have some very firm views on the matter. As I say, I'm not trying to avoid discussion of Kirby; I'd be happy to discuss Kirby, although I don't think now is the appropriate time. We'll be bringing in amendments to The Attorney General Statutes Act, and to The Provincial Court Act, that relate to Kirby. On those occasions I would be happy to deal with major areas of Kirby at some length and in some depth.

With respect to the concern about imprisonment for non-payment of fines, I have general sympathy with what Mr. Justice Kirby and his colleagues were recommending there. You know, it has a very pleasant and immediate appeal, that we should not put people in jail for non-payment of fines. The cases we usually cite are very minor fines. The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview recently

referred a matter to me which we both looked at, and were appalled to discover what the court had done with them in a certain circumstance. That is a highly unusual and unfortunate circumstance which we are attempting to remedy.

I don't think we're ever going to get away totally from the alternative of imprisonment for non-payment of fines. I think we should provide the court, as much as possible, with as much flexibility and as many alternatives as we can in sentencing -- entirely new procedures that we are not using today. The Solicitor General has commenced some work in a pilot project area on that subject as well.

That is not to say that in all cases where we assess a fine under provincial legislation, we should not deal with the alternative of imprisonment. I think there will be some circumstances where, indeed, it is as a last resort. The only alternative that presents itself, and I don't like the expression debtors' prison, but occasionally debtors' prison brings people around. I've had the perhaps unfortunate circumstance of putting somebody there for that very reason in a civil matter. It's unfortunate, but the case I'm referring to was a simple contempt of a court order involving a debt. It wasn't until this individual was picked up by the police that he decided he had to meet the court's requirements. He had every capacity to pay, but just chose not to.

So I'm suggesting to the House, Mr. Speaker, that I don't think we can abolish the alternative of imprisonment for non-payment of fines in every case. We should look very seriously at Kirby's recommendations. I say to you, however, that it's a monumental task to assess all the offences under provincial legislation where a fine and imprisonment are outlined as punishment and/or alternatives, and assess from there from which we should strip the imprisonment alternative. In the case of major matters, I think we have to leave that alternative there, and provide the court with many alternatives to imprisonment and, indeed, to fining people. The judiciary is as anxious as the public, I am sure, to seek alternatives to imprisonment.

Unfortunately, we as a society have not always equipped ourselves to allow courts to deal with alternatives in sentencing people. The suggestion that we should create a simple collection agency, while appealing, imposes a fantastic cost on the taxpayer. I think everyone in the House appreciates -- and now I'm perhaps digressing into trivia, Mr. Speaker -- that to collect a \$50 fine, the cost of that is sometimes exceeded by 200 or 300 per cent. We should weigh very carefully the move to a collection agency as an alternative to putting people in jail. Part of the answer is to expand the alternatives for judges in sentencing people, and our capacity to follow up on the alternatives the bench is looking for.

I would be happy to deal with this subject, Mr. Speaker, at a later date, as I have indicated earlier.

[Motion carried; Bill 49 read a second time]

Bill 54
The Social Services
and Community Health
Statutes Amendment Act, 1975

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, Mr. Young, from Edmonton Jasper Place, I am privileged to present to this Assembly Bill No. 54, The Social Services and Community Health Statutes Amendment Act, 1975, for second reading.

This bill basically encompasses four amendments. The first one, under The Child Welfare Act, will allow a more responsive approach to the problems inherent in child neglect, custody, and confinement of children review and proceedings. The Nursing Service Act amendment allows 100 per cent funding of nursing service facilities by the Department of Social Services and Community Health when these services are absorbed into a local health unit.

The third amendment is under The Maintenance and Recovery Act. This amendment expands the definition of the word "mother" under the terms of this act to include "divorced woman". Under The Welfare Homes Act the amendment provides for uniformity in the setting of rates to be charged to residents of government-owned and -operated institutions under this act.

These simple amendments, Mr. Speaker, will do a great deal towards expediting social justice, and I strongly urge the members of this Legislature to support Bill 54.

[Motion carried; Bill 54 read a second time]

Bill 55
The Livestock Brand
Inspection Amendment Act, 1975

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 55, being The Livestock Brand Inspection Amendment Act.

This act was basically rewritten in 1971, and some amendments were made in 1972. Since that time, improvements have been made in the brand reading of animals in Alberta. For example, we have regionalized the brand reading, and with regional inspectors we find that we now have a better quality and a more uniform system of reading of cattle brands in Alberta. As well, we now use the computer for any stray animals, or animals whose ownership can't readily be identified. The brands are computerized.

We feel that the system of brand reading in Alberta is possibly and probably the best in all of North America. However, we have felt that there is need for clarification of some sections of the act. Things have developed in the cattle industry which we didn't encounter before 1972. Princip-

ally, these include the fact that percentage cattle carrying brands, mostly of the exotic breeds, are now being sold through purebred cattle sales. We have also found that on the manifest as it's presently set up, truckers cannot be held responsible for supplying information on cattle being shipped. We feel that possibly the time has come when every producer should have his own manifest book. This would help him to keep a record of the cattle being marketed. He is the one who can give the information which should go with the cattle when they are being marketed, rather than the trucker.

Basically, this is a housekeeping bill, and I would ask the House for its support in this amendment to the livestock act.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make a brief comment regarding second reading of Bill 55. In principle, I must say, I support the concept of making the act more enforceable. Even more important, I think, is clearly defining the areas of responsibility of the brand inspectors. In the past, inspectors have been in a nebulous situation. They were sure neither of their responsibility nor of their powers to enforce the provisions of the act. However, I'd like to caution the member who's piloting the bill through [against] giving too much power in operations such as this. Sometimes we create situations where there is a breakdown in relationship between the inspectors and stock growers.

I would also like to see a more humane method of branding our animals, which is not in the act. At the present time there is a freezing process. I think, if the government could take some study in this area, they would be able to come up with a more humane method of branding our cattle. I'll have more to say on this, Mr. Speaker, on third reading of the bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 55 read a second time]

Bill 64
The Mental Health Amendment Act, 1975

DR. BACKUS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to move second reading of Bill No. 64, The Mental Health Amendment Act, 1975. At introduction, I brought out the main points of the bill, and I would just like to recommend support for second reading.

[Motion carried; Bill 64 read a second time]

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of the Whole Assembly will come to order.

Bill 37
The Teachers's Retirement Fund
Amendment Act, 1975

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 37 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 39
The Alberta Opportunity
Fund Amendment Act, 1975

DR. HORNER: Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism, I move that the bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 41
The Licensing of Trades and
Businesses Amendment Act, 1975

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, I move Bill 41 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 43
The School Amendment Act, 1975

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, I mentioned during second reading that there was a printer's error in the printing of Bill 43, in Section 7. The printer's error flows from the misplacement of that portion of the word "regulations" which appears in the fourth line of the section. What should appear is the word "tenders" instead of the portion of a word "ulations". In addition, there would then be a misspelling of "regulations" as found in Subsection (3), because in splitting up the word following the hyphen on "reg", the "u" is missing on "lations". So there are two printer's errors that would require correction. The first is to ensure that there is a "u" before "lations" in the first part of Subsection (3), and the second is to provide for the replacement of the portion of a word, "ulations" by the word "tenders" as it appears in Clause (a) of Subsection (3).

I do not have a written amendment with me, Mr. Chairman. I would hope that I could seek unanimous approval of the Committee as a whole for these two typograph-

ical amendments without the necessity of this.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, before you call a vote on that, since it's a school document which should be related to exactness, in Section 93(3), on the third line, the word "exceeding", could it be included in the unanimous support of the committee, to delete one "e".

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is that section again, please, I didn't hear.

MR. COOKSON: It's Section 93(3) (a), the word "exceeding" on the third line. Someone started to stutter with the typewriter and there's one "e" too many in that word. It's not a serious matter.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is correct. "Exceeding", as far back as I can recall, is spelled with only two "e"s and not three. I would like to thank the hon. member, who I know is a teacher by profession, for the carefulness with which he approached the reading of this bill and the assistance that he's given to this committee.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I want to pursue the matter I raised in the second reading with regard to Section 93.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, hon. Member for Drumheller, I wonder if we may clear this up before we go to your other . . . You've heard the recommendation of the minister. Do we have the unanimous consent of the House to make the corrections as requested?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the second reading of the bill, I endeavored to point out the difficulties I saw in Section 93, and I outlined a situation where the school had been centralized. The people of that area wanted to use the facilities of that building and the land for community purposes, and the board was interested in securing a very large amount of money for the buildings and the land.

In the minister's response, he suggested that the board did want to secure as much money as possible for the purposes of education. I have no objection to that objective generally, but in a community where the people have already paid for the school and the land, if the school is centralized and the same people want to use that building and land for community purposes, then I would think they should have first priority on that building, which they've already really purchased with, of course, some provincial money.

For the board to take that property because they can get a very high sum of money for it, sell it and leave the community without that facility or that land, is I think a very serious mistake. Every community requires a community area, and there's generally no better area than the site chosen for the school for that community area.

Under this section, the school board could go ahead and advertise the buildings under Section 93(4)(5)(6) of the bill, get the highest tender, and get the most money for it. Unless somebody caught it in the community, the school and the area could really be sold right out from under them. Sometimes there's not too much advertising given to this type of thing.

I would like to see this thing arranged so that where a school has been centralized, if the people in a community want to use that area for community purposes, they should be given the first opportunity to retain that property. Frankly, I think it should be sold to them for one dollar, simply to make it legal, because it's already been paid for. To use the opportunity to sell it to some commercial operation, or somebody else for residences and so on, leaves that part of the area without a community hall, without community land, which in my view has already been purchased by these people when it was paid for as a school.

Subsection [7] reads, "... if the board disposing of the property obtains the approval of the Minister." I would like to see this put the other way, that before disposing of any community property, after centralization, the minister should be advised before they advertise under (4), (5), and (6).

If there's no use for the property, that's a different thing. But I think it's a very serious mistake when we take lands and buildings that have been used for school purposes; then the school is centralized, and the people of that community don't even have the first chance to purchase that for a very nominal sum to continue to use it for community purposes.

I think this is very important in some communities. While some people may say, well, they should see the advertising and so on at that stage, it becomes too late because there are already people going to make tenders. It simply aggravates the picture, because sometimes large sums of money are offered for this land. But it's not the money that I'm concerned about. It's retaining that area for community purposes. I don't think you can value that in dollars and cents. If this is done in many cases, what it really means is that within a few years the community has to reorganize its forces, apply to a department like Recreation, Parks and Wildlife for further government grants to rebuild what is already there in a different location, and maybe not nearly as satisfactory. So I really think that Section 93 needs more consideration than simply waving it off. The other thing I'd like to mention -- and while it's not contained in the bill, it is part of The School Act. I'd like to have the comments of the hon. minister on centralization, particularly in Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 in the elementary grades. I find the people in the province are becoming very, very put out or angry with centralization by school boards that's really thrust upon them, particularly in the lower grades. I can go along with centralization in Grades 10, 11,

and 12. Maybe there are occasions when centralization can properly take place in the intermediate school. But even there, many times it's questionable, because once you close a school you almost close up that community too.

So I would like to see the government adopt a policy that there would be no centralization except in the most extenuating circumstances for Grades 1 to 6, and only in extenuating circumstances for Grades 7, 8, and 9. I think this would go a long way towards helping the people of the province to continue to appreciate the policy on which this government spent a great deal of time in '71, and even in the last election, when it was made very clear that the government did not look with favor on wholesale centralizations -- and properly so. Centralization has gone too far.

When today we look at some communities, and find that centralization is taking place, with youngsters being transported further to another school than they are from their home school, it makes you stop and think just what is going on in the minds of our school superintendents. Too many of our school boards simply accept the superintendent's recommendation. Many districts are becoming very frustrated year after year after year, trying to fight the closing of their school. I believe -- and maybe the information is already available through the studies that have been made on school vans -- that much of the school vaning is now being done, taking youngsters past the school to which their parents would like them to go, and where there's room.

The other point which I mentioned in second reading also, is the matter of the buildings themselves. I think the school buildings branch should take a double look, and a second look, for applications for money for new buildings when there are already schools in that division which are half empty or contain a great number of empty classrooms. I believe this thing could be resolved to the satisfaction of the vast majority of our people, if we can get into the minds of the school superintendents who are still advancing centralization in spite of hell and high water, that the government is not in favor of centralization unless there is a very definite reason for centralizing. I would like to have the minister's viewpoint on this matter.

MR. KOZIAK: In dealing first of all with Section 93, I didn't want to leave the misimpression that perhaps the hon. Member for Drumheller feels I left during the course of second reading, to the effect that school boards were in a hurry to dispose of school property at the highest possible price. [In] my understanding of the comments I made on second reading, Mr. Chairman, [they] were to the effect that school boards are very loath to dispose of property, even under circumstances where it might be to their best advantage -- and that example holds particularly in the cities of Edmonton and Calgary.

In many cases, a partial disposition

has taken place of certain schools in the very central areas of the city, where the enrolment has declined, and that partial disposition has been by way of lease, lease to other institutions -- for example, Grant MacEwan. I am personally aware of a couple of schools in Edmonton where Grant MacEwan occupies the schools now, and provides educational services under the community college concept cut of schools formerly owned by the Edmonton Public School Board.

The hon. member raises a point that prior approval of the minister should be obtained before any disposition of school buildings that are used for instructional purposes. That, in fact, is a good point, and is the reason it appears in Section 93(2). In that subsection, which reads as follows, Mr. Chairman:

Subject to this section, a board may, with the prior approval of the Minister in writing, sell, lease, rent or otherwise dispose of any real property or buildings thereon.

Subsection (7), indicating which subsections do not apply, does not eliminate Subsection (2), so the requirements of Subsection (2) still apply in those dispositions envisaged by Subsection (7).

The matter of centralization, Mr. Chairman, is not something that the Department of Education, the present or the former Minister of Education, or this government actively recommends to school boards. It is a matter that flows from a decision taken by school boards, having regard to circumstances at a local level.

We appreciate that there are certain monetary pressures which may require a school board to, in fact, centralize -- close down smaller schools. In appreciation of that fact, Mr. Chairman, under the guidance of my predecessor, the small school grant was developed to provide, in the case of elementary schools where there was a small enrolment, an additional grant over and above those regularly provided in accordance with the formula provided for by that grant.

The hon. member, Mr. Chairman, made reference to the decisions of the school buildings branch. The school buildings branch and The School Buildings Act are areas where I receive a great deal of correspondence, a great number of phone calls and submissions from school boards. The comments of the hon. member are extremely refreshing in times when all pressures seem to be to pull the stopcocks, and spend all the money possible for the construction of new school facilities.

There seems to be no end of demands -- yes, there will be an end to the speech, Mr. Chairman; that should satisfy the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud -- that are made on the school buildings branch for new facilities. In many cases, these are justified. In some, they flow from desires in certain jurisdictions to have facilities similar to those they find in others, notwithstanding that there are sufficient school instructional facilities within that particular jurisdiction.

Then again, of course, there's the

problem that occurs in areas that have growing enrolments -- areas such as Parkland to the west of Edmonton, Sherwood Park, areas around Calgary, Fort McMurray, some of the new subdivisions that are created, such as Mill Woods. The community core school concept was created to satisfy some of these needs.

But there is no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that a balance must be kept, because the first charge on the school foundation program fund is for repayment of capital -- capital which has been provided to permit the construction of these new facilities. The more construction that takes place, the greater the demand will be for repayment of capital. The greater funds that are used from the school foundation program fund to repay capital, the less there is available for instructional purposes. We must consider all applications. The school buildings branch must consider and weigh all applications seriously. From my experience, they have done just that. The complaints usually go the other way, that the school buildings branch is perhaps too strict in its interpretation of the laws and regulations, not that they aren't strict enough. So I say, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member's comments are extremely refreshing in these times.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to make one further comment. I'm not going to speak about the situation in Edmonton. I know little about that, and I'm not charged with that responsibility. But I do know in my own constituency, children are being hauled to schools that are overcrowded. In the area, there are a great number of schools with empty rooms -- good, well-built schools. As I said before, I plan to take this up further with the school division in that area.

But I certainly think it would help a great deal if the school superintendents of the province could get the message of the government, namely, the government is not in favor of wholesale centralization. As a matter of fact, I believe the government wants to slow up and stop centralization to the greatest possible degree. I think something should be done toward getting that injected into the heads of some of the school superintendents, because they are very influential with school board members.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, just one brief comment in that regard: the fact should not be lost sight of that school superintendents in this province, with very few exceptions, are in fact employees of school boards. Their function is to discharge the responsibilities under The School Act as required of them by law and by the school boards. So it's the school boards that make particular decisions that result in either centralization or no centralization. It is the school boards, after taking into account various factors, such as perhaps the number of grades a teacher might have to teach, the number of students available for a proper class within a particular jurisdiction, that make these decisions. The proper forum, in many of these cases,

is in fact the school board or the school committee of the county, in regard to the question of decentralization or centralization.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I admit the hon. minister certainly is right. Many times the school superintendent is the employee of the board. I realize the department doesn't have any particular control over such superintendents. I do think, though, if we can get the message to our school board members in a more realistic way that centralization is not desired, that it should be kept to a very minimum if not stopped entirely in many areas, it'll certainly bring much happiness to the people of the province. I would hope the day will not have to come when an amendment to the act will have to be made before some school boards realize the people of the province are tired of centralization. Generally, they want to keep their schools, particularly the lower grades, in their own area.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I may have missed the minister's answer because I was out for a few minutes. I am interested in his comments, on second reading, about the three programs relating to rural schools: the low assessment, the lower enrolment, the small schools program. As I recollect his answer, he indicated the programs were going to be continued, but did not specify whether they were subject to any increase, and what the increase would be, whether he is looking at the overall 11 per cent, the global figure for the department -- he's going to apply that kind of increase to the program, or whether it will be kept at the same level we had this year. I would be interested if he could advise us just what the government's position is on those three programs in terms of funding.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, the position on those three programs hasn't changed since second reading. Although I'd much like to be able to announce the level of funding that will be attributed to those three programs, I cannot do so at this time because the calculations have not been made. There are a number of variable factors we must take into account. We are awaiting more complete information on enrolments throughout the province to determine what level of funding can be applied for these types of grants and, in fact, if any amendments to the formula have to take place, so we can provide proper funding within the 11 per cent guideline and not exceed it.

MR. NOTLEY: In offering some comments on this particular question, I would say I'm sure most rural members would agree that further centralization is not in the public interest. No one has opposed some examples of centralization I've seen in the province more than I have. However, the fact of the matter is, the decision we make as a Legislature in terms of funding those three programs is going to have a very important bearing on whether school boards will be able to maintain the existing level of

services. We can talk about saying no centralization, but what choice does a division have if, in fact, they go to supplementary requisition, the requisition is challenged, and the referendum turned down. They have no choice but to cut back on services. So in my view, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, the funding of those three programs is going to have a more significant bearing in slowing down or stopping centralization than almost anything else we can do.

The final point I'd like to make is to say that in some areas further centralization would be absolutely ridiculous. I'm thinking, for example, of the Fairview School Division. At one point, there were proponents who suggested the high school in Worsley be closed, and students bused into either Hines Creek or Fairview. That might be very fine if you had good roads. But the roads in that area are incredibly bad at the best of times. It's 60 miles over indifferent gravel roads between Worsley and Fairview. In order to bus those students, you would, in fact, be adding an hour and a half or two hours a day. Many of the students come on feeder buses to get to Worsley in the first place. Busing under those circumstances would be just an unheard-of situation.

Yet, at one point at least, the board has had to consider closing down the school at Worsley because of the financial problems in which they found themselves. I don't know what's going to happen in the coming year. But I do know this: they're going to have to look again at how they can live within their budget. If the requisition is turned down, as it probably will be when it's challenged -- and it is almost certain to be challenged when it's raised again -- the board is forced, Mr. Minister, into an almost untenable situation.

I say that centralization, as such, is certainly an unsatisfactory solution, and I oppose it. There are certainly exceptions to the rule. Examples can be cited of communities very close together, where it doesn't make sense for communities five or six miles from one another both to have high schools. But most of the centralization I think many of the divisions are now looking at would very seriously erode the equal opportunity of those students in the remote areas to gain proper education, proper high school training.

In my view as a member of the House, I just can't underline enough the importance I place upon proper funding for those programs. Those programs will determine whether we're able to maintain in operation most of the smaller rural high schools in the Province of Alberta.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, I recognize the hon. member's concerns in these areas. One of the things, of course, that should be kept in mind is that the decision is, to some degree, relevant to the funding available. In the case the hon. member mentioned, I recall that a projected deficit by the particular jurisdiction involved in the possibility of the closing of that particular school, after due study by the

Department of Education, turned out to be a small surplus. So, sometimes it's important that these jurisdictions take into account all the funds they have at their disposal and make those decisions wisely, knowing all the facts, before moving rashly.

I'm sure that, regardless of the funding, there will always be proponents for centralization in certain jurisdictions, because of the possibilities that might have in strengthening community A over community B, the type of problems you have there, and the possibilities that exist for enlarging the scope of curriculum, the scope of studies available at a particular school.

But generally I agree that, particularly at the elementary level, the closer the child is to the home, the smaller the school, I think the better the education is. I, myself, took my first grade in a two-room school, and I think that was probably the best year of my education.

MR. NOTLEY: There's one additional question I'd like to ask. I'm delighted the Minister of Education has sort of a log-cabin background, like Abe Lincoln. I'm sure that will bear him well in his future political career.

MR. CLARK: Ask the trustees.

MR. NOTLEY: I beg your pardon? Ask the trustees? Okay, especially some of them in Calgary.

Well, Mr. Chairman, the question I'd like to pose to the minister again really stems from the problem of the smaller jurisdictions. He cited where, in the case of one problem in the Fairview Division, subsequent review by the department showed that perhaps the figures were different, and I can understand that. But I would also put to you, Mr. Minister, the case that has been brought pretty forcibly to my attention by rural trustees, when they say they are not in the same kind of position to know where they stand vis-a-vis the wide variety of programs, grants, and funding formulas which now exist, as are, for example, the larger divisions that are able to have a bigger supervisory personnel in their central office.

Let's take a look at the Fairview School Division, for example. The Fairview School Division, in terms of its administrative personnel, has one superintendent, who has to spend most of his time on his major responsibilities as a superintendent of schools and, only in a peripheral sense, acquires the additional knowledge of what funding programs are available. It has one secretary and one accountant, who also serves as a bookkeeper or a receptionist. Now, that's not exactly what you call a top-heavy administrative staff. I'm sure the minister would agree.

The problem I want to raise, Mr. Minister, is that, at least as I've had representation made to me by members of the board, sometimes grants and programs for which they could qualify are missed because they simply don't have an inventory, if you

like, of all the range of programs, grants, qualifying clauses, and what have you. If I remember correctly, there was also a resolution passed by the trustees' convention -- I believe last year, if I'm not mistaken -- which asked for an overall inventory of financial assistance, for all the available grants, on an ongoing and up-dated basis.

I'm wondering whether that has been done, or if in fact the government has considered doing it.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, two points of view are expressed. One is that the provincial government -- and I'm not suggesting that those points of view were expressed by the hon. member, but these are out in the field -- in providing funding for school purposes, should provide one grant, and all boards of education would receive funding on the basis of account, of students they have. They would then determine the dispersal of those funds without regard to any priorities in education of the provincial government; that school boards are, in fact, closest to the situation and best know how to spend funds available from the provincial sources.

Now that, of course, would eliminate the need for staff knowledgeable in other areas of provincial grants, such as the educational opportunities fund, the three types of grants mentioned by the hon. member, and many other forms of grants. However, if that approach were taken, it would eliminate such grants as the supplementary requisition equalization grant, the declining enrolment grant, the small school grant. So we're in a dichotomy there. If we provide all those funds to eliminate some of the superintendent's work, we eliminate the possibility of providing funds that will adapt to the needs of boards in peculiar circumstances.

I think that, given the two, it is better to fall on the side of a variety of grants that take into account a variety of circumstances, even though they may require some additional homework on the part of administrative staff, than it is to provide a simple grant that may, in fact, not provide for justice for all the school boards throughout the Province of Alberta.

The regional offices of education are, in fact, there to provide that type of assistance, particularly to those boards which do not have the administrative strength some of the larger urban and rural boards might have. I would hope that the facilities available there are, in fact, made use of by these boards.

MR. NOTLEY: [Inaudible] follow that up for a second, if I can. Has there been, at any point, a printed inventory by the department of all the programs presently in existence, somewhat like the booklet the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health has just put out for MLAs, which would list every single grant, the qualifying conditions, the whole shebang, so that it could go out to superintendents, to school board secretaries, perhaps even

to chairmen of boards throughout the province?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, through the communications branch of the Department of Education, we follow the practice of informing constituent groups, including all school board superintendents, of any changes that take place, either in grant structures, grant formulas, amounts of grants, and all other relevant information that flows from the Department of Education. This comes on an ongoing basis.

We presume that the recipients of this information, in fact, compile it and have a ready source to which they can look for information on available grants. I don't believe we have a solitary booklet which compiles information on all government funding for every program other than -- no, not in the simple form and the fashion the hon. member suggests. I don't believe there is one in existence at the moment.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would recommend to the minister that he ask the communications branch to consider that sort of overall inventory of programs. I would doubt it would be a very expensive thing to compile, and it would start off all the school jurisdictions in this province with, at least, some basic information.

I can appreciate the arguments of the minister when he says he assumes that the boards are, in fact, going to be keeping this information on file. That hopefully is true -- but not always true. I think that was the reason, as I recall, Mr. Chairman, why the trustees convention voted for that kind of inventory in the first place. It would seem to me, since it is not a large budgetary matter, it would at least make available the ground rules to rural trustees, superintendents, and secretaries -- especially on any of those programs that relate to first come first served basis. But certainly as an overall assessment inventory of programs, if you like, I feel it would be well worth its cost in reproducing. Perhaps it might even be useful to the members of the Legislature to have copies of it as well.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, that matter will be taken under consideration. The only thoughts I have at the moment in regard to the problems that could exist are such things as the six-month review of school buildings prices, so it would mean this thing would have to be updated every six months. We have the announcement of the per-pupil grants in November. Some of the other program announcements will be forthcoming during the course of the next three, four or five months. So it's an ongoing thing. You may create one catalogue, one inventory, today that tomorrow will no longer be current. There are the problems that exist with that as well.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a couple of comments and ask the minister a question. On the minister's last comments about the problem of having to keep the thing up to date, I think all

members are familiar with the government telephone directory and the way in which the government tries to keep that up to date. So, if we are only going to have changes every six months as far as school building grants and other school grants are concerned, I'm sure most school jurisdictions could labor under that.

The real reason I got up though, Mr. Chairman, is to ask the minister if I heard him correctly when he implied that the reason he hasn't been able to give the figures for the foundation program for next year to the trustees, secretary treasurers, and the ATA -- so that in fact their budgeting process could be under way -- was that the minister or the department didn't have the enrolment figures. Was that the reason the minister gave? Perhaps I heard him wrong, but I would like him to elaborate on what the reason is he can't be telling school jurisdictions now, with a fair degree of certainty, what they can be looking at as far as grants for next year are concerned.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, on Monday, November 3, 1975 in fact I did inform the Alberta School Trustees Association at their annual convention in Calgary what the school foundation program fund grants would be. Those figures were \$838 for elementary students, \$921 for junior high school students, and \$1,172 for high school students.

Mr. Chairman, that represents almost -- just a little bit short of, perhaps \$20 million -- \$400 million, in the vicinity of \$375 to \$380 million. Now that's a substantial portion of the funds which are provided by the Department of Education to school boards for spending on instructional purposes. They already know what support prices are available for school construction purposes. They were also informed as to the funding formula for rural transportation. So what we are looking at in terms of additional announcements is not a substantial portion of the budget of the Department of Education.

Further, Mr. Chairman, the information which was provided to the Alberta School Trustees Association at their convention in Calgary is of the same nature which was provided the previous year, and the year before that. As a matter of fact, it's more in the way of information than was customarily the case in this province years ago. So the Alberta School Trustees Association and the member trustees can go home with a degree of certainty as to the funds they will be receiving. It's in the special areas that the certainty still does not exist. But those special areas are by no means the lion's share of the funds that school boards receive and spend.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, commenting to the minister, I don't think anyone indicated they were the lion's share of the amount of money available for education. One doesn't have to have been involved very long to recognize that. But what I'd point out to the minister is that, in the rural school jurisdictions across the province, when they are involved in the process of their

budgeting, it's these special grants, to a very great degree, that boards either have to go to a plebiscite or at least advertise for a plebiscite. If school jurisdictions -- and we've all been through this -- don't know where they stand as far as these special grants are concerned for much later in the year, then we are going to have the same kind of situation we had last year when school budgets were being passed in June, July, August, and September. Then you're passing a budget which has four, five, or six months left in the year, and you've already spent six months of the budget.

If the minister is saying we are far better off than we were in the past, I'm glad. I just wish that school boards could be in a situation where they would know what the situation is going to be as to special grants. For the life of me, I can't understand this question of enrolment figures holding back the minister from being able to announce what these special grants are going to be in these special areas -- special areas that I commend the government for becoming involved in. Then the school boards would be in a position to make some of the decisions. Trustees and teachers I talked to -- not just in my own constituency, but in and around Edmonton, in the northern part of the province, and down south -- make the point that, until we know where we stand as far as special grants are concerned, because of the way in which they have been moved around over the past few years, it's essential they know those before they can really go to work on the budget.

If the minister doesn't think this is the case, and if the minister feels there is virtually no reason why boards can't pretty well finalize their budgets suddenly, then I would like him to tell us. I would be pleased to report the minister's feelings to those people.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, the school boards have, in fact, one advantage; They are aware, by the announcement the Provincial Treasurer made on September 17 of this year, that the grants which will be provided by the Department of Education budget will not exceed an 11 per cent increase over the previous year. That factor is known. They now know what the school foundation program fund grants are. In the case of rural school boards, they know what the transportation funding will be. There are the areas of the special grants that we mentioned and, much as I would like to make an announcement sooner, that is impossible and contrary to previous practice.

The budgeting process has to take place on the basis of the projected expenditures of the board. They may have to leave in blank some areas of projected revenues. But surely their expenditures should be determinable. They should be in that process now.

If all the grants we made known today, that would in fact not guarantee boards that they would know the ultimate situation. Because in those cases where supplementary requisitions are levied beyond the

point where plebiscite requirements are triggered, those boards wouldn't know until after the plebiscite. There are certain situations where boards, in fact, obtain funds by determining a mill rate rather than an amount they requisition. Changes in the assessment over the previous year, which are not known at this particular time, will affect the number of dollars those boards will receive.

So there are many other factors than just the special grants which affect the income section of any budgetary process. There are the ones I have mentioned and, of course, I think the boards should be spending their time at this particular moment in the area of expenditures, using what information they now have and filling in the blanks when that other information becomes available.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, one other question to the minister with regard to the regulations for the referendums or plebiscites. Has the minister or the department given any consideration to having some basic percentage of people which must take part in the democratic process? I allude to some of the plebiscites which took place this spring and summer, where you had certainly less than 25 per cent of the ratepayers in a division or jurisdiction vote on the referendum or plebiscite. I know the suggestion has been mooted around, certainly by some trustees and officials. I wonder if the minister has given the matter any thought.

I would have to say, rather frankly, I'm of two minds myself. On the one hand we don't have a minimum number of people who have to vote in the constituency to elect people to this Assembly. On the other hand, I can certainly sympathize with school trustees. A plebiscite is forced; if the plebiscite is held late during the year, you get 25 per cent of the people out to vote and the thing is turned down by 14 or 15 per cent of the electorate in that particular school jurisdiction.

So I would ask the minister if he's had the opportunity to give any thought to that kind of idea. What are his thoughts? Will there be any changes in the basic regulations as far as the plebiscites are concerned?

MR. KOZIAK: The changes in the plebiscites will be with respect to the change of the present 15 per cent to 11 per cent. If boards wish to exceed an 11 per cent increase in their spending, they might be required to proceed to a plebiscite, if a petition with the required number of names is presented to them.

We are also involved in a new three-year plan. Boards will be able to adjust their base where they presently have a base below something in the vicinity of the provincial average. So if a school jurisdiction now has a mill rate substantially below the provincial average, it might be at a very strict disadvantage relative to other boards in the province when it comes to increasing its supplementary requisition. Provision will be made to ensure

that those boards which have mill rates below a figure that will approximate the provincial average, will, by meeting with the Department of Education, have an adjusted base from which the 11 per cent increase will apply.

The other point is a matter of philosophy, and that is the question of the number of people who in fact vote. There are some jurisdictions on this planet, Mr. Chairman, that make it an offence to fail to exercise your democratic right to cast a ballot. We don't do that in this country. I can't see us moving in that direction on school plebiscites.

Where you have a small turnout and a plebiscite is defeated, no doubt the board might say, well, if there had been a larger turnout, it might have passed. On the other hand, those who voted against the plebiscite may take the opposite point of view: that in voting they represented also the majority that did not vote, and had the majority come out, the vote would have remained the same. Notwithstanding the different points of view, I don't see any changes in this area of the plebiscite requirements.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, another question of the minister. Dealing with the question of average mill rates across the province, in determining that rather provincial average, will the department be taking into consideration just the average mill rates, or the mill rate tied to the assessment, and where pupils are in the school system as opposed to elementary, junior, and senior high schools? I'm asking is it simply a matter of an average mill rate, or will factors other than just the number of mills be involved in arriving at this average?

In the county of Mountain View, for example, the mill rate is something like 100 or 108 mills. Now, there are a number of other factors involved. Traditionally, if we leave it at just an average mill rate, I suspect it may well be the urban centres would receive the bulk of the advantage, as far as taking an average across the province is concerned; however, I haven't had a chance to check the mill rates recently. But if we just look at it as an average mill rate and nothing else, not tying it to assessment or students, I question how applicable it might be across the province. Is the minister in a position to outline that for us?

MR. KOZIAK: I can't give the exact details of that. The figure used will be something that will approximate the provincial average, and will take into account circumstances that the hon. member raises, such as the fact that a mill rate in one jurisdiction may, in fact, mean something different than it does in another jurisdiction. If there are those disparities, they will have to be equalized before the formula is applied.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, could we ask the minister when he expects to be in a position to give school boards an indication of

the size of special grants? Are we looking at January, when the provincial budget comes down? Can he give us some indication of a time line he's looking at there?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, I expect that the urban transportation plan -- as soon as we receive the additional information we've been waiting for from some of the urban boards, some of which was delayed by the mail strike -- should be ready in December, and information should probably be available by then.

With respect to the other grants, I don't expect we'll vary from the precedent of previous years, which would be that these announcements would probably not take place until March -- probably at that time or before, about the same practice that has been followed in the past.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 43, The School Amendment Act, 1975, be reported as amended.

[Motion carried]

Bill 38
The Hospital Services Commission
Amendment Act, 1975

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Chairman, I believe earlier this afternoon an amendment to Bill 38 was distributed to hon. members of the Assembly. I would like to explain briefly the reason for the amendment.

Bill 38 was prompted, as I indicated on introduction, by the decision by the government to appoint MLAs to certain commissions, boards, and agencies of the Government of Alberta, and I think this provision was covered in The Legislative Assembly Act. At the same time, the decision was made that the capacity for appointment of the MLAs should be with the Lieutenant Governor in Council, rather than with the minister. This is fairly standard, whether it would be MLAs or public members appointed to a commission, board, or agency.

Hon. members would note, on Bill 38, that the act presently reads that the chairman of the commission would be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, and that the commissioner for finance and commissioner for hospitals, being, if you like, the number two and three administrative persons, and being full-time [members] of the commission, are appointed by the minister. Then six other persons from the public are appointed by the minister. When this bill was drafted, the intent was that the six other persons from the public, including the MLA, were to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, rather than the minister. But in drafting, the commissioner for finance and the commissioner for hospitals were caught up as well with the Lieutenant Governor in Council. So I requested that this be amended in committee, to allow the commis-

sioner for finance and the commissioner for hospitals, being the number two and three full-time administrators in the commission, to be appointed by myself, as the minister.

This is standard with respect to appointments at senior management level in government departments. For instance, deputies are usually appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and assistant deputy ministers are appointed by the minister. So it's standard with respect to other areas of government.

MR. NOTLEY: I wonder, following the Premier's answer to questions in the Oral Question Period today, if we could just clarify the remuneration for the MLA on this particular commission. Also, flowing from your comments on Monday night, Mr. Minister, I'd like to know what part-time members of the commission receive.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Chairman, I hope I'm accurate on this. I'll get the accurate information, but the hon. Mr. Kroeger, the member appointed to this commission, will receive the same honorarium as other public members appointed to the commission. I believe \$100 plus expenses is the amount the MLA will receive, \$100 per month.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, if I could ask one supplementary question for clarification. I realize Mr. Kroeger is receiving \$100 a month, plus expenses. Is that the standard remuneration for the other part-time members of the commission as well?

MR. MINIELY: No, Mr. Chairman, I think other members are paid by the meeting, but we felt that MLAs should have a monthly limit. I think it's fair to say that if Mr. Kroeger, were attending meetings of the commission, he would be receiving less on a monthly basis than public members would be receiving. We felt that others were paid by the meeting, and that there should be a ceiling on MLAs, regardless of the number of meetings or how long they were.

MR. NOTLEY: A further question, Mr. Chairman. I can appreciate that. My question, however, just as a matter of information, would be to determine what the per diem rate is for non-permanent members of the commission, whether it's \$50 a meeting, \$100 a meeting, \$200, whatever. Just as a matter of information, I would like to know what the per diem rate is.

MR. MINIELY: I'd have to get the figures exactly, Mr. Chairman. My recollection is that the number of times the public members meet on a monthly basis, at a per diem rate for meetings they would be paid more honorarium than Mr. Kroeger. But I'd have to get the exact figures.

MR. NOTLEY: Just to follow that up further, will the minister undertake to obtain this information, so when he speaks on third reading that information will be presented to the Legislature?

MR. MINIELY: Well, Mr. Chairman, if it's acceptable to hon. members, if they would allow the bill to go through committee, I would give my undertaking to table it, if you like, as a report to the Assembly.

MR. NOTLEY: Fair enough, I accept that, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to make a comment. I would hope with each of these bills that concern appointing a member to a board or commission, the person either piloting the bill through committee stage, or the minister where that is being done, would obtain the information so we have it during committee stage. It seems to me that's the sort of thing we should be looking at during committee stage, rather than waiting for third reading. I am not going to try to hold the thing up this afternoon and I certainly appreciate the minister's willingness to do this, but I hope for additional bills we deal with tomorrow night -- and I assume we'll be getting on tomorrow night -- that the members would obtain all the specific information on remuneration so we have it, it's tabled, and we know what we're voting on.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Chairman, I think that's fair. The only reason I wasn't sure how we might do it is that the hon. Deputy Premier will be . . . I think there are amendments to The Legislative Assembly Act that tie into this as well. I leave it to the hon. Deputy Premier to put that information down with respect to that particular bill.

MR. NOTLEY: Again with respect to this supplementary information. It would be useful, if it's sort of six of one and half a dozen to the government, if we had the information as we dealt with the bills individually.

DR. BUCK: I'd like to ask a question of the former hon. Provincial Treasurer. For all MLAs sitting in committees -- I guess maybe this information will come out tomorrow night -- will they all be receiving the maximum of \$100 per month in all committees? This is what the hon. Deputy Premier is going to tell us, is he?

DR. HORNER: I think that's a public document, Mr. Chairman, but I'm quite willing to get that information for the hon. gentleman.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 38, as amended, be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 44
The Northern Alberta
Development Council Amendment Act, 1975

MR. NOTLEY: I'd ask the minister whether, at any time in the discussions of council members or in the deliberations of the

government on this matter, they considered whether there would be any merit in having election, as opposed to appointment, of members to the council?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Chairman, we have not discussed that matter. However, our view on the appointment of members of the Northern Alberta Development Council is that we must assure that each interest group in northern Alberta is represented, as well as each region of northern Alberta. We think that we've accomplished that in the past through the former minister. Now we feel that we can better accomplish it by establishing an increased number of members on the board, and not excluding MLAs from participating as was the case when the act was first established.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, a follow-up question to the minister. The proposal here is to increase the number of members on the council. Will there be any redrawing of the general boundaries that individual members represent at this point in time, and, if so, what is anticipated?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Chairman, yes, we are considering a redrawing of boundaries since there could be as many as two additional members on that board. However, the general tone of appointments will be maintained. We do have, as you know, some excellent representation from the native community on the board at the moment, as well as excellent representation from the female part of our population. So we are considering redrafting the boundaries because of the additional membership.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, is there any consideration to appointing additional members to the commission, recognizing the concern expressed by the Grande Prairie Chamber of Commerce and other groups in the west Peace about representation? I'm sure the minister is well aware of the fact that when the initial appointments were made, many people in the west Peace felt that the balance on the council was in the eastern part of the north, and that there wasn't sufficient representation from the west. So, since we are increasing the numbers, I would be interested in hearing the minister's views on the possibility of representation from the west Peace.

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Chairman, we did consider that prior to the amendment being introduced. At the moment there is a member sitting on the council who represents the town of Peace River. He is going to move to Grande Prairie very soon, and it was our view that, as an interim measure, we would maintain his membership on the council as a representative of Grande Prairie. But down the road, we would re-examine the total membership of the council and establish a new membership with the concurrence of those people most involved.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, what avenues does the minister envisage for close cooperation of the council with the Peace

River Regional Planning Commission? I've talked to various people in the planning commission who have felt that perhaps one of the areas lacking in the last number of years, not just the last two or three years, has been a very close, tight relationship, so that they, in fact, could work closely with the Northern Alberta Development Council. Flowing from that, would the government consider perhaps, as a way of improving liaison, having as one of the additional members the chairman of the Peace River Planning Commission?

MR. DOWLING: The latter point, Mr. Chairman, has not been considered at this time. But I should say that we have, and the former minister has, over the course of the last number of months, attempted to develop a closer liaison with the Peace River Planning Commission. You might recognize that in the most recent document put out by that organization, they indicated their support of the Opportunity North Conference which is going to proceed during the next week on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. That's a little bit of advertising I thought I'd throw in, Mr. Chairman.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the hon. minister who the MLA, or MLAs, would be on the development council, and what their pay will be.

MR. DOWLING: The hon. member may have to speak up a little bit, but I think I understood what he said -- who the MLAs are? Well, first of all we have the Member for Lesser Slave Lake, Mr. Shaben, and the Member for Edson, Mr. Dowling.

DR. BUCK: Will the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake. . .

MR. DOWLING: Speak up.

DR. BUCK: . . . be paid the \$100 a month? I assume you'll be paid by the taxpayer.

MR. DOWLING: Loud and clear, Mr. Chairman. No, the Member for Lesser Slave Lake is almost a volunteer. He will be paid expenses incurred as a result of attendance at meetings and doing the job of being a member, but he will not receive the stipend which is normally paid to those members of the Northern Alberta Development Council. I can't recall the exact figure, but I believe they receive something in the order of \$75 per day. In other words, if they were 2 days at a Northern Development Council meeting in Wabasca-Desmarais, they would be paid \$150 total.

DR. BUCK: But there is nothing saying that he cannot be paid.
[interjections]

DR. BUCK: I say there is nothing saying that the MLA will not be paid.

MR. DOWLING: As a matter of principle, we have determined the position should be, at this time, that the expenses of any MLA who

serves on the council will be paid and that would be the extent of it.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, in light of the changes in the Northern Alberta Development Council, I'd like to ask the minister if he would sketch for us, albeit rather briefly, how he sees the input from the council fitting in to each of the various departments -- because the minister has been chairman, his colleague, the Minister of Recreation, Mr. Adair was chairman and there was a direct input to the Executive Council.

I'd like to have the minister outline to us how he sees recommendations coming from the Northern Alberta Development Council, and what avenues or mechanisms they will have for input to the various departments.

MR. DOWLING: Yes, the manner in which it will be done is rather like this: the council will hear presentations made by the various people in the northern part of the province. From those presentations, they will glean the import of the presentation and will present that to the various departments of government.

The Northern Alberta Development Council will not be a delivery system, but it will rely on the delivery systems now in position in the government. I should say, in support of the Northern Alberta Development Council is a Northern Development Group of about seven people who are, in fact, research people who deal with the matters that are discussed, and present proposals for departmental action.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I recognize that the Northern Alberta Development Council isn't a delivery system in itself. What does concern me is, once the Northern Alberta Development Council makes a recommendation, where does it go from there. You know, does it send a letter to the Minister of Housing about problems at Fort Chip, or does it send a letter to you about the road from Grande Prairie to Grande Cache, or just what's the mechanism?

MR. DOWLING: First of all, Mr. Chairman, they don't have to send me a letter about the road from Grande Cache to Grande Prairie, or Edson, or Hinton, or anywhere. I know about that one. They also don't have to inform me about any of the others, because I am the chairman and therefore am apprized of the presentations and know of the presentations as they are made.

On reflection, you might recall that there was a water well or water delivery system established by the Department of the Environment some time ago. That was brought to fruition through considerable effort by the Northern Alberta Development Council. A presentation was made to the Department of the Environment, or to government generally. The Department of the Environment picked it up, and water systems are now established in some rural communities which did not have those systems before.

MR. CLARK: Will the council report to the hon. minister, and the minister then go and bend the arm of his colleagues? Is that the approach, or will council itself be left with the job of bending the arms of the various cabinet ministers?

MR. DOWLING: Well, the council, Mr. Chairman, would not report to me, because I am the chairman of the council, and therefore I wouldn't report to myself. But I do make presentations to the various cabinet committees in government to make sure the wishes of the northern people are heard, and that some action is taken where it is warranted.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, pardon me for taking so much time, but when I look at Section 5 of the act, it says: "The Council shall be composed of not less than eight and not more than 10 members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, one of whom shall be designated as chairman." So, the practice is going to be that the minister is going to be chairman, is that . . .

MR. DOWLING: That means he could be the chairman. At the moment, the situation is that I am the chairman, but it doesn't necessarily follow that I will be.

MR. CLARK: That's what concerns me: that, in fact, if the hon. minister isn't the chairman, what mechanism does the chairman have, if he isn't a cabinet minister, of getting his input to the various departments. I'm sorry I didn't make the point clear earlier, but that's the problem. Does he report to the hon. minister? That's on the assumption, once again, that the minister is not the chairman. Where does that chairman report, how does he get the recommendations to the various departments?

MR. DOWLING: Well, as the hon. leader knows, I am the Minister of Business Development and Tourism. The Northern Development Group and the Northern Alberta Development Council fall under the aegis of that department, and therefore they would report to me, if I were not the chairman.

MR. CLARK: So would it be fair to conclude that when things aren't done, it's your fault? When things aren't done, it's your fault: that's what we really wanted to establish.

MR. DOWLING: As a matter of fact, no. When things aren't done, they're not my fault. If they're good, I did it.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I guess I'm just a little naive, but I'm still a little concerned about the "expenses only" for the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake who's going to be sitting on the commission. Just what does "expenses only" mean? I mean, what are the parameters, what are the guidelines? You know, I'm like the present Minister of Energy. When he was on this side, he was very naive. Well, I'm very

naive. I would just like to know exactly what the expenses . . .

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Chairman, I agree. Expenses incurred as a result of a meeting at Wabasca-Desmarais, for example, are the transportation costs of the Member for Lesser Slave Lake to Wabasca-Desmarais, an opportunity to break bread with members of the council, and an opportunity to return to his place of residence.

DR. BUCK: What are the upper limits? I mean, is this by helicopter, is this by car, is this by dog-sled?

DR. WARPACK: By rhinoceros.

DR. BUCK: Well, Mr. Chairman, you know, we might as well all pack it up, if this is boring you, but I would like to know.

MR. DOWLING: Well, Mr. Chairman, bearing in mind, as the hon. member has often expressed to me, the value of an MLA's time, I'm sure he would be willing to admit that we should expedite transportation to and from the various meeting places, as is possible.

Wabasca-Desmarais, for example, is isolated by a great number of miles, by a road that perhaps is not so good. The obvious method of transportation, if possible, would be air transportation. That was accomplished for all the people that attended that Wabasca-Desmarais meeting. The flight was accomplished by a DC3. We took off from Edmonton, and we had perhaps 15 to 20 people there. Most of them rode up on the aircraft, as officials or resource people who were taking part in the meeting.

Some of the other meetings, for example, if we were attending a meeting in Peace River, it would be very simple for the Member for Lesser Slave Lake to drive up there or, you know, that kind of thing. But reasonable expenses are reasonable, and that's what we deal with.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, then the member drove from his home to Edmonton, and caught the airplane with the group?

MR. DOWLING: No, Mr. Chairman, he happened to be fulfilling a very important function of an MLA in the city of Edmonton at that time, and we were taking the aircraft anyway. Rather than have him walk, I thought he should ride.

[interjections]

DR. BUCK: This is fair. No, but I mean, apparently then there are no limits. There are no limits to the expenses, is what the minister is saying?

MR. DOWLING: Well, Mr. Chairman, reasonable men act reasonably, and I'm sure that council members and this department will always act reasonably.

MR. FARRAN: Unless they are strawberry farmers.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, we've gone through the question of MIA representation, and will do so again as we go down the list of bills. So I think that issue has been discussed. Suffice it to say that I don't think you're going to convince any of us on this side that it's a useful exercise.

The question I want to raise, however, deals with the conference. As a matter of fact, I welcome the conference, in Peace River. I think it's a very useful and important conference. I'm glad to see as many of the cabinet ministers attend as are. I'm not in the habit of congratulating the government on anything, and it would probably be a rather poor policy to start, but I think that in this case, the northern conference is useful.

I would be interested, however, in what the government proposes to do with the results of the conference. For example, will there be a report printed out, compiling the consensus, where consensus in fact takes place? What information will be transmitted to members of the Legislature as a formal report of the conference?

Generally, I agree with the areas that are being examined. I would simply say that the part emphasizing agricultural processing is fine. But there is one additional area that I think is quite important, Mr. Minister, and that is the expansion of agriculture, itself, in the Peace River area, in two important ways.

I think we have to look at the area around Fort Vermilion, where there are many, many thousands of acres of excellent land that can be opened up for new farming ventures in this province. I think many members may not be aware of the agricultural potential of much of this still-virgin land. I happen to have in my constituency a man who has, for the last 10 years, worked on a project in that area. His yields have been just as good as the yields in the south Peace. I'm sure the Minister of Transportation would be aware of the potential in that area.

The other area that seems to me to be of interest -- and I've had this brought to my attention by officials of the Department of Agriculture in Fairview, which is, as the minister knows, the regional centre for the department -- is the potential for truck gardening along the Peace River.

It seems to me that these are two important areas where it's not just a question of consolidating agriculture, but in actual fact expanding the opportunity for people to get in and break new ground.

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Chairman, first of all there will be a report compiled as a result of the conference. I appreciate the hon. member's efforts in helping me to promote the conference. I really look forward to it being a true success. I should congratulate myself, the former minister responsible for northern development, for having the original impetus for bringing it to fruition.

I agree with what the hon. member says. There are some areas in agriculture which need to be looked at very carefully. You should know that the Department of

Agriculture is, through its present minister and the former minister, doing everything it can to expand the produce along the Peace River valley and in the north country.

One of the problems that has always been recognized by this government, and I suspect former governments, is the transportation problem of that northern part of our community. I never have forgotten, nor will I ever forget, that approximately two-thirds of the area of our province lies above the city of Edmonton.

So, I would hope that during the conference, those people who are participating actively as part of a panel, and those people who are not on a panel, would take the opportunity to express the views that you have just expressed regarding agricultural development and other things in which the people of the Peace River country can participate.

It's interesting to note that of approximately 300 delegates to the conference, all but 75 come from the north country, and those 75 others come from the city of Edmonton. The reason for the difference is that this time we are arranging the conference to apprise the people of the north country of how they can participate in the advancement and so on that is going to take place in the Peace River country over the next few years.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I want to make one quick comment and ask one question. I'll ask the question first. I understand by "service delivery" in 4(b) that this will include all types of transportation. I'm wondering if it includes any more than that, or if that is the proper interpretation, because it is not defined.

Secondly, I have difficulty following concern about elected representatives being on the Northern Alberta Development Council, because there have been elected representatives on this ever since it was first brought into being. If it has done a good job I think the elected representatives have had a part in bringing that about. As a matter of fact I think the Northern Alberta Development Council could not do as valuable a job as it has done and as it is

doing, without elected representatives on it.

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the hon. Member for Drumheller for those comments. I agree that the council was established properly in the first instance with MLA representation and, at one time, had the hon. A.O. Fimrite as its chairman.

Secondly, on the matter of transportation, the item does deal with all modes of transportation and all types.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Chairman, I move the bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move we rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Dr. McCrimmon left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

DR. MCCRIMMON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration the following: Bills No. 37, 39, 41, and 44, and begs to report same.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration the following: Bills No. 43 and 38, and begs to report same with some amendments, and begs leave to sit again.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

[The House rose at 5:31 p.m.]