

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, November 26, 1975

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

## PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRESENTING REPORTS BY  
STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the House, in respect to Private Bill No. 7, being An Act to Amend The Calgary Convention Centre Authority Act, that Standing Order 77 has been complied with. If I may explain to members of the House, Standing Order 77 relates to the question of advertising the bill prior to its presentation to the Clerk at the spring session.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 68  
The Attorney General  
Statutes Amendment Act, 1975 (No. 2)

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, No. 68, The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1975 (No. 2).

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to permit persons carrying on business as chartered accountants, dentists, lawyers, and medical doctors to form a professional corporation for the conduct of their business. This act will allow these four professions the privilege of incorporation that other professions and individuals already enjoy, and will remove discrimination under the income tax laws.

[Leave granted; Bill 68 introduced and read a first time]

Bill 69  
The Water Resources  
Amendment Act, 1975

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Water Resources

Amendment Act, 1975.

The bill contains a number of amendments to the act, but the highlights would emphasize the upgrading of water for irrigation purposes. A variety of techniques and procedures, dealing with licensing and managerial and administrative matters with respect to Alberta water resources, is involved in the bill. It provides for the making of a variety of regulations and for the assessing of local benefits by the local authority.

[Leave granted; Bill 69 introduced and read a first time]

Bill 72  
The Alberta Uniform Building Standards  
Amendment Act, 1975

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Alberta Uniform Building Standards Amendment Act, 1975.

This bill is basically to streamline the regulations to be consistent right across the province. As it is now, there's one regulation in the city of Calgary, another in the city of Edmonton and other cities, towns, or villages, and it has created a problem of enforcement by the administration. This certainly will streamline and improve the building principles in the building industry.

[Leave granted; Bill 72 introduced and read a first time]

Bill 221  
The Cash Discount Act

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Cash Discount Act.

This bill provides for a 2 per cent discount for cash customers by any merchant who accepts payment by credit card other than a credit card issued by his own business. The bill makes it an offence for a credit card lending institution to forbid a merchant, by any type of agreement, to offer cash customers a discount. Briefly, this bill will stop the subsidizing of credit card holders by cash customers.

[Leave granted; Bill 221 introduced and read a first time]

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 72, The Alberta Uniform Building Standards Amendment Act, 1975, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

Bill Pr. 7  
An Act to Amend The Calgary  
Convention Centre Authority Act

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a private bill, Bill Pr. 7, An Act to Amend The Calgary Convention Centre Authority Act. The purpose of this bill is to amend the composition and certain procedures of the authority.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 7 introduced and read a first time]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, it's my honor, on behalf of my colleague, the Hon. Neil Crawford, Minister of Labour, to introduce from his constituency, Edmonton Parkallen, 78 Grade 9 students from the McKernan Junior High School, accompanied by their teacher, Mr. W. Barnes. Mr. Speaker, these students appear in both the members and the public galleries, and I would ask that they rise and receive the usual acknowledgement from the House.

TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file copies of the report of the Special Advisory Committee on Communal Property and Land Use. The report is essentially a record of the land transactions in Alberta by the Hutterian Brethren for the year ended August 1, 1975. As well, a very comprehensive land holdings by the Hutterite colonies throughout Alberta is included in the appendix. Copies will be made available to the members today.

DR. WARRACK: As required by statute, Mr. Speaker, I would like to file a copy of Gas Alberta operating fund annual report and financial statements.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file copies of the annual report for 1974 for the Hospital Services Commission.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the answer to Question 203, asked for by Mr. Taylor on Tuesday, November 18, and the answer to Motion for a Return 189, asked for by Mr. Notley on Tuesday, November 18.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. minister please refer to members by their constituencies.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file the response to Question 201, by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table Motion for a Return 207, requested by the House.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

AGT Equipment Purchase

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address this question to the hon. Member for Calgary Bow, who is the MLA sitting on the Alberta Government Telephones Commission. Mr. Speaker . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order.

DR. BUCK: What's your problem?

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know if the hon. member can confirm that AGT has recently agreed to purchase between \$6 million and \$8 million worth of IBM equipment without it going to public tender.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the hon. member well knows that he is to direct his questions to ministers in the House, and not to the members of the House.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, rising to speak to the point of order, if the hon. Attorney General reads Section 32(b) of the Standing Orders and Forms of Proceedings of this Assembly, it indicates:

. . . to other members relating to any bill, motion, or other public matter [concerned] with the business of the Assembly in which such members may be concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I humbly submit that the hon. Member for Calgary Bow is concerned with the business of the Legislature in that he's on the board of AGT. He's been appointed by order in council, and I'm sure the member of the Executive Council was aware of that.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order, the Minister of Utilities and Telephones is the chairman of that board. When he is in the House, Mr. Speaker, as he is, I submit it is only reasonable that the question should go to the member of the Executive Council who has direct responsibility in the subject area in question.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, speaking on the point of order, Beauchesne, Standing Order 39 on page 145, confirms the position taken by the hon. Member for Clover Bar, and I'd just read that:

Questions may be placed on the order paper seeking information from Ministers of the Crown relating to public affairs; and from other members, relating to any bill, motion, or other public matter connected with the

business of the House, in which such members may be concerned

Now, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me there is a case to be made that where a cabinet minister is in the House, perhaps it might well be that he should answer the question. But, Mr. Speaker, where the cabinet minister in charge of a particular division, department, or branch is not in the House, and we have a member of the Legislature who is sitting on a board, it seems to me, in the absence of that cabinet minister, that hon. member should, as I read Standing Order 39, be legitimately asked by the opposition to answer questions relating to a matter of public concern dealing with that particular board.

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order, and particularly the last point, absolutely not. With respect to my own particular case, in any absence I might have from the House, if a question is directed from any member of the Legislature, my acting minister -- who in this instance happens to be the gentleman on my left, the hon. Mr. Farran, the Solicitor General -- would be pleased to undertake the question.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. Certainly, I think we have to examine who is responsible in certain areas. Through an authority of the legislative process and the law process, a member of the Legislative Assembly has been appointed to take on certain responsibilities. That, in turn, should give the opportunity to us as members to question that particular MLA with regard to his responsibility.

The minister may have one responsibility, but at the same time that particular person, appointed through a bill, appointed through order in council to a responsibility, also has one, and is to be held accountable for his actions and attitudes on the boards. Accordingly, we should be able to ask him questions.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member proposing to speak again on the point of order? I think it would be too bad if we used up too much of the question period discussing a point of order.

My understanding of the standing order referred to by the hon. Member for Clover Bar would be that such a question would be in order, put to a member in the position of the member to whom this question was directed. Subject to checking further, I would say the question as it was put was in order. If, as a matter of government policy, such questions are not going to be answered, I would assume, again subject to checking, that a member to whom such a question was put would be entitled, if it were not put in the form of an order of the House, to decline to answer such a question, as a minister is entitled to do. But, as I say, subject to checking, I'm

very much of the opinion at the present time that the question is in order.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, in the course of your checking, may I ask that you address yourself to the provisions of Section 32, which, as I interpret it, apply only to questions on the Order Paper, and therefore written questions and not oral questions in the question period.

MR. SPEAKER: The general rule, and again subject to checking, is that the same rules apply to questions on the Order Paper as to oral questions, and if the hon. minister would refer to 171 of Beauchesne, he would find that reference there.

DR. BUCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like once again to ask the question of the hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

Can the hon. member who is on the commission of Alberta Government Telephones indicate if equipment with a value of \$6 million to \$8 million dollars was obtained for AGT without it going out to public tender?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'll refer this question to the Minister of Utilities and Telephones.

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that that's a question that fits very well the rules of the House for the Order Paper, and if the hon. member would be so kind as to place it there, I would endeavor to seek the answer.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Without wanting to interrupt the hon. member unduly, it would seem that if the question is going on the Order Paper, since there really was not an answer to the question proper, the supplementary question might also be put on the Order Paper.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the question can be asked as to government policy, which I believe would fit under being able to ask a supplementary.

#### Canmore Mines

DR. BUCK: All right, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my second question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. I would like to know at what stage the negotiations are between the provincial government and Canmore Mines for the purchase of Canmore Mines by the provincial government.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge, there are absolutely no negotiations going on for the purchase of Canmore Mines.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Have there been any negotiations

between the government and Canmore Mines relating to surface rights or mineral rights of the area now owned by Canmore Mines?

MR. GETTY: That's a little different matter, Mr. Speaker, and it may be that somewhere within the government there have been tentative discussions. However, that is something that would be subject to considerable checking, considering the scope of government responsibilities. I'd be happy to look into it for the hon. member or, should he want to be more specific with his request, he could place it on the Order Paper.

DR. BUCK: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister also check to find out if any ski slopes in the land owned by Canmore Mines are potentially in the developmental stage?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what the hon. member means by a developmental stage. Therefore, to be sure I get him the information he'd like, perhaps it would be best to put it on the Order Paper.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my final, final supplementary. In light of the fact that this may have to do with government policy, I would like to know if the minister can obtain the information if there are negotiations and report directly to the House.

MR. GETTY: Well, that would be my understanding, Mr. Speaker. If he puts it on the Order Paper, it would come directly to the House.

#### Anti-inflation Guidelines

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for Calgary affairs. In light of the 16 per cent hike for adults and 25 per cent hike for children in bus fares in Calgary, effective January 1, 1976, what effect will the proposed provincial guidelines with regard to price increases have on this hike?

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I think I would have to take that question under advisement, and if the hon. member would put it on the Order Paper, we would reply to it in due course.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I feel there is some urgency in looking at this. Did the minister have any discussions with any of the members of the city council of Calgary or the mayor with regard to matters such as this, because of the announcement made in this House about guidelines and holding down spending?

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, to answer the first part of the question, we have regular and continuing discussions with the representatives of city hall in Calgary on this and many other questions. I'd like to remind the member opposite that the alder-

men and the mayor down there do run an autonomous show, and that they are empowered to increase their bus rates as they see fit.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I'm sure the minister is aware that under the new guidelines municipal employees will have their salaries held down, their incomes contained.

What steps does the minister intend to take in other potential areas of increases such as the city utilities, parking meters, and general taxation with regard to Calgary? What responsibilities will he take as the minister for Calgary affairs?

DR. BUCK: He'll study it.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention, as the Minister Without Portfolio with responsibilities in the Calgary area, to usurp the functions of city hall. I'm sure the member opposite is conscious of its need to have autonomy, and if he's suggesting we usurp that authority, I'd be pleased to hear him say it.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Is the minister saying to the House, so I can interpret clearly what he's saying, that the provincial guidelines we hope will come in with the bill in a couple of weeks will have no effect on the city of Calgary, and they can continue to increase taxes and spending as they see fit?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order, order.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, no, I'm not saying that. I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, that the federal regulations have not yet been exposed to us, and we don't know whether or not they bind the city in that area. It's something we are presently studying. We hope to be able to clarify the area at a fairly early moment.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Will the minister be prepared to change his study attitude to one of immediate concern for some of these things in Calgary?

[interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. McCRAE: Could I have that question again, please.

DR. BUCK: You don't want it.

MR. SPEAKER: When a question gets by with a barb, it's difficult in fairness to prevent an answer with a shield.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In view of the fact that municipalities come under provincial jurisdiction, in view of the fact that price control is really a matter of provincial jurisdiction, what discussions has the minister held with officials of the city of Calgary concerning possible controlling of

utility rates or bus fares as a result of provincial initiatives?

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, along with my colleagues, I've held general discussions with the city representatives. We explained the 11 per cent guideline of the province to them. The real answer to his question will have to await the unveiling of the federal legislation and the regulations, and how our provincial guidelines will be interpreted within that legislation and regulation.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. In light of the fact that these increases are taking place at the present time, would he recommend to the city of Calgary that these increases be waived in light of decisions made by the federal government, as the minister has indicated, or the provincial government?

MR. McCRAE: No, not at this time, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Supplementary to the acting Premier -- I believe that's the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud. Mr. Speaker, have there been . . . I was going to say third-class Premier, but that would be facetious.

Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. I would like to know if negotiations have been going on with the cities, pursuant to the proposed federal and provincial guidelines, or are they just going to be imposed upon the large municipalities?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, a number of ministers are presently in Ottawa attempting to get as many details as possible regarding the federal guidelines. They're meeting with the federal Minister of Finance today and possibly for a period of time tomorrow. It's our responsibility to get as much of the information as possible in order to be able to carry on meaningful discussions with municipalities and others within our province who will be affected by those guidelines.

DR. BUCK: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. In the negotiations with the municipalities, have the municipalities been informed that there may be a possibility of a rollback of some of the increases if they have gone above the provincial and federal guidelines?

MR. GETTY: First of all, Mr. Speaker, negotiations are not going on with the municipalities. Secondly, we are not dealing in hypothetical matters with them.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I shouldn't say negotiations. I will rephrase that by asking the hon. minister if discussions are going on with the municipalities in light of the fact that some of these increases have been above the proposed federal guidelines. Would the hon. minister answer the question in that context.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I thought I did answer it for the hon. member. What we are trying to obtain are the details with regard to the guidelines, so that we may discuss them with those within the province, municipalities and others, who will be affected by them -- exactly how the guidelines will be applied within our province should we enter into an agreement that allows them to be applied.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary on this topic.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the deputy acting Premier, Mr. Speaker. Ambition is destroyed completely this morning, I'm sure.

Mr. Speaker, the question I'd like to pose to the acting Premier is: in light of the delay in finding out the details of the federal program, the delay in introducing the provincial program, and the uncertainties this creates not only for municipalities, but for all other groups, is the government prepared to reconsider the Premier's statement of several days ago that there would not be public hearings of this Legislature to allow groups to come and make representation to us before we finally pass legislation?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

#### Matrimonial Property

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. In light of the high divorce rate in Alberta, compared to other provinces in Canada, when will the government introduce the matrimonial property act?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, the responsibility for that act would not lie in my department. I'd refer that question to the hon. Attorney General.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, we received the report of the Institute of Law Research and Reform on the matter of matrimonial property a little too late to assess the report and bring forward legislation for the fall sitting of the House. I would anticipate, however, that we will be in a position to do so by the spring.

#### Divorce Rate

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Has the government, in the interim, carried out certain studies with regard to the high divorce rates in Alberta?

MR. FOSTER: Perhaps the hon. member would like to indicate the nature of the studies he is referring to.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, possibly my question would be better directed to the

Minister of Social Services and Community Health, because it deals with a social problem. Has she carried out any studies on the causes of the high divorce rate in Alberta? If not, are there plans for any studies in the near future?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, were it not such a serious matter, I would be tempted to answer in a facetious vein and say that marriages are the cause of the high divorce rate. But because it really is a serious matter and causes many social problems, it is not to be taken lightly. However, we have not undertaken a study of divorce rates.

There are many opinions as to what causes family breakdown. I don't know that a study would serve a very useful purpose. It's a matter of concern to the whole community. It's part of a social evolution which is very grave, and causes problems in the community as well as problems to the public at large when these things occur. As for undertaking a study, I really don't know what use we could make of it, except to pry into the private lives of individuals who have seen fit to terminate their marriages.

#### Legal Aid

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Attorney General. It concerns the report of the Legal Aid Planning Committee on legal aid in the Province of Alberta. I'd like to ask him, Mr. Speaker, whether the government concurs in the general assessment of the report that poor natives and people who live outside major centres are being short-changed by Alberta's legal aid plan.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, until one could say every citizen has reasonable access to competent legal advice, I think one can always say citizens are being short-changed. I don't think I could say that every citizen in Alberta has immediate access to competent legal advice. Therefore, you might say I concur generally in the conclusion.

I don't think it's a question of whether or not additional legal aid services should be made available in our society. It's a question of how many additional legal aid services can be made available, how quickly this can be done, and how the administration of justice, as we know it, can accommodate additional legal services.

I think we would all agree that an expanded legal aid program would be highly desirable. But with budgetary constraints and the Kirby report currently being considered, I have indicated to the benchers of the Law Society and to the Legal Aid Society that except for the area of duty counsel the recommendations of the Kirby report are my first priority. An expanded legal aid system, contemplated by the recent report of the Legal Aid Society, would be a secondary concern.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of exempting the recommendations of the Kirby report, and generally law and order in its largest sense, from the 11 per cent constraint, and in light of what the minister has told us about equity before the law, that legal aid will be exempt from the 11 per cent constraint, what is the government's position on that question?

MR. FOSTER: I think I indicated, Mr. Speaker, that an aspect of legal aid, as it's outlined and implied in the Kirby report, will hopefully, subject to the concurrence of my colleagues, be exempt from the 11 per cent guideline.

However, the question is how far the administration of justice will be so exempt, and how many additional dollars may be available to my department to do the things we all know should be done. My preliminary assessment of the Kirby report, forgetting about the capital cost, is many, many millions of dollars. I think I have already indicated that I am anxious, given Kirby, to make some immediate and early changes and additions to the legal aid system in this province. But I do not have access, perhaps, to all the resources I would like, and someone has to draw the line and draw some priorities.

I have indicated my priorities quite clearly. My first priority is improving the administration of justice, with some emphasis on additional legal aid, particularly in the duty counsel area. My next priority would then be some expansion in the legal aid system as we know it. I think that is quite clear.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. Does the government place any priority on the recommendation of the planning committee that legal aid lawyers be hired to deal specifically with the problems of the poor?

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, the other recommendation I found rather interesting was the proposal that legal aid offices be established in neighborhoods in the province.

MR. FOSTER: As I said a few moments ago, Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that any time you can provide citizens with greater access to better legal services, you have done your fellow man a considerable service. No one's quarrelling with that. The question is timing, resources, and priorities. I'm not quarrelling with the point the hon. member is making. I'm simply saying, given the time we've got to make certain changes, the resources we've got, and the priorities I've already mentioned, that will more than consume the resources of this department in the immediate future. I would hope we can move significantly in other areas to expand legal aid services to the citizens in our society, and access to the law generally. But it's not today, Mr. Speaker. It's got to be some time after tomorrow.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary on this point.

MR. NOTLEY: Can the minister advise the House of the government's preliminary assessment of the proposal that more use be made of paraprofessional personnel in the system? We have a Medical Profession Act that makes provision for paramedical personnel. What is the government's assessment of the use of paraprofessional people, especially in the legal aid system?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, the government has not addressed itself to many of the details of the recent study of the Legal Aid Society, so what I am about to say to you is my own opinion, and that is a very firmly held personal opinion which I expressed frequently when I was on the other side of this front bench, as the Minister of Advanced Education. The legal profession -- and this applies as well to the Department of the Attorney General -- must accommodate and employ a division of manpower within the delivery system of professional services. It must accommodate to various kinds of paraprofessionals, and I would hope we in the department I represent, the profession of which I am a member, and the legal aid proposals could all accommodate to a substantial increase in involvement of paraprofessionals. This will allow us to improve, I believe, the quality of service, expand the level of service to citizens across our society and, indeed, provide such service at a lower cost than is currently the situation.

#### Telephone Service

MR. JAMISON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Utilities and Telephones. As a short preamble, on November 1 extended area service for 30 miles north of Edmonton came into effect for toll-free long distance. Since that time, I have been informed by many, many people that it's now almost impossible to talk to your neighbors.

I was wondering if the minister was aware of this problem, and whether or not the main exchange in the city of Edmonton was big enough to accommodate this service.

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, this is the first time this important and serious problem, as I would understand it, has been brought to my attention. I'll endeavor as quickly as I can to search out the answer and report to the hon. member.

#### Municipal Financing

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. Would he indicate to the Assembly what consideration the government has been

giving to the motion proposed this spring in the Legislature in regard to making grants available to municipalities to serve residential lots?

MR. JOHNSTON: I hearken back to last night, Mr. Speaker, when I was accused of referring to the Provincial Municipal Finance Council. Yet I have to say that indeed the council is working very diligently on all types of revenue sharing. I understand the hon. member's motion is on the Order Paper and will indeed be debated. Perhaps some new inputs will be put forward at that time.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question. The motion has been debated and has been referred to the municipal finance council. Could the minister indicate when policy in this area will be determined by the government? The motion has been debated.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, of course, there is policy in the area right now. It's a question of whether we're going to change the policy.

#### Housing Programs

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the acting Minister of Housing. It's my understanding that the city of Edmonton is launching a \$40 million to \$50 million housing program involving 1,000 homes that are to be rented for moderate rents.

I'd like to know if this program was discussed with the Alberta Housing Corporation, and if it will take money away from the core housing incentive program. Also, Mr. Speaker, will similar opportunities be offered to other municipalities?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Housing, the hon. Mr. Yurko, of course is not in the House today. The question the hon. member asked is of such magnitude of detail that I would ask that the question either be addressed again to Mr. Yurko when he is back . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. minister please refer to the other minister by his portfolio.

MR. MINIELY: . . . or put on the Order Paper, Mr. Speaker.

#### AEC Shares Sale

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the acting Premier. Can he bring this House up to date on the status of the Alberta Energy Company share issue? As he reported the other day, it was at \$70 million, but more returns were coming in. Could he bring us up to date at this time and indicate as well when a final report will be made available?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it is timely perhaps that the question has been asked by the hon. member. I have had an opportunity to obtain some up-to-date information today, and am pleased to advise the House that the Alberta Energy Company shares have now been substantially oversubscribed within Alberta.

[applause]

This is still the result of applications that were validly completed by the end of last week and have been coming in from the widespread parts of the province. They are presently in the area of \$79 million worth of subscription.

While a few more may still come in, Mr. Speaker, it now appears that there will be need for some type of prorating of Alberta Energy Company shares within the province.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the acting Premier give his considered opinion as to whether one would have been better or wiser buying one share in Alberta Energy as opposed to one share in PWA?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

#### High School Enrolment Trends

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Education. In light of a recent survey among Ontario high school students, which reportedly shows more students moving towards mathematics and the sciences and away from languages, I wonder if the minister could relate whether a similar trend is occurring in Alberta.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, a survey is not available that would provide statistics for Alberta comparable with those found in Ontario. However, I would urge hon. members to look at the last few reports of Alberta Education. In those reports, there is an indication of the number of students who enrol in each of the courses available throughout junior and senior high school. Looking at that information, one will find that from the time a second language was dropped as a requirement for entrance into universities, enrolment in second languages has, in fact, declined.

#### Crowchild Sunrise Centre

MR. DONNELLY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister Without Portfolio responsible for native affairs. The Crowchild Sunrise residence for native alcoholics has been granted a \$153,000 loan by the federal government to buy a building in Calgary Ramsay. Although 250 residents in the area signed a petition against its acceptance into the community, they would at least appreciate it if he would do whatever possible to have someone from the

community serve on that board. Would you, Mr. Minister, do this?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. Member for Calgary Millican, I'd be most happy to assist him in arranging a meeting between a delegation from the Crowchild Sunrise residence for native alcoholics and a delegation from the Ramsay committee in Calgary.

MR. DONNELLY: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. With operating costs of the centre being funded by the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission, would she also consider having someone from the community serve on its board?

MISS HUNLEY: I don't know that I have any authorization to advise the hon. member that I can guarantee that someone from the community serve on a board for which we are not directly responsible, even though we do work with them in a funding matter. But certainly, in every instance, I think it's extremely important that the community be involved and supportive of any organization in order to ensure its success.

#### Assured Income Plan Cheques

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health, and a question of great importance, in view of the date, to perhaps 25,000 Albertans. Has the minister made arrangements for delivery of the Alberta assured income plan cheques to recipients?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, in response to an earlier question from the hon. member, I advised that I felt there would be no problem in getting the cheques delivered by the end of the month -- at least, I believe I implied that. I'm not sure we'll reach the target of the end of November, but I believe we have the situation well in hand. The cheques will be delivered in the very near future, if not by the end of November.

Perhaps while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I could commend employees in the provincial government services area, in the Terrace Building. They've worked extremely hard in order to help get the cheques out. One young fellow worked all night. The cheques are ready, they're issued and bagged, and unless we run into some problem with distribution, they should be delivered in the very near future.

[applause]

MR. COOKSON: Could I ask the minister a supplementary, Mr. Speaker? Perhaps I missed the point. Will the cheques be delivered to a specific place or bank throughout the province, in view of the postal strike?

MISS HUNLEY: That's been part of the problem, Mr. Speaker. We've been attempting to establish the most efficient manner of delivering the cheques. If I could refer



to the Alberta assured income plan cheques, we're attempting to work through the federal government with the family allowance cheques, and they will then be delivered to the individuals concerned rather than having to be picked up. The social assistance cheques are being delivered through the regional offices, and I think that is proceeding fairly well.

#### Gun Control

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the Solicitor General. Is the minister reviewing any alternatives as far as gun control is concerned, in light of the fact that gun privileges are, in fact, being abused in certain areas?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, the legislation for gun control falls under federal jurisdiction. Our present responsibility lies only in the area of enforcement through local registrars in regard to restricted weapons, which roughly means handguns and fully automatic weapons. The new proposals with regard to licensing of shotguns and rifles, or persons who own shotguns and rifles, are presently being considered by the federal government. We have made some submissions in this regard, since we are alarmed at the possibility of a very costly and cumbersome administrative exercise being thrust upon the provinces. Beyond making submissions to the federal government in this regard, we have not proceeded any further, because we have no jurisdiction in this area.

#### Bingo

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Attorney General. What is the policy of the government on neighborhood bingos?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I don't know that I have enough time to answer this discussion. As a matter of fact, I had a very interesting meeting last night with the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues to discuss this very subject.

In some ways I would very much prefer that we were not in the business of regulating bingos. However, since we are, my preference is that we not allow any more large bingo operations in Edmonton. I very much prefer to see neighborhood or community bingos where volunteers have an opportunity to raise some funds to assist their community. But that almost denies the fact that there are already several large bingo parlors in Edmonton.

I'm not suggesting for one minute that we shut them down. I am suggesting, however, that we work out arrangements to allow particularly the community leagues that do not have the opportunity of participating in the bingo business access to some halls to allow them to make a few dollars for the members of their community. This will mean

some of the larger organizations will have to move over and make a little room for the smaller ones, but I'm hoping that with the co-operation of the federation and the community leagues themselves, we can come up with a common policy that's sensible and equitable to all.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are not some of the large bingos put on by a group of neighborhood community leagues?

MR. FOSTER: There's no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that many of the community leagues already do participate and put on their bingos through these large bingo parlors. There's no doubt about that at all, and I'm not suggesting that they should not do so. I'm simply saying there are two kinds of groups in the bingo business: those on the inside making money, and those on the outside making nothing and wanting in. All I'm trying to do is keep peace and somehow accommodate those groups on the outside that would like to get into the bingo business, particularly community leagues anxious to raise funds for the purpose of providing facilities and services for the members of their community.

MR. NOTLEY: Can they get a loan from the AOC?

MR. TAYLOR: One further supplementary. Does a community league that is raising money only for community purposes pay a fee to the government, being a percentage of its bingo take-in?

MR. FOSTER: No, Mr. Speaker, the groups eligible for licensing are religious and charitable groups, broadly defined, and all such groups pay a licence fee to the department.

#### Trust Company

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I wonder if he as yet is able to advise the House about the apparent relocation of the head office records of City Savings & Trust Company, and whether this relocation, if in fact it has taken place, is in violation of Alberta trust company law?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, the matter has been receiving the attention of officials in the department and of the officials in the Department of the Attorney General. A meeting is scheduled with the principal owner of City Savings & Trust, and as soon as that meeting has been held, I will be able to report further progress, I hope.

#### NFU Meeting

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask

if the government has reconsidered its decision to have some of its MLAs, the minister himself, or any other cabinet minister meet with the NFU people tomorrow?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, first of all, it was really not my, or the government's, decision not to be meeting with the National Farmers Union tomorrow. As I indicated to hon. members, I believe it was yesterday in the Legislature, I personally had been scheduled for some time to speak tomorrow afternoon at the Opportunity North Conference in Peace River, and will be at the annual meeting of the Alberta Wheat Pool in Calgary tomorrow evening. As was indicated once again yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we did suggest to the NFU the alternate date of Friday, November 28. However, to this date it is our information that they have not altered their plans.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'll rephrase my question. Is the government not sending any MLAs or any cabinet ministers to meet with the NFU tomorrow?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may have recalled the answer given in the House yesterday, which still stands, that in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture there will not be any members of the government meeting with that group.

#### Social Credit Party

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Member for Clover Bar. I'd like the member to advise the House of the status of the Social Credit Party in Alberta as to its name.  
[laughter]

AN HON. MEMBER: Mud.

DR. BUCK: It's certainly not pink, Mr. Speaker.

#### Trust Company (continued)

MR. SPEAKER: Before calling on the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview for a final question -- and we're running out of time -- with regard to the question asked by the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands, concerning which the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is obtaining an answer, I omitted to point out at the time that, of course, the second part of the question involves the giving of a legal opinion concerning whether or not what was done is contrary to the law. It could be very awkward in the event the matter subsequently had to be adjudicated on in the courts.

#### Publishers' Loan Guarantee Program

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Government Services and Culture. It concerns a news report in October indicating that the guidelines for Alberta's new \$2.5 million loan guarantee program for publishers were likely to be approved within a week.

My question to the hon. minister is: have the guidelines for the \$2.5 million loan guarantee program for Alberta publishers been formally approved?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, the guidelines have been approved by myself. They actually now await, pretty well, the conclusion of the postal strike, so they can be sent out to interested parties.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, has the Government of Alberta received any input from Alberta publishers in drafting the guidelines?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, we have been meeting with representatives of the Alberta publishers and other interested parties for the last three years regarding guidelines, requests, interests, and concerns. Hopefully, we have been able to include as much as possible in these guidelines to help the Alberta publishing industry establish itself as a healthy industry in this province.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have one final supplementary question. I'll ask two questions at the same time, and the minister can answer both of them.

One is to clarify the timing of the guidelines. I understand the minister said, we await the postal strike. But is there some other way publishers can obtain the guidelines, before the postal strike is ended, by contacting your office? The other question is: have guidelines for the \$50,000 a year grant program for Alberta publishers been approved yet?

MR. SCHMID: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would hesitate to announce they could contact the office to pick up the forms, because we'd also have to make arrangements, of course, to send these guidelines out to the bankers, because it really is a loan guarantee which will guarantee the publisher's bank an amount of money which would be approved. Therefore, if we would have to send it out to the banks, it would be rather difficult to make that happen until after the postal strike is over. Maybe the hon. member can influence his representatives down in Toronto to bear some pressure on them to finally conclude it.

On the other hand, as far as the \$50,000 is concerned, these guidelines, of course, are included within the overall guidelines for the publishing industry.

## Cow-Calf Operators

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to reply to a question asked of me several days ago, if you find it in order.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. minister give the answer that is being proposed now?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MISS HUNLEY: It's in reply to a question from the hon. Member for Little Bow, who was inquiring about the possibility of farmers asking for social assistance as a result of the concern over the cow-calf issue.

Supervisors in the regional offices in the following centres were contacted: Vegreville, Vermilion, Olds, Brooks, Athabasca, Grande Prairie, Peace River, and Barrhead. They were unaware of any situation of emergent financial need arising out of the cow-calf situation. They've had no new applications for social assistance from district farmers. Until today, one regional office, Smoky Lake, had eight persons exploring the possibility of financial assistance. Seven did not meet the eligibility requirements, due to excessive assets. One person appeared to be a bona fide applicant.

So it appears, Mr. Speaker, from my interpretation of this, that only one applicant appears to be bona fide.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS  
(Second Reading)

## Bill 82

## The Election Amendment Act, 1975

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 82, The Election Amendment Act.

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank members who were and are still in this House who worked with me on the election act review. We had a really good committee, excellent discussion. At this time, I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Mr. MacDonald, Clerk of the Assembly, for his valuable contribution in the draft of this bill.

As outlined in the House yesterday, we have made many changes in The Election Act -- made it more contemporary with our modern way of life. We have lowered the actual days of the campaigning to 28 from 39. In doing it in this manner, we studied legislation throughout other jurisdictions in Canada, and found most other jurisdic-

tions substantially lower.

In The Election Act all constituencies will now be treated the same. There was a vast difference in the other act between rural and urban constituencies. An example would be, it was written in the act that you had to have two enumerators in the urban areas. Two enumerators will be required in all constituencies in all polling subdivisions.

Continuing with enumeration -- enumeration will be done geographically in our urban areas. We found in studies that other jurisdictions are doing this in a geographical manner. Instead of visiting house to house, we will pick out areas and it will be done street by street. We found previously that streets were actually missed in enumeration, and this caused a hardship to enumerators and especially to the voter.

The special committee of the Legislature, established in 1972, was of the view, and it was in concurrence with other people, that we should remove the term "British subject" from the act. This is in compliance with what has happened in the federal legislation. I believe the term "British subject" was removed from the federal act effective July 1975.

A very important amendment in the act will allow a person who moves from one constituency to another, after the day the writ is issued in his new area, to apply to the returning officer to have his name included on the list of electors. He will have to be moving into the constituency on a full-time basis. This will not take place with regard to a by-election, but only at a general election of the province.

With regard to ballots, we are looking at standardization of the ballot, as most other provinces have done. We've also incorporated into the act that all ballots will be rotated every 100 batches in all constituencies. Previously this was only done in the city constituencies.

Advance polling has been a problem. I was faced with this a number of times in receiving submissions from the people, and we have refined that. The number of advance polls will be increased to four and not less than one. The reason for going this route of not more than four is, you can take a constituency such as Jasper-Edson where you have four major centres: Hinton, Grande Cache, Jasper, and Edson. It was impossible to have a person travel from Jasper, or vice versa, to vote when only three polling places were set up. So it will help in these larger constituencies if four polling places can be set up. We've reduced the number of days for advance voting by two. Advance voting will be held Thursday, Friday, and Saturday preceding the week of the election.

Previously, to vote in an advance poll was a very difficult procedure to go through, because many people didn't understand what was required. With the amendments to the act, the person will be able to go to the advance poll and swear an affidavit that in fact he is and will be absent from his constituency on the day of the balloting. It will then be the respon-

sibility of the returning officer or deputy returning officer in charge of the advance poll to get word back to the enumerator in that polling subdivision that that person has voted. This will do away with the procedure where a person had to pick up an advance polling certificate from his respective enumerator. There is also a penalty clause built into this section: if you make a false declaration, you could be liable to a fine of \$1,000.

Another procedure that has been refined in the new act is that voters who were not enumerated and wished to vote on election day had to have a person vouch for them, and only one person was allowed to vouch for one voter. We found this to be a very difficult procedure to follow. The act has been amended to allow the deputy returning officer or the poll clerk to swear in that voter by an affidavit. In other words, Mr. Speaker, we're getting rid of the voucher system, and it will be strictly up to the deputy returning officer and the poll clerk. They will have that responsibility.

Another feature of the act that has been refined is in regard to nomination of a candidate and when that person becomes a candidate. The act was previously very vague in this respect. We have stated in the amendments that a person will become a candidate the day the writ is issued. Many times candidates from various political parties are nominated maybe two years in advance, and the way the legislation is now written it prohibits them from becoming involved in many activities that a person usually carries on.

The last feature I'm going to touch on, Mr. Speaker, is in regard to election documents and destroying of election documents. We got a lot of feedback from various candidates that documents such as posters and dodgers placed by a political party were, in fact, being destroyed. We've incorporated this into the act, and the act is being amended to state that candidates' personal posters and so on will be labelled as election documents. For the destroying of such documents a \$2,000 fine is written into the legislation.

Those are some of the major points of the act, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to the debate on it in second reading.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in the debate of Bill 82, there are a number of features of the bill that I have no difficulty in supporting. In many respects, some of the proposals are essentially housekeeping amendments which will make the bill more workable and the operation of elections more efficient in the province.

But in addressing myself to the legislation, Mr. Speaker, I would be less than frank if I did not say that there are three major omissions from this bill. I understand the member, when he was interviewed yesterday after introducing the bill, indicated that the whole question of election financing would be dealt with later. I would simply say to the members of the government that if we're going to talk about streamlining The Election Act, if

we're going to talk about modern electioneering, then there's no point in dodging the really crucial issue of controlling election expenses.

I suggest there are three glaring omissions that really deal with the question of election expenses in the province. The first is the need to limit election expenses: not just limitation at the local level, but limitation from provincial or ancillary organizations. I remember a debate in this House, I think in 1972 if my memory is correct, on a bill I had proposed, which by and large would have incorporated in the provincial Election Act many of the features which have now been accepted by the federal Election Act. We had a number of MLAs get up and tell us the amount of money they spent in their individual constituencies. But, of course, that's only part of the story, because we all know, and the public knows, that the largest part of the expenditures in most modern election campaigns comes from the central headquarters.

When one looks at the newspaper advertisements, for example, it's pretty obvious that the Alberta Progressive Conservative Association, the Alberta Social Credit League, the Alberta New Democratic Party, and the Alberta Liberal federation are the bodies which do most of the provincial-wide advertising.

I thought, Mr. Speaker, it might be interesting, as we look at this piece of legislation, to review just how some parties can spend more than others. If we take just one example, the expenditures in the Edmonton Journal between March 17 and March 25, the last eight days of the election, we find that the Tories were able to secure 740 column inches. At the normal going rate that would be valued at \$11,048. The Socreds were a rather poor second, I should point out to the hon. Member for Bow Valley. They were only able to afford 454 column inches, worth \$6,700. The NDP: 436 column inches, worth \$6,509. The Liberals now appear to be the poor party of Alberta. They came in a rather bad fourth with only 214 column inches, valued at \$3,195.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to argue that in every case the amount of money spent determines the results of elections. But I think we would have to be pretty naive, when we see what has happened elsewhere on this continent, to fail to recognize that large sums of money -- sums of money not only directed to advertising in the public media, but the kind of money which can obtain modern public opinion, sampling methods, and research for the political party into what issues are sensitive -- this kind of very expensive campaigning can make a real difference in the results of the election.

So, Mr. Speaker, in my view, what has to be done at some point in this province -- and I hope and appeal to the government to do it before the next provincial election -- is to bring in legislation which will limit the amount of money that can be spent, not only by the local candidate but, far more important, by the provincial

organization and ancillary organizations. By ancillary organizations I would include, in the case of the New Democratic Party, any assistance we get from labor; in the case of the Conservative party, any assistance they get from business organizations which perhaps may volunteer a few executives to assist in the preparation of a campaign. I'm talking about limitation of the amount of money which can be spent both directly and indirectly on behalf of candidates in an election campaign.

Mr. Speaker, the second glaring omission in this bill is that again we have no clear-cut position on forcing the central offices of the party to disclose the sources of their income. I think that's pretty important. If people are going to be able to judge the government, they have to know who, in fact, is putting up the funding for the campaign. I know many, many arguments are presented, traditionally old-hat arguments saying that it's somehow going to limit the freedom of individuals if they aren't able to contribute in an anonymous way to the political party of their choice.

Mr. Speaker, for the vast majority of people, you can easily get around that by doing as the federal government has done -- imposing a very reasonable level, say, \$100. Anything less than \$100, the names don't have to be disclosed, but anything more than \$100, the individual, corporate or union names, or what have you, would have to be disclosed. It seems to me that would get around the problem of those who want to give anonymously. If people for some reason want to give more than that amount anonymously, then frankly I have to pose the question: for what reason do they want to give more than \$100 anonymously?

Mr. Speaker, the argument, of course, is made that somehow this again interferes with the rights of individuals to make contributions to the political party of their choice, in the amount of their choice. I would simply remind people who make those arguments that political parties are not private organizations. We're not looking at the women's auxiliary of the United Church. As to how they raise their money, that, frankly, is something up to them and is not the business of this Legislature or of legislation, or what have you.

But it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that a political party is not a private organization. It is a public organization which is setting out to field candidates with the express objective of forming a government; of being given the chance by the electorate to conduct the public affairs of the province, or the federal government, or whatever level of government the political party is seeking office.

Mr. Speaker, under those circumstances, political parties are indeed public organizations. I believe that they have an obligation to 'fess up, so to speak, to clearly open their books, so that the people know just who is funding the campaign both directly and indirectly.

Mr. Speaker, the third omission also deals with the question of overall expendi-

tures. At what point are we going to consider some level of public funding? I raise this although I am sure the idea of public funding will not go over too well with many of the members of this Legislative Assembly. I should point out that one of the first provinces to pioneer this area was the Province of Nova Scotia, under the leadership of the now federal Tory leader, Mr. Stanfield.

[Mr. King applauded]

MP. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad there's at least one Conservative who still supports Mr. Stanfield.

In any event, the proposal of Nova Scotia for public funding was a pioneer movement in this area, and I think it has to be pointed out that it was done by the present Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons when he was Premier of that province. Quebec has legislation which provides for public funding. Under the federal act, as members are probably aware, any candidate who receives 15 per cent or more of the votes in a given riding is eligible for a rebate. The figure of 15 per cent was put in to ensure that candidates have to be serious in their efforts to obtain public office. That does eliminate many of the fringe candidates.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have the examples of other provinces which have moved in this area. We have federal legislation which, quite frankly, was supported by all parties in the House of Commons, which sets this out as an important principle. In my view, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see the Province of Alberta move in this direction. Because, make no mistake about it, if we're going to talk about meaningful, contemporary democracy, we have to accept the fact that we should equalize the opportunities, as much as possible, for the various political parties and for the ideas to be placed before the public of Alberta. Let it be on the basis of the competition and presentation of ideas, not on how much money one has to promote a particular cause that will, in the future, determine electoral results in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with some of the specifics in this act. The committee has recommended the reduction of the election campaign itself from 39 to 28 days. No doubt that's going to be a relatively popular proposal. In many respects I can see some merit in doing it. I acknowledge that other provinces, by and large, have shorter terms for elections than we do in the Province of Alberta.

But the concern I would express is that, first of all, it does place the other political parties at a disadvantage if a snap election is called. As a former secretary of the party that I represent, I have more than a little bit of experience in political organization and can, quite frankly, advise members that it's not easy to draw together an election organization quickly.

We had the example in the last provincial election, even with considerable advance warning -- not officially, but certainly unofficially -- and a 39-day

campaign, that one of the political parties was only able to field, I believe, 40 or 45 candidates. Even the official opposition party was short in all 75 of the ridings.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you reduce the duration of the campaign, you take 11 critical days off the beginning of the campaign, and you will find it will be even more difficult in a snap election situation. Where the election is held at the normal time, it's obviously not going to make any significant difference, because the political parties will be planning accordingly. But snap elections will, in my judgment anyway, pose a rather substantial organizational problem for the parties not in office.

I have some concern, as well, about reducing the days of the advance poll. If I'm not mistaken, I believe it's being reduced from five days to three. I agree that we should make more spots available, from, I gather, two to four for advance polls. That's certainly something I applaud. But by reducing the number of days that the advance poll is open, we are going to restrict those people who are just not able to meet either the advance poll or election day. I am sure that most members will have had cases brought to their attention -- there certainly were in my case -- of people who just weren't able to be at home on election day. On the other hand, even the five days on which the advance polls were open were insufficient to allow them to vote. I say to the members of the House that, rather than reduce the number of days the advance polls are open, we should perhaps even go the other way and increase it.

The other points in the bill that the member mentioned, first of all, changing "British subject" to "Canadian citizen", is not a major amendment. I can support it. It will eliminate a number of Albertans, a small number who are able to vote in provincial elections, who aren't entitled to cast ballots in federal elections because they are not yet Canadian citizens. Since it is consistent with federal legislation, it's not something one can object to. It's not unreasonable to say that one has to be a citizen of the country in order to vote in a provincial election.

I also applaud the proposal that people do not officially become candidates until such time as the writs are issued. This can certainly cause problems. The way it is now, I know there have been several cases where people have quite innocently given to charity, or where they have made contributions. Technically, the way the old act read, they are in violation of The Election Act as soon as they are nominated at a convention. So this change to reduce that to the time after the writs are issued, in my view, is a worth-while amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I propose to vote for Bill 82, because I don't really differ strongly enough with any of the minor changes to oppose it. But I want to stress in my remarks on the principle of this bill that what the Legislature has to do now is make it clear that we want to move beyond the scope of Bill 82, and see some pretty

definitive action forthcoming on limitation of election expenses, disclosure of sources, and at least moving, as the federal government has, to make some provision for public funding of campaigns in the future.

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to participate in the debate on this matter, which is certainly a very important matter to all members of the House and to all citizens of Alberta.

With respect to Bill 82, as the hon. member introducing the bill pointed out, a large number of changes are involved, most of them of a relatively modest nature and magnitude but, nonetheless, adding up to a substantive improvement in The Election Act and in election regulations and procedures that will be possible henceforth.

Not to comment in too much detail on any one of them -- but I notice there are a number of areas where an updating or a modernizing is involved. I notice particularly on that score that it's even up to date to the extent that on page 31 there is provision for the term "Ms." instead of "Miss". Perhaps the hon. Member for Bow Valley would like to reflect to one of the former MLAs, who brought in a whole barrage of such bills to make provision for "Ms." in legislation in Alberta, that this is in fact being done at the present time.

A considerable extent of streamlining is involved, and this was pointed out by the member introducing the bill. It seems to me that certain examples might particularly point out the worth-while nature of some of these revisions and streamlinings. I notice, for example, on page 4, a geographic arrangement is provided for in the city constituencies. I understand that's a major improvement over a strictly alphabetical arrangement, which will still pertain in the other constituencies, such as mine. [There are] also changes with respect to enumeration, residency clarifications, and the voting by invalids and others who might be in any way generally impaired by being able to participate in the process. So I think there are these very major and important kinds of improvements by way of updating, modernization, and streamlining of the election system in Alberta.

It's a shame that the hon. member who just spoke has now left, because I thought it was rather amusing that, from the point of view of his particular party, he'd be suggesting further regulations about financing and so forth. I understand that there is some question as to whether the intent of federal legislation in this area of election financing provides for and in any way contemplates a kind of process where donations to a particular political party would be sent to Toronto and then sent back to Alberta -- I'm sure sent back with a great deal of advice on how to run our province, as well -- for an Alberta election. I really question that this is within the intent of the federal legislation, and to have someone who participates in that kind of thing suggesting that there ought to be more regulations, perhaps more regulations to find loopholes around, is

rather amusing indeed.

Speaking of humor, I was reminded, as that particular hon. member spoke, of a comment he made on one of my speeches prior to the 1975 election, where he seemed to think it was quite humorous, presumably by being not effective in terms of the comments I had made, and suggested that it would be perhaps helpful to the NDP if I were sent around to speak throughout the province. Well, I'd want to draw to his attention, via Hansard, that I did considerable speaking during the 1975 election, and we really handled his boy. Despite the kind of growth that we've got throughout Alberta, including rural Alberta, the total number of votes fell to less than 200. He did come to the first forum in Three Hills and wouldn't come back any more. I thought that, while the hon. member who had made . . .

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, perhaps the hon. minister might pursue this present topic on another occasion.

DR. WARRACK: Perhaps roughly something like 1979. But I did want to add to the humor I presume that particular member must be enjoying about the outcome of the Three Hills constituency election in 1975.

Besides those little shots and additional positive comments on some of the, I think, practical improvements that are made in The Election Act, I did want to express a couple of reservations. This is really primarily the reason I'm commenting on the bill itself at this time, and on second reading, Mr. Speaker.

There are two [comments], and one is quite minor. It's quite minor in the sense that it may or may not be an effective difference, but I think one that we could draw to people's attention, and one that I think perhaps others who are on the same end of the alphabet as I am -- particularly I always think of my hon. colleague and friend from Drayton Valley, who is even lower in the alphabet at Z than I am at W. I notice the act, Section 59 amended, would provide that the candidates would be printed on ballot papers in alphabetical order.

The House may not be aware that there's a considerable amount of statistical study showing that being listed first on any ballot or any such survey is not just a minor but actually a significant advantage. I suspect some of my friends on the other end of the alphabet might want to disagree, but as a matter of accurate fact, that is the case. I guess those of us on the other end of the alphabetical order, like the hon. Member for Drayton Valley, the Member for Calgary Bow, and I, will have to overcome that particular disadvantage.

I have another reservation I did want to express, Mr. Speaker, and it is a more serious one. It's one I've held for some time and still hold. It refers to Section 4, where the time of election notice would be altered by making it shorter; that is to say, from 39 days to 28.

I can remember what it was like to be a challenger in an election, and what it was

like to be a very busy person with a large number of other responsibilities to take into account, including family, as I contemplated my future and the possibility of being involved in public affairs in Alberta. That is to say, I feel that as a challenger, the incumbent had substantial advantages over the challenger, even with the 39-day election call.

It's my submission, Mr. Speaker, regardless of what party one might be a member -- I don't think this is in any way a partisan issue -- it seems to me that those of us who are fortunate enough to be here now as incumbents are in a position that we would be granted an additional, and I feel unfair, advantage by a shorter time of election call than the present. As a matter of fact, although I'm sure I'm in a minority on this distinction, my suggestion is that the time be lengthened, rather than shortened. So I move to put the case forward that I feel an unfair advantage is rendered to the incumbent, all of us sitting here, as distinct from the challenger, and I question whether that is in the longer term public interest of Alberta. It's an amendment I think I am not able to support.

I'd also like to add that, when one is considering being a challenger for any party and any constituency -- particularly rural, for that's the situation I know best and speak from -- it seems quite clear to me that the busy person who's very much involved in community affairs, business affairs, the family of which he's a part and many times the head of the household, who is involved in doing major things in the community, is the person who, regardless of party, would be desirable as a possible candidate in an election.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the shorter the time period of the election, certainly shorter than 39 days to 28, would tend to place a premium on immediate availability. Oftentimes that person who might be immediately available is not necessarily the one who, in the longer term public interest of Alberta, we would want to see run for whatever party he might choose.

Consequently, on that second basis also, the basis that there is an undue barrier, I think the busy person who's getting a lot of things done in life and in that community is placed in a position where there is the serious additional barrier to that person running in an election, and thereby becoming a candidate for the public elected affairs of this province. I think that is a disadvantage to the people of Alberta and the public interest.

Mr. Speaker, in capsulizing, my basic point is that I feel a shortening of the election time period from 39 to 28 days does two things. It creates an additional advantage to the incumbent that I think is beyond what is reasonable. Secondly, it places a premium on immediate availability, and would tend to preclude the busy person, who's making major contributions to his community in many areas, from being available on such short notice to run in elections. Those are the reservations I have and express with respect to that particular

aspect of the bill as amended.

On the whole though, Mr. Speaker, barring the one very minor reservation I admit, and the more serious one that causes me to have serious concerns, I think the other provisions of Bill 82, The Election Amendment Act, are provisions that would improve the electoral process. I have no other hesitations or reservations about them, aside from the ones I've now expressed.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I hadn't planned to contribute to this debate, but I am moved now to do so. I would like to commend the hon. member, the mover of this bill, for the work he's put into it and for producing what I regard as a much improved Election Act for the future.

I would like to deal with the major concern of the Member for Three Hills, who has just spoken, and perhaps at the same time, what I interpreted to be a concern of the Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

I'm of the opinion, Mr. Speaker, that good government is based upon a continuing interest in our democratic process, not something that occurs once every four years when somebody starts scurrying around looking for candidates. If a person is really seriously concerned and interested in becoming a candidate, surely that person will look to his or her affairs in the full knowledge, or at least in as good a knowledge as an inexperienced individual for public office can have, with the expectation that there will have to be changes, that elections may be called on relatively short notice, and that their affairs must be in order to participate, given those conditions. In other words, Mr. Speaker, I think it's quite important that the people who seek public office should have a long-term [interest], and an interest in some depth, in the position they are seeking.

If the shorter term, the 28 days as opposed to the 39, rules out some persons who may have a quick and sudden notion that they might be interested and they'll take a fling at it, I'm not too regretful. I don't really think that kind of commitment is a sufficient commitment to make for good government. So, it's that basic concern I have that I'm supportive of the 28 days.

I don't quarrel with a second argument advanced by the hon. Member for Three Hills that the best people are frequently busy people. In fact, I would tend to support that point of view. But I'd also suggest that if they are, in fact, active in their communities, if they are leaders in their communities and leaders in business, they have already completed a substantial portion of their campaigning well before the election is called. They are known throughout the community, they have contacts, they have friends, and my experience is that that's what wins elections, at least on an individual candidate basis. So I would call my judgment on that differently from his. It's strictly a judgment decision, but I think that is a plus in favor of a candidate.

Mr. Speaker, I favor the 28 days, and

feel, for reasons I've advanced before, that parties will be or should be anticipating elections. The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview indicated that what he termed, as I understand him, "a snap election" in March of this year was one which he had in fact anticipated. Therefore, the party machinery should be in order, the potential candidates should at least be thinking about seeking office, and may in fact have already been selected by their respective parties.

So I think, in the interests of good government and a stronger democracy, we should not, in fact, encourage these opportunities for people who move into the situation at the last minute, without really thinking through what they may be involved in. We should have a system which encourages persons to be concerned about the state of government all the time, rather than once, briefly, every four or five years. I think this move will do that, and at the same time provide ample opportunity for campaigning.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment briefly on the problem of the advance poll. I accept what is suggested in the bill. I know it's not going to make people happy -- it doesn't make me happy either -- but I don't know what the alternative is. Since I'm unable to come up with a better alternative, I am pleased to go along with what's here. I know, as the hon. Member for Stony Plain assuredly does, that we had problems of people being unable to vote with the longer advance poll. In my experience, from the complaints I received, I'm sure we would have had problems if the advance poll had been three weeks long. There would still have been some people who would have claimed, for whatever reason, their course of life that particular month took them away from their constituency. So, I say I'm uneasy about it. I have no better suggestions. I think that, in fact, the proposal to have advance polls in a number of locations will be a very definite improvement for some of our constituencies.

The last point I wish to direct some comments to was made by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, that, in fact, this bill does not place a limit on election expenditures; it does not provide for disclosure of campaign fund sources, nor for public financial support for campaign expenses. Mr. Speaker, I have reached the position in my own mind that I would very much like to see a limit on campaign expenditures. I am, however, still at a loss to know how to make it enforceable. I think that problem is the real issue before us. I have observed that every time an attempt is made to limit expenditures, somebody as intelligent as those who drafted the limitation figures out a way to get around it.

I'm sure the problem the hon. member alluded to -- that is, unpaid-for assistance -- is of much more concern to me than he suggested. I do not know how that kind of assistance can be valued. I personally place the highest value on the volunteer support I receive. I wouldn't attempt to put [a value] on the kind of voluntary



assistance that can be provided and that is, in fact, provided. How do you put a dollar figure on 80 or 90 enthusiastic volunteer campaigners? I just don't think you can do it. I think for that reason alone, the whole effort to limit campaign expenditures, at least at the constituency level, just isn't going to be very successful. While I'd like to see it done, I'm not at all convinced it's possible.

As far as the disclosure of sources for campaign funds is concerned, I haven't changed my opinion. I don't think it's going to provide anything very useful. Actions and history speak very loudly. The voting public is generally aware of the particular philosophies and affiliations that exist between party leaders and representatives, and business, industry, consumer, and union interests, or whatever other interests there are. I don't think it is going to be very illuminating to have disclosure.

As far as I can ascertain, it's possible to run a local campaign with contributions of no more than \$100. In any event, that is the instruction I gave my campaign finance committee in the last election. To the best of my knowledge, that is the directive they followed, and I'm pleased to say we are able to commence another campaign, if need be, without having to start off with an empty bank account.

Mr. Speaker, I have no particular strong feeling with respect to public financial support of election campaigns, except that I don't think a strong and abiding commitment to democracy and strong citizenship involvement will be maintained by providing something for nothing. That's the direction in which this goes. While I have the greatest respect for the former Premier of Nova Scotia and the current leader of the Progressive Conservative party, and think that honorable gentleman would have made one of the best Prime Ministers Canada might ever have enjoyed, this is one point on which I have still not been persuaded. For that reason, I would have a difference of opinion with the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased and impressed with these amendments, and look forward to participating in another election when some of the headaches and little annoying complaints will not be with us.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, some of the changes in The Election Act almost make me want to run in the next election right away. I think a lot of the changes are long overdue, and I believe a lot of them are excellent. There are one or two I want to deal with particularly, but I want to comment just briefly on some of the changes.

In regard to the shorter period, I agree with that completely. It seems to me people got tired of listening to election speeches in the last few years in Alberta. It just goes too long. Many people would say to me, I wish to goodness this election campaign would end so I can watch my favorite TV program. Maybe it's because our TV -- I didn't have any last time, so I

can mention this -- isn't interesting enough, or exciting enough. In any event, I think 28 days should be ample time to run an election. A few years ago, when the roads were bad, when there was lack of transportation -- sometimes there weren't even any roads to polling places -- it is understandable that you had to have a longer period of time. But when Ontario and British Columbia, which have their northern regions, are able to shorten that period, there's certainly no reason Albertans can't do similarly.

Now in regard to the advance poll, although I was very pleased with the results of the advance polls, again I felt that in the last election, it was a waste of public money; the people sitting there for so long to serve so few. I just don't think one person who voted in the advance poll in the Drumheller constituency would have lost his vote if that period had been shortened to two or three days. I'm glad to see a little realism being put into The Election Act.

Also, in connection with swearing in at city polls, I believe that should have been done many, many years ago. At one time it was done. Apparently there were so many abuses that it was taken out by the previous administration. I haven't had any experience in running in major cities like Calgary or Edmonton, consequently I don't have any first-hand knowledge of the problem. But it certainly seems to me that we can control this. If people are going to vote twice or three or four times, let's make the penalty big enough so they'll be afraid to do it, they just won't do it.

One thing I've always noticed -- and there are infractions of The Election Act from time to time -- I've never yet seen a case laid against a person following an election. I suppose the winner is so happy that he's not going to bother, and the loser might think it's sour grapes. But sometimes things go on that the police shouldn't close their eyes to. I hope that we in Alberta will never get elections where it's simply and completely criminal the way a person is elected. I think our elections in Alberta are relatively clean, and I think they should be that way. I think we should keep them that way by making sure that those who don't live up to the standards set in The Election Act are required to face the music afterwards.

In regard to the candidate himself, several years ago a candidate in Alberta didn't receive a copy of the voters list at all. As a matter of fact, when the voters list came out you had to have one of the enumerators run an extra copy, which was not according to Hoyle and consequently we didn't do it. So it meant that we had to go out and stand by the telephone pole and write down all the names if we wanted a list of the electors in any polling division. Then we got to the place where we were provided with one copy of the voters list at public expense. That was a tremendous improvement. At least then you could make other copies. Now, I see, the change is to have six copies of the voting list made at public expense for each candidate.

I think that is proper. I don't think a candidate or his workers should have to be spending time standing out by a telephone pole or in front of a building trying to find out who's voting, who's on the voters list, or who isn't.

Now, one of the things I want to deal with particularly is in regard to refreshment. There's always an area of doubt in regard to refreshment. During the many elections I've been in, I've always taken the stand that I don't even buy coffee for anybody. I get kidded a lot about that in Drumheller, because during the election campaign everybody's buying my coffee and I'm not buying any coffee for anybody else. I tell them I can't take a chance, in case I won the election, of having it checked and changed because I bought somebody a cup of coffee. Maybe that's going too far, but I rather like it. In the first place it saves me quite a bit of money every election campaign. I think I make up for it afterwards, but at the same time I think it's pretty excellent.

Now, when it comes to buying beer in beer parlors and so on, I take a pretty dim view of that. I just don't think that should be done by a candidate, or a candidate's agent or friend. If it is done, I think there should be definite action taken. I noticed in the bill that drugs have been added. It says, "any meat, drink, refreshment or provision or any money, ticket" et cetera, and drugs are now being added. I think that's a really good amendment.

I would like to see alcoholic beverages in there too. "Drink" is pretty general. Maybe some people think of beer and hard liquor when you say "drink," but many also think of coffee, tea, milk, or soft drinks. I think it might be wise for the government and for the hon. member to consider putting "alcoholic beverage" in there and making no doubt about what drink really means: any person who gives or causes to be given to an elector on polling day on account of his being about to vote or having voted, any food, drink, refreshment, alcoholic beverage, or drugs, or any money, ticket or order to enable him to procure the same is guilty of an offence.

Actually, it's buying a vote that we want to discourage; not only discourage, but if it takes place there should be very definite action resulting. It does permit someone in a home to put on a party, provide coffee, strawberry shortcake, and sandwiches on behalf of the candidate during an election campaign. I think that's quite logical. I've never had anybody provide strawberry shortcake -- I've been hoping every election -- but lots of people provide coffee and sandwiches. People do enjoy this. Whether they are voting for you or not, they do like to have a cup of coffee and discuss the election issues at that time.

I want to deal with two points now. One is the enumerators. I like the provision in the federal election act where the sitting member and the party of the candidate that got the highest vote in the previous election each have the right to

recommend an enumerator to the returning officer. I think this is pretty wise, and I think it assures people that the government is going out of its way to make sure that things are above board, above the table, and everything is being conducted according to the act. I really can't see any argument against that. I notice that two enumerators are now going to be required. I think the government would be going a long way in persuading the people that it does want everything done above the table, if it permitted the sitting member and the candidate securing the next highest number of votes in the previous election each to name an enumerator. I believe that would also reassure people in the various areas, when they have two people of different political stripes taking the enumeration.

The last point that I want to deal with involves the ballot. I notice that a change is being made on the ballot. I would appreciate knowing just why that is so. Previously you had the name and underneath that, closest to the left border, you had the political affiliation. In the sample ballot in this act you have the name, then the political party immediately after the name, all in one line. Now, say you had a candidate by the name of John Philip Isaac Michael George Gordon Makachuski running, and he ran for the Labor Progressive Party or the Communist Party of Canada. I'd like to ask the hon. member how he's going to get that all in one line? He's going to be running over into the area where . . .

Really I think the name should be the one that's emphasized, rather than the political party. I know many people disagree. They think the political party is the important thing. I don't agree. I think the person running, the things he stands for, the principles upon which he stands, the platform he's put before the people should be the deciding factor on the part of the electors. I would ask the hon. member and the government to take another look at putting this all in one line. Perhaps when the hon. member is closing the debate he'll give us some reasons that is now being done.

In connection with the ballot, I like the idea of rotating the names on a ballot. During the years, my name, starting with T, has always been at the bottom. Many people thought, you're going to be at a disadvantage. And maybe you are, I don't know. But I think our electors in Alberta are not illiterate. I think very, very, very, very few simply vote for the name at the top of the list. I think they go through the list and vote for the person for whom they want to vote. At the same time, I still think the rotation of names on the ballot, while it may be a little more costly, is a very good procedure.

I plan to support second reading of this bill, and look forward to discussing some of the other points in the Committee of the Whole.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS (reversion)

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I'm wondering if I could take the opportunity of asking you and the hon. members if we could revert to introduction of visitors.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, hon. members. I have two distinguished young men in Mr. Speaker's gallery. They are both amateur boxers.

The first is Lloyd Belair, and I would ask him to stand. Lloyd has now participated in amateur boxing for 12 years. He's had 180 bouts, and he's won 150 of these. He was a Silver boy in 1971. He was a Canadian champion in his class in 1973. During last summer, he visited Europe with a Canadian boxing team, where he boxed to the acclaim of the people of many of the capitals of Europe. Lloyd Belair is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Denis Belair of the city.

Then I'd ask Brad Hortie to stand. Brad Hortie is also an amateur boxer. He has been boxing for 7 years. He's had 115 bouts, and he's won 95 of them. At the Junior Olympics in 1973, he won a gold medal. Again at the Junior Olympics in 1975, he won a gold medal -- which is no mean feat. He also won the gold medal in 1975 at the Canada Winter Games. Brad is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hortie, and Paul was a page in this Legislature several years ago.

I would ask the hon. members to welcome these two fine young men to the Legislature.

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS  
(Second Reading)Bill 82  
The Election Amendment Act, 1975  
(continued)

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, this House has had ample opportunity to pass second reading of this bill in my absence, and if they persist in not doing so, I have no alternative except to make a few remarks.

AN HON. MEMBER: Very brief, though.

MR. KING: That's what you had the chance for, but you missed it.

I would like to say first of all, Mr. Speaker, I think the efforts of a number of people on both sides of the House at the time that The Election Act was the subject of the consideration of a select committee, and since that time, while it has been the subject of ongoing review by the hon. member who has introduced the bill -- excuse me, there was a sentence that I

started, and I don't know how to finish. I think the House has been well served by the efforts of these people, and the legislation before us is a very necessary updating of the legislation under which the electoral process is conducted in this province. I think people on both sides of the House have alluded to a number of the necessary amendments that are here before us now.

The one to which I would like to speak very briefly, because I think it's the subject of interest by all members . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Time out.

MR. KING: . . . is the question of the election campaign. I came into the House to hear the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview say that the reduction in the length of the campaign was one of his concerns about the legislation, and I subsequently heard the hon. Member for Three Hills express the same concern. I must say the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview was wise enough to couch his remarks in terms of his concern for the other two parties, rather than his concern for his own party. I have the feeling that, during the 1975 election, had the period of the election been 99 days, the official opposition would still not have been able to field a full slate of candidates. In fact, it is only the independent party from Drumheller which enjoyed notable success in electing its entire slate to the Alberta Legislature.

By the same reasoning, the party which was least successful in electing representatives to the Legislature was the party which did manage to field a full slate of candidates and elected only one. That was something of a surprise to me, Mr. Speaker, because their clear intimations, prior to the calling of the election, were that they were aware the election was going to be called.

In my own constituency, they had their full-time field worker in from British Columbia three days after the election was called; they had the union organizer in from Toronto five days after the election was called . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Who pays him?

MR. KING: . . . and the United Steel Workers organizer from across the river was in six days after the election was called.

I thought this was actually a pretty remarkable piece of logistics: to have 3 NDP workers in from British Columbia, Toronto, and the United Steel Workers within 6 days of the calling of the election. I enjoyed the company of all 3 of them during the 39 days. I'm only sorry that, immediately the 39 days were up, they felt constrained to return to their homelands, rather than stay here to try to create a long-term opportunity for themselves and their few friends.

MR. NOTLEY: They had you going for a while.

MR. KING: Yes, yes, they had me going, and it's probably just as well. I think, though, in all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, the example in my constituency, and I think the example in a number of other constituencies around the province, demonstrates that what is critical to the electoral success of any candidate is not the amount of time during which he can contemplate what he is going to do, but rather the amount of time that he takes for himself to do what needs to be done in the constituency where he is running.

DR. BUCK: Plus a good coattail.

MR. NOTLEY: Emphasize the coattail.

MR. KING: I was nominated, and a number of other candidates were nominated, well in advance of the 1971 election. A number of candidates were campaigning in their constituencies well in advance of the 1971 election. It would have made no difference whatsoever whether the formal length of that campaign was 39 days, 45 days, or 28 days. What was critical to electoral success in those circumstances was the fact that people, having made the decision that they wanted to be elected to the Legislature, went out and began to work for it immediately, not waiting for the calling of the election. I think that that will . . .

DR. BUCK: You flatter yourself.

MR. KING: It was true, if I remember correctly, of the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

[interjections]  
Exactly.

MR. NOTLEY: It's worth at least 50 votes, the work you did.

MR. KING: The other side of that, Mr. Speaker, is, I think, in our communities today, when people have so many responsibilities to consider in terms of their employment, their family, the community activities in which they personally are involved; it is difficult, and in my view not unreasonably difficult, for politicians to sustain a high level of interest in partisan political activity for 39, 49, or 59 days. I think it is fair to the people of the province, I think it is fair to the people who are involved in campaigns, and I think it is fair to the process, that we should attempt to restrict this very high level of activity, in terms of emotion, time, and finances, to a reasonably short period of time; and I think that 28 days is such a reasonably short period of time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a comment or two on this bill.

First of all, I would like to endorse the shortened campaign period because we have moved into a period where communications are much easier. They're instantaneous in many instances. The roads are better. Because of the previous government

and the previous minister we had in this province, it's easier to get around.

But we may have some problems. I sent a note up to the Clerk of the Assembly saying, what did he think about the shortened period, and he just laughed. But there are some logistics involved. I think we will eventually get around to a permanent voters list, because in the day of the computer surely we can keep practically an up-to-date voters list. So I certainly do welcome the shortening of the campaign period. My family welcomes the shortening of the campaign period . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Do your patients welcome it?

DR. BUCK: My patients welcome it. Even my constituent, the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands, welcomes it.

MR. NOTLEY: Did he vote for you, Walter?

DR. BUCK: The area I am really concerned about is the limiting of election expenses. I would like to see election expenses limited to \$3,000 in rural constituencies and \$5,000 in urban constituencies. Now we always say we can't police it, but I think we can. The candidates who are running know themselves, plus or minus several hundred dollars, how much money the other fellow is spending. It was interesting, when I declared my election expenses this year, that they were considerably higher than those of the other candidates. Somebody said to me, "How can that be?" I said, "Well, I told them exactly how much I spent." That tells a story in itself. But the candidates do know how much money is being spent.

I would like to see, with this limit of \$3,000 and \$5,000 to rural and urban constituencies, two-thirds at least being picked up by the taxpayer. At the same time as I say it should be picked up by the taxpayer, I would also like to see the deposit, which candidates put up, being \$1,000. Now I know in the course of the debate people will say, you're trying to rule out the little man who wants to run. No, we're not. Because if there is a cause a small group believes in so strongly that 100 people cannot put up \$10 apiece to further this cause, I don't think their cause will attract a sufficient number of people in this province ever to become a movement. So, if we put up a \$1,000 deposit by each candidate, this \$1,000 would go toward the \$3,000 in a rural constituency. The taxpayer would be putting up \$2,000, and the candidate or his supporters would be putting up \$1,000. That way we would keep out the triflers. We would have dedicated people running who believe in their cause.

But the most important part is that we would get out of being locked into the situation where large companies and industries put money into campaigns, because that is basically wrong. I'm amazed that governments ever get thrown out, because the government has all the aces, all the wild cards, and all the jokers. I'm not

saying that facetiously, hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands. It's really amazing that a government ever gets thrown out. . .

MR. KING: You worked very hard at it.

DR. BUCK: All the hon. members of this House know how it works. If you go to X company and they say, okay, let's say we're giving \$100,000 in campaign funds. The party in power gets 60 per cent, and the other parties divide the remaining 40 per cent.

MR. NOTLEY: Not all of them.

DR. BUCK: That's a pretty good rule of thumb. That's how it works. That's a pretty good rule of thumb.

MR. NOTLEY: The Tories take it all.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, not only does the government have its deputy ministers, its executive assistants, and taxpayers' employees running around campaigning, they have this large source of funds available to them in a disproportionate amount.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

DR. BUCK: That's why we should get away from the business of private corporations, private people, unions, putting large amounts of funds into campaigning for candidates. I think it's grossly wrong. But I know that the government would never ever bring that forward, because it's to their definite advantage not to change that part of the system.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why didn't you bring it forward, Walter?

DR. BUCK: Because we were the government, hon. member, and now we're the opposition. But some day . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: There goes an honest man.

DR. BUCK: That's right, we're supposed to be honest when we're in this Legislature. But some day some government is going to have the guts to have to do it, because it's the right way to go.

MR. NOTLEY: Hear, hear.

DR. BUCK: It's the right way to go, and let's be fair to the hon. Prime Minister of this country. He knows that, and he has tried to do something about it.

MR. NOTLEY: So did Art Smith.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Who?

MR. NOTLEY: Art Smith.

DR. BUCK: I think he happens to be a P.C. campaign manager or public relations firm.

MR. NOTLEY: Used to be.

DR. BUCK: All hon. members know that is the route to take -- that's the road we should go -- because we are heading down the Watergate path the way we're going now. Every year . . .

MR. HORSMAN: Rubbish.

DR. BUCK: The hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff can call that rubbish. But he knows, and I know, that it's a fact we're heading down the Watergate path the way we're going now. Four years ago my campaign cost me approximately \$3,000. It was almost triple that now. The expenses have gone up.

It's public information. A fact hon. members may find interesting is that 85 per cent of those funds came from people who were concerned about the direction of this government. Hon. members may find that interesting. Through some of their green-belt freezes, through some of their arrogance, through the fact that some of the ministers do not answer their telephone calls -- to MLAs or to the man on the street -- that's why those people came up with 85 per cent of \$8,000.

AN HON. MEMBER: Are you sure it wasn't a surcharge on your bills?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the costs of campaigning are going up and up, and it gives a decided advantage to the man who has got the dollars. Let's not kid ourselves. I think if we looked at the expenses over the last election, there would be a very high percentage of people now sitting in this Legislature who had the highest amount of money to spend. Now that is not the way democracy should operate.

I feel that the man running against any of the members sitting in this House should have, number one, the same amount of money to spend, and secondly, Mr. Speaker, come out of the starting gate at the same time.

I also know, Mr. Speaker, that the government is not going to bring that in, because that's just another decided advantage to being government. Besides the fact that you have the greatest amount of money coming into your war chest, it is such a decided advantage to be able to call the date of that election that I hazard to say, Mr. Speaker, it will take more than guts on the part of some government to change that.

AN HON. MEMBER: You betcha.

DR. BUCK: Because if we set the dates . . .

MR. NOTLEY: Moral honesty.

DR. BUCK: It would take some moral honesty, right.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

DR. BUCK: That was my honorable friend from Spirit River-Fairview who interjected that, just for the record, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, fixed dates are something that should be adhered to.

[interjections]

For the hon. member -- which hon. member was that?

Mr. Speaker, that really irritates me. When are we going to change this House so that we have the government where they should be and the opposition on this side? I feel very strongly about that, Mr. Speaker. We want to have that change made, because I feel . . .

MR. SCHMID: You can leave.

DR. BUCK: . . . that the House should be constituted that way, the way it's supposed to be set up. There is room available, and it can be set up. So, Mr. Speaker, that's an aside, but I would ask you, sir, to use your good graces, your initiative, and your leverage to make sure it gets accomplished.

[interjections]

Mr. Speaker, they're trying to lead me astray. Red herrings they are throwing in my path.

AN HON. MEMBER: They're already there.

DR. BUCK: But, Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member's question when he said, why did the previous government not follow that practice. They followed it to a closer degree than the present government does.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

AN HON. MEMBER: August the 30th?

DR. BUCK: Give or take, give or take. Give or take a few months.

AN HON. MEMBER: A year or two.

DR. BUCK: But getting back, Mr. Speaker, to the fact about how honest we are about what we say in this House. The fact that governments do fool around with the election date does not make it right. It does not make it right for this government to do that. But it is such a political advantage to pick that date, it will not be changed, I reiterate once again. But it should be changed, because the people of this province are entitled to know well in advance, so governments cannot skate all over the place to bring in a pre-election budget, or hand out the candies or the carrots to the electorate.

If they are in, knowing that there's a fixed election date, they will run the province the way it's supposed to be run, and never mind the pussyfooting around about what should be good in the fall . . .

DR. WARRACK: Meow.

DR. BUCK: . . . because we may call an election, or what should be good in the spring.

The hon. minister of futility and telephones, I would like to inform . . . I mean, Mr. Speaker, Utilities and Telephones.

MR. NOTLEY: That was one of his most intelligent comments.

DR. BUCK: I warned the hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation last year that, when he was sitting that close to the door, the next move would be entirely out. So I warn the Minister of Utilities and Telephones that he's getting awfully close to that exit door. So maybe the minister should do more than just sit there and heckle the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

MR. NOTLEY: Where's the sock?

DR. BUCK: He should provide something constructive to this Legislature. As the members of the press gallery said, maybe the Premier should use that big sock, so we have something constructive come out of the Minister of Utilities and Telephones.

MR. NOTLEY: That'd get more applause on that side than anything.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the issue of fixed dates is a serious one. I say to the government, I know it's a great advantage to you to pick the date, but it's not fair to the people of this province. It's not fair to the electorate. So that's one area that should certainly be changed.

The question of the removal of election material is one that I think is going to be much more difficult to enforce than the amount candidates can spend, because the silent skulker seemed to strike in the middle of the night, and it's really quite difficult to know what happened to election materials. The thing that should be reinforced more closely is to make sure that election materials are removed after the election is over. One thing I will compliment the government on is that by having the election in March, Old King Sol did most of the poster removal for the fellows who stuck them in the snowbanks, because when the snow melted they all fell in the ditch, so it saved a lot of picking up.

So in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see rural election expenditures limited to \$3,000; urban expenses limited to \$5,000; a \$1,000 deposit for candidates; the taxpayer provide \$2,000 of that \$3,000, and in the city, \$4,000 of the \$5,000; fixed election dates; and let's give democracy a chance really to function. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member would permit a question.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, seeing it's my only opportunity to answer questions from the honorable backbenchers, I'd be pleased to.

DR. PAPROSKI: Even if it is from your rear side.

I wonder if the hon. member would answer this question. Did the hon. member foolishly indicate or imply by his remarks that expensive campaigns can assure a win?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I don't think that's what I said. I said, if we look at

the members who are sitting in the House, and we look at the amount of campaign funds they expended to get elected, I think the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway would find there is a direct correlation between the amount of money spent and the candidates who were elected.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I perhaps would like to take a unique position here. I happen to agree with much of what the hon. Member for Clover Bar has said.

DR. BUCK: Atta boy.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Back in 1967 I enjoyed my first campaign as a provincial candidate for the PC party, and my election expenses were about \$750. This last time they were 10 times that amount. I recall at that time the Premier suggesting the very thing the hon. member is mentioning, and that is setting the election date every 4 years. I think that, while it's a concept that's an important part of the federal system in the United States, I think it could be worthy of consideration in our own system.

I also agree that the matter of financing campaigns is a difficult one. Some of the hon. members of the House may not appreciate it, but many large national companies are now stopping giving campaign moneys to parties. The reason is that, if you give a \$100 contribution to a federal party, you can get \$75 off your income tax payable, which in result nets, Mr. Speaker, that you actually pay \$25 out of your purse. Unfortunately, that only applies to federal parties, and perhaps we're going to have to change our party to a federal party so we can enjoy the unique position of the NDP which has a federal party and is able to collect this money in that way.

AN HON. MEMBER: Loophole, loophole.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the better attempt would be to get the federal legislators to recognize provincial parties and allow us the same benefits that the federal parties enjoy.

I do feel, though, Mr. Speaker, we should bear in mind that the cost of campaigning and the ability to campaign still seem to be oriented in the past. When you look at the fact of an urban constituency, where you have to try to touch base with 17,000 people, when you have to try to do this in 28 days, it's obvious that the days of running from door to door, as we've done in the past and enjoyed considerable success at, are fast running out.

I would suggest that there should be more moneys available so people will be able to use the modern technology that's available, such as television and radio, so we can approach more people and be able to talk to them by telephones, by all sorts of devices that are quite easily obtainable, if we just set our minds to it. I agree that the campaign expenses should come out of the public purse. If democracy is to survive, I think all those within the community should be compelled to partici-

pate, and the best way to do that is through contribution of tax dollars.

I recall one of our hon. ministers sitting on the front bench who, when he was an alderman in the city of Calgary, suggested that perhaps the city of Calgary should also be putting up money for serious candidates, those who could have, say, a nomination list signed by at least 200 citizens.

I think that, while I may find it unique agreeing with a member on the opposite side of the House -- and I appreciate his difficulty, when he doesn't know which side he's on . . .

DR. BUCK: Room for ex-Conservatives over here.

MR. MUSGREAVE: I do feel, though, Mr. Speaker, that he does have a good point. I feel that in the interests of democracy, if we can project our campaigns to the people, and what we stand for, so they can make rational decisions, it's going to be for the good of the entire country.

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: Mr. Speaker, I, too, favor the 28 days. It seems to me that these campaigns seem to drag on too long. Like the hon. member who just spoke, I have to kind of agree with some of the things the hon. Member for Clover Bar said. To me, he really made sense at times today.

DR. BUCK: You didn't have to qualify that.

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: I don't think, Mr. Speaker, he actually thought of what he was saying. He said his campaign funds were the highest because people got behind him, because they were concerned about the government. But then he turned around and said, most of the members sitting in here had the highest campaign funds. I certainly appreciate his candid appraisal of why there's more on this side. I just thought I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, how I approve more of the 28 days. Thank you.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. PURDY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank all hon. members for their participation in this worth-while debate. There are some points I'd like to touch on just briefly before we vote on this bill. The hon. Member for Clover Bar touched on a number of subjects, such as a fixed election day, contributions, \$1,000 deposit, and so on. I think if we go to \$1,000 deposit, democracy goes right out the window. The legitimate candidate who may want to get into it can't afford it, in that way.

He did talk about a fixed election date. We had a select committee of the Legislature. There were three or four members of the then opposition on it, who are no longer here, who were not in agreement with the fixed election date. We did

not receive any briefs, after advertising, from the Social Credit Party, the NDP, or anybody else, asking for a fixed election day. That's why advertising was held in that manner.

DR. BUCK: I'm sure you would have gone along with it.

MR. PURDY: The hon. Member for Jasper Place and the hon. Member for Three Hills did bring out facts in regard to election spending, and so on, brought up by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. I said yesterday, when I was interviewed by the press, that the government is studying the method just enacted in Ontario. They recently went through a provincial election. We'll be looking at their procedure, at how well it worked. We're also looking at the federal procedure, first enacted in July 1974, and we'll be making a decision on that particular aspect of election spending and so on.

The hon. Member for Drumheller brought up a point in regard to the ballot. I'm not sure, in studying Form 27 of the proposed bill, if the words, "political party" should come in behind the name, because it does read:

The names of the candidates alphabetically arranged in the order of their surnames, and political party or political affiliations of each shall be printed on the ballot paper as close as possible to the black margin at the left.

I think it should be interpreted where the political party affiliation should be at the left of the black margin, too. This is a point I will look at with Legislative Counsel.

He also mentioned we should bring in drinks . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. PURDY: . . . and a definition for alcoholic beverages. I think the interpretation would mean that drinks would include alcoholic beverages, but that's something we can check.

It's interesting to note that the Member for Clover Bar stated that he knew where 80 per cent of his donations come from. I don't know if there's any member on this side of the House who knows where his donations come from. I certainly don't know where any of mine come from, and don't care to know either. I think this is democracy, and people shouldn't be asked to make public where the donations come from if they wish to contribute to a political party.

Those are my concluding remarks, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: May I ask a question now of the member? Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member. I forgot one point I wanted to ask. I didn't see it in the bill, or maybe I missed it, and that is: titles cannot be used in the ballot. I believe that has not changed.

AN HON. MEMBER: Sir Walter.

DR. BUCK: Thank you.

MR. PURDY: You won't be able to use "Sir Walter", but you would be able to use your nickname, if you had one.

DR. BUCK: A title can't be "Colonel Joe Smith" or "General Joe Smith" or "Dr. Walt Buck" or that . . .

MR. PURDY: No, the way I'm interpreting it, there will be no titles on the ballot. It will be "Joe Smith" and that's it.

[Motion carried; Bill 82 read a second time]

Bill 78  
The Social Development  
Amendment Act, 1975 (No. 2)

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 78, The Social Development Amendment Act. It's a very simple bill, Mr. Speaker. As I said on introduction of the bill, it flows from federal legislation which permits the provinces to be flexible in their interpretation and the configuration of the family allowance, which is payable for the children in their province. Alberta has elected to pay the highest amount to teenagers, for the simple reason they feel it costs more for clothing, food, and so on, for 16 to 17 year olds. So they are in the highest category. The lowest category is for infants, 0 to 6 years old. Based on that philosophy, we have adopted that configuration of the federal family allowance payable to our province. I would urge hon. members to support this bill, in order that it may become effective January 1, 1976.

[Motion carried; Bill 78 read a second time]

Bill 66  
The Motor Vehicle  
Accident Claims Amendment Act, 1975

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill 66, The Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Amendment Act, 1975. I think I can briefly outline the six areas of amendment in the bill. First of all, payments for damages arising from off-highways vehicle accidents have not been allowed. The bill proposes to amend the act to make allowance for that legislation.

Secondly, certain disability payments made under a life insurance policy were held to be life insurance benefits in a recent case, and were therefore not deductible from the proceeds. There is an amendment to the act to define life insurance to accommodate that problem.

Thirdly, at the present time you are only entitled to claim for property damage



in excess of \$50. We've moved that to \$100, which I think is consistent with the usual minimum deductible under most accident insurance policies. In some cases, the administrator, in appearing in court, has been construed as the agent of the defendant, so an amendment is being proposed to ensure that the administrator may take steps to represent his interests independently from the defendant, and to defend and safeguard the interests of the fund.

A further amendment will provide for the commencement of proceedings within two years, except when there is an extension of time by the court.

Finally, the administrator in this amendment is being empowered to settle claims without a judgment up to a maximum of \$2,000.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I just want to deal with one item in the bill, the raising of the minimum property damage from \$50 to \$100. The normal deductible on an insurance policy is generally \$50 or \$100. Many people who have had their vehicles struck by a hit-and-run driver, and can't find that person after a reasonable search, have been able to collect damages to that vehicle above \$50. They've had to pay \$50, because that was the exclusion. But by raising it to \$100, I'm wondering if we aren't hurting the people who really need this most. I know it will help the fund. But when a vehicle is hit by another, and you can't find who that is and you have \$100 deductible, now, of course, you're not going to be able to collect anything from the fund.

Maybe it was never intended that the automobile accident claims fund supplement insurance policies. But in truth, that is what has actually happened in many cases. I think the attitude of the department has been very liberal in that regard, in trying to help people who have had their vehicles injured by hit-and-run drivers. The one danger I see is, now many people who think there's no advantage in having \$100 deductible may well go to \$250 deductible and still try to collect the balance from the motor vehicle accident claims fund, which would simply raise the ante and may hit the fund even harder than it's being hit today.

I know that the slightest bump on a car today costs well over \$100. Possibly it's in line to raise this from \$50 to \$100. But I do think it's going to have some severe repercussions, because you're going to hurt people who can ill afford to pay \$100 for damages for which they are not responsible.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, addressing myself to this particular point, I think we have to be realistic, and appreciate that costs of auto body repair have risen in a most astonishing manner in the last 4 to 5 years. Even the slightest scratch or bump could not be repaired for anything like \$50. Even \$200, \$250, or \$300 would barely cover repair of the most minor damage. So, I think it's only proper to change these limits in step with the inflationary effect. I doubt if many Albertans were

aware they could have claimed in excess of \$50 for minor bumps and scrapes. I think the question to be put is, whether \$100 is high enough for the limit and whether it shouldn't be, perhaps, even higher, maybe \$150. But since the bill does mention \$100, I think that is enough.

If more deductibles rose in accordance with the inflationary level, I think this might have a beneficial effect, rather than the other way around. Perhaps too many of us at large are paying insurance covering other drivers and ourselves for very, very minor scratches, when the whole point of insurance is really to cover you against an unforeseen disaster. Now, \$200 would almost not pay your hotel bill for a week. So I support the idea of raising this limit from \$50 to \$100.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, I feel constrained to express my concern with respect to the matter of raising the amount from \$50 to \$100, because, indeed, very often the individual who is least in a financial position to pay the additional cost is the one who suffers. I am particularly concerned about damages such as those experienced in hit-and-run cases.

When we take into consideration the very extensive increase in insurance premiums . . . and I can appreciate the comments the hon. Solicitor General has made with regard to the increase in cost of repairing vehicles. Nevertheless, the fact that any claims may be filed for payment from the fund really says two things. First, here we have people operating vehicles who are inadequately insured or not insured. We are asking that the unfortunate individual who, perhaps, played no part at all in an accident be required to take on the responsibility for the individual who has been enjoying the use of a motor vehicle improperly or illegally.

Secondly, I think our statistics indicate that we have a rather high percentage of people in the lower income bracket. Surely they are having substantial difficulties meeting the high premium costs we have been experiencing. I regret that, inasmuch as I do agree with the major part of the amendments, this is certainly one area where I must express concern on behalf of constituents in the area of Edmonton Norwood, if not anywhere else, because it is a very well-known fact that the majority of these people is in a lower income bracket. I raise a concern that I cannot agree with this particular part of the bill.

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a couple of observations on this bill. I don't really have a lot of quarrel with raising the minimum from \$50 to \$100, if we could in some way assure Albertans that the culprit, the party who was responsible for the damages, could be made responsible to reimburse the innocent victim for even that \$50 or \$100 deductible before he was able to drive again in this province.

One of the most difficult things to explain to a citizen of this province is that if his automobile was parked in front

of their home and it was damaged by somebody who had no insurance, that innocent victim goes to the department, has to suffer the deductible -- \$50 up to now, and if the bill goes through, \$100 in future -- yet nothing is being done to recover that \$100. The innocent victim is out that amount of money. So I would hope that the Attorney General, and the Solicitor General who is going to be administering this legislation in future, will look at the regulations that apply to this, to aid these innocent people. If a person has a new automobile and chooses not to buy collision insurance, because he knows his own driving habits, but that vehicle is badly damaged, or damaged to any extent, he is at the mercy of the department and the civil servants by nobody making any effort to recover that deductible.

I'm pleased with the raising of the ceiling to \$2,000. That is a very, very wise move in the right direction.

One area that I would like to touch on only is, for some reason it appears that until the guilty party is found, or until enough time lapses, a police report does not appear to be sufficient to complete the claim for the innocent victim. I think it's more a practice, Mr. Speaker. I

would hope that when there is time, the Solicitor General can look into this. When a police report is made available, through the channels or even by the victim going out and obtaining a copy of the police report, the process of recovery for that innocent victim can then be commenced, instead of waiting to get a report from either a person who evades the responsibility of reporting to the department, the motor vehicles branch, or even is not easy to contact. From experience I have found that that is awfully frustrating to the innocent John Q. Public. I would like to leave these few comments with the Attorney General as the bill is being considered.

[Motion carried; Bill 66 read a second time]

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I move we call it 5:30.

MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the motion passed earlier this week, the Assembly now stands adjourned until next Wednesday afternoon at 2:30.

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