

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: **Wednesday, March 10, 1976 2:30 p.m.**

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

**PRAYERS**

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 7****The Alberta Loan Act, 1976**

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Alberta Loan Act, 1976. The purpose of this bill is to authorize the borrowing, from time to time, of a sum not to exceed \$200 million.

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

**Bill 12****The Department of  
Transportation Amendment Act, 1976**

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 12, The Department of Transportation Amendment Act, 1976. This being a money bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the contents of this bill, recommends the same to the Assembly. The bill essentially is a change in the limit to the stock advance fund for the Transportation Department from \$35 million to \$60 million, relative to contemporary costs.

[Leave granted; Bill 12 introduced and read a first time]

**Bill 16****The Northland School  
Division Amendment Act, 1976**

MR. TESOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 16, The Northland School Division Amendment Act, 1976. This bill provides for more representative and efficient delivery of educational services to those within the boundaries of the Northland School jurisdiction.

[Leave granted; Bill 16 introduced and read a first time]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 16, The Northland School Division Amendment Act, 1976, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

**Bill 213****The Right to Information Act**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 213, The Right to Information Act. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of The Right to Information Act would be to force the release of information relevant to the making of public decisions, unless justifiable reasons can be advanced as to why this information can't be made available. Mr. Speaker, it's modelled on a bill presented to the House of Commons by the hon. Member for Peace River, Mr. Ged Baldwin. It contains the same sound principles applied provincially.

[Leave granted; Bill 213 introduced and read a first time]

**Bill 205****An Act to Amend the Alberta  
Government Telephones Act**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being An Act to Amend the Alberta Government Telephones Act. Many people are being annoyed and inconvenienced by telephone calls to their homes, endeavoring to sell everything from washing machines and peanuts to cemetery plots. The purpose of this bill is to prevent intrusion on private individuals' free time by unsolicited telephone sales calls, by making such calls an offence.

[Leave granted; Bill 205 introduced and read a first time]

**Bill 209****The Smoke Detector Act**

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 209, The Smoke Detector Act. The purpose of this bill is to require the installation of smoke and/or heat detectors in all rental sleeping units.

[Leave granted; Bill 209 introduced and read a first time]

**head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. JAMISON: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, 45 Grade 5 students from Brigadier Gault School in my constituency. They are in the members gallery and they are seated with their teachers. I would ask that they stand and be recognized.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce a group of students from the D. S. McKenzie Junior High School in Edmonton. They are approximately 45 students, Mr. Speaker, from Grades 7, 8, and 9. They are sitting in the public gallery accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Waters and Mr. Pho. I would ask them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce to you, and through you to the hon. members of the Legislature, a fine young man from Drumheller, Mr.

Jack Vickers. Jack, in spite of his young years, is a farmer in his own right and a second year pharmacy student at the University of Alberta. I'd ask Jack to stand and be welcomed by the members of the Legislature.

#### head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the legislative library two copies of the preliminary report of the Environment Conservation Authority dealing with flow regulation in the Red Deer River, and two copies of a public opinion survey that accompanied that report.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table Motion for a Return No. 214, which has been requested by the House, and two reports which are also required by the House.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, the hon. Minister of Agriculture, I'd like to table a reply to two returns: No. 204, concerning loan guarantees, Agricultural Development Corporation; and the answer to return No. 205, regarding correspondence from the Minister of Agriculture.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Motions for Return No. 194 and 206.

MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to table the *Report of the Ombudsman* for the period from November 1, 1974 to October 31, 1975. The Ombudsman and his counsel, Mr. Weir, are in the Speaker's gallery. I didn't introduce them on the assumption that an officer of the Assembly could not also be classed a visitor.

#### head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

##### **BNA Act**

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Premier. The question flows from comments the Prime Minister made last weekend in Quebec, when he talked about the repatriation of the BNA Act.

I'd like to ask the Premier if the Prime Minister has been in contact with the Premier, regarding the recently announced federal plans to bring home the BNA Act.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, with regard to that matter, there has been correspondence with the Prime Minister. Of course, there has been some discussion over the course of the past years with regard to the patriation of British North America Act to Canada.

We have been disturbed by the remarks made recently by the Prime Minister — or attributed to him — to the effect that he feels it's a prerogative of the federal government to be able to take unilateral action by way of the patriation of the Canadian constitution. It's our view that Canada is a confederation formed by founding provinces. In many respects, it's a fragile enough confederation with the regional

disparities and the need to assure that provincial government jurisdiction is adequately realized and protected. So we are disturbed by the remarks attributed to the Prime Minister. We hope he will reassess his position.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, we share the concerns of the government backbenchers.

Mr. Speaker, could I ask the Premier a supplementary question? Have there been recent — and I say recent, in the last three weeks or month — discussions between the Prime Minister's office and the Premier's office, or the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, regarding this question of repatriation of the BNA Act?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, there has been correspondence. But the correspondence is of such a nature that it did not refer, in our view, to any sort of unilateral action being taken by the federal government, but generally dealt with the question of possible further discussions at first ministers' meetings that might involve a reassessment of amending formulas and things of that nature.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the Premier. Has the Premier had conversations with the Premier of Quebec, in light of the statements coming from Quebec City that the Premier of Quebec has spoken with eight of the premiers regarding the unilateral ultimatum the Prime Minister laid before us last weekend?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. leader is well aware, I do not make a practice of making public the nature of conversation or communication with the other premiers, unless there has been agreement. I have noted that the Premier of Quebec did state that he had been in conversation with other premiers in Canada. I believe he said eight of the nine of them. He did call me and express his deep concern with regard to the statements of the Prime Minister of Canada, relative to the constitution, along similar lines [to] the way in which I responded to the hon. leader's first question. For our part, as we have said in the past, we feel it's extremely important that Quebec not be isolated on this issue in Confederation in the future.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the Premier. Is it the intention of the Government of Alberta to assure that this question of repatriation of the BNA Act is on the agenda at the upcoming first ministers' meeting?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, from the developments that have occurred, I would sense that others, who have been perhaps more involved in it than the Alberta government, would assure that it would be on the first ministers' agenda. We have certainly said that it would be one matter we wish to discuss among others, including foreign ownership of land, and, obviously, energy prices.

I would like to make it clear to the Assembly, if I have not before, that it's our view that the discussions that occurred in Victoria in June 1971, at what has been termed the Victoria constitutional conference, and agreed to at that time by our

predecessor government, are of such a nature that we do not feel bound by the deliberations and discussions which occurred in June 1971, in Victoria. We would approach such discussions on what we might call a *de novo* basis, being prepared to listen to all points of view.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. In light of your most recent answer, has the Government of Alberta yet developed a position with respect to an appropriate amending formula, one that would be agreeable to the province of Alberta?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, the nature of the discussions that no doubt will occur in due course, with regard to such a fundamental matter as the constitution, would appear to be the type of discussions that would lend themselves better to governments approaching the conference table, if you like, with tentative points of view. I think it is important, if at all possible, that there be enough give and take that we can come to some conclusion on the matter, so we can have control of our constitution here and patriation of the constitution on an agreed basis between 11 governments.

Naturally, we for our part, through the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and in part with the Attorney General, have been working on developing various numbers of alternate positions, and we have a large number of background papers and studies. As far as any position is concerned, we haven't developed any final position, nor would we in this case, probably, until we've heard the views of the other governments.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Premier. How important does the government view the position taken by some that there should be agreement by all 11 governments before changes are made in the constitution? Would it be the view of the Alberta government that any amending formula would have to have the concurrence of all 11 jurisdictions?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'd prefer at this stage to reserve upon that question, and perhaps elaborate at a later date.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier. Has the matter of the repatriation of the BNA Act been discussed by our Agent General with appropriate ministers in the British government?

MR. LOUGHEED: No, Mr. Speaker, it hasn't been. We felt that, with respect, that sort of action on our part would in a way also have a tendency to be interpreted as a unilateral action. I think what is essential here is that in due course — and I don't suggest it should be the highest priority we face today, certainly other economic and social problems have to be considered in high priority — when the time comes the approach to the British Parliament is made with the concurrence of all 11 governments. We simply do not accept the fact, and never have, that the provincial governments are junior governments in Canada.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Does the Government of Alberta feel that the repatriation of the BNA Act is contingent upon a wider discussion of constitutional change, or is it the view of the Alberta government that the primary question, at this stage, is the amending formula?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I believe there is a feeling that it should not be restricted to just the amending formula. There is some concern about the matter in which appointments of justices to the Supreme Court of Canada occur. There's some concern, certainly by the province of Quebec, with regard to cultural matters, that they expressed subsequent to the conference in June 1971.

There is a view that some hold to, and we do not share, that we would try to deal with it in stages; that is, try to deal with the amending formula first and then, if settled on that, go on to other matters. I think the general feeling of a number of provincial governments, I can't say how many, is that we should attempt to agree on the various aspects, as they did very strenuously and with considerable effort in June of 1971.

#### **Syncrude Agreement**

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the second question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Is the Alberta Energy Company or the Alberta government doing the negotiations as far as the Syncrude agreement is concerned — that aspect the minister referred to yesterday, regarding the pipelines and the power plants?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the rates of return of the pipeline and the utility company, those negotiations are being carried out with the participants by the Alberta Energy Company.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. The comment attributed to the minister that, in fact, Ontario can pull out of Syncrude: has that been discussed, or was that a rather offhand comment by the minister? In fact, have discussions taken place between the partners as to the possibility of Ontario pulling out?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I should make it clear that the Government of Alberta welcomed very much the province of Ontario as a participant in the Syncrude project. We thought it was wise that the major consuming province should see the various aspects and decision-making factors that go into producing a product they consume so heavily.

However, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the problems raised in the article the hon. member was referring to, it is our position that rather than risk the project should one of the participants — in this case it is the province of Ontario which did not want to proceed for some reason, even though all other participants did — you have to consider some alternative for solving that problem and not risking the project.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question. Has the minister, or officials of the Alberta government, been involved with the three companies, or the federal

government, or the Alberta Energy Company, in some one or all picking up portions of Ontario's part of the action?

MR. GETTY: I think, Mr. Speaker, you'd have to consider that speculative or hypothetical at this time, because we have not got to the position where the Government of Ontario is wanting to pull out of the project. And I trust that it will not happen. However, I think we would certainly have to consider that as one of the many alternatives.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I didn't make the question clear. I asked the minister if there have been discussions within the participating companies, the federal government, Alberta, or the Alberta Energy Company, about one or all of them picking up on Ontario's piece of the action?

MR. GETTY: I'd have to say, Mr. Speaker, that it has been discussed in a relatively offhand method because, as I said, it would be hypothetical at this stage.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister in a position to indicate to the House what the ballpark figure for the total Syncrude project is now? I raise the question, frankly, because of reports coming from Fort McMurray that we're looking at something in the vicinity of \$3 billion for the project.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the \$3 billion figure which has been mentioned is, I understand, an estimate of what a third plant might be constructed for. The present Syncrude project is still on target within a few million dollars. [interjections] What's a million?

But, in any event, it's still on the target of \$2,048 million, give or take a million here or there.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary to the hon. minister. Is any money from the federal government or the Ontario government going into the pipeline or the power plant?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker, there are no capital funds going into either of those projects.

MR. TAYLOR: A further supplementary then, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. In that case, why should either the federal government or the Ontario government try to chisel down on the profits for the people of Alberta from an investment that they are making themselves with Alberta money?

MR. GETTY: That's the position we've been taking, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta Energy Company, of course, negotiates a rate of return with the six participants. But we felt it was pretty clearly set out that that would be at normal pipeline and utility plant rates of return. Those normally can be established fairly easily.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Can the hon. minister advise whether the projected costs of building the power plant and the pipeline are on target, within a million dollars, here or there?

MR. GETTY: Here or there, yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: How much here or there?

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a further supplementary question to the minister with regard to the Syncrude project. Has the problem been sorted out between Syncrude and the province of Alberta, Ontario, and the Government of Canada on the question of the interest which the federal government or the Government of Ontario would have in additional plants built on this same lease?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, on the same lease as the present Syncrude plant, unless somebody pulled out or negotiated a sale of some kind, the interests would be the same as the present interests in the Syncrude plant now being constructed.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. Is the situation the same with regard to other leases which are held by the consortium? Does the federal government and Ontario, by means of this agreement, have a piece of the action there?

MR. GETTY: No, they don't, Mr. Speaker. I should point out to the hon. member there are two leases involved in the existing Syncrude project, not just one. They have their interests in those two leases but not in others, in terms of another plant.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister indicate to the Assembly where the Home Oil and Petrofina Canada applications now stand?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the Home Oil application is being held at their request. They've advised the Energy Resources Conservation Board that they would like to do some additional work, and perhaps make another presentation to the board. Therefore it is temporarily in limbo, I guess you could describe it.

As far as Petrofina Canada is concerned, they still have an active proposal. However, when the board gave approval and recommended approval to the Executive Council, a condition was imposed by the board that Petrofina Canada come back with some additional information. The ERCB felt one feature of their proposal needed to be given some additional consideration. As I understand it, Petrofina Canada will be presenting the additional facts to the board, and presumably will then have an amended recommendation from the board.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, one last supplementary question to the minister. Is it still the position of the Government of Alberta that a reasonable timetable to look at for the next plant is that construction would start at about the time that construction gets close to being finished on the Syncrude plant? Is that the time line the government is still looking at?

MR. GETTY: As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, no. That is one of the considerations to which we are giving thought regarding a third plant. There are really two points of view. One is that a third plant should come on stream in terms of construction, so that the labor force and equipment can move from the

existing project to the third plant. Another point of view is that the pressures from one plant on the Alberta economy and on the area are such that there should be a period of time during which those pressures can be digested, and perhaps alleviated, before a third plant commences.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister a question? Which of the two points of view is the position of the Government of Alberta?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Alberta is considering both of those factors, and many others, in something as important as a third oil sands plant involving an investment of some \$2 to \$3 billion.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, in light of the hon. minister's answer. When does the government propose to introduce in the Legislature the long-promised position paper on development of the oil sands, which would deal with the question of pace of development, number of plants, and what have you?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, you'll recall that this matter has been discussed before in the House. We felt there were so many changes in the energy picture in Canada and the world today that it would be unwise to try to state a timetable, if you like, or pace of development for oil sand plants with this fantastic number of varying factors presently at work. Therefore, we will prefer to consider each plant possibility on its own merits.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary on this very important topic. If there's time left, we can come back to it.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. Have there been any applications for nuclear explosions in the underground, in regard to securing oil from the oil sands?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, when the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority requested applications for plans for the development of that portion of the oil sands that cannot be mined by surface mining methods — with present technology, some 90 per cent of the oil sands cannot be mined by surface mining methods — one of the applications they received was from a company which is exploring the possibility of some kind of nuclear energy in order to unlock the oil from the mixture of oil and sand. As I understand it, that is presently before the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority, along with some 20 other proposals — making a total of 21, I believe — involving \$700 million in total. I imagine the Authority will be making recommendations to the government before the end of the year, I trust.

#### Oil Spills

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, I also have a question for the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, but on a different subject.

In light of the damage done to good farmland, I was wondering if something can be done, through the

ERCB, to prevent the continuous breakage of Interprovincial Pipeline at Strome?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I understand there has been a pipeline break in the Strome-Killam area within the last two days — a small pipeline break which covers some three acres. It is a pipeline operated by Interprovincial Pipe Line Ltd. The Energy Resources Conservation Board is supervising the clean-up which the company is conducting.

If I understand the hon. member's question, it is: can we do something about preventing breaks like that? Certainly, Mr. Speaker, just the efficient management and pipeline practices that are normally conducted in the province — the company actually has a very good record in Alberta. I'm not sure if the hon. member is suggesting that something additional could be done. I would be pleased to discuss it with the Energy Resources Conservation Board to see if there are any recommendations they would make which might prevent a recurrence.

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of the Environment. Has a landowner any recourse for compensation for damages incurred on an interprovincial pipeline break?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, I must say the hon. member is perhaps asking for legal advice, or something closely related to legal advice. If the question could be put in another way, perhaps it might be acceptable.

MR. STROMBERG: A supplementary. Is the minister aware of any pipeline companies that have made compensation? Or, to put it in a different light, if a farmer has problems with an interprovincial pipeline company, what recourse does he have?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, as to liability or arriving at compensation, I believe the answer is settled in the courts. Insofar as the Department of the Environment is concerned, of course, its main concern is damage to water bodies, and it would be involved to that extent.

#### Dodds-Round Hill Project

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of the Environment, and ask if he can advise the House whether it's his intention to ask the Environment Conservation Authority to hold public hearings into the Dodds-Round Hill power plant and coal mine project.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, that's a matter which hasn't yet been decided. I know the chairman of the Environment Conservation Authority has been in the area, discussing the matter with the property owners. We've also had a person from the Department of the Environment in there for a fairly lengthy amount of time, discussing the concerns. As for the kind of hearings that would be best suited for the residents to put forth their views, that's still a matter under discussion among all the parties involved.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to give the Legislature a timetable as to when he will be able to decide whether or not to ask the Environment Conservation Authority to hold hearings on the project?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that decision is one that would be affected by the scheduling of the mandatory hearing by the ERCB, should the applicants decide to go ahead with the project. So we'd rather face one question at a time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones. Has the government considered the alternative sites recommended by the Farmers' Advocate? I specifically make reference to Sheerness.

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, that matter has been a subject of considerable study through the Electric Utility Planning Council, established under the leadership of my predecessor, Mr. Farran. In the course of those studies, not only with Sheerness as the hon. member mentions, but other alternatives as well, it has come forward with certain recommendations that are, as I understand it, tentative at the present time and the subject of further review both with respect to the Planning Council and certainly with respect to the Energy Resources Conservation Board, when those hearings can be held.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise whether the tentative recommendations offer some hope that Sheerness, or the other areas, would be an adequate substitute or alternative to the Dodds-Round Hill project?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, it seems quite clear to me that getting into that kind of judgment or observation would have the danger of imprudently prejudging the analysis that the Energy Resources Conservation Board is responsible for, under The Hydro and Electric Energy Act. I would not think I should be doing that at the present time. Rather, that proper analysis [should] go forward by the board.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. Has there been any preliminary discussion with Calgary Power, in the light of previous assistance on the Big Horn and Brazeau Dam projects, on possible financial participation or assistance, either directly or indirectly, through loans for the Dodds-Round Hill project?

MR. LEITCH: None that I'm aware of, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Kirby Report**

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, I would address this question to the hon. the Attorney General. Would the Attorney General advise the Assembly what progress has been made to implement the recommendations of the Kirby report pertaining to the chronic overload and backlog of cases before the provincial courts in both Calgary and Edmonton?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, arising from the debate last fall on the Kirby report, I think it's clear that there need to be substantial changes in both personnel and procedures in that court. I'm happy to say that both are taking place. I'll be announcing, in the course of the next short while, several additions to the provincial court bench. I hope to be in a position shortly to indicate who the chief judge of that court might be.

I think everyone is aware of the difficulty I'm having, or at least I hope they are, in attracting able Crown counsel to serve in this department. I'm pleased to report to the House that I have a team of people who will be interviewing a number of applicants in central Canada, principally in Ontario, and I'm hopeful that we will be able to attract a number of outstanding and able practitioners from that area of the country to come to Alberta.

There will be procedures that need to be changed within the court itself. I'm hopeful, for example, that when we have additional Crown counsel we will be able to get a little closer to the police relationship with the accused, to ensure that only proper charges are brought before the court, which is not always the case today.

Mr. Frank Jones, who is the chairman of the Provincial Court Reorganization Agency, is now with us and working diligently at his job. He will be becoming familiar with the department and the courts and, I expect, will bring considerable leadership to this problem.

I think there will be other major announcements with respect to the department and the court, that you can anticipate very shortly. I'm hoping, additionally, Mr. Speaker, to have a series of meetings with the judiciary and the bar association, to discuss the matter of legal aid, and some problems we have there that have direct impact on the workload in the provincial court. I also want to address specifically to the bar association the question of the conduct of defence counsel in the court, and their role in the delay now being experienced in these overworked courts.

So, Mr. Speaker, briefly, a number of initiatives and activities are under way and will be taken shortly.

#### **Proposed Federal Penitentiary**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the hon. Solicitor General. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the Member for St. Albert has indicated his opposition to the proposed federal penitentiary, and the people in the area have.

I'd like to know, Mr. Speaker, if the minister can indicate to us if there has been any liaison between the provincial government and the federal government, indicating the opposition to the proposed site, in the Oliver area, for the proposed federal penitentiary?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, this is entirely a federal decision, and a decision, of course, for the local authority involved. I understand that, before my day, there was some approach as to the provincial opinion on the suitability of the Sharpe farm site, from the point of view of general proximity to the courts in the city of Edmonton. Just on sort of broad lines, the province said it could see no objection to the general location of a site in that area.

Since that time, I understand the federal authorities did receive the proper approval from the local authority, then some farmers in the neighborhood of the proposed site expressed some objections. It's really a decision for the federal authorities. I understand they have looked at alternative sites and, I understand from the press, have finally come back to their original preference for the Sharp farm site.

From our overall point of view, the early construction of a federal penitentiary, within reasonable distance of Edmonton, is of paramount importance.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the hon. minister indicate if there have been or will be any plans to have a provincial institution in the proximity of the proposed federal prison?

MR. FARRAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, although the federal authorities have indicated they would have no objection to a provincial institution on that site, our present plans consist of early building of the remand centre in Edmonton, to have it on stream by 1978. In view of the extensive remodelling taking place in the Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Institute, once the more serious offenders in the remand wing are moved out, we believe that that will be adequate to handle offenders who only require minimum or medium security.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, has the hon. minister had any conversation with the federal minister to look at a young offenders' detention area, possibly in conjunction with the federal one?

MR. FARRAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the whole question of young offenders is still under active debate throughout the nation. The hon. member probably recalls the document published by the federal government, called *Young People in Conflict with the Law*, which proposes a new young offenders act. I understand that the federal target is to complete this debate some time in the fall, with a view to new legislation in the House of Commons in the spring of 1977.

The province of Alberta has not yet come to a final conclusion on what its response should be to this federal document. The implications are quite profound. If the original proposals are to prevail, there are enormous cost implications for the province, and the probability of having to establish some new facilities for young offenders. But until that law is changed or resolved, it's not possible for anyone to give a definitive answer.

#### Rural Gas Co-ops

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones. In his recent announcement of further assistance to rural gas co-ops for capital expenditure, could the minister advise whether there will be a maximum of assistance for the individual consumer, or is it an open-ended assistance?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, I can advise that there will not be a maximum insofar as that new formula's application to the individual rural gas co-op is

concerned. It's our thinking, Mr. Speaker, that in the instances that the 75-25 split provides additional financial assistance, normally the additional costs involved are cost difficulties of a very special and severe nature to be faced by the co-op, and that it's reasonable they have the additional financial assistance that the protection provides.

The only maximum, in a sense, is the factor of the total budget maximum in a given fiscal year. But insofar as the formula's application to the individual rural gas co-op is concerned, there is not.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Have any gas co-ops in the province had their applications refused because the actual capital cost per potential customer was too high? For example, some of them are around \$6,000 per customer at the present time. Have others been submitted at a higher rate, and refused by the department?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, I think I understand the import of the member's question, but there are two possibilities. On the one hand, the cost that you have by way of estimates can be too high, in the sense of not fully justified. In that instance, I would think there would be some refusal subject to further revision and closer examination of the cost estimates.

On the other hand, with respect to costs being too high, in the sense that they're just high and unavoidable, then the answer to that would be, no.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Will the 28 cent increase in the basic level of support be passed on through Gas Alberta? As of April 1, will the price go from 42 cents up to 70 cents?

DR. WARRACK: The hon. member may recall my explaining that to him at the Public Accounts Committee in December. The answer is, indeed, yes.

#### Petrochemical Plant Proposal

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Could the minister indicate what stage the negotiations are at with the proposed petrochemical plant at Bow City?

MR. NOTLEY: It's a new project that snuck in while you weren't looking.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, do I understand the hon. member to ask me about the proposal at Bow City? Could I use the term "Brooks" interchangeably with that, or what?

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, the site is at Bow City, but it is in the Brooks area.

AN HON. MEMBER: Give him a road map.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's a suburb.

MR. GETTY: I must say, Mr. Speaker, I haven't been around to all the cities in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the PanCanadian proposal is being

held in limbo, at their request, while they straighten out their marketing arrangements. They have presently separated from the organization which was going to handle the marketing of the product. I trust they are now going to work out some other marketing arrangement. The matter was delayed for some time while an amended application was before the board, in which the board wanted to take into account increased natural gas prices in the ammonia application. The board's recommendation then was that ammonia should be sold at a price that reflects current field prices for natural gas. That caused marketing problems for PanCanadian's partners in the United States.

#### **Calgary Housing**

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the Minister of Housing and Public Works. The housing prices in Calgary, which are the highest in Canada at this point, have risen very sharply since the new year.

I wonder if the minister has made any effort at this point in time — to the local authority as well as the council — to cut down red tape to get more housing on stream to relieve this building problem?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Alberta doesn't involve itself in any way in an attempt to control the secondary house market with respect to prices. With respect to the supply of housing, I indicated earlier that we did very well in Alberta last year, increasing the housing starts by some 30 per cent. We're looking forward to an even better year this coming year.

DR. BUCK: Prices have gone up more than 30 per cent.

#### **Coal Policy**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Is the government considering adoption of the policy suggested by the Environment Conservation Authority, namely, to take over the first stages of coal exploration?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, all the recommendations from the ECA report are being considered by the government, and therefore are under consideration along with the one the hon. member just mentioned.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary. Is it possible that when the board made this recommendation they had a momentary lapse, and thought they were in Saskatchewan?

#### **Power Supplies**

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Utilities and Telephones. It concerns our supply of electric power.

According to the present or latest projections, at what date will the supply of electric power — as it is now produced and as it will be produced under projects now under construction — be insufficient to accommodate demand in Alberta?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, that's a very difficult question, but at the same time a very important question — as difficult questions often are, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Right!

DR. WARRACK: Basically, it involves a question of the present supply capability that is assured and in place, and projecting that with respect to the rapid growth Alberta has been happy to experience in its diversification efforts. At the present time, as I understand it, the projected date of concern for serious shortage of electric power would be the winter of 1982-83. But at the same time I would add, Mr. Speaker, that there's substantial lead time involved in any of these projects that might be contemplated. As a result, it is necessary to address the decisions some considerable time — in fact, years — ahead of a predicted shortage date.

#### **Spruce Cliff Centre**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Would the minister report as to the present status of Spruce Cliff in Calgary?

I understand that it isn't going to be closed. Has the alternate purpose been established at this time?

MISS HUNLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to advise the hon. member that Spruce Cliff will be used as a group home, managed by a community citizens' group. It will be used for handicapped, both physically and mentally, as far as the advanced planning goes.

I would also like to say, and have it on the record, how grateful I am to receive the wire from the community association in that particular area, endorsing that concept and assuring them of their co-operation. I very much appreciate it.

MR. CLARK: It was motivated by the MLA.

MR. R. SPEAKER: It must have been politically acceptable, anyway.

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Are the 23 staff members formerly working at the institution to be retained or transferred to other facilities?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to check that to find out actually whether they've moved into other areas or are remaining. I'm not sure. But I'd be pleased to inquire into that and advise the hon. member and the members of this House.

#### **Gun Control**

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Solicitor General. In view of the likelihood of federal gun registration, is the Solicitor General intending to bring in regulations, or can this government bring in regulations, to assure that those who have guns have adequate vision and acceptable, optimal physical and mental status?



AN HON. MEMBER: Bite the bullet.

DR. BUCK: You'd eliminate half the population.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, the question of testing for the proposed licensed holders of firearms will have to await the federal law and regulations. I understand that the federal proposal is that licences be granted to those who qualify under a simple test like the present test for passports, where they get a testimonial from a manager of a bank, or justice of the peace, or somebody like that that they are sane, have got two eyes and 10 fingers. We'll just have to await the federal act.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question on that topic. Does the hon. Solicitor General consider that adequate? Does he, in fact, consider this as important as obtaining an operator's licence and being physically and mentally fit?

MR. SPEAKER: I'm not sure whether such a request for an opinion can be answered briefly. But, certainly, it's not strictly within the parameters of the question period.

AN HON. MEMBER: It was a silly question anyway.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister. Has the minister or someone from government made representation to the federal minister, indicating Alberta's position with regard to this legislation?

MR. FARRAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think I indicated just the other day in the House that Alberta's response to the proposed legislation is that it agrees with the provisions for increased security, for stricter penalties against those who use a firearm in the execution of a crime, for greater security over the holding of guns, and for the keeping of records by gun dealers. But it regards the licensing aspect of the new legislation as a very costly bureaucratic exercise with limited public benefit. We're afraid the costs will fall upon the province more than on the federal authority.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, one more final supplementary on this topic. Will the minister indicate to the House whether he intends at least to review this matter that I brought up earlier, and consider making representation to the federal government?

MR. FARRAN: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we'll take the hon. member's views into account. Of course, the Criminal Code is set by the federal authorities and administered by the province at provincial expense.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### head: **CONSIDERATION OF HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH**

Mr. Shaben proposed the following motion to the Assembly: That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Ralph G. Steinhauer, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Notley]

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part in this debate, one has to look back over the last few months. I would have to say that one of the more interesting events we've seen occurred federally. That's the selection of an Albertan, Joe Clark, as the new leader of the Tory party. I'm sure I'm going to destroy Joe's credibility with his friends in the Alberta House when I say that had I been there, I would have been very pleased to support him, had I been a Tory.

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame.

MR. NOTLEY: I see the Attorney General has left, or he's just standing at the door as a matter of fact. [He] and the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands can now look upon themselves as sort of new Dalton Camps of the Tory party. I wish, however, for their own sakes, that their careers are somewhat more successful at the polls. I would hate to see them stuck with commentating on that socialist CBC national broadcasting corporation for their future.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, in turning my attention to the Speech from the Throne, as I read over this august document, I must confess that there have been probably stronger statements of purpose. This is certainly no Magna Carta, no Gettysburg Address, or frankly not even a good off-the-cuff speech by Jack Horner.

Mr. Speaker, there are several worth-while things in the Speech from the Throne, which I'm going to note. I'm pleased to see the government has finally decided to move on industrial health and safety. I applaud them for that. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that is long overdue.

Now the Leader of the Opposition, when he began debate the other day, singled out the government's emphasis on housing. I hope we can applaud that emphasis, Mr. Speaker, but we'll have to wait and see. Simply dividing the Alberta Housing Corporation essentially into two sections does not necessarily mean we're going to deal with the problems in housing today.

I was interested that the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View raised the question of the enormous increase in the price of housing. Mr. Frank Johns is quoted as saying on Saturday last that the average price of a home in Calgary today is \$61,000, and that's up from \$48,000 at the end of 1975. He goes on to point out that in December Calgary home prices were the fourth highest in Canada, now they are the highest. Mr. Speaker, that is certainly not something to be proud of, when you consider that there are tens of thousands of people searching for homes.

I was interested in reading over some of the technical reports which were prepared for the Land Use Forum. I don't know how many hon. members, Mr. Speaker, had an opportunity to review the technical report on urban housing, but I would

suggest that before we get to that debate tomorrow, hon. members take the opportunity to peruse it. It shows that in 1976 the average cost of a home in Edmonton will be \$55,000. It's already \$6,000 higher than that in Calgary. By 1981 we're looking at \$100,000, and by 1986, \$175,000.

But what I think is even more significant, in reviewing the technical report on urban housing, Mr. Speaker, is that the availability of housing to most wage earners is shrinking, and shrinking fast. In 1961, 70 per cent of wage earners could look forward to earning enough to own a home of their own. But by 1986 that will shrink, according to this technical report, to only 24 per cent. Mr. Speaker, indeed we need more money put into housing. I will wait with interest to see whether the budget will, in fact, deal effectively with the very serious need for more housing in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a word or two about the latest controversial issue in the province of Alberta, the move of PWA's headquarters from Vancouver to Calgary and Edmonton. Mr. Speaker, I think it should be said, and said clearly so there is no misunderstanding, that over the long term I believe the headquarters of PWA should be moved to the province of Alberta. As a matter of fact, I have raised that on more than one occasion in the question period.

In the past it's been interesting to find that the government has equivocated on the matter. All of a sudden we now find we have to make the move. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me the government must accept full responsibility for what has happened. There is no question about the long-term strategy of making the move to Alberta. But the issue at stake, Mr. Speaker, and it's a very important one, is whether the short-term tactics of going ahead the way they did it, forcing the move and thus causing the resignation of probably the most competent air line president in this country, is in my view subject to legitimate debate. I simply say to the minister that anyone who knows anything at all about PWA will recognize that that air line has developed because there has been a strong *esprit de corps* among the pilots, maintenance people, and the management. There is a trust and confidence in the management which frankly doesn't exist in other air lines.

Mr. Speaker, for us to suddenly change that — and the results of Mr. Watson's resignation I greatly fear will be prejudicing the future of Pacific Western Airlines. I hope that doesn't happen. I hope that doesn't happen because we own the air line. I, as much as any member of this House, want to see it a success. But I say that the hon. Deputy Premier must accept full responsibility for the move, for the changes, and for the ultimate results.

Those of us on the opposition side have an obligation to watch the profit picture carefully. I would be very interested indeed, Mr. Speaker, if next year they are able to retain the rather unusual position of being one of the few air lines in North America that returned a profit. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe you build up a management team overnight. I think before you set into motion a series of events which disrupt that management team, you have to be very sure that you know what you are doing. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I'm not really sure the government knows what it is doing on this particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, before getting into the Speech from the Throne, I want to say that there are several other issues which were discussed last fall that I believe should be raised once again. We had a debate on the cow-calf situation, as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, one of the better debates in the Assembly. But I find the government's view that somehow we should have a national stabilization plan when we as a province have done virtually nothing — as a matter of fact the only province with any kind of cattle population at all that has done almost nothing, 7 per cent loans but we have even taken out liens against the land to secure those loans — for us to go to Ottawa and say to the other provinces, disband the programs you have in place because here we are. We think it could be done better federally.

Well, Mr. Speaker, everybody, including all the other provinces and the farm organizations, know that it would be better done federally. The fact of the matter is, as any student of Canadian history can tell you, that we have developed federal programs more often than not because we have seen provincial governments pioneer. It is because of the pioneering of provincial governments — for example in the field of hospitalization and medicare — that we finally got federal participation on a cost-shared basis. Mr. Speaker, in my view, Alberta would have had much better luck in getting Ottawa to move had we set an example.

I want to say something too about the question of land use. I'm going to be dealing with that report in our debate tomorrow. But I think there is a vital issue of land use in the Dodds-Round Hill controversy which I raised in the question period today. I would simply say to the minister that the Environment Conservation Authority should be asked to hold hearings on that project. It isn't good enough to say that the ERCB is going to hold hearings. The ERCB is a very technical agency. What is required is the sort of agency which can provide public input in the way the ECA can. I think it was interesting, Mr. Speaker, when the ECA held hearings on the dam on the Red Deer River, to observe the tremendous amount of interest those hearings generated and, in my view, the focussing of public opinion as a consequence. I simply want to underline, Mr. Speaker, that what is at stake at Dodds-Round Hill is so important that at the very least, before the cabinet makes a decision, there should be formal hearings by the ECA.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move on to the Speech from the Throne itself. When one reads it very carefully, one finds that first of all there is very little commitment within this Speech from the Throne to Albertans as consumers. As a matter of fact, we have already seen that user fees set by provincial institutions are going to be exempt from the federal wage and price controls. So we have medicare premiums up 11 per cent, senior citizens' unit rental fees up 10 per cent, nursing home fees up 25 per cent, and university and college fees up 25 per cent. The one exception — I see the Minister of Advanced Education is in his place today — is Grande Prairie College, which is suggesting a 12.5 per cent increase. I hope the minister will authorize that increase rather than insisting on a 25 per cent increase in fees. But here we have user fees at provincially funded institutions which serve the people, that have very substantial increases. Mr. Speaker, I would note that in

most cases those increases are going to be somewhat greater than the wages Albertans will be able to earn this year under the new price and wage control legislation.

Let's look at another area of prices. Let's take utility rates. Last year, on August 1, 1975, Alberta Power sought a 21 per cent rate increase; January 1, 1976, another 8 per cent increase; Calgary Power, a 15 per cent increase on December 1. I compare the profits of both these companies, Mr. Speaker. Calgary Power had a 45 per cent increase in profits in 1975 over 1974. Canadian Utilities, which as most members know is controlled by International Utilities, had a 56.4 per cent increase over their 1974 profits. Mr. Speaker, it's the complaint of many people — most especially in the trade union movement, but many others as well — that we have a double standard in the wage and price controls: one standard for the guy who is pushing a broom, and quite a different standard for the powerful and strong within our community. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that that double standard is something which is becoming more obvious with each passing day.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to another aspect of consumer prices. Let's take a look at what has happened to natural gas distribution in the rural areas of our province. I remember the debate that took place in the Legislative Assembly in December 1973. I recall the Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc at the time, Mr. Jim Henderson, standing in his place and saying something during that debate that I found rather unusual, making the point that we would be better to go ahead with some kind of public agency to undertake rural gasification, rather than the co-op plan. Well, Mr. Speaker, we went ahead on the co-op plan. Now that we [have taken] that route, I for one think we have to live with it and try to make it work.

But, Mr. Speaker, I read the brief which was presented to the cabinet on February 11 by the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops. Seldom in my years in politics have I seen a more damning statement by anybody. The federation of rural gas co-ops say on page 2 that they understood certain things about rural gasification before they went out and sold the program to their neighbors. They understood that "the gas price to the contract holder would be 50 cents per MCF". They understood another thing, too, Mr. Speaker. They understood — and this is the thing I find really incredible in view of the minister's answer to a question I raised today, and I am sorry he is not in his place — the price of natural gas would only increase at a rate of 4 per cent per annum compounded over the next 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, when they understood that, the price of gas from Gas Alberta, according to their brief, was 30 cents per MCF. Now we have the Minister of Utilities and Telephones standing up in his place in a very arrogant way today saying it's going to go up to 70 cents per MCF, an increase of more than 100 per cent, even though local people were told by officials of the department that they would see a 4 per cent increase.

Some of the members of this Assembly can be very smug about it. But if you meet with rural gas co-op officials, people who went out and sold the program to their neighbors — one of the officials of the north Peace gas co-op said it's a pretty tough situation for him to even to go to the skating rink or the curling

rink. The price of natural gas in the north Peace gas co-op was 65 cents per MCF in November; in December they had to increase it to \$1.75. This poor gentleman can't go downtown. Even at a funeral, he no sooner got through with "ashes to ashes and dust to dust" when somebody came up and said, you so-and-so, what about my gas rate?

Mr. Speaker, this is the sort of situation that the government has put the people in who sold rural gasification. I say very clearly that we have not got, as yet, an adequate response from this government on how it is going to make the rural gas program work. I say to you that the announcement the other day, while it will be a small assistance, is not going to change materially the problems these gas co-ops are in. Two things are required, in my judgment. One is for the government to honor the commitment it made for low-priced gas over a period of time. The other is that on the overage, on that portion of the overage that has to be borne by the local co-op itself, rather than having to go to private lending institutions or even the ADC, we should have a fund similar to the REA fund, where there can be low-interest money to finance these overages and costs.

Mr. Speaker, I think that coming to grips with this rural gasification program is one of the most important issues facing rural Alberta today. I read the comments of people who, almost without exception, a year or two ago were completely, totally sold on the program who now feel betrayed, who feel let down, and who feel that this government, once the program was off and running, abandoned them. In my judgment, Mr. Speaker, that isn't good enough.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move on to note a rather interesting part of the Speech from the Throne. On page 1 we talk about the need for a pause in social programs. Mr. Speaker, perhaps it might be worth our time, for a moment, to ask what is the price of a pause. We already have the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care telling us yesterday that we're going to put the brakes on hospital expansion. As a matter of fact, we're going to try, over a period of time, to reduce the per-bed level to the national average. And it's my understanding, if he was quoted correctly in the press, that this will mean layoffs in the hospital services field during the year 1976. I know that the administrators of hospitals I've talked to in northern Alberta are far from happy with the budgets they are stuck with, knowing perfectly well that these other costs I've talked about, utility costs and what have you, are going to rise by much more than the budget they have been allotted by the provincial government. So that's one area.

But let's look at another one, preventive social service. Mr. Speaker, preventive social service was one of the good programs that the former Social Credit government brought in during the last years, during the years of . . .

DR. BUCK: One of the many.

MR. NOTLEY: I won't say one of the many, but one of the good programs the former government instituted.

But you know, we find that the increase this year is not going to be even 11 per cent but will be 8 per cent. I had my office contact various preventive social service directors throughout the province, and they responded in case after case. Let me just give you a

quote or two:

Our budget for the 1976-77 fiscal year has been limited to an 8 per cent increase over the previous year's budget submission.

It goes on. When one reads these letters, [there is] the feeling again, by people who are working in the area of innovative social programs, of being let down. That's one of the strongest features about preventive social services, whether it's the day care program, or the home care program in the city of Edmonton that received so much publicity a few weeks ago. The fact of the matter is that preventive social service offers an opportunity for innovation to help people help themselves. Surely, Mr. Speaker, to limit the increase to less than the 11 per cent is just not good enough.

I've already mentioned the fact that university tuition fees are going to go up. In my view again, Mr. Speaker, that is completely unjustifiable. I say, as I said yesterday, that as long as the public is paying for most of the cost of the institution, there should be no barrier to young people attending. I think the question of whether people attend colleges or universities in this province should be dependent upon their ability and their willingness to learn, and not on the amount of money they either happen to have themselves or that their fathers have in the bank.

Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the price of a pause in social programs, I want to take just a moment and look at this question of the Deerhome contract. I have to say, though I have a great deal of personal admiration for the minister in charge, that in this instance the government has made a very serious error.

We were told that this particular contract would not reduce the quality of service. Well, as I look at the two alternatives there is a saving of some \$800,000 between the CSA proposal and VS Services. But, Mr. Speaker, at what price is this saving going to take place? It was under the department that an evaluation committee was established. That evaluation committee looked at all the proposals, examined them very carefully, and scored the proposals. And in scoring the proposals, in every single instance — in housekeeping, in laundry and linen, and most important of all in food services — it scored the CSA proposal highest.

Mr. Speaker, in a letter dated January 29, which I intend to table in the House, Mr. Koegler, the executive director of Alberta Hospital Deerhome, makes a point about VS Services which I think has to be made. He simply says he doesn't believe there will be a million dollar saving. He says, and he quotes from the committee:

We feel, however, that these projected figures are unrealistically low and could be realized only at drastic reductions of staff or greatly decreased quality of service.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to table that for hon. members.

The point I think has to be made very strongly is that we shouldn't be saving pennies if it's going to decrease the quality of service. When the executive director of Deerhome, who knows more about the institution than anybody else including, with great respect, the minister in charge and certainly the other members of this Assembly, when the executive director makes this kind of statement, in my view, Mr.

Speaker, the government's decision to award this contract to VS Services is a staggering error.

I'm told that it's good to get private enterprise involved. Well, what price are we going to pay for private enterprise? I sit in my seat and listen to members of this government talk about the evil east controlling and stopping us. Here you have a firm, VS Services. Where's the headquarters? Is it in Edmonton, Calgary, or perhaps Red Deer, Mr. Speaker? No, it's in Ontario. Where are the members of the board of directors? Are they in Drumheller, Spirit River, Medicine Hat, or Lethbridge? No, they are either in central Canada or the United States. We had a proposal from our own civil servants which was assessed by an objective committee and scored the highest. We turn it aside because of a doctrinaire preoccupation with private enterprise, regardless of the effect on people. You can have doctrinaire socialists, Mr. Speaker. You can have doctrinaire private enterprise. This is an example of doctrinaire private enterprise.

Mr. Speaker, in the remaining five or six minutes I want to deal with perhaps an even greater problem than the impact of this government's restraint program on social services. That's the question of accountability; and beyond the question of accountability, the supremacy of the Legislature itself. Last December we had the Auditor's report, which has already been raised in this House. Statements have been made both within and without. I simply state here, as I stated outside the House: in my view, however much good work the minister has done for the promotion of culture in this province, that report was sufficiently damning that he should no longer hold the portfolio. But I say, Mr. Speaker, that responsibility rests with the Premier. The proper place to discuss it will be during the estimates of Executive Council. At that point, opposition members would be rather derelict in our duty if we did not fully explore the question of ministerial accountability, whether it relates to the bull semen case last fall or the Auditor's report in December.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps even more important than the issue of the hon. minister across the way is whether we intend, as legislators, to assert the proposition that the Legislature should, in fact, be supreme. The question of accountability goes beyond ministerial accountability. I look at some of the measures of this government, an operation like the Alberta Energy Company, which is going to be a very important instrument in developing our industrial policy. Yet when we ask questions in the Legislature about the AEC — when a little over a year ago the former Premier, Mr. Strom, asked what the salary of the president of the AEC was, that was turned down because it's a private company. When we ask for information about the operation of the AEC we're told, go to a shareholders' meeting.

Mr. Speaker, the decisions that affect the future of this province should be debated in the House. Both the institutions that facilitate those decisions and the ministers should be accountable in this House. We should not be abdicating our responsibilities to quasi-public agencies that make decisions on how the future of this province will be shaped, yet are not accountable within the Legislature on an ongoing basis. Mr. Speaker, that's one of the important reasons I believe the battle over the heritage trust

fund — and it will be a battle — is so important. I've heard members get up and say, oh, there's a great difference between an investment and an expenditure. Somehow it's necessary to debate expenditures, but it's not necessary to debate investments. Nonsense! Mr. Speaker, I would point out that quite often Tory investments have a tendency to become public expenditures. Witness the pulp mill in Manitoba. Or, Mr. Speaker, the Bricklin in New Brunswick, under the leadership of Premier Hatfield. Let's remember the Bricklin. You know, the sports car, the Tory car of the 1970s. Yes, that was to be an investment too. Unfortunately, it's turned out to be an expenditure for the people of New Brunswick.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is: it's important that we, in the Legislative Assembly, make the decisions. It's important that, whether it's an investment or an expenditure, decisions which affect the future of Alberta are debated here. No, that's why we're going to stress — at least I'm going to, and I'm sure the official opposition as well — the importance of legislative accountability when we debate that heritage trust fund. It's part of the larger question of accountability. Too many times we see examples of by-passing the authority of the Legislature.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker. When coming down to the opening of this session, I encountered a Tory coming back from the federal leadership convention. He said, "Some of the concerns you are raising in the Alberta Legislature are the same concerns our people are raising in the House of Commons. Too many decisions are made outside the House of Commons. Too often there's a by-passing of Parliament." Mr. Speaker, that Tory was right. But I'm also right here, provincially. So is the official opposition. Too many basic decisions are being made outside this House. It's our job as members of the Legislative Assembly — not just on the opposition side, but, indeed, the backbenchers — to stand up and insist that the supremacy of the Legislature be reasserted. Mr. Speaker, when I think of that heritage trust fund, I can only muse for a moment that had Mr. Trudeau brought in a bill like that, you could hear John Diefenbaker right from Ottawa without the benefit of the CBC or CTV. He would be standing up for the rights of Parliament — and correctly so — as we in a few days have to stand up for the rights of the Legislature in this province.

Thank you.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to join in the throne debate. I represent the Wainwright constituency that was long served by Henry Ruste. Ours is a blessed constituency, because it's been more blessed to give than to receive. One misconception of the past that should be corrected and cleared in the minds of some people is that although we live on the Saskatchewan border, we're on the west side of it. I represent a strong, self-reliant group of people who have excelled in all phases of agriculture that were adaptable to that area. Our cattlemen do not have notches in their guns parading in front of the Legislature, but rather notches in their belts, trying to ride out the depressing times of the cattle market. At times I feel that the feeling in my area compares to Alberta's feeling in its relationship with Ottawa.

The oil and gas development in our area is starting to have a real difference in our outlook, and may increase our population and economic importance.

The policy of restraint proposed by this government has been well discussed here. I'm certainly going to endorse it. I feel we have a responsibility, as leaders in government, to set the trend and try to control the inflationary period we are living in.

Hospitals and medical service in our province are probably the best in Canada. I feel that we, in our particular area, have never been left out on this matter. At this time, one of the most modern hospitals in rural Alberta is under construction in my constituency.

Dealing with agriculture, I think the cattle industry is probably uppermost in everyone's mind at this time. Certainly it is suffering one of the worst phases it has gone through in my period of involvement in the cattle industry. I feel this government has taken many steps to try to set a better pattern, to make it a more sound industry by processing our agricultural products.

In the period from 1968 until 1971, there was a feeding industry acceleration in this province, probably second to no place in Canada, that developed an industry that was of real benefit to all cattlemen. It raised the price of our feeder cattle, gave them a local market, and created the product that packing industries could make best use of and keep much of our product in our province until it was ready for a retail market. I think this is one phase of our agricultural economy that is going to suffer the most, if the times do not change and our cattle markets do not come back to a stable and profitable situation in a short period of time.

I had the opportunity last summer to tour the irrigated part of our province, and I'm very proud of it. I mean, it was my first instance to see irrigation at first hand. I'm very proud that we've seen fit to take part of our Heritage Savings Trust Fund money to help rebuild and put irrigation at the forefront, [as] one of the priorities in agriculture. A very small portion of our province is under irrigation, but it is a very important part of our economy. The diversification that takes place in the products we can produce, mostly products that can be used at home that otherwise we'd be importing, make it a very important phase.

One of the problems we are striving for today, in this government, is a better break on freight rates for agricultural products leaving the province and on agricultural equipment that has to come back in. Certainly, we have been paying both freight rates, in the operation of our agricultural enterprises.

Land use, as far as agriculture is concerned, and the Land Use Forum, are things the people involved in agriculture are certainly concerned with. We have a limited amount of good agricultural land in this province, and we have a lot that's marginal. If we do not protect the good quality land we have, and make sure it is kept for agricultural purposes, we may find ourselves, down the road, facing the same problem as Ontario, where industry is covering up some of the best agricultural land. Every year they're left with a diminishing amount of land to produce their agricultural products.

On the matter of education, I think it's recognized that to give the same level of education to rural

Alberta is more complicated and more expensive. Busing is one of the problems, an additional expense that rural education calls for. I feel sure our government will recognize that while restraints have to go on all phases of our expenditures, rural Alberta will not be left at a disadvantage in the formula that will give us grants to operate our rural educational system. I think the study on curriculum that is coming up in the near future, and the assurance that we may get the basic education our students need so when they reach university level they carry a higher degree of the basic knowledge required to carry on and learn in that institution, is a very important factor that should be considered.

When we come back to the form of education that trains people to fill the jobs this province has a surplus of at this time, and that cannot be filled by our local people, I think we have to commend this province. At least we have 8 per cent of the work force and 14 per cent of the apprentices, which shows that we have adequate facilities to train these students. I think, certainly, this is one phase of education that has to be accelerated. It's been recognized that it has to be accelerated if we're going to fill the expanding jobs that are being produced by our economy.

In the matter of transportation, I think Alberta can boast of one of the best highway systems of any province in Canada. I think not only this government but the former government have to be given credit for establishing a basis of good highway construction, at a time when it wasn't recognized in other areas. I think that, while we may have some bad roads — we have some roads that are broken up with excessive travel — nowhere will you go in Canada and find a higher standard in a primary highway system than we have here. I think one thing we may lack, and we're a little slow coming on stream with, is more north-south highways to give all the province the opportunity of intertrade. It's important with the expansions of new programs and new industries that these north-south highways, particularly in the eastern part of the province, be brought up to the same standard as the rest.

I think our economy is something we've got to be proud of. We've got the lowest unemployment, the lowest property tax, the lowest income tax. I feel these are things this government may not take all the credit for, but certainly it's proving that our natural resources, while we're expending 70 per cent of them, are going back and being put in the hands of the people, to encourage private enterprise and more expansion on an individual level. I feel this is something we can certainly take credit for.

This is the only province in Canada at the present time, I believe, that has no sales tax. I think that, while we're spending more money on health than any province in Canada, we're certainly proving that the 70 per cent of our natural resources that we're putting into the general revenue are being put to a good cause. I believe this province must diversify. Our natural resources will not always be with us. Certainly, with the leadership and the programs we have started, I'm quite confident that, in time to come, we'll prove this government has done a good job.

Thank you.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I also take pleasure in joining in the throne speech debate, for several reasons. It seems that every session I like to participate with the thought that maybe I won't have to do it next year, [as] it seems that all the problems and concerns are just about over. However, by the time the next year rolls around, some other concerns come up. That should be expected. If there were no concerns, they wouldn't need the representation.

I would like, at the outset, to congratulate the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake and the hon. Member for Calgary Bow for their very impressive addresses. I must not by-pass, and also commend, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, for so eloquently making the presentation of the throne speech.

It is, indeed, a pleasure to participate in today's throne speech debate, particularly because I am on this side of the House. I will be speaking to part of the Executive Council, rather than at them. Also, the move to this side of the House brings me a little closer to the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, who I admire occasionally, particularly when it's not politics. However, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that our closeness now is not in any way going to influence our amalgamation.

There are several areas in this throne speech that I applaud, and some areas [where] I have concern. First of all, I want to say that I feel very proud of our government which has joined the federal government in the fight to combat inflation. I believe it is an obligation of everyone in this country, regardless of their political affiliations, to do what they can to combat inflation.

When we see that 75 persons are elected in this province and quite likewise in the other nine provinces, along with 265 in the federal House of Commons, it would be very unfortunate if a few leaders from the unions could run the country.

When we consider that our standards of living in this country rate the highest in the world, I think we have to go along with fighting inflation so that, in a short while, we will not again face the recession we had in the early '30s. I do not remember too much of it. I was a young boy at that time. I know I had plenty to eat, but I know there was a shortage of money. I think, if there's any way we can combat inflation, it is everyone's obligation to do so.

At this time, I would also like to commend the former Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons who saw, much sooner than anybody else, that there was a need for an inflation program, a wage and price control. However, he may have lost out on the elections to some extent just because of his action. But I am glad the federal government, even though it took a considerable amount of time, realized this point.

The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund — I would actually say I won my election last year on this little piece of legislation. I think there is a great need for it when we, in this country, enjoy the highest standards of living. I think there is a necessity to put a little aside so our children and grandchildren have a chance to enjoy the same prosperity. When we realize that 40 per cent of education is funded from the revenues received from the sale of non-renewable resources, what is going to happen when there are no revenues? Are we going to cut education by 40 per cent? I think this is a time the

people in the province have a chance to demonstrate their abilities and stand behind it.

It seems to me that an odd number of people, particularly in the opposition, ever since the introduction of this act in the fall, have given us a lot of ideas and suggestions on how to spend the money. Well, I think the people of Alberta have elected this government to spend the money wisely. However, our intention is to invest it. I think this is what we have to do.

I particularly was very interested to see even the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview call public meetings to discuss where the heritage trust fund should be allocated, and so forth. I do regret that he didn't pass some of that knowledge on to his friend, the former premier of British Columbia. There was a real heritage there. When the former government of British Columbia took office, there was approximately \$700 million sterling in the desk. They created another \$350 million in deficits in 38 months — a heritage comparable to that we are looking at in Alberta. However, as I say, I feel very sorry that the hon. member did not pass over some of his knowledge to the other province.

As for housing, again I am very proud that the government, along with the Minister of Housing and Public Works, has seen fit to go on such an intensive program. I feel that every Albertan, if he so desires, should have the privilege of owning his own home.

I am looking with great favor that the senior citizens in this province have been looked at in a very favorable position. I do not think that this is our government giving them anything extra. I believe they have earned it. Those senior citizens who came to this country 40, 50, 60 and more years ago built this country. They have broken brush, built the roads, the elevators. They are the ones who made the country the finest in the world. No other country can provide security such as this. I think they have earned it. I am glad our government is honoring and recognizing [them].

I must say also that I have one regret in a particular area, that was with the town and community of Two Hills in my constituency. It is the second largest in the constituency. The senior citizens' club there has a membership of 220, [although] all are not participating members. However, when I was first elected, I thought that was one area where the senior citizens need accommodation. Not too long ago, even the Minister of Housing and Public Works told me they deserve it, there is a need for it, and there is a probability. Very unfortunately, those members serving on the foundation — there is an east and west division and because of that, Two Hills will not qualify for a home. When I look at several hundred areas in the province requesting it, it is very unfortunate that you will find anybody turning it down. However, because the regulations and laws are such, I feel very sad that the town of Two Hills is going to be left out in this project.

Social Services and Community Health: despite what we heard a few minutes ago from the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, I am greatly impressed by the attitude the minister has taken to save \$1 million by services of the VS Services Ltd. True enough, if the only reason was to save that \$1 million and put it into some other department, I would be just as concerned as he is. But after visiting Deerhome a

year ago, I believe the intention of the minister was to use that saving to bring programs which are greatly needed in other areas. At that time, there were 2,200 patients, and I think the working staff was approximately 1,700. I think if that \$1 million could be used in other ways, it is going to be a much better and happier place.

I am also glad about the incentive program the minister initiated last spring to provide incentives for persons on social assistance to get on their own feet. The little information I have is that it is materializing. I think it's a step in a right direction. It's hard to see it in the rural areas. But I understand that there is quite a change in the cities, and I hope it continues.

As for education, I feel there was a great need for this province to put some restraints, and I think the 11 per cent is as good as possible. There are areas where I think the school boards are going to find it much better now than they ever had. I was a member of school boards for 20 years of my life. However, as I say, I don't want to elaborate too much on that program because I want to participate in the resolution to reconsider the amount of money. Here again, I can well agree that money does not make education, and more money will not necessarily provide better education.

Agriculture [is] still, I think, the most important basic industry in this province, particularly in my constituency. I am glad of the many programs our government has offered to improve agriculture, despite what we had here last fall about the cow-calf problems and so forth, which I recognize. There may have been some misunderstanding when I made my presentation last fall. In no way did I oppose any assistance. The only thing I was critical of was the manner in which the procedures were taken. However, it was very interesting to notice in the Lamont County Star of February 28 a lengthy letter to the editor from the regional co-ordinator of the National Farmers' Union. There is one area I want to mention. It says: Alberta implemented no less than 17 different programs at a cost of \$50 million to encourage livestock production.

Mr. Speaker, there is only one program I have seen during my time of office that would encourage capital production. That is the \$10,000 guaranteed loan for animals. If the people in this province had used it, and particularly those people for whom it was intended, there would not have been a problem. I never realized there were so many programs. However, I feel that those programs were not to encourage, those were programs to assist farmers. When you look at the facility program of \$2,000, nobody built facilities before he had any animals. If a farmer was building a facility and this government came along and said, we will help you build it, we will help you with 50 per cent of the total cost to a maximum of \$2,000 — this is not an encouragement. I think this is an assistance. It's the same with the water supply program offering up to 50 per cent to a maximum of \$550. If anybody was going to use it for livestock — and I know many farmers did take advantage of it — this was not an encouragement. It was an assistance. At the same time, many farmers had a chance to install water in their own homes by this program.

However, I might say one of the requests was that this government subsidize with \$100 per calf. Mr.

Speaker, if this had been carried on — not that I oppose it in any way — I am sure this regional co-ordinator would have said that there are 18 programs to assist. A \$100 subsidy to each person for every calf is definitely an encouragement to keep them. I know if this government ever made a guarantee that there would be a \$100 subsidy for every calf a farmer has, I would go at once to raise calves.

Mr. Speaker, I already have a few concerns in this area, particularly that land in my constituency is selling at relatively high prices, probably much more than agriculture can pay back. No doubt people are speculating. However, there are two ways to look at it. Maybe this is the first chance the farmer ever had in his life to set the price for something of his own. In the once in a lifetime that he is selling his land, maybe he should be able to get as much as possible.

As the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview mentioned, I too have a concern about the Dadds-Round Hill project. There are people in my constituency who are looking forward to it, particularly farmers who are ready to retire or will be retiring within the next few years. There are a couple of villages alongside that are looking favorably, because it may be an asset to them. But it seems the agricultural committees and so forth are concerned. You can't blame them. They have to be very cautious of the records of previous years. How many gravel pits have been opened and left? The same with coal mines. A person has only to drive through Estevan, Saskatchewan to see mounds of fertile land standing that could be put into production. However, this could be a different situation. After we formed the government, both the former Ministers of Agriculture and Environment had a good program, not only to help finance reclamation, but also for what had been done for many years. While serving on the county council, I thought this was one of the best things, getting assistance for land reclamation. I think that we, too, would not want to see progress stalled. But here again: if the people had the knowledge that this land in that area would be brought back to agricultural conditions, I think there would have been far less cry about it.

Another area of concern is the abandonment of railway lines. Within my constituency, a line has been partly abandoned between Camrose and Vegreville. Some of you may have seen the elevator pulled down a couple of weeks ago from Inland on Highway 16 just south of Vegreville — an indication that the balance of that line will be closed shortly. I was very glad to hear the Minister of Transportation respond in the question period that it is his intention that the government take all these railway rights of way. The farmers in my constituency have shown great concern because realtors are already showing an interest in that. Should anybody else get hold of these railway rights of way, some people might find it very difficult to get from one piece of land to the other. At present, the railways provide crossings.

Back in 1966, I think, when the hon. Member for Drumheller was the Minister of Highways, he initiated a program, the regional study for secondary roads. As a county councillor at that time — I was one of those — I found it very interesting. However, I felt sorry that all there way, was a regional road study. It stopped at that. However, at that time it was

very strongly considered and recommended that should there be abandonment of the Camrose-Vegreville railway line, it would be very appropriate for a secondary highway. I hope the Minister of Transportation is taking this in. It is something to consider. I think there is great importance in having a link between Camrose and Vegreville.

As for land use, I recall members of the opposition expressing concern in the last couple of years about expansion of the Hutterite colonies, particularly in southern Alberta. I have two in my constituency. They are very well appreciated, because of their contributions to agriculture. However, in southern Alberta, where there are so many more, it may be a different story. When we assess this, we find out — and I think I've mentioned this before. The former Premier of this province indicated that by 1975, 85 per cent of the people would be in the two metropolitan cities, and nothing could be done about it. At that time, the maps were circled already, which towns and villages have to die. Maybe unfortunately, they start dying out in southern Alberta. The people moved away. The younger farmers didn't want to stay around the community where there was hardly anything, so they moved out. The Hutterite colony was the only alternative. So as I say, maybe this is the penalty some are suffering now for their past performance.

Transportation: there are a few areas I would like to mention. First of all, the Minister of Transportation mentioned that there will be some speed reduction. I have nothing against it. I feel that where accidents are prevalent, maybe reduction of speeds should be put on. But I sure would not want to see them all over the province. For some reason or other, I have a heavy foot too. It would be a detriment to me as to many others. However, when we look at the condition of the roads in Alberta, there is no reason the speed limits have to be as low as they are elsewhere. While on holiday this summer in Ottawa, I travelled to North Bay, a matter of 200 miles. I travelled with the Greyhound bus. It took six hours to travel on Highway 17 and that's the Trans-Canada Highway. Why? Two lanes, as narrow as could be, where there aren't any shoulders. They're not even hard surface. It's gravel, because of the curves and hills. With the conditions of those roads, you don't need a speed limit of 60 or 65 miles per hour. You can't travel much faster than 35 or 40. So, as I say, I sure wouldn't want to see this happen in Alberta, say, on roads such as Highway 2. If it ever was reduced much slower, I think it would be a much bigger job for the police.

As for PWA, just a few minutes ago the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview almost condemned the move. However, it is very fortunate to see that of the major air lines, Pacific Western Airlines was the only one that showed a profit for last year. As I say, I am very glad. Most of this must be for the management of it.

In Telephones and Utilities I applauded very much the minister's action to go along and increase assistance to the rural gas co-ops. In his short term of office, the former minister created a very fine program. With all the natural gas in the province, it was unfair that the people of Alberta were still burning wood and coal and anything else. However, this program was initiated at a time when inflation



set in. Because of that, many rural gas co-ops got into severe problems. One of the reasons was that this was intended to be a 10-year program. At the rate it was going, it would have been completed in four years. So there is a reason for the high cost. It helped inflation to a great extent.

I have asked the hon. minister today whether he did not consider having a maximum. Previously it was considered that if the cost for the individual consumer was more than \$3,000, it was not reasonable, and that person should be looking at other means of heat. Because of inflation this rose, and as I say, I appreciate very much the minister's response to this with further assistance. However, I do feel that there should be some maximum. I believe that if it's going to cost \$8,000 or \$9,000 or \$10,000 to provide natural gas for someone's residence, that person maybe should be using either propane, oil, coal, or anything else when natural gas would have to be subsidized so heavily.

As for parks and wildlife, I want to appeal again to the minister. There is a continuous demand for upgrading Lac Sante, which could make a very fine picnic area for the entire summer. When the weekend comes, hundreds of people flock to the place and the local people cannot get in. This is exactly between the Vermilion Provincial Park and Garner Lake, which would be about 50 to 60 miles each way. I think that if there were a provincial park or anything like it in that area, it would serve a great number of people. I would request that the minister take a really good look at it.

Culture and heritage: despite what we heard in the question period, particularly about Government House, Mr. Speaker, I think this was a very wise move, even though it may have been quite elaborate, extravagant, and expensive. But when we look at that \$1.7 million, it is not only done for this time. That place was used for 36 years by the previous administration and ours, and nothing was done to it. A time was coming, it was deteriorated so badly that either it be replaced and so forth. So I think that with this amount of money, it's a preservation of the historical building. In the condition that that building is now, I hope it will be able to serve us for another 40 years. [interjection] Despite the criticism by the Leader of the Opposition, I think this was a much better step than the step they took starting to build Fort Edmonton just a few years ago — new structures and projects to make them look what they looked like 75 and 80 years ago. It's the same with the Heritage Park in Calgary. Had the previous government looked at upgrading some of them and so forth, maybe we would have had the buildings.

I know it has been mentioned here by the hon. Member for Clover Bar that the seating arrangement is not the best, and maybe something should be done. Well, I'm glad they're not recommending that part of this heritage trust be used to build a new parliament building so the seating accommodation would be better. I think if it ever came to that, it would be much easier and cheaper to call another provincial election, and maybe that would solve the problem.

As for business development, here again, I would say this was a very good move. There has been a lot of criticism because there have been some losses. But when you look at the Alberta Opportunity Company, it provides assistance to those who cannot

get it elsewhere. So I believe that every loan that is approved is a risky one. It's expected that there should be some losses. However, with the amount of losses there are, I feel this was very well accepted by the people of this province. I know of a few who, if it wasn't for the Alberta Opportunity Company, probably would have no business today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to end at this time and thank the House.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, this is indeed an honor and a proud moment for me. It's a privilege to address this House, and to address it on the Speech from the Throne.

In reality, few people have an opportunity to stand here. I know that seven of us tried this last year, and I was the fortunate one. I'm also happy to say I'm the first Progressive Conservative MLA who has ever represented the Vermilion-Viking constituency.

Our constituency has a broad agricultural base, and it's from this base that I would like to understand farming and problems with farming from a governmental point of view. I know there are some changes that have to be made, and some changes are necessary. I hope that my presence here will facilitate some of those changes.

I would like to see, and we all would like to see from our constituency, some changes in the marketing, transportation, and indeed the quality of our production. We would also like to see some of our agricultural production processed and looked after at home instead of having to raise the feed and the livestock and ship it all over the country to be finished off. I know that our Minister of Transportation is certainly looking after the long transportation haul to the east as best he can.

There are many concerns in our constituency relative to agriculture. We have a university farm at Kinsella, but unless you drive by and see the sign, very few people know that it's even there. We have the Vermilion campus at Lakeland College. Both of these facilities have had a very low profile in the last 10 or 15 years. I would certainly like to encourage the Minister of Advanced Education to get together with the Minister of Education to see about having some of these resource people in these places do some teaching in some of our high schools. With agriculture being what it is, and changing so fast, I think we should get more use out of what we have.

I would like to see our young people, and our older people as well, get down to more of the basics and learn how to make a dollar. We have all these great courses at our schools and colleges. One of the dumbest ones I've heard of lately is finger-painting. The teacher actually said it was mind-expanding. Well, it's mind-expanding to try to make a living these days, and I think we should concentrate on some of that.

I'd like to speak a bit about rural Alberta to those people who haven't enjoyed rural Alberta. I would like to emphasize that the real action is in the rural areas. Possibly some of the brain trust is located in the cities, but the petroleum industry, agriculture, mining, fishing, hunting, and tourism are all located in the country. For those people who live in the city who really don't appreciate what goes on, come on out and spend a weekend with some of your rural MLAs.

I think we have to diversify some of this brain trust from the large urban areas into the rural areas. But I don't think we should be doing what has happened in the past where it's all located around a few centres. I think they should be, as is happening, going into several centres rather than in big clusters.

I would like to make a few remarks about the Land Use Forum, how it affects me and my constituency, and some of the comments I have had from the farm people.

One item, Mr. Speaker, which has really upset me and everyone I've talked to, is they are doing away with the trespass section. I would like to suggest to the people who wrote that report that they run into a herd of cattle with a little pup or a yappy dog, and then see the reaction of the farmer when that dog tears loose on the herd of cattle. As well, if we have people tramping all over our land, we have fires and all sorts of problems. I know some of these would be accidental but, on the other hand, some of them might be on purpose. I don't think that when we own land we should be having people there without our permission. Surely people can ask for permission, and usually this permission will be granted. They talk about an educational program to teach people how to respect peoples' land and, Mr. Speaker, somebody who wrote that is dreaming.

There are certainly some aspects of the Land Use Forum which can be supported. I can't honestly say that I completely understood all of what I have read in the Land Use Forum, but certainly vital consideration should be given to establishing some of their recommendations.

There are many of us who seriously worry about foreign ownership. But equally serious are those who buy up 160-acre parcels and more for purely recreational purposes. In many cases, these people are lot worse than the foreign buyers. Some contribute nothing to the community but disregard and contempt. I don't think we can waste land just for people to have a saddle horse or something out there, and the farm people have to pay the extra price to acquire farmland.

I would also like to say something about some of our social programs. Mr. Speaker, I believe some of these programs are of questionable value, and some even appear to be make-work schemes. I honestly hope that over the period of the next few years some of these social programs can be looked at in more depth.

Another problem we face, and I imagine every employer faces, is in regard to our labor laws. Most of us who are sitting in this House, and most of us who have been in business or agriculture, have had to work 12 or more hours a day, six days a week. There are thousands of people in Alberta who are quite prepared to work more than their eight hours and certainly more than their five days a week. Mr. Speaker, I just cannot for the life of me see how we can be denying people this right to work. There are, as I said, thousands who would be prepared to sign a waiver to be allowed to work longer hours and get the job done. If we are going to develop Alberta, we can only develop it with hard work and people with initiative.

The same thing could spill over in our schools. As the hon. Member for Drumheller said yesterday in this House, he would like to see teachers teaching at

least 21 children in a classroom. I think there are many teachers who can teach 21, and more than 21. There are some people who can probably teach six, or shouldn't be teaching at all. I feel if we have people who can handle a bigger job they should be able to get paid more. Those who can't handle that job shouldn't be paid as much, or maybe released.

I got a note last night that said for every average student less in the classroom in this province it was costing our provincial government \$25 million. If we told our teachers that if they increased their classroom people ratio by three they could save this province \$75 million, surely the teachers would go along with that. Most anyone in business gets paid for how much they do, and how they do it: doctors, lawyers, accountants, farmers, everyone. Why not other people who are in the private and public sector? I've worked that way all my life. I've enjoyed it and I'm sure everyone else would. I think it's our right to be able work, and work hard if we want to.

Mr. Speaker, that's about all I have to say. In closing, I would like publicly to acknowledge the appointment of Mr. Charles Heckbert of Vermilion, former mayor, to the board of the Alberta Opportunity Company. I think he will be a fine addition to that board, and I wish him all the success in the world.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your indulgence.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this debate. I, like many other speakers before me, would like to compliment the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake and the hon. Member for Calgary Bow for the important roles they have played as mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne. They make me proud to be a member of this Legislature.

The government has been criticized because of the restraint it is recommending in the Speech from the Throne. This is a very wise course for the government to follow, especially in this time of inflation. A government, a private company, or an individual, after a period of expansion in its operation, should also take the time to assess in an objective manner the programs initiated to see in which areas these programs should be improved, added to, or in some cases curtailed. This is the responsible approach. On its past performance it should come as no surprise to the residents of our province that this is a responsible government. At times, we must not only take a look at where we are going but also at where we have been and what we have done.

On behalf of my constituents, I would like to commend the government for the aid directed to southern Alberta because of the flood last June. The Alberta disaster fund assessed the damage claims fairly, and the cases which were appealed were handled in an efficient and conscientious manner. Both the Department of the Environment and the Department of Transportation were involved.

An area of concern to some sections of rural Alberta is the matter of rail line abandonment. We have struggled with centralization for over 20 years, and this is just another aspect of it. I feel that rail transportation in Alberta is far from perfect and greatly needs upgrading. But until the people of rural Alberta have an acceptable alternative, we must fight to keep what we have.

The Department of Transportation has greatly

assisted the Cardston constituency by presenting to the Hall Commission a brief on the impact of rail line abandonment and what will happen in the province. In my area, it has used its influence with the federal government to have the CPR repair a railroad bridge in the Glenwood district that was damaged by the flood last June.

Twenty per cent of my constituents reside on the Blood Reserve. In area, it is the largest Indian reserve in Canada, and from reports in the papers, it may become considerably larger. I am very pleased at the interest this government is showing in native people, and I hope that in the future our native people will receive benefits from our province equal to those of other Alberta residents. On this reserve, at least, except for Alberta income tax, these people pay as much as other residents, in the form of taxes to our province.

The tourist industry plays a vital part in many areas of Alberta, and the Department of Business Development and Tourism is doing a terrific job promoting our tourist resources. I hope the department is successful in influencing the federal government to have the port of entry at Carway put on a 24-hour basis. Many American tourists have their first look at our province when they cross the border at Carway, and it is to the advantage of Alberta that this first impression is a good one. Many tourists travel with campers and trailers, and we need more and better camping facilities in the south.

In Alberta we are spending far more on social services than any other province in Canada, but some people are still not satisfied. It is very gratifying to see the Department of Social Services and Community Health saving money at the ASH/Deerhome; not only that, it is prepared to use these savings to enrich other programs.

The role irrigation plays in agriculture in southern Alberta is very important. Many people from other parts of the province do not understand how important it really is. Four per cent of the cultivated land of Alberta is under irrigation, but this 4 per cent produces 26 per cent of Alberta's agricultural products. Not only this, irrigation greatly increases the vitality of the businesses in the towns in the irrigation districts. The people concerned with irrigation greatly appreciate the importance the provincial government places on this resource.

I sympathize with the hon. Solicitor General. At times, it must seem to him that he is a voice crying in the wilderness. To my knowledge, on three different occasions he has quoted statistics that should cause grave concern. But it seems the price per square yard of rugs and the location of the head office of PWA are more important to some members than the increased consumption of alcohol and the youth of the prisoners in our jails. I can attest to the zeal of his department in enforcing the speed limit, as within the last month three members of our local PC executive, in their haste to attend executive meetings, have been arrested for speeding.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I am proud to be an Albertan. I am proud of the fact that for anyone who truly wants to work, there is no unemployment in our province. I am proud of the fact that in the areas of education, medical care, and benefits to our senior citizens, we lead the nation. I don't want to sound complacent, but when I see the

problems our sister provinces are struggling with, I think we spend some of our time making mountains out of molehills.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your attention.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, as I rise to take part in the throne debate, I would also like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion. They did a tremendous job in their speeches, and it makes a tough act to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start my comments by tying in the trip I made to Great Britain just a few weeks ago. Looking at the economy, and hearing the people of that country talk, against the vibrant economy of Alberta, we can see very readily, Mr. Speaker, what a socialist type of government has done to the economy in Britain. You tell them over there that Alberta has what they call zero unemployment. They, with their unemployment approaching two million people, look at you as if to say, "Now, just what's wrong with him? There can't be any such place." They don't realize what Alberta is like, what it's like to live in Alberta, and the vibrant economy of Alberta.

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview was asking questions about the Alberta Energy Company. But when this company was put on the market, investors in other parts of Canada didn't get a crack at the investment opportunity. It was taken up by the citizens of Alberta. This must say something about the people, the way they feel for their province, and the assurance they have in their economy, taking up all the stock before it hit the open market. It must also say something about the investors in other parts of Canada who also wanted a share of the action in Alberta. It must say that they would sooner put their money here, Mr. Speaker, than in other provinces, such as Saskatchewan and British Columbia, where a different form of political party is in power, and was in power.

In Great Britain, people pay approximately 33 per cent of the first \$9,000 of income for income tax. It rises to about 83 per cent at about the \$40,000 mark; tremendously high, compared to that of Alberta. They also have that cute thing called "valuation tax", where they nail you 8 per cent at each stage of a product. So if a product passes through four stages before it gets to the consumer, four people get a crack at the 8 per cent raise.

Mr. Speaker, I think now is the time, in this time of inflation, for the people to ask themselves just how much they want in the way of service and how much they are willing to pay for this service. In many cases, government supplies what people ask for. People don't realize that somebody has to pay for this. They think it's just given out; they think government has a money tree. Now is the time when these people must wake up and realize that they have to pay for this service. The more service they want, somehow in their economy they're going to have to pay for it, be it through resources, income tax, or any other kind of tax.

Mr. Speaker, I must applaud the commitment the Premier made to the irrigation systems of southern Alberta. Farmers in this area have some of the most modern methods of irrigation, with the pivot sprinkler systems, with a total underground feed system to the pivot in the centre. Natural gas has helped in many ways to provide a cheaper source of fuel for the

sprinkler motors, also the other type of side roll sprinkler.

Farmers have spent a great deal of money preparing their land and their systems to adapt to their particular conditions. In many ways this commitment towards irrigation will help bring the irrigation districts up to and maybe surpass the amount that the farmers have gone ahead of the government in the modern systems they now have. Many of the irrigation ditches have been there for many, many years, but the farmers themselves have progressed a long way past that stage of flood irrigation on unlevel land.

I must say I come from an area of the province, in and around Bow Island, that has the highest heat units of any other area in the province. The Brooks horticultural station has done some experiments in the area, and they are finding that many of the products they grow mature from seven to 10 days faster in this area than they do in Brooks. Tied in with this is the opportunity that this area should have in future productivity of food and the chance for a basic agricultural-orientated industry to process this food and to ship to other areas in Canada, maybe even in the world, with a stamp on it "Made and Grown in Alberta", a stamp that we should be justly proud of.

The cow-calf situation in Alberta has had a very rough time lately. A few months ago we saw the fellows outside, picketing for help with the situation. And just as it appears that the market has changed to help improve the situation, cattlemen in southern Alberta receive another blow. The people saw fit to close the Suffield grazing reserve. This left about 5,000 cows with no pasture. A considerable number of people in my constituency put cattle in there. Now, for 5,000 more cows to be dumped on the cattle market could be very disastrous indeed.

It appears that the environmentalists feel it is better to let the tanks tear up the grass, have fires, burn it off; that that does less damage than overgrazing around the waterholes. Mr. Speaker, maybe overgrazing is damaging. But not being able to properly provide water systems in a rangeland is also very damaging. It would seem to me that we're going to lose a lot more wildlife with the land being burnt off and being chased away than will be done with overgrazing.

There is an industry in Bow Island called the Bow Island Bean Growers, a group of men who had an idea. At the time it was started, there was virtually little government help available for an agricultural industry, so they went to the bank. They backed their own loans to build their plant. At the time I believe it cost in excess of \$500,000. 1972 was their first year of operation from the new plant. They had 1,200 acres in beans. In 1975 they had 3,850 acres, and their projection for this coming year is 5,000 acres. Now these beans are shipped and marketed in such places as Latin America, South America, Europe, northern Africa, and even Cuba. This, Mr. Speaker, shows what the people of Alberta are all about. They have an idea. They were not able to get the help they needed, so they did it themselves. They were sure enough of their idea that they pushed this idea, they put their own farms at stake, and they went ahead with it. And it appears now that every ounce of their product is salable. They don't have any carry-over,

and they can't grow enough.

Mr. Speaker, while I was in Britain, I took the liberty to spend a little bit of time in the strangers' gallery of the Houses of Parliament. The scene was very different indeed to what it is here. They don't have the desks. All they have is benches. The table in the centre is much bigger. I always thought the table in the centre had some ceremonial importance, but it appears over there that it's for Mr. Wilson to put his feet up so he can relax, lay back, and have a little bit of a snooze while the other people are asking the questions. It appears that this kind of attitude is the kind of attitude that they have taken towards their economy — lackadaisical. It appears as if it doesn't seem to matter what happens. They think they don't have to answer to anybody.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read a portion of an article from the *Medicine Hat News*. It was on February 26. It was a leader of, let's say, a party conspicuous by its absence in this House who spoke to the Chamber of Commerce in my home town. It appears my annual meeting was a short time after that. I didn't have any news coverage to talk about this gentleman's comments made in my home town, so I would like to take this opportunity. Part of it is:

Alberta's future lies in agriculture and food production, not in the "gung-ho industrialization policy" of the Lougheed government, . . .

Well, you know it seems that we've been saying this all along. We've been saying, diversification. This is the name of the game. There may be a time when the petrochemical industry or industry based on the natural resources runs out. If the land is managed properly, it will always be there. I'd like to read another paragraph, Mr. Speaker, that says:

"The Rip Van Winkles in Edmonton haven't realized yet," but there has been a "complete flip in the economy" from manufacturing to agriculture . . .

Well, I would suggest that maybe this gentleman is the Rip Van Winkle. Who does he suppose helped try to set wheels in motion to diversify the economy of Alberta, to put more emphasis on agriculture-orientated industry? It would appear he has not sat in the gallery for any longer than the question period to hear about our philosophy in rural Alberta.

Another paragraph says:

. . . Albertans must change their "buffalo-hunter" mentality toward the land. Albertans must learn that the land is "not something to rob . . . and then get out."

I think we realize this. Why does he suppose the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources has spent a considerable amount of time in Ottawa negotiating, trying to tell that government down there that we're tired of giving, giving, giving? It's our turn to get something in return.

Mr. Speaker, the hospital in Bow Island is a 20-bed hospital. It is having a 20-bed nursing home wing added to it. The date for completion of construction is, I believe, in July of this year. This is a new concept. The concept is of two wings of different types of health care using the same centralized facilities. Maybe it isn't big, but it's something new; it's something different. Maybe we can supply the same care, or a better rate of care, for a cheaper dollar, and thus leave more money available for health care somewhere else.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I'll say too much about the Land Use Forum, because I would like to join in that debate at a later time. But I think the different ideas that are going to come forth are going to be interesting. It appears as if some of the comments the forum made will lead to a very lively debate, and I wait until this comes to the floor of the House.

What about transportation? I see the the hon. Deputy Premier and Minister of Transportation is here. I'd like to caution him very seriously, regardless of what the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway said, to consider very carefully before he reduces the speed limit in my constituency. I'm afraid, like the hon. Member for Vegreville, I, too, have a somewhat heavy foot. It is a big constituency to cover, and I would hate to start paying some of those \$30 fines quite regularly, then find out that I have to walk it after a short while.

Recurrent upgrading of No. 3 throughout this constituency is greatly appreciated. For many years, No. 3 was not touched. It was upgraded to a point about 3 miles from my border in the constituency of Taber-Warner. There was a conspicuous absence of completion of this highway. It was given many names; some of them were mentioned in the previous speeches by other hon. members at the start of the last session. But now this government has done a great deal on this highway. There is a section of approximately 10 miles left to do, that is, with the recently announced contract on about a 6-mile section. About 3 of it again is in the hon. Member for Taber-Warner's [constituency] and the remainder is in my own. We await, and we hope, that the

remainder is coming quite soon.

Secondary roads in this constituency have also taken a great step forward through the previous administration. It appears as if not too much was done in the previous time, for different reasons. I've heard some of the reasons which I will not comment on. But we're making steps now. Maybe restraint is going to hold us back, but I urge the minister to take all considerations. Some of you fellows up north think you've got bad roads, well, we've got some too. I must admit that maybe it's not quite as bad as [for] the Member for Spirit River-Fairview, where you go 90 miles out to a school. Well, I've got areas where you go almost that far, but you don't see trees, you see grass, and maybe a few cows.

As I end the debate, I'd like to thank the Speaker for his indulgence, and thank the members for listening to me.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I move we adjourn debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

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

[The House rose at 5:20 p.m.]

