

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: **Thursday, March 18, 1976 2:30 p.m.**

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

**PRAYERS**

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, today I have the great pleasure of introducing on behalf of my colleague, the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands, some 10 students and their teacher, Mrs. Aponiuk, from Grant MacEwan Community College, Assumption campus. I believe they are in the members gallery. I would ask them to rise and be recognized by the House.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Legislature, 25 Grade 9 children seated in the public gallery from William Roper Hull Home in my constituency. I'd ask them to stand and be greeted by the Legislature.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, today it's a great pleasure for me to introduce to you, and to members of the Assembly, a large contingent of Grade 9 students from Laurier Heights in the constituency of Edmonton Glenora. They are in both galleries, 50 in the members gallery and 35 in the public gallery. I ask that they rise and be recognized by the Assembly at this time.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to the House a distinguished visitor from Calgary, who I believe is in the Speaker's gallery. I'm doing it on faith, hoping I'm not pulling a Hohol or a Getty, because I can't see him. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce Col. Sam Blakely, former colonel of the Calgary Highlanders, now the senior staff officer of South Alberta Militia, a member of the Calgary public school board, and director of social services for the city of Calgary. I ask him now to rise and be recognized.

**head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, as required by statute I'd like to table the annual report of the Northern Alberta Development Council.

**head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****Age of Majority**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address the first question to the hon. Attorney General. On Tuesday last, the hon. minister stated that he would like to

review the Supreme Court decision regarding the age at which a young person becomes an adult. Can the hon. minister inform the House if he has had that opportunity to review the situation?

MR. FOSTER: Not at this moment, Mr. Speaker, no.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the hon. minister indicate if he is going to, or has made any representation to the federal government to have this statute changed?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I believe my colleague, the Solicitor General, has commented in the House on this subject before to the effect that we will be making representations to Ottawa with respect to their proposed Young Persons in Conflict with the Law report and legislation. That is a subject under active discussion by several of my colleagues. We expect to be in a position in the near future to respond in terms of a government stand on the matter, as well as a response to the federal government.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a point of clarification since we've had a fair amount of representation on this. For the enlightenment of the members as well as myself and the people involved, can the hon. Attorney General indicate the present status of adulthood in Alberta? How does it apply in the courts?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to obtain a copy of the report and make that available in detail to the House, if you'd like, either by commitment now or in a motion for return.

**Hearings on the Environment**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address the second question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. I would like to know if the hon. minister is in a position to inform the Legislature when he will ask for hearings by the Environment Conservation Authority on the proposed Dodds-Round Hill coal mine.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, that question is presently receiving a great deal of attention from members of the Executive Council. It's a rather complex situation insofar as the ECA is concerned, involving their schedule of hearings, either scheduled or proposed, for other topics in other parts of the province, as well as the best way the residents of the area might be served by way of a hearing, inasmuch as the ERCB is obliged to hold one if an application is received.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'll give the two areas in one blast, because my voice may not hold out that long. I may need help from the hon. Deputy Premier and he may not offer it — medically, that is.

As far as other areas of concern for the Environment Conservation Authority, will there be hearings with North Western Pulp and Power Ltd. on the air and water pollution in the Hinton area — and the Syncrude project?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, those are the two specific examples I was alluding to in the first part of my answer to the hon. member's previous question. In addition the ECA has other hearings under way in a preliminary way, by way of the initial research. They have been scheduled for some time. So I suppose the task before us is to see how and when and what hearings should be held in the manner that best serves the public of Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for clarification to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise the Assembly then if the government is looking favorably at this stage upon asking the ECA to hold public hearings on the Dodds-Round Hill project?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to use the word "favorably", because of the following reasons. The Department of the Environment has had a resource person available to the citizens of the area for some time. We're trying to assess what their concerns are, what information they need, and what type of hearing they feel would best suit their purposes. At the moment we're uncertain whether it would be better for just the ERCB to hold a hearing, if the ECA or perhaps the department or some other agency should be involved in some way. So all possible alternatives are being studied very carefully.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of the minister's answer, will any specialized assistance be given to other groups that might want to make submissions to the ERCB, bearing in mind that ERCB hearings are much more technical in nature? I'm thinking for example of Unifarm, which has some very strong views on the question.

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, bearing in mind the nature and makeup of the Environment Conservation Authority — the whole purpose and philosophy of their hearings is to get out into the community and hear from the people themselves what their concerns are. We'd be very disappointed if the ECA developed into the kind of forum where very expensive, technical, hired expertise was used. The idea is to hear the citizens themselves. It's for that reason we've made available to the citizens the resource person from the Department of the Environment I previously referred to.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question for clarification. Perhaps the minister misunderstood me. My question did not relate to technical assistance to prepare submissions to the ECA. One well understands the nature of the ECA.

My question is: in the event the government does not propose that ECA hold hearings, and the hearings are held by the ERCB, will any technical assistance be made available to groups which may want to make submissions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member's question is hypothetical, and perhaps could be put again if and when the eventuality he has in mind comes to pass.

MR. NOTLEY: Well, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can rephrase that so it's not hypothetical. Is the question of making this kind of assistance available to groups being considered as an option at this time?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe the best way to try to answer that question is that we're very much aware of the concerns of the citizens. Our only objective is to make sure the proper forum and the best method of hearing their concerns is arrived at. That's what we're working towards.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. Can the minister indicate to the Legislature and the people in the area if there would be funds available to assist these people in their presentations and, shall we say, in their fight against the proposed plant?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, it would appear that the hon. member is repeating a question which has already been asked.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

#### **Third-level Air Service**

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Deputy Premier in charge of transportation. Would the minister indicate when the request for proposals will be put out for the extension of the third-level air service for Brooks, Lloydminster, and Saint Paul?

DR. HORNER: We expect in a matter of the next few weeks. We're working on the matter at the moment.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Have any potential dates been set for the extension of air service for these centres? Could the minister estimate what amount of time will elapse after the proposals are received before there will be air service to these areas?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the timetable will go something like this. The request for proposals will go out and a date will be set when we should receive them. The process of evaluation will go on. Hopefully, while that process of evaluation is going on, there will also be some preliminary work done with the federal ministry of transport to obtain the necessary licences that are going to be required to implement the service.

As an estimate only, it may take as long as six months from the time the request for proposals is advertised until we get the schedule in operation.

#### **Crowsnest Rates**

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture. My question has been brought brought to my attention this morning by one of my constituents. There's a growing concern from Calgary area cattlemen about the adverse effects of the Crowsnest Pass rates on feed costs, resulting in a weakened competitive

position.

I wonder if the government is doing anything to improve that position as far as feed costs are concerned.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, there is indeed a concern throughout Alberta with respect to those involved in the feeding of cattle, regarding the inequities which they consider exist because of feed-grain prices in Alberta related to the freight costs of moving live and processed cattle into the eastern market. Mr. Speaker, our review of the Crowsnest Pass rates is very simply that western Canada has benefited for many years. Any move by this government to eliminate the Crow rates would place a very real hardship on western grain producers. The resulting financial benefits to people in the cattle feeding business would not in any way outweigh the loss to grain producers.

Mr. Speaker, we're involved in a variety of other things in trying to overcome some of those difficulties. Indeed I — and, I expect, the Minister of Transportation — could elaborate on them to some extent, perhaps at another time.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Will freight rates be a major point of discussion when we are bargaining for an increase of \$2 per barrel for our oil?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member is well aware, we have taken the view — and I think I have repeated this on a number of occasions in this House — that since the Western Economic Opportunities Conference, we don't look at the question of important changes in Confederation relative to transportation as something that needs be bargained, by way of our giving, in the sense of a resource pricing, to a very legitimate position of western Canadians with regard to a new deal in transportation. We've had the statement made by the federal government on a policy basis over a year ago which reflects and accepts many of the positions that we took at the Western Economic Opportunities Conference.

We are not prepared — and I'd like to repeat this again — we are not prepared in this House to take the view that to get a fair deal in transportation for western Canada and Alberta we have to bargain with our resources. We think it's part of Confederation we're entitled to.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Does the term of reference of the Hall Commission request a recommendation on the Crowsnest rates?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. member, I think this would be a document which would be generally available, and would not need to be paraphrased in the Assembly by the minister.

#### Rail Cost Disclosure

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Is the Premier in a position to advise the Assembly what progress has been made with respect to the important question of

rail rate cost disclosure, which was one of the major issues at the WEOC?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'd refer that question to the Minister of Transportation.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the initial cost disclosures have been made available to us. I think I'm correct in this, so far those have been mainly related to the transportation of coal.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise the House whether the initial cost disclosure information made available to the government props up the arguments of the railways? Or does it expose some new information which should be made public?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I think members will recall that the cost disclosure was based on the confidentiality factor relative to the two railway lines. I would expect that we would hear more relative to the conclusions of the Hall Commission in this area. The commission could then make them public if they so desire.

#### ADC Loans

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture, and relates to the question of Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation loans. Has the minister received or otherwise obtained the records of direct loans made to individual farmers or to family farm companies, including the names of the borrowers, the loan amounts, and the payment records of each loan?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, there are something close to 9,000 files with respect to direct and guaranteed loans to farmers, in the Ag. Development Corporation in Camrose. I have never asked for nor received from the Ag. Development Corporation — my understanding is the situation was the same with regard to the previous Minister of Agriculture — a complete list of loans granted, applications refused, or anything of that nature.

Mr. Speaker, it of course follows, as a result of responsibilities in that area, I do become aware of individuals who have made applications and may have had them approved or refused because they contacted my office directly and provided that information.

MR. HORSMAN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister ever caused such loan records to be made available to individual MLAs or other persons?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, not in total, certainly not. Individual MLAs and other persons within the Department of Agriculture have asked, from time to time, for information with regard to a particular loan. Some of that has been supplied on a confidential basis, when it is our judgement that it's required.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question to the hon. Deputy Premier, in light of the fact that the Deputy Premier promised that if we requested to look at such

lists, they would be available in his office. Can the Deputy Premier indicate to us — Mr. Speaker, then we will check *Hansard*, for that reply was made two years ago.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, let me clear it up. The hon. member is not correct, as usual. In the previous session we made the commitment that certain information on an individual loan would be made available on a confidential basis at the request of the MLA. At no time in my office, as the present minister has said, has there ever been a total list of the loans that the ADC made.

#### **Shell Oil Sands Discussions**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. It flows from questions asked the other day by the hon. Leader of the Opposition with respect to future oil sands development.

Mr. Speaker, my question is: is the hon. minister in a position to advise the Assembly of the current status of negotiations with Shell on their proposed oil sands project?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, in my last discussions with Shell they were attempting to monitor the ability of Canadian and other fund supplies, the supply of dollars they could raise in order to finance such a massive project, as it now appears the third plant may cost something in the order of \$3 billion. They were going to be talking to banks, finance houses, and investment dealers in an attempt to establish whether they could raise the kind of money that's necessary. I think it would be fair to say they were pessimistic about their ability to do so.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister in light of his answer. In view of the difficulties of obtaining that kind of money, is it true that the Shell people have asked the Government of Alberta or officials for a 10-year holiday on royalties and a 50 per cent government investment?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, if it is true they've never made the request of me, nor am I aware of it.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. During the negotiations with the Shell people, have they made any request for a floor price on the price of oil beyond the international price of crude oil?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, they have not with regard to the third plant. As I recall, there was some considerable discussion of that matter when the Shell oil company was considering joining the Syncrude project. But at that time they felt that inasmuch as the government believed the project commercial terms were not negotiable, the arrangement was just too tough. Therefore, they backed off from joining the Syncrude project. But at that time, there was some discussion of a floor price.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Has the government

given any consideration to assisting Shell in the search for commercial funds outside of direct government investment?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Colorado Oil Shales**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of previously stated fears in the House about competition from the oil shales in the United States, has the government obtained any recent statistics to measure the size of the so-called threat of competition from the Colorado or mid-western oil shales?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as part of their normal responsibilities of monitoring energy matters throughout the world, we have in the department and the Energy Resources Conservation Board certain information having to do with the oil shales. It's my view that the situation is probably the same as in the past, that it's strictly a judgment as to how large the threat is.

I might say, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with a third oil sands plant, we should all be clear that those who need that resource are not the people of Alberta. The development is most important to other Canadians who will require the supply in the future.

#### **Alberta Food Products Limited**

MR. JAMISON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, I understand that Alberta Food Products has recently indicated that construction is being postponed on their new plant in the M.D. of Sturgeon across from Fort Saskatchewan.

I'm wondering if the minister has any reason for this postponement.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I have not yet seen any news release with regard to the postponement. I have not yet been advised by the plant developers of a postponement.

#### **Unemployment Statistics**

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Labour. In the recent news release that Canada is now facing the highest unemployment rate since 1961, could the minister advise whether there are any provinces besides Alberta that have a reduced unemployment rate?

MR. SPEAKER: There is some question whether this is the sort of question that should be dealt with in the question period. Presumably, when published by other provinces, those figures would be as available to the hon. member as they might be to the minister.

#### **Government Waste Paper**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of the Environment. What happens to what must be tons of waste paper that go out of this

building every week and every month? Is it recycled, shredded, burned, or given to the *Edmonton Journal*?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I don't know, but I'll try to find out. Perhaps the hon. Minister of Government Services could add to that, but I would have to find out.

#### **Southwest Calgary By-pass**

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of Transportation. Can we be advised of the present status of planning for the southwest Calgary by-pass in view of the proposed south residential expansion?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, in the ongoing discussions with the city of Calgary, relative to the western portion of the city, our indications to them are simply that we would favor a northwest by-pass in the area of the Bears paw Dam, well away from the present and proposed residential construction.

#### **Dental Care**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. It flows from a question asked yesterday by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Does the minister agree with recent statements made by the Alberta Dental Association that fully 90 per cent of dental problems in Alberta are preventable with proper education and hygiene?

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly that's the kind of opinion the hon. member might seek elsewhere.

MR. NOTLEY: Supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of the importance of this matter, has the government obtained any statistics on it?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what statistics have been gathered within the department, but I know it's part of an intensive and ongoing study. Without a doubt they would have as much statistical information as they can obtain.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Could I ask a supplementary of the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health? Could she advise the House if she's considering legislation to have the fluoridation of all public water supplies in the province of Alberta, so those of us in Calgary can enjoy the same water we have in Edmonton?

MISS HUNLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not anticipating bringing in such mandatory legislation. I hope that enlightenment, advertising, encouragement, and education will make these things come to pass.

#### **Fertilizer Prices**

MR. MANDEVILLE: My question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Does the minister's department do any monitoring of fertilizer prices in Alberta, particularly prices paid by Alberta farmers as compared to U.S. farmers?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, on a quarterly basis we do monitor the costs of all agricultural inputs in Alberta, including fertilizer.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate why the price of Canadian fertilizer is so much higher than the price in the United States?

MR. SPEAKER: It's very doubtful whether this comes within the obligations of the minister. Perhaps the member might wish to put the question on the Order Paper to get the statistics if they are available. Then perhaps he could form his own opinion.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate whether there is going to be an adequate supply of fertilizer in Canada for the coming year?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I can only say that the departmental review of the fertilizer supplies available in Alberta would indicate that the supplies are better this year than they have been for about three years. Aside from some possible localized conditions, we would expect no serious supply problems with either nitrogen or phosphate fertilizers in Alberta in 1976.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Has the minister's department received any complaints on the pricing of fertilizer in Alberta?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, not that I am aware of.

MR. NOTLEY: Supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Can the minister advise the House whether the monitoring conducted by the department and Unifarm has a comparison of prices in parts of Canada and the United States as part of its mandate?

MR. MOORE: No, Mr. Speaker. That particular contract with Unifarm working with our department does not require them to compare prices with other jurisdictions. Using the information we have in Alberta, most certainly we're able to relate that to statistics with regard to prices obtained from Statistics Canada and other sources with regard to prices.

I'm sure Alberta farmers continue to have the lowest agricultural input costs of any farmers in Canada.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Labour but I really have one additional supplementary question, if I may, to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. In light of recent reports, can the hon. minister assure the House that fertilizer produced in Alberta is in fact sold to Albertans cheaper than it is anywhere else, including the United States of America?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, no, indeed I cannot. As members well recall, one and two years ago the cost of fertilizer was substantially higher outside this province than it was in Alberta. As I understand it,

the situation with regard to the pricing of phosphate rock and other materials brought from outside our borders would indicate that there has been a softening of prices in the United States. It may well be that fertilizer is being sold in the United States today for somewhat less — I don't think it's a great deal — than it is in Alberta.

I can say, however, that since the development of some new fertilizer plants in this province in recent months, companies have agreed, as part of the condition attached to their permits, that they would price and sell fertilizer within this province at a price not to exceed what they were selling it for outside Alberta's boundaries.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Has the government given any consideration to the question of competition in the price of fertilizer products? I'm not going to say "in the light of", pending legal resolution of it. But as a general question, has the government given any consideration to the competition or otherwise in the fertilizer business?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, in the fertilizer business, similar to other farm input costs, we've always believed that a good deal of competition is good for the industry and the consuming public purchasing whatever product it is. Indeed, we encourage that competition.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Perhaps I didn't clearly state the question. I apologize for not doing so. As the minister well knows, there are charges pending under The Combines Investigation Act.

My question is: in view of the seriousness of that particular matter, has the department as a preliminary policy considered looking into the question of competition among fertilizer companies to assess, itself, whether there is adequate competition at the present time?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, no. I don't believe that has been a function of the Department of Agriculture.

#### **Concrete Industry Labor Dispute**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Labour. It concerns the recent lockout by ready-made concrete companies and Teamsters workers.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. minister is: is the Department of Labour involved at this point in time? Is he in a position to report any progress in resolving this dispute?

MR. CRAWFORD: As in all such cases, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be too much to presume on my part today to report progress or otherwise in the discussions. However, it is certainly so that department officials have been meeting with the parties in order to be informed of the situation and to see if any mediation or conciliation service might be offered.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of his answer,

is the department providing mediation or conciliation services at this time?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the specific activity is today. The department's policy is to be available and to be in touch with the parties in all such disputes. I have no doubt that that has taken place. The department officials have been in touch in order to be informed of the situation. I don't know what the specific activities are as of today.

I would have to add that the real accommodation reached in cases like this, as the hon. member would be well aware, is really quite fully dependent upon the willingness of the parties to reach that accommodation.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. Premier. In view of the importance of resolving this particular dispute and the impact it has on housing and construction in the province, is the government in a position to advise the House what time period the government foresees for a voluntary settlement before public action will have to be taken?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is well aware that on a general basis in this province we have been very fortunate in terms of the minimal degree of labor disputes that we have. That's a matter, though, that's clearly within the portfolio and jurisdiction of the Minister of Labour and I'd refer the question to him.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member — unless I misunderstand him — is presuming a great deal if he's presuming that the government involvement would go beyond the area of providing a conciliation or mediation service as requested by the parties.

#### **Coal Testing**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Energy. A very short explanation is necessary first. I believe a mix of Alberta coals has been sent to Ontario for testing by Ontario Hydro and other industries.

Has the hon. minister had any results from those tests?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, during a recent visit by the chairman of the board of Ontario Hydro, we discussed the potential for such a blend being used in Ontario. They have run the tests on the blends. However, other than an initial reaction in a telephone conversation that it looked promising, I have not had any confirmation in a technical way as to details of the results of that blend test.

#### **Licence Plate Sales**

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Solicitor General. Can he advise the House why the preregistration slips for motor vehicles are not in the mail to this date?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to take that question under advisement. We do expect to have licence plates on sale by April 1, which is a consider-

able advance on last year, despite the fact we have moved to a new building, installed new computers, and carried out the substantial new division of responsibility from the former Department of Highways.

#### **Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Institute**

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, Fort Saskatchewan jail wasn't mentioned today, so I would like to direct my question to the hon. Solicitor General. Could the minister advise whether overoccupancy at the Fort Saskatchewan jail has been in existence for a long time, or is it something that has developed over a short while?

MR. FARRAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd say that it has been getting progressively worse due to the increased caseload which corresponds to the rising crime rate and the growing delays in the court system — the number of remands and so on. However, I believe the particular institution has been a problem for many years. We're probably now reaping the harvest of neglect from days prior to 1971 when justice was just a sideline done as a sort of second priority by the premier of that day.

#### **Juvenile Offenders**

DR. BUCK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Solicitor General indicate where young offenders were transferred after Bowden was sold by the Conservative government to the federal government? Can the Solicitor General indicate where these young offenders were transferred after Bowden was closed?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, that question should be properly put to my colleague, the Hon. Helen Hunley, the Minister of Social Services and Community Health, who is responsible for young offenders.

MISS HUNLEY: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I was not listening to the hon. member. Would he repeat the question?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the question is: can the hon. minister indicate into which institution young juvenile offenders were transferred after the provincial government sold Bowden to the federal government?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid the hon. member may be confused about who are juvenile offenders. Juvenile offenders were not in Bowden. Juveniles had always been a responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Development. They were at YDC, William Roper Hull Home, or various group homes. That's where juveniles have been kept until — well I don't know when it started. Under the previous government there was a change in Bowden and I believe that's when those changes were made. That's the way it is today.

#### **Rent Regulation**

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs reflecting on the tenants of Alberta. If a landlord desires an increase beyond the provincial guidelines regarding rental increases, Mr. Speaker, can the tenant offer information to the rental review board in confidence, meaning the name of the tenant will not be used, so the tenant will have the feeling of not being threatened?

MR. HARLE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. That's provided for in the legislation.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, recognizing that fact, would the minister consider advertising that information so tenants will have that latitude and know it?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, every member of this Assembly is aware of the statutes of the province and can communicate these facts to his constituents.

I would also indicate that in fact we have done some advertising and I will just check to see whether that particular matter was mentioned.

#### **Senior Citizens' Benefits**

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address this question to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health. It has been reported that because of social security benefits a large number of senior citizens in this province are living common-law. As it now stands, a couple may be economically better off to live together common-law than to marry.

I was wondering if the minister anticipates any changes in the social security benefits to alleviate this situation.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd be shocked and surprised to find out a few dollars difference is what makes people decide to live common-law or to marry. I have an opinion that our senior citizens have higher values than that, but I'm not one to moralize about who should live with whom. I think that's a decision they need to make for themselves.

MR. NOTLEY: It's a question of incentive.

#### **Government Waste Paper** (continued)

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the question of the hon. Member for Drumheller, all government waste paper is sold on a contract basis. So we've been getting money from the contract for the paper we dispose of.

#### **Fertilizer Prices** (continued)

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address this question to the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. It relates to the issue of fertilizer

pricing in the province of Alberta, which was posed to the hon. Minister of Agriculture.

My question to the hon. minister is whether he can advise if his department has studied the question of competition in the fertilizer industry.

MR. HARLE: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is it the government's intention to give this matter serious consideration in light of present court proceedings?

MR. HARLE: Not at this time, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege to bring a matter to your attention and to the members of the Legislature, in that a nod is very difficult to record in *Hansard*. Mr. Speaker, first of all I thought I had a Nixon pulled on me, because I went to look at *Hansard* and the two middle pages were missing. But then I found one that was complete.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to read a portion from that *Hansard*. It's the bottom of page 194, and I am speaking.

Mr. Speaker, it's quite obvious this motion is going to be rejected. But I would like to ask the hon. minister if that information will be made available to us on a confidential basis, as the former Minister of Agriculture promised the opposition side of the House that [the] information would be available to the members on a confidential basis. If it is, I will accept that.

And the hon. Deputy Premier nodded, Mr. Speaker. But that nod was quite obviously not recorded. So I would like to read from *Hansard*, page 3394, October 31, 1974. Under Motions for Returns, Motion No. 205 is by the former hon. member, Mr. Drain. The hon. Deputy Premier is answering.

Mr. Speaker, if I might just make a remark which applies to this motion and some of the others which are following. We would certainly accept all of these motions with the understanding that we do not feel it is necessary to make public the names of individual farmers involved. We are quite willing to make any of the agribusiness public and quite willing to give the commitment that the individual farm loans are available in confidence to the MLAs. But I think it would be unfortunate if that wasn't the understanding in regard to these motions for a return.

DR. HORNER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that's exactly what I said earlier this afternoon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Since the hon. member has not proposed a motion in regard to this alleged question of privilege, no action is required on it from the Chair.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

120. Mr. Notley asked the government the following question:

With reference to the statement of the former Minister of the Environment made in the Alberta Legislature on May 30, 1974, *Hansard*, page 2761, indicating that he agreed to a request by Syncrude Canada Ltd. to revise one of its reports before it was made public:

- (a) What is the name of the report referred to?
- (b) In what specific respect was the report altered?
- (c) Were revisions prior to publication permitted by the Minister of the Environment in the case of any other of Syncrude's reports made public by the minister?

MR. RUSSELL: I agree to accept the question.

121. Mr. Notley asked the government the following question:

1. How many civil service staff positions will be abolished as a result of the contracting of food, laundry, and housekeeping services to VS Services Ltd. at ASH/Deerhome in Red Deer?
2. How many civil service positions will be created for ward, counselling, and administrative services as a result of the construction of group homes at ASH/Deerhome during:
  - (a) 1975-76
  - (b) 1976-77
  - (c) 1977-78
  - (d) 1978-79
  - (e) 1979-80.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the question stand.

### head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following motions for returns stand and retain their place on the Order Paper: 118, 119, 122, 123, 124, 128, 129, 130, and 131.

DR. BUCK: Could the minister read those again, Mr. Speaker?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, the motions for returns that I was reading out, requesting that they stand and retain their place on the Order Paper are: 118, 119, 122, 123, 124, 128, 129, 130, and 131.

[Motion carried]

116. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

The cost to the Provincial Treasury of the Alberta petroleum exploration plan for the period January 1, 1975, to March 31, 1975, and the expenditure forecast for the plan for the fiscal years 1975-76



1976-77

1977-1978,

in each case giving the cost of each of the items given in the Premier's announcement of December 1974, and giving the assumptions used as to:

- (a) oil and gas prices,
- (b) Alberta production of oil and gas,
- (c) the part of production to which the plan will apply.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I urge the Assembly to reject this motion. My principal objection to the motion, and the grounds upon which I urge its rejection, is that the answer would involve guessing of the most extreme kind about future events. That, I submit, Mr. Speaker, is not the kind of answer that ought to be asked for, either during the Oral Question Period or by Written Question or under Motions for Returns.

However, before developing that argument, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to call attention to the wording of the motion, and in particular the phrase, "the cost to the Provincial Treasury of the Alberta petroleum exploration plan". It then sets out the periods. Mr. Speaker, I suspect, if we answered that literally, the answer would not be what the hon. member who moved the motion was looking for. In the sense of a cost to the Treasury, if one were to regard that as an appropriation, I doubt that there is very little money, if any, in the Treasury appropriations to deal with the six elements of the plan outlined by the hon. Premier in December, 1974, which is referred to in the motion. If the hon. member was referring to things such as reduced revenues or something of that nature, and meant that by the [word] "cost", I would think he ought to withdraw the motion and change the wording to make that clear. Because ordinarily, when we're asked to provide cost figures, we're talking about sums of money paid out by the government pursuant to an appropriation or a special warrant.

However, that really wasn't the substance of my reasons for urging redirection of the motion, Mr. Speaker. They were that, of necessity, this involves a great deal of guessing in order to provide an answer. For example, Mr. Speaker, the motion does not call for costs that have been incurred, or foregone revenues — if that's what the question intends — that have happened up to this time, but requests predictions for several years into the future. On that part of it, dealing with such things as revenue and prices, we must of necessity speculate on future prices and future production.

I do want to call to the attention of members of the Assembly that those things are, in some respects, not within the control of the provincial government at all. For example, the amount of oil or natural gas that might be produced in Alberta is to some extent, at least, determined by federal decisions. Take the case of a reduction in exports to the United States and the amount of the exports there: [that] would be under the control of the federal government. If that occurred, there would be a drop in production in Alberta. In addition, parts of the Alberta petroleum exploration plan deal with tax matters. Indeed, the plan came into existence because of changes in the federal taxation system. If future changes were made — and again it's purely a matter of speculation

whether they are made — it would affect the information being requested.

Perhaps a more serious objection, in the sense that it involves much more guessing, lies in the benefit side of that program. To refresh the memories of members of the Legislature, I simply want to mention that the program involves six elements: an increase in the select price of crude oil, a royalty tax credit program, a royalty tax rebate program, a reduction of the incremental royalty rate in respect to old oil, a reduction of the royalty rate on old natural gas, and an exploration drilling incentive system. Those were the six elements of the plan.

The question asked for the cost to the Provincial Treasury of the plan. Now the cost surely, Mr. Speaker, must involve a net calculation. If we were talking about such things as foregone revenue, if that's what the mover of the motion intended by the use of the word "cost to the Provincial Treasury", we must put a calculation of benefits on the other side of the equation. As I hope I will be able to demonstrate, that very much involves a guessing game.

Hon. members will remember that this program was introduced because of the importance of this industry to the economy of the province of Alberta; because of the harm that, in our view, had been done to that industry by certain moves of the federal government in the taxation field; and the need for provincial action.

On the revenue side, let me point to a very clear example. That lies in the area of bonus payments, lease rentals, and payments made when oil and natural gas exploration leases and permits, and what have you, are up for auction. I'm sure the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources would support me in saying there has been a substantial increase in the payments made in those areas. Mr. Speaker, in any calculation of the cost of this program, that surely must be set off against any expenditures that might have been incurred under it or any foregone revenues.

Mr. Speaker, another example is the exploratory drilling incentives system. To speculate what sums are likely to be spent under that particular head of the program can be described as nothing other than pure guesswork. We're still talking about revenues. We may find that the increased exploration activity, their increased development activity which has occurred as a result of this plan — and I'm sure no one in Alberta would argue there hasn't been an increase in all those areas as a result of the plan. We have no idea what increased revenues that might lead to, so far as the provincial government is concerned.

For example, supposing a new oil field were discovered as a result of the exploratory drilling incentives system, production started from it during this period, and revenues by way of royalty flowed to the government because of that. In addition, Mr. Speaker, we've really no way of even guessing at what additional revenues may have come to the provincial government as a result of the viability of this industry, as a result of the fact that people are now working in it who wouldn't have been working in it without that plan. Those people are earning incomes and paying income tax, some of which comes to the provincial government. The same is true of the companies in this industry that have increased their activity and their incomes as a result

of the plan, and are contributing to the overall economic benefits of the province.

In short, and in a sentence, Mr. Speaker: "cost" within this motion for a return must — if given even the narrowest interpretation — mean the net cost; mean we'd have to set on one hand the expenditures under this program or foregone revenues, and deduct from that on the other hand all the gains this program has meant to the province of Alberta and to the revenue side of the provincial government's operations.

Mr. Speaker, as I said in my opening comments, it's my submission that that kind of guessing is not the proper subject matter of a motion for a return. We certainly want to give all hon. members all the information we can on questions such as this. If they want to do their own guessing or estimating, and require information the government might have that would help them in making their guesses or estimates, we're delighted to provide that.

Examples of that, Mr. Speaker, would be the Alberta production of oil and natural gas at this time. There are also some forecasts in documents prepared by the Energy Resources Conservation Board. The part of the production to which the royalty programs are applicable was again factual information that we can and would be pleased to provide. No doubt other factual information, such as the funds expended on the exploratory drilling incentive system to date, and a number of programs and items of that nature, would all go into the kind of speculation this motion calls for. We would be happy to provide that.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would simply say that, as a matter of principle, the kind of speculation this motion calls for is not one that ought to be made pursuant to an order for a return of this Assembly. But if the hon. member would restructure the question to call for factual information including, if he likes, the costs of the program to date, such a motion would be perfectly acceptable to us.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the hon. Attorney General — the hon. Provincial Treasurer, pardon me, I shouldn't omit that promotion of late — I couldn't help but feel that he regretted not being able to get back in the courtroom as often as he used to, so he could, as lawyers are wont to do, play with words.

Mr. Speaker, we have all sorts of rather adroit justifications for not providing this information. But as I view it, Mr. Speaker, this is information the people of Alberta have a right to obtain. I noticed that when the minister began to speak, he talked about well, if I had asked for revenue foregone instead of cost. But then he was very quick to point out that that really wasn't his major objection.

Mr. Speaker, I would certainly be quite pleased to reword the motion for a return and insert "revenue foregone". Whether you call it revenue foregone or cost, the fact of the matter is that I can't imagine the Department of Treasury does not have, at this stage, projections on the cost of ALPEP — all six features of the plan. As a matter of fact, I am absolutely certain they do. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Assembly has a right to at least call for that information. The government, in my judgment, has an obligation to provide it.

I find it interesting when he talks about the

difficulty of guessing the future. Well, that's true, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure we all recognize that in something as topsy-turvy as petroleum it's difficult to guess. Of course, we did have some interesting guesswork in the budget of 1975. We had the suggestion, for example, [of] the money that would be made available to the heritage trust fund. We're not going to reach that objective. But we had that kind of guesswork contained in the budget. So I find it a little difficult to understand why the minister isn't able to release the guesswork in this particular case — the guesswork we all know his department has compiled.

As a matter of fact, when the Premier announced ALPEP in early December, 1974, he outlined some of the costs. Mr. Speaker, my concern as a member of the Legislature is to obtain the most accurate data which I know the Department of Treasury will have at its disposal now, so that Albertans can properly debate this issue. It seems to me that is the kind of information which should be made available to the people of Alberta.

It's very easy to bring in programs called incentive programs, programs based in essence on revenue foregone. But whether it's revenue foregone or outright grants such as the federal DREE program, the fact of the matter is that it still costs the taxpayer money — money in the sense that people who are now paying taxes have to continue to pay more because other people aren't paying what they should, because of concessions such as ALPEP. Mr. Speaker, the people of the province have a right to know that kind of information.

I was interested in listening to the hon. Provincial Treasurer making the government's position clear — the position very clearly is that they don't want to release this information — and suggesting that if we're going to talk about the cost, we really have to talk about the net cost and get into the cost benefits. Mr. Speaker, with great respect to the hon. Provincial Treasurer, that wasn't what I asked for. I asked for the projections as to cost. That's what we need. Then we'll get into a debate on the benefits on one hand and the costs on the other hand. But at least we will have the most reliable figures the government has been able to obtain on the costs of this project.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether we're looking at \$300, \$400, or \$500 million a year, but we're looking at an awful lot of money. As the projections which found their way into my office last fall indicate, it's going to be a lot of money over the next 10 years. I would simply say that we have a right, as members of the Legislature, to see this information formally submitted to the House. I realize that 69 members can pass or defeat any motion for a return they choose. I only say to the hon. minister that I will redraft the motion and resubmit it.

[Motion lost]

117. Mr. R. Speaker proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

Copies of all reports presented to the Department of Social Services and Community Health, from January 1, 1975, to March 1, 1976, concerning the

contracting of support services at Alberta School Hospital/Deerhome.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. Member for Little Bow, I move Motion No. 117 standing on the Order Paper.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would urge this motion be defeated. Many of the reports received are confidential and need to remain so because of the method of contracting and of obtaining information and request for proposal development. I would therefore ask that hon. members reject this motion.

[Motion lost]

125. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

A copy of all feasibility studies and/or estimates of cost of a high-speed rail system between Edmonton and Calgary prepared by officials of the Department of Transportation and/or consultants working on behalf of the department.

DR. HORNER: That motion is acceptable, Mr. Speaker. One preliminary feasibility study is available now. Others are ongoing.

[Motion carried]

126. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

For the period April 1, 1975, through March 12, 1976

1. A copy of all submissions by the Minister of Agriculture to his federal and provincial counterparts concerning a federally and provincially funded cow-calf operator's income stabilization program.
2. A copy of all correspondence or other documentation forwarded by the federal Minister of Agriculture to the Alberta Minister of Agriculture in response to such submission, subject to the concurrence of the federal minister.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague the hon. Minister of Agriculture, and at his request, I accept the motion.

[Motion carried]

127. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

A copy of all Treasury memoranda prepared in the final six months of the term of the Slave Lake Special Area Agreement outlining the cost and benefits of said agreement.

MR. LEITCH: I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member expected someone to rise on this one, and I shall not disappoint him. I simply urge the House to

reject this motion on the basis of a long-standing practice both in this and other Houses that internal memoranda are not, as a matter of public policy, supplied pursuant to motions for returns.

[Motion lost]

## head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

1. Mr. Taylor proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to urge the Government of Canada to introduce legislation reinstating the death penalty for all persons convicted of murder.

MR. TAYLOR: One of the first things to do in a debate is define the terms. I would like to define the terms "death penalty" and "murder". By "death penalty" I mean death, but not necessarily by hanging. It can be by other, more humane methods, if the federal government so wishes to institute [them]. But it does mean death, in some form or other. In connection with "murder", I want to define that as meaning capital murder. To make it very clear, I want to read from the Criminal Code of Canada exactly what capital murder is. I emphasize that murder in this resolution does mean capital murder. I am reading from 202A of the Criminal Code of Canada.

1. Murder is capital murder or non-capital murder.
2. Murder is capital murder, in respect of any person, where
  - (a) it is planned and deliberate on the part of such person,
  - (b) it is within Section 202 and such person
    - (i) by his own act caused or assisted in causing the bodily harm from which the death ensued,
    - (ii) by his own act administered or assisted in administering the stupefying or overpowering thing from which the death ensued,
    - (iii) by his own act stopped or assisted in the stopping of the breath from which the death ensued,
    - (iv) himself used or had upon his person the weapon as a consequence of which the death ensued, or
    - (v) counselled or procured another person to do any act mentioned in subparagraph (i), (ii) or (iii) or to use any weapon mentioned in subparagraph (iv), or
  - (c) Such person by his own act caused or assisted in causing the death of
    - (i) a police officer, police constable, constable, sheriff, deputy sheriff, sheriff's officer or other person employed for the preservation and maintenance of the public peace, acting in the course of his duties, or
    - (ii) a warden, deputy warden, instructor, keeper, gaoler, guard, or other officer or permanent employee of a prison, acting in the course of his duties, or counselled or procured another person to do any act

causing or assisting in causing the death.

3. All murder other than capital murder is non-capital murder.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to emphasize that the word "murder" in this resolution is capital murder as defined in the present Criminal Code of Canada. With those two [terms] defined, I think we can start going into the resolution.

About a year ago, I introduced a resolution somewhat similar to the present resolution, but not exactly the same. As a matter of fact, the resolution which I introduced the last time and which was defeated by the Assembly did not ask that capital punishment be restored. It didn't go that far. It did not ask that capital punishment be carried out, as it is definitely set out in the Criminal Code. It didn't even ask for a change in the definition of capital punishment.

The present resolution is definitely asking that capital punishment be restored. It's far more definite than the last resolution in that respect. The last resolution suggested endeavored to do it step by step. But the way the federal government is dealing with this matter, in my view, the people of Alberta and of Canada are stating very definitely what they want done in the case of murder. That's exactly what this resolution is doing. I'm not dealing with the commutation section at the present time, and I'm not dealing with life imprisonment, which was suggested last time.

In the present definition of murder in the Criminal Code of Canada, we have found the federal government loath to act upon and to carry out the law as it has been enacted by Parliament. It would be refreshing to hear the members of the federal government say they are unwilling to sanction a hanging under any circumstances whatsoever, and to hell with what the law says, because that's exactly what the federal government has been doing. They are saying, it doesn't matter what the law says; we're not going to carry out the law. And when we have a government doing that in a democracy, we're defying the very essence of democracy.

The hon. Solicitor General in the federal government, the Hon. Warren Allmand, has used excuse after excuse to try to subterfuge his unwillingness to carry out the law as set out by the Parliament of Canada. In the last one, when three people were waiting to be hanged, he simply said that the three convicted killers would be held over because the law might be changed in the near future by the Parliament of Canada. That is one of the most ridiculous arguments I have ever heard. If we're going to follow that out, no law in this country could be enacted, or be enforced by the police forces. If they said, this law might be changed at some time in the future or at an early time in the future, it might be changed, so we will not enforce it at this time.

The price and wage controls would be an example. We know we're going to change those some time in the future, according to the statement of the government itself. But we're still going to enforce them during the time that that law is on the books, and properly so. In my view, the Canadian government has no excuse at all for defying the law set out by the Parliament of Canada and saying we will not enforce the law at the present time.

I believe society has to protect itself somehow from

those violent individuals who have proved by their actions they are extremely dangerous to other individuals within society. When we look at the record of what is happening in regard to murder, we find it's on the increase. We find the thugs of the country are becoming more violent. Every year there's an increased number of deaths due to murder. There's a tendency to pamper the criminals, to make sure all the rights of the criminals are preserved. Sometimes we forget about the rights of other citizens in this country. We're too anxious to support the rights of the thugs who are out to take life and to take the law into their own hands.

Well, what did the Canadian people think about the situation? Because democracy means that the government carries out the wishes of the people. I don't care how the federal government tries to get around this, it's not democracy if the government is defying the wishes of the people. The very beginning of representative government was that the representatives would go to the parliament to speak on behalf of the majority of their people, with the view of carrying out and enacting in law the wishes of the majority of the people of that community, that province, or that country. That today is not being carried out.

What do the people of Canada think? I realize Canadian opinion polls are not completely accurate, but they give a pretty fair indication on most subjects of this nature. In 1943, seven out of 10 said, let's hang the murderers — and they used the word "hanging" — let's hang the murderers. Only three out of 10 said, let's be lenient on them, let's pamper them, maybe they made a mistake and maybe we can rehabilitate them. Seventy per cent wanted hanging brought back in. That was in '43.

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair]

In 1966, that dropped to 51 per cent. There was a lessening of the feeling that murderers should be hanged. So it was just slightly over 50 per cent who still wanted hanging in this country — [for] the murderer to meet the death penalty, the same death he brought on somebody else. In 1971, six out of 10 — 60 per cent — said, we want hanging brought back. When it came to the guard section of the Criminal Code that I read, the policemen and guards, eight out of 10 said, we want hanging restored, capital punishment restored.

Well, I think the people of Canada have spoken pretty well. I took a poll in my own constituency a year ago, at the presessional public meetings, and over 80 per cent wanted capital punishment brought back. Number one, they wanted the government to carry out the act as it is now, and they definitely wanted the act amended so that those who murdered others would themselves be subjected to the death penalty.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what do we find [about] the pampering of prisoners going on today? No one objects to rehabilitation, but I think we have to look upon this matter of death to somebody else [in terms of] will it happen again, not on the chance that it's going to happen again. Last night after the improvement district meeting, I watched a scene for a few moments — I believe it was on CBC; I'm not quite sure which station, but I think it was CBC. A young murderer was so pampered by the police in that

particular story — which is supposed to be true — from some part of the States, that he murdered one little girl and was in the act of murdering several more. He was let out. He wasn't kept there. They said, maybe he's rehabilitated, we'll give him a chance. Well, Mr. Speaker, can we give a chance and take a chance with the lives of other people in the community? This matter of pampering the thugs and the criminals of this country has gone too far — far too far.

As a matter of fact, right in our own province we saw a terrible instance the other day where an excellent man in this province, who has contributed to the peace and the happiness of a community, was shot down. Why did it all happen? It happened because of pampering the criminals. Two people who are convicted of murder, charged with murder, and have a terrible record, are released into society. And that's what happens. This isn't justice, in any sense of the word.

Then, Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General tells us he's going to bring in a new order and bring in gun laws. I don't think that is at all what the people want. The people want more than simply new gun laws. They want a convicted criminal at least not to commit another terrible crime.

Now you might say this is a terrible way to feel about another human being. Well it may be, Mr. Speaker, but what was the feeling of those people themselves when they . . . What about the man with a .22 who shot his wife right in front of his own child? Why should I feel kindly towards a man like that? Whose wife will he shoot the next time, if he's permitted to go out into society again? Cold-blooded, deliberate murder! And we talk about trying to rehabilitate them and bring them back to society.

When I read statements like the one from a professor at Simon Fraser University who was hired by the Solicitor General of Canada to make a report on this matter, it makes me sick at the stomach, absolutely sick at the stomach. I wonder why professors like this . . . What they are teaching the young people in a university. If I had a son, he wouldn't go to Simon Fraser if they have those kinds of professors there.

They give his name, a criminologist, Ezzat Fattah. I hope I'm pronouncing his name right. [He was] hired and paid a sum of money to advise the Solicitor General of Canada about this matter of capital punishment, as if the Solicitor General of Canada had to pay taxpayers' money to find out what is right about capital punishment. He's there to enact the thinking of the people of Canada. That's why he's there. If he's not, he shouldn't be in a democracy, he should be in an autocracy, where one man tells the country what's good for them, or a dictatorship of some type.

An autocracy — that's the way the present Solicitor General of Canada is acting today. He's an autocrat. He's telling the people of Canada what's good for them, and he says, to hell with what you think, you're going to have what I give you. I hope the people in the Parliament of Canada tell him where to get off. He threatens to resign. Let him resign; the sooner the better, Mr. Speaker. Let's get somebody there who's going to carry out the wishes of the people of Canada, to deal with the increasing violence in this country, before we get as bad as some other

countries around us.

Well, what did Mr. Ezzat Fattah say to the Solicitor General? I might tell you who he is first of all: Professor Fattah, chairman of the criminology department at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. He goes on to tell the Solicitor General: "Canadian attitudes are almost as tough where hanging is concerned as they were in the 1940s and [the] 1950s." So what? The people have a right to their opinions. If they are just as tough, I think it's time they get tougher if we're going to restore peace and order to this country. The more we pamper these thugs, the worse the situation is going to get.

We talk about making it comfortable for them in prison. We talk about giving them wall-to-wall carpeting. We send them to university. The man who killed a policeman in Grande Prairie — the next thing we hear about him, he's going to university in the east, has a car at his disposal to drive back and forth from university. He gets tight — he hasn't even enough sense to keep sober — while he's driving, and is convicted of impaired driving. Only through the grace of God did he not take other lives.

While the working people of this country work like Trojans to put their sons and daughters through university, there's an easy way. Just kill a cop, and the Government of Canada will send you to university at public expense.

Mr. Speaker, the situation is getting pretty bad in this country. I was very happy to see a statement by a member for Calgary, Mr. Woolliams, who wasn't afraid to come out and say what he thought. Mr. Eldon Woolliams is the Progressive Conservative Member for Calgary North, and in a newspaper statement:

He said he was sure 70 per cent of Canadians would favor capital punishment for premeditated murder if a plebiscite was held on the issue.

The Canadian government has been challenged to hold a plebiscite, but no, they won't do it. They want to tell the people what's good for them. They don't want to know what the people want them to do. Mr. Woolliams said he is definitely in favor of capital punishment. Then he went on to define capital punishment as not necessarily meaning hanging, but it does mean death.

What did Mr. Fattah say about it? Well, he comes up with a lot of giggle-gaggle, the most nonsensical stuff I ever saw in my life. He doesn't even have enough sense to recognize the opinions of others as coming from people who are just as smart as he. But no, he said, "that better-educated Canadians tended to be more tolerant in their attitudes toward punishment". I know a lot of educated Canadians who want capital punishment. They are just as clever as Professor Fattah, and maybe a lot more so. He says:

Support for capital punishment seems to be associated with prejudice, ethnocentrism, and low regard for values such as equality, forgiveness and love.

Such piffle. That's all it is. That's what we're paying taxpayers' money for? To get stuff like this from somebody who had his mind made up before he ever wrote the report. It's completely nonsense.

"A democratic government should not simply reflect uninstructed opinion ..." Oh no, just take the opinion of professors. That's what he wants done.

He says, "A democratic government should not simply reflect uninstructed opinion but should actively help to shape moral sentiments to rational common ends."

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government has been trying to shape this opinion in Canada since they changed the Criminal Code 10 years ago. The people of Canada still say, we want hanging. We want capital punishment. They've had their chance to shape public opinion. Mr. Speaker, now is the time to start enacting laws that carry out the thinking and the wishes of the people of this country.

We've had some terrible things happen. The little girl who was murdered in the woods by the Low Level Bridge in Edmonton — would she have been murdered if that man had been kept in prison? I don't see how she could have been. What about the four little kids who were murdered in Saskatchewan? The judge found him guilty. He got his kicks out of killing — killing kids, at that. When the judge said he'd sentence him to life, he said, I suppose they'll release him after seven years. So he'll come out again and murder a few more kids — innocent kids. Innocent boys and girls. Is that the kind of law we want in this country? It's certainly not the kind I want. And it's not the kind the majority of Canadians want.

Mr. Speaker, I have no apologies for bringing this resolution to the Alberta Legislature. I think there are parliamentary precedents for a Legislature to tell the federal government or any other government what they want done in regard to national issues. We've done it in this Legislature. We've advised the British Columbia government how we felt about the Bennett Dam. That was by a resolution by our present Premier, when he was a member of the Opposition — and properly so. Why shouldn't we let the Government of B.C. know how we feel as a Legislature in regard to the Bennett Dam? We've told the federal government a number of times how we feel about many things. You say it might not do any good. Well, it might not. But it'll help support the stand of men like Mr. Woolliams, who's not afraid to stand up and be counted. He's not afraid to defy the autocratic power now being exerted by the present Solicitor General in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I'm asking hon. members of this Legislature to support this resolution that enables the Government of Alberta to advise the Government of Canada to introduce legislation reinstating the death penalty for all persons convicted of capital murder. If we do that, Mr. Speaker, we're on the road to having a safer, more peaceful country.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity of participating in this very timely discussion. I have considerable doubts as to whether this is an appropriate forum for the moving of the resolution. I would like to come back to that in a couple of moments.

In commencement, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the hon. member opposite certainly owes no apology to the Assembly for bringing this motion forward. I think it's timely. It needs discussion. Again, I have reservations on whether we should move on it. But certainly the matter needs airing here.

All of us are extremely concerned about the growth in crime — amazing statistics: violence, rampant

violence. We're also concerned about the increasing crime among the youth of the nation. I think all of us support the recommendations of the Kirby Commission for improvements in the judicial system to assure speedier administration of justice. Similarly, Mr. Speaker, all of us applaud the speech of the hon. Solicitor General a few days back, when he suggested there might be changes in The Corrections Act that would further facilitate the administration of justice.

Mr. Speaker, we saw a very tragic situation this past weekend in Calgary, a situation where two holdup men with two young women killed a police officer who was trying to apprehend them. Then they holed up in a dwelling and held off the police, or refused to surrender, for 24 hours: a very sickening, disgusting, unnecessary happening. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all of us here sympathize with the family of the deceased police officer, Staff Sergeant Harrison.

I'm sure all of us would like to offer our congratulations and commendations to the police of the city of Calgary for their very credible efforts in bringing to bay and finally having the perpetrators of the outrage surrender, and in seeing a release of the hostages without any injury to them. I think we could say without hesitation that they performed very, very well. The congratulations of this Assembly should go out to Chief Sawyer and all his men, particularly those of the SWAT squad which was formed after the killing about a year back. In hindsight, we can all question whether certain things should or shouldn't have been done. Certain concessions or arrangements might or might not have been made. But I think the people on the scene do what they think is best. In my view, they did the proper thing under those circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to comment on the actions of the community in that northeast section of Calgary in responding to the needs of the Ingrams, who own the house where the hostages were held. Considerable damage was done to that house. Of course, there is a dispute now as to whether the damage is insured, and what compensation there will be. I think it very commendable that the people of that community responded almost overnight in cleaning, repairing, and otherwise assuring the Ingrams that they wouldn't be without a home.

I also like to think that this government, in responding with its suggested amendment to include property damage in The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, made a very responsible and imaginative move. I think the answer of the Premier the other day, suggesting that we could consider an amendment retroactively to The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act to cover the property damage of the Ingrams, was a very good response, an immediate, human response.

Mr. Speaker, I think all of us would applaud the letter of the Solicitor General on March 15 to the Hon. Ron Basford, Minister of Justice in Ottawa, deploring the bail system as it has been applied here in Canada. That telegram or letter arose out of the unfortunate incident in Calgary which I spoke of. I'm sure that is really the root of the problem. Certainly the question of whether capital punishment is reinstated, or applied as the law presently intends it should [be], is only part of the question. The other part is how the bail system is administered. I'm sure

all of us are concerned with the apparent laxity that allows people charged with very serious crimes to be out on bail — and perhaps, as in the Calgary case, to commit another crime. I'm sure all of us support the Solicitor General in his representations to the Minister of Justice in Ottawa for a tightening up of that administration, and a stronger, more discretionary implementation of the bail laws.

Mr. Speaker, dealing with the motion itself, as to whether we should, as an Assembly, urge the Government of Canada to introduce legislation reinstating the death penalty for all persons convicted of murder, I frankly have some serious doubts on that, Mr. Speaker. This is a question we're all concerned with. Each of us has his own viewpoint. It's a matter of conscience for each one of us. It's a highly emotional issue. I think there's no doubt that 80-odd per cent of the people of Alberta have expressed a strong viewpoint in favor of this resolution. But that's the kind of thing we should be communicating to the federal MPs. My MP, Mr. Eldon Woolliams, of whom you spoke, and yours, Mr. Schumacher, are the people to whom we should be communicating our individual views as Albertans, to help them make up their minds in the debate and on the vote that goes on in Ottawa.

I think it is a mistake to suggest that we, as an entity here, should pass a resolution urging the government in Ottawa to do this. There may be some members of this Assembly — I don't know who they might be — who may be opposed to that resolution. If we pass it, are we to include them in our resolution as if it were unanimous, as if it expressed the view of all of us here? I don't think so, Mr. Speaker. I think each one of us should communicate to our constituents, if they want to know where we stand on this. Many of them have inquired. We tell them where we stand. More particularly, we should express our views to our federal Member of Parliament. I think we've got to jealously guard our provincial jurisdiction. In turn, they in Ottawa may want to jealously guard their prerogatives and field of jurisdiction.

I think there is ample precedent for my concern in this area. It goes back to the debate some two years ago when Ottawa got involved in the oil and gas business. They suddenly discovered there was an oil and gas business and an oil and gas revenue opportunity. And we in this Assembly stayed many, many late nights debating what we would do in response to their oil export tax. There was, I think, unanimous concern expressed here about them imposing an oil and gas tax. They then passed, as I recall the legislation, the Petroleum Administration Act, which could have gotten them into pricing of oil and gas under certain circumstances. All of us here deplored their entry into that field. There was just no doubt where this Assembly stood. There was no doubt where the people of Alberta stood in telling them to keep their hands off something that was pre-eminently provincial jurisdiction.

So I say that in this area we've got to be cautious that we don't get into their bailiwick. We have ample opportunity of expressing our views as individuals, individual citizens of Alberta, but not as an Assembly, not as a government.

I think another area where we have expressed our concern about getting into other people's jurisdiction

has to be the suggestion by the Prime Minister that if the provinces don't agree with him, he may unilaterally attempt to repatriate the British North America Act. All of us condemn that. In fact, I think the Premier said words to this effect here last week: that it would cause a serious dislocation in what Confederation is all about if the Prime Minister were to go forward with his expressed intention to repatriate the BNA Act if there weren't agreement among the provinces.

We've heard the Premier of Newfoundland and the Premier of Quebec express similarly strong views on that topic, as have many other premiers of the provinces. So again I suggest we shouldn't be intruding in an area that very clearly is exclusively the jurisdiction of another government, and that is the Government of Canada, the government in Ottawa.

This is, however, a very topical matter. All of us have watched with interest the bill introduced in the federal Parliament some time in the past couple of weeks dealing with gun control, this capital punishment question, the bail system, and all the matters related thereto. We've all been impressed by the response of Albertans by way of telegram and otherwise to the federal members, expressing their views on the subject. Clearly, the views are in support of the resolution. I don't think there is any doubt of that. But that isn't the entire question. As I said, part of the question is the application of the bail system.

I don't think you can just say, without consideration of these other matters, that reinstatement of the death penalty for all persons convicted of murder is the answer. There are many, many cases — and I'm sure the hon. member would concede this — where the death penalty isn't the answer. There may be cases where there is no other alternative, where the only reasonable thing appears to be administration of the death penalty. But there are other so-called murders where the death penalty may not be appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, I think for us, as an Assembly, to attempt to pass a blanket resolution which would call for the reinstatement of the death penalty would be a distortion of the beliefs of many members of this Assembly. I think it would be much more appropriate if each one of us here were to express our views as an individual Albertan to our federal Member of Parliament, so that he may represent our view in the debate that will be carried on in that House. I think again, Mr. Speaker, it would be inappropriate of us as an Assembly, as an entity, to pass this resolution today. I would have to speak against it, although I'd be happy to make my views known on the question itself to my Member of Parliament and to any of my constituents who might be interested.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, as I rise to speak on this motion — if I may read it, Mr. Speaker, just to underline what it exactly states:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to urge the Government of Canada to introduce legislation reinstating the death penalty for all persons convicted of murder.

I'm pleased, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. Member for Drumheller clarified "murder" as being capital murder in this case.

At the outset, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to compliment the hon. Member for Drumheller for bringing this motion to the floor again. I took part in debate in the last motion he brought, a similar type of motion. In spite of the fact that we, as a provincial Legislature, are dealing with an issue out of provincial jurisdiction, [that is] not to say, Mr. Speaker, that each and every one of us should not make our wishes known directly to our respective Members of Parliament, as the hon. Member for Calgary Foothills has indicated already. I think that is the salient point with respect to an issue like this that is out of the jurisdiction of this province.

Mr. Speaker, we should make our definitive wishes known, not only in the laws dealing with murder, but of course, in the laws dealing with gun control and much more. I suggest we carry on in this area.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the comments of the hon. Member for Drumheller regarding some academics and some criminologists who are fantasizing and not dealing with practical realities of life. Mr. Speaker, I agree with that member's comments also. I suggest that some of these theorists and academics, including Professor Fattah, should talk to the families of those who have been murdered, and convince these families and the vast majority of the Canadians who [would] undoubtedly take a position for [the] death penalty if a plebiscite were, in fact, held. Mr. Speaker, this professor and his moderate, insulting outlook, I suggest, is something to behold. Mr. Speaker, it's a most topical topic in view of the Alberta scene and the scene across Canada in recent weeks and the past 24 or 48 hours. The murdering of a top-rate officer of the law in Calgary, mentioned by the hon. Member for Calgary Foothills, must cause a considerable amount of sorrow and heartache, not only for the family, but for the police officers, the police force, and citizens at large. I'm sure all of us here extend our apologies and our empathy to that family.

Mr. Speaker, then we have bail set, and alleged murderers are released — an issue that is again very topical. Then we have people, even in the past 24 to 48 hours, who are violating bail for a possible committed murder. Mr. Speaker, they are out on bail now, violating bail, roaming this province, and possibly causing another murder. These are concerns, Mr. Speaker, that already have been stated by the members. I would like to underline that very, very high concern.

Mr. Speaker, some background regarding this issue should be brought to the forefront for the members to consider. Murders in Canada from 1973 to 1974 increased by 11.8 per cent. Attempted murders, rape, robbery, drug charges, breaking and entering, and theft have all increased in 1974 over 1973 in Edmonton. This is true generally across Canada. I suggest that increase has been maintained with few exceptions across Canada. For example, if I may just relate some statistics, Mr. Speaker, in 1974 in Edmonton, Alberta — for which I am representing one of the constituencies — murders doubled in 1974. Rape increased by 30 per cent; robberies, 861 cases; drug charges doubled; breaking and entering, 25 every day; thefts, 18,743; motor vehicle thefts increased by 28 per cent. Mr. Speaker, very striking statistics, and this is not fantasy, these are facts.

Mr. Speaker, such statistics and such information

surely reflect on our society's increased population and density, the increased mobility of people in our society, the influence of our environment on humans — including the congestion and mobility as a result of this or as a result of congestion and increased population — and the influence of the environment on these people resulting in these types of adverse activities, including murder. Mr. Speaker, it's obviously a most distressing situation.

As quickly as I say this, Mr. Speaker, the vast percentage of our society, I must say, is good. Men and women are generally good. It's a human trait to be good. It's a mutual human trait to be good. So there will be no misunderstanding that society at large is on that track.

But as background, Mr. Speaker, regarding the dealing of capital punishment regarding murder — just a note, Mr. Speaker, I thought I'd read. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to relate some comments regarding the background dealing with murder. In 1966 the Prime Minister, Lester B. Pearson, sponsored in Parliament and enacted a bill, [namely] Bill No. C-168, which dealt with abolishing the death penalty on a five-year trial basis except for capital murder — that is, murder of police officers, correctional officers, or prison staff. Of course, at that time, treason and piracy continued to be punishable by death. Mr. Speaker, the arguments presented in 1967 are documented and are certainly worth-while reading for everybody who is interested in this topic. Mr. Speaker, the bill received Royal Assent in December 21, 1967, and came into force on December 29, 1967.

Today, Mr. Speaker, a new bill dealing with this matter is on the floor of the House of Commons. Mr. Speaker, at that time and since that time, we have been talking about doing away with the death penalty, the abolitionists say this: to deal with the death penalty, there is a borderline definition between ordinary and capital murder, and it's an extremely tenuous situation. Those who advocate death penalties say: if it's okay to protect police officers and prison staff, why not ordinary citizens and our children? And who can argue about that? Mr. Speaker, the abolitionists say: if we restore capital punishment, then the state, the society, in fact lowers its values of human life in the minds of citizens.

Mr. Speaker, today we've heard and we know as citizens in this province, in Edmonton, and across Canada that voters are in favor of capital punishment. Police officers want capital punishment. Why not have a referendum to reinforce this, if this is necessary? Mr. Speaker, the abolitionists have stated and are still stating that statistics do not clearly show that the death penalty is a true deterrent. The advocates of the death penalty state that statistics are not accurate, and death eradicates those who murder, like removing a cancerous cell. The abolitionists, Mr. Speaker, say, on one hand, that to carry out capital punishment is cold-blooded murder in itself. The advocates say murder is cold-blooded murder.

Then we have those who talk about the *Bible*. On one hand, the *Bible* says: "Thou shalt not kill", and so on, and so on. There are those who can quote from the *Bible* and say self-defense of society is necessary. And the *Bible* does say there is a right to



abolish or to abandon those who have committed murder. So, Mr. Speaker, on and on goes the argument.

The '60s and the '70s have been marked with increased crime. Offences from 1954-66 have increased from 57,000 to 80,000. Then we have those who come out with reports, Mr. Speaker. This Ceylon Committee on Capital Punishment, Mr. Speaker, states in part that the Canadian provinces show homicide rates which suggest that these rates are conditioned by factors other than the death penalty. Nothing emerges from the study of trends and violent crimes in Canada that would support, or even suggest, the proposition that the suspension of capital punishment has caused an increase in the homicide rate.

Mr. Speaker, some of the conclusions that have been indicated in this particular article are as follows:

- (1) If the increase in homicide were solely due to the suspension of capital punishment then it should be limited to this offence.  
...
- (2) If the increase in criminal homicide were due to the suspension of capital punishment then it should show a clear and consistent trend by starting to rise when the administrative suspension became known and [continue] to rise at a quicker pace when the legal suspension came into effect ...
- (3) The years during which capital punishment was administratively suspended (with the exception of 1967) did not witness an increase in criminal homicide over 1962.  
...

Now, Mr. Speaker, the last point:

- (4) If the increase in criminal homicide were due to the suspension of capital punishment, then the rate of increase should be identical or at least similar in the different provinces.

Now, Mr. Speaker, at that time, "Actually the increase in criminal homicide over the past eight years", according to this report, "has been very different from one province to the other, varying from 5.1 per cent in British Columbia to 82.4 per cent in Alberta."

So, Mr. Speaker, in reference to this motion, there would be a definitive action, at least an expectation of a definitive action, if we urge the federal government. It would offer us something to hang our hats on. Mr. Speaker, even if it were passed by this Assembly, the federal government does not necessarily have to follow this direction. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, the latter seems likely. They will not necessarily follow our direction. In view of the highly charged emotional issue it is, and in fact, Mr. Speaker, probably the most important reason is that right now in the House of Commons they have a bill dealing with this precise item which will, as I understand it, prescribe for capital punishment life — a fixed period of time, meaning X years, 20 years, maybe plus.

Mr. Speaker, it is odd that we as a group in the Assembly allow excessive violence and crime in all our media — television, the books we read, and so forth. We pollute our brains and condition our brains to many, many unfavorable activities via the media. And who in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, would deny

that influence: the psychological impact of the media or the environment on shaping our direction, whether we're children or adults, and recognizing quickly that children are more malleable in that area. We allow societal stresses, which provoke many, many of our members to unfavorable activities, to increase. Then, Mr. Speaker, we deal with the problem, as we are today, after the fact. In the next few years I hope, Mr. Speaker, some of us will have guts enough to do something about other areas, besides dealing with actions after the fact. Mr. Speaker, here I speak of areas that are common knowledge, yet somehow we turn our backs on it. Why? I don't know. Maybe it's a human frailty.

Mr. Speaker, the areas I speak of are: prevention, education, an ongoing change regarding our human relationships and our values. What do I speak of here? Not something airy-fairy, not Mary Poppins — although Mary Poppins is a hell of a lot better than some fantastic, extraordinary violence on media. But I'm speaking here, Mr. Speaker, of a wholesome, strong society, a community, not mass urbanization and dehumanization. I'm thinking and speaking of values, values that each and every one of us preaches every day to our families and children, that we hear at our schools and churches, that we know very well.

Mr. Speaker, we should not allow the destruction of these values by so-called impersonal — and for lack of a better word, Mr. Speaker, I call them "impersonal" — corporations. This does not mean all corporations are bad. But, Mr. Speaker, that corporation is media in one sense, and the corporation that wants to sell something for a dollar value. Mr. Speaker, these same corporations also have members in their midst who are youth, children, parents, and leaders of our society, who also know and want a good life. But the machine they establish rolls on and churns on, ignoring the values they themselves have created. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the machine, these corporations — really, the best [phrase] is "the second phantom government".

Mr. Speaker, they are the producers of an image in our brains that undoubtedly results, to a large degree, in some of our activities. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that they may be redirected, for the benefit of the individual and of families, by a vigorous, equally hard-sell program beginning not today, but yesterday; not after the fact, not after the murders, but right now.

Mr. Speaker, this second phantom government that I speak of — these corporations that have one sole purpose, to make dollars, apart from what damage it causes to our brains or to our development as human beings — is the product of that intelligent person or individual — that entity, humans. So I suggest, Mr. Speaker, if it's created by humans, it certainly can be redirected, buffered, and modified to suit our purpose. For after all, what is life all about?

So concluding, Mr. Speaker — and I don't know how much time I have left. If I could ask, Mr. Speaker, do I have another five or 10 minutes? Good. Thank you.

This item is a federal jurisdictional issue which must be acted on by the federal authorities, apart from what we say here. I applaud the hon. Member for Drumheller, as I have before, for having enough guts to bring it up, even attempting to urge the federal government. I think this can be done just as effectively on a one-on-one basis by the members

here. If the majority of the people of Alberta want capital punishment for capital murder, I suggest the majority of the members here will undoubtedly write their letters directly to the members, if they haven't already, and I'd suggest they have.

Mr. Speaker, the opportunity we have at the provincial level is to offer a definitive, preventive, and balanced outlook regarding the environment and the quality of life that plays on our psyche, on our brains, on our children; offer an educational program regarding [the] interpersonal relationship and practise that interpersonal relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken on this topic before, via community health and social service centres. I know in my heart, I feel in my heart, that this will be the direction of the future. Why do I say that? Because health costs are so high in the hospital system, there is nowhere else to go but back to the community where the action is and prevent the problems before they get in the hospitals and in the jails.

DR. BUCK: Doctors get too much money.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, the issue will not be resolved at the provincial level or [in the] provincial House on a definitive basis by this resolution. It will be resolved on a provincial level by prevention, by diagnosis, by early treatment and sound rehabilitation, and not wall-to-wall carpeting and mahogany doors for each room. That's b.s.

MRS. CHICHAK: Brown sugar.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, it will be resolved towards positive values, with strong counterbalancing anti-crime measures, and most of all — if I may suggest, Mr. Speaker, with all humbleness — [by] leadership which does not fear Mary Poppins, does not fear being called Mickey Mouse. Because, Mr. Speaker, that fantasy is a hell of a lot more wholesome than the fantasy of kill, bullets, rape, and abnormal sex on films.

Mr. Speaker, as I'm on this particular area — and naturally the media is not here. If they were here, I wish they would hear it. Mr. Speaker, in the last session when I introduced the bill regarding family movies — and I intend to reintroduce it — a writer on our only daily newspaper, so-called community newspaper, had this to say . . . I said, more family movies; they should be a counterbalancing measure, because we're being polluted by overabundance of excessive violence and crime in movies. You know what he said, Mr. Speaker? In all humbleness — and I felt sorry for him — he said, Paproski should go to Hollywood, New York, Beirut, to get the producers to change the types of movies they produce. This is the best thing he could suggest.

I [said to] myself, boy, this guy is really realistic. Not one word, Mr. Speaker, did he suggest that some producers themselves admit that this type of movie causes severe distortion of our human emotion, stretches our emotion to the limit. They say, that ain't nothing yet, because what's to come is going to be a hell of a lot worse in three- and four-dimensional movies.

Mr. Speaker, some of the producers themselves acknowledge — and I congratulate the *Journal* for mentioning that — that there is even Mafia behind

this. It was in subsequent editions, but this writer didn't mention that. So, Mr. Speaker, I challenge the *Journal* and all media, especially our daily community paper, to promote a more realistic attitude to the public than they did at that time.

Mr. Speaker, that same writer did not say that some of the crap shown does indeed shape and mold our attitude in a misdirection. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, it's about time we did counterbalance this type of censorship we're getting from producers, because in fact it's censorship in an indirect way, in a reverse way. They are censoring our society by giving us only one type of thing to feed on. We have no choice.

So by having a greater percentage of family movies, I'm suggesting balancing this off. Or, Mr. Speaker, we as members and leaders of our Legislature, and legislators across this province and in Canada, can say, leave the producers to show what they want, what will give them the most dollars, or think it will give them the most dollars, and let them blanket us with their own type of censorship by showing what they want, when they want it. Let them bastardize our society and our values. Let them twist our reality of life, Mr. Speaker. Let us distort our human frailty and pleasures.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest in conclusion that men and women of good will — and the vast majority of us are exactly that — need, want, and will get action. Mr. Speaker, I too enjoy freedom of the press. I hope this will continue, but let us not be fooled by the barrage of junk that some people say can't be counterbalanced by a change of direction, and not by censorship.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, to offer some added comments, I'd like to quote from an article. This will take exactly two minutes, if I may have permission of the House. Thank you. No? Yes? Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to quote from an editorial, and it's from an Alberta writer — and I must compliment that writer, Glynis Jones — on prevention:

Protective surveillance of a community is vitally necessary. In Britain, as well as having police patrol cars, they are returning to the use of the man on the beat, the constable who patrols his assigned territory on foot, and hence he gets to know personally the citizens he protects.

A tremendous idea. Five years ago, Mr. Speaker, the police began involving themselves in organizing sporting and other social projects for young people. The result has been a marked decrease in juvenile delinquency and gang activities. Why not, Mr. Speaker, in Edmonton?

On statistics, Mr. Speaker, this writer goes on to say:

Those who say statistics can be used to prove anything mean that the recorded facts do not support their side of the argument.

Mr. Speaker, on death:

It only deters the one being executed, though there is something to be said for that.

Mr. Speaker, on the death penalty itself:

Perhaps the responsible members of the human tribe should execute its murderers, not because it would deter others but because . . .

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the hon. member about to complete?

DR. PAPROSKI: Yes I am, Mr. Speaker. There are only two sentences, or two or three sentences . . .

at least these particular individuals, gangsters with their guns, terrorists with their bombs, would be eliminated and give us no more trouble. It should be done without rage or talk of retribution, but more in the spirit of euthanasia, or surgery — the removal of an insolvable problem or cutting out of a cancerous cell.

So, Mr. Speaker, if we are to charge a person for murder, and let him go out on bail, then to kill again, I suggest we stop this. If we release a killer again, before the sentence is completed, my choice would be the death penalty.

Thank you.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, I believe the time has now expired for this afternoon's motion. May I have leave now to adjourn debate on this motion?

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it agreed that the hon. member adjourn debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS  
OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT ORDERS**  
(Second Reading)

**Bill 200  
The Cash Discount Act**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in moving Bill 200, The Cash Discount Act. There is no better example of the cash customer being the victim of easy credit theories than the national credit institutions, including some of our banks, in use of their credit cards. Stores sign contracts with institutions that issue credit cards, most of which require the merchant to pay a fixed percentage of each credit card sale to the card issuer. This service charge ranges from 2 to 8 per cent of the credit card sales over and above the interest charged on credit balances, or holdover balances at the end of the month. It's over and above the fee the credit card holder must pay to such issuers as Diners Club and American Express, which I believe is \$20.

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair]

Since the merchant realizes 2 to 8 per cent more when he sells for cash than when he sells to the credit card holder, under this act a portion of this is returned to the cash customer. A merchant's overhead helps to determine his prices. A portion of his overhead is a service charge to the issuers of the credit cards, which gives the credit card holder his pay-later privilege.

For some years, the merchants were required to sign contracts with the institutions issuing the credit cards which forbade the merchant from giving a better price to the cash customer than to the credit card holder. This was declared illegal by the courts in the U.S.A. and is now illegal through an act of the Parliament of Canada. This bill also makes it illegal for any issuer to forbid a merchant to give a discount for cash. This bill provides for a discount not less

than 2 per cent.

You might ask where the 2 per cent comes from. Well, the idea of the 2 per cent is that we start at the bottom. Practically all credit card/merchants' contracts require at least 2 per cent, and these go up to 18 per cent of the cash sales. Consequently, when the merchant sets the price of his goods, he includes that as part of his overhead. So on every cash customer he is making extra money. This bill simply gives some of that back to the cash customer, at least up to 2 per cent.

The bill provides this only where national credit cards are used — where the merchant enters into a contract for the use of that credit card and pays a percentage of the sales to that national institution. Consequently, it doesn't apply to cases such as The Bay, Eaton's, Zellers, Woodward's, or Simpsons-Sears, where they issue their own credit card and do not require a percentage to be paid to anybody. It's simply a convenience for the customer. This has nothing whatever to do with the merchant extending credit for a month or two months, as he sees fit.

This is simply a place where national credit cards are used, where the price is upped in order to pay that institution for the use of their credit cards, and part of that is being paid today by the cash customer. All this bill is asking is that at least 2 per cent of that take from the cash customer be returned to the cash customer, rather than charging him for a practice in which he does not indulge and from which he gets no benefit.

The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is the minister in charge of the act. The bill gives him the authority to make regulations and to check the records of the lending institutions and the merchants involved. That, itself, would be a tremendous revelation. I have never yet seen a balance sheet or a statement of loss and profit from the institutions which issue these credit cards. They do guarantee that when you use their Chargex, American Express, or Diners Club, that bill will be paid. Undoubtedly there are some bad debts, but there's a wad of money being made by these institutions. I'm not even particularly objecting to that at the moment. What I'm objecting to is that the cash customer is forced to pay some of that money for a service he does not get.

This bill provides penalties for infractions — \$100 or more for a first offence, and up to \$500 for a second or subsequent offence. The bill comes into force upon Royal Assent.

Mr. Speaker, the principle of this bill is presently being carried out by some merchants in this province. I think of a general store in the village of Hussar, where the merchant has advertised in newspapers that there will be a 1 per cent discount for cash sales. It's surprising how many people go to that particular area to do their business. In questioning him whether there's any difficulty in carrying out the practice, he said, with the cash registers today there's certainly no difficulty in paying back to the cash customer 1 per cent, which he gives at the present time on all cash sales.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is not going to take anything from the credit card holder. Today that credit card holder is being subsidized by the cash customer. That credit card holder will be able to do his business as he does today. It will not interfere with the line of credit given by merchants. It will not interfere with

credit cards where you don't have to pay a percentage of the sales to an institution. But it will give the cash customer, who today is paying for a service he doesn't get, a small return on his sales.

Mr. Speaker, this would mean a great deal to the working people of this province — if they could get 2 per cent back on the sale price advertised in the store that's applicable to both credit card users and cash customers where national credit cards are in use.

I have great pleasure in moving second reading of Bill 200.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Drumheller and I have, of course, neighboring ridings. We share, obviously, some areas of the province which are very attractive indeed. We've also something else in common, I think. We both try to avoid being in debt. And I think both of us avoid the nude body-rub parlors.

I find The Cash Discount Act, Bill 200, has some attractive and sensible philosophy in it. It is attractive because it appears to offer an advantage to a cash customer — to the person who pays as he goes, and who, if he is consistent, only buys what he has the money to pay for.

Buying only what one has the money to pay for is one of those phrases which, perhaps, is best referred to in the old-fashioned prairie virtues. However, unlike many of these sometimes forgotten virtues, the concept of living within one's means is as important today as it ever was.

The proposed Cash Discount Act is attractive because one of its effects is to provide a tangible reward — a 2 per cent discount — to the customer who pays as he goes, and thus avoids accumulating personal debts. The measure also provides a very substantial advantage to the merchant. He receives his money right now, rather than in some days or weeks. Although he pays a discount of 2 per cent, this is generally much less than the discount he would pay to a credit card company for handling the transaction. As was noted by the member proposing the legislation, the credit card schemes charge participating merchants between 2 and 8 per cent for the use of the credit card service. Different rates apply to different classes of business. The rates vary according to the merchant's monthly volume with the credit card company. In general, the merchant selling big ticket items and doing a large volume of credit card business will pay the lowest rate.

Although those discount costs sound substantial, particularly for the small enterprise, the charge card system really is a bargain. Experience has shown it costs the merchant considerably more to provide the charge cards himself. These costs not only include bookkeeping and billing, but the cost of credit verification, bad debts, and interest on working capital. For the small merchant this can total more than the percentage he pays to the credit card company.

Thus the proposed act is an attempt to provide benefits to both the consumer and the merchant. The consumer receives a discount if he is prepared to pay cash. The merchant, by granting the discount, receives his payment sooner and at a lower discount cost than if a credit scheme were used.

I regret I must say that although I like the intention and philosophy of the bill, I am afraid that in practice, difficulties will be encountered. Indeed, rather than

promoting a lower price for cash customers, I am told by economists that this legislation is likely to induce the merchants to raise all their prices by the amount of the proposed statutory discount. An example of this is already found in the wholesale trade. For years it has been customary for dealers to offer a discount of 1 or 2 per cent to induce prompt payment. Phrases such as: "Discount 2 per cent 10 days; net 30 days" are a common sight on wholesale invoices. The wholesaler publishes his catalogue and prices his invoices with this in mind. For him the normal selling price is the net price after the discount has been deducted. It is the net price that he expects to receive, and indeed that is what most of his customers pay. The catalogue price, without the discount, might be better described as the selling price with a penalty added, which the wholesaler finds convenient to handle in this way.

I'm not convinced that all merchants would raise their prices 2 per cent if this bill were passed. For example, a small merchant accepting bank credit cards who competes with a large department store using its own credit card might not raise his prices. Competition would prevent him from doing so. Yet by the terms of this bill he would be required to offer a 2 per cent discount, but the department store would not.

However, it is clear there would be some upward pressure on prices. I would be unwilling to see this House pass a bill which it knew might drive up prices without being sure of the benefits. On the other hand, this bill would definitely cause what economists call "switching". Some people who now buy on credit would buy for cash, and they would be regarded in two ways. First, they would get 2 per cent off. Secondly, if enough of them did it, they would find they were helping to dampen inflation. There is no doubt among economists that heavy use of credit cards by all of us has serious effects.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

That brings us to one of the riddles in a bill like this. Merchants might raise their prices by 2 per cent to cover the discount. That appears inflationary. Yet switching from credit to cash is anti-inflationary. It is not safe, I think, for lawyers to discuss economics, Mr. Speaker, so I have to leave that riddle with you.

But what about the question: why not allow all retail prices to rise about 2 per cent if cash customers are to receive a 2 per cent discount in any case? There are some obvious disadvantages to credit card companies, but as this bill relates to helping consumers I'll not discuss that aspect of the problem.

The bill contains certain provisions which seem to be discriminatory. These provisions fall hardest on the little guy, both the consumer and the merchant. Let me list some of these. One of the reasons credit cards have become so popular is that many of their uses are not directly related to the borrowing of funds. It is true that every time you use a credit card you are in effect receiving the use of someone else's money. However, if your principal reason for using the card is not to borrow funds, but for some other purpose, then all those other purposes carry an automatic 2 per cent penalty if this bill were to become law.

For example, salesmen and others who travel make

extensive use of charge cards because they provide a convenient and accurate record of their expenses. In the case of self-employed people and salesmen this is necessary in order to take advantage of income tax legislation, and these people would of course pay a 2 per cent penalty. Businesses that provide credit cards for their employees for travel and other expenses do so because it is safer and more accurate than cash advances. These businesses would also pay a 2 per cent penalty. Many people use the so-called major credit cards because they provide greater mobility in the market place. Because so many merchants now accept major credit cards, the consumer can shop where he pleases, he can seek out the best bargain.

At present, merchants who benefit most from this increased mobility are the small merchants. For them, the discount they pay the major credit card company is not a finance charge added to their price structure. The merchant regards it as a small sales commission which he is happy to pay for the added sales volume generated. Greater mobility in the market place, and increased sales volume in small stores are facts that we associate with increased competition and a more competitive pricing system. These are not things to which we should add a 2 per cent penalty.

Credit cards are often used because they immediately establish the identity of the owner and indicate his ability to pay. Even in one's home town it's sometimes difficult to cash a personal cheque these days. The credit card saves the individual from an embarrassing hassle, and relieves the merchant of the risk. Many people use charge cards because it is safer to carry a plastic card than a large amount of money. There is the danger of being robbed, but perhaps the greater risk is to lose the wallet that contains the cash.

Finally, people like me use the credit card because they've forgotten to go to the bank. Of the non-credit card uses which result from this, perhaps forgetfulness is the only one that deserves some penalty.

The definition of a credit card in this bill focuses on those called the major credit cards. I suppose this means Chagex, Master Charge, American Express, and so on. In recent years we've seen a remarkable growth of these cards among small businesses. For a small businessman it's cheaper and less paper work to accept these major cards than it is to operate his own credit scheme. The big department stores, however, have retained their own credit card schemes. Thus, the proposed bill would only affect small merchants and not the big department stores. If the small merchant felt he had to raise his prices 2 per cent to offset the discount, the proposed bill would place him at a competitive disadvantage vis-a-vis the department store. If that little guy could not raise his prices in order to compete, he would have to absorb the 2 per cent. For a few firms I suspect that might be enough to drive them out of business.

There are some other economic issues. If indeed merchants were induced by this act to raise prices 2 per cent, would that lead to a drop in sales volume, poorer profits, and further price increases to compensate? How would the large department stores react? They are not included in this act, but they tend to be the price setters in the market place. Would they offer a 2 per cent discount voluntarily? What would happen then? I leave these problems with you, Mr.

Speaker. I won't comment on the cross-subsidization issue. That is a most difficult one to rationalize.

Finally, this bill has the effect of placing another restriction on the way buyers and sellers meet in the market place. I believe this government is committed to providing regulations to keep the market place honest and straightforward. Our Unfair Trade Practices Act is an example of that philosophy. But we are most unwilling to interfere with the terms of honest bargains which buyers and sellers want to make. We do not want to set prices or interest rates in circumstances where these can be established by market forces and competition. A government that regulates too many things soon finds itself out of touch with the citizens. The generation that tried so hard to shed parental bonds of both home and school now forms a very large group of consumers in our market place. I suspect they would find it odious to discover that the government is suddenly retying the apron strings and telling them how to spend their money.

On a more positive note, many of the difficulties I have mentioned might be avoided if the principle of a discount for cash were provided in another way. It is my personal view that the discount should be optional. If a merchant sees a mutual advantage to himself and his customers by providing a cash discount, he should be free to grant it. If granting a cash discount would create more problems than it solves, he should not be obliged to grant it. However, if he decides to offer a cash discount, he should — and I say, perhaps he should — advertise that fact and treat all customers the same way. All retailers of goods and services should be subject to the same rules in this area. A credit card is a credit card, whether it's issued by a credit card company or honored by an individual retailer, department store, or oil company for the use of that company's products. However, these are only comments about the bill before the House.

The Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has been carefully observing the developments on this issue in other jurisdictions. I have decided not to propose legislation of this type at this time.

About two years ago, the Consumers Union of the United States tangled with the American Express Company over this issue. The contract between American Express and merchants honoring its credit cards contained a provision that the merchant could not offer a discount for cash. The outcome was that the American Express Company agreed to write to every establishment accepting its cards in the United States, to tell them they were free to offer a cash discount if they wished to do so and to advertise that fact to their customers. I understand the United States government has since passed an act which provides merchants with the option of offering a discount for cash. But there is no requirement to advertise the discount unless it exceeds 5 per cent.

In Canada, there have been suggestions that the federal government should legislate in this area. Indeed, since the major credit cards in Canada are a service of the chartered banks, the question of federal or provincial jurisdiction must be considered. It may be that this legislation is *ultra vires* of the Legislature.

Officials in the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs have been in touch with representatives of the major credit card companies. All their

contracts with merchants accepting their cards appear to contain prohibitions about price discrimination between cash and credit card customers. However, all these companies have assured the officials in the department that they only want to prevent a merchant from adding a surcharge onto the market price of goods for a credit card sale. I understand they have no objection to a merchant reducing the marked price of goods or services for cash customers. Thus it would appear that merchants in Alberta who accept the major credit cards are already free to offer a discount for cash if they choose to do so.

Borrowed money has become one of the most expensive commodities we can buy. If our fathers and grandfathers thought debt was a sin at 3 per cent, Mr. Speaker, I suspect they would regard you and me as less than coherent if we admitted to occasionally paying 18 and 24 per cent on an overdue charge account. Like some of the other sins of a generation or two ago, credit has become something we have found we can live with, provided we do so in moderation.

However, I would be remiss in discussing consumer credit if I did not point out two things. My responsibilities include the supervision of credit granters centred in Alberta, and relations with those outside credit granters who do business in this province. By and large, I have found them to be a very respectable industry, conscious of their market place ethics and their need to serve both consumers and businessmen. Secondly, although we can say many bad things about borrowed money and moneylenders, the concept of credit, intelligently used, has been one of the great market forces in our society. Mr. Speaker, it is fair to say that we would not enjoy the standard of living we do today if borrowed money were not available and used by many of us.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to say a few words on Bill 200. First, I want to compliment the mover. I'm sure, from his experience, he can appreciate the concern of constituents and people about the abuse of credit cards and possibly the rumors that cash discounts are even illegal. Following the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, who gave a very well-prepared address on the subject, makes it difficult to follow such an address.

But I do want to say that in my experience, I have found a concern by the public. There's a concern by people in business. In my own area of business, insurance, I was advised quite early in my experience that to give a discount on insurance is illegal. This is something that people aren't aware of. They wonder why sometimes this isn't practised by people in the general insurance business. Yet I often wonder why it is illegal, when two people, a businessman and a consumer, want to carry out a transaction that way, in cash, and instead of buying the customer dinner that day, give him a discount. Both of them would be happier, because neither one of them needed an extra meal that day.

The idea of 2 per cent is one of interest. I'm told there are areas in our business world that have a sort of unwritten arrangement, an unwritten law or practice of giving even a higher . . . I appreciate that the mover of the bill was looking at this figure, as this would be the approximate cost that credit granters

seem to feel it takes to cover the cost of granting credit.

Recently I heard an address presented on what really has taken place since our society moved into the credit card era. I was interested in the comments that a lot of fraud and wastefulness is taking place. Maybe the intent of a cash discount would eliminate or even totally cut out the question of fraud. We know that business is carried out through payment by cheque. There's a lot of fraud in that area. But I think the intent of cash does not include cheques. Therefore, there would be no fraud through the cash payment method. I support that concept.

It's an interesting behavior of persons when they have a credit card. They can drive up to the pumps for gasoline and fill the tank up. If they only had \$5 in their wallet, they would only buy \$5 [worth]. They wouldn't be as wasteful with the gasoline they bought. The same thing happens when they take a client out for an evening. If they're paying by American Express, as I do, or by Chargex, which some of the hon. members of this Assembly possibly use, or Master Charge, or even [cards of] a certain chain of restaurants or hotels, they don't stop to think, well, I wonder how much I should pay on this client. They become wasteful. They blow the whole wad of credit card — the sky's the limit. We do become wasteful when we have the use of credit cards. It's a mania. It's an uncontrollable sense of trying to outdo whoever you're trying to outdo.

I was interested in the hon. minister's comments that, in some areas, merchants have expressed a concern that there would be an increase in the price of commodities, goods, and services if they went back to cash, because automatically they would be bombarded by the clientele, by the consumer, for that discount. I wonder what used to take place before we got into this credit card mania. I'm given to understand that the pioneers of this nation always enjoyed to — whether you would call it haggle or negotiate. But they always enjoyed getting a better deal. I would hope that isn't what would take place if we had legislation that would provide for a cash discount, that immediately merchants would say, now I have to give a cash discount, I must raise the price of my commodity or my service. Because, in my opinion, it didn't take place at one time.

I appreciate the minister's comment that this should be optional. I would say that would be truly the free enterprise approach. If a merchant or a person providing or selling a service would want to give discounts, that would be quite in order. He or she would advertise it. If they didn't, then they wouldn't have an advertisement that gives the misrepresentation that they also give discounts. For that reason, you would be able to say yes, I want to buy my service or my commodity from that store because there is a discount. Or you might say, I like the service behind the other place. I don't care for the discount. So the hon. minister's comment that there is possibly some merit in it being optional — I can address myself to that approach and hope someday we can provide the option for merchants even to advertise discounts.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to further debate on this bill. It is an area where maybe we can bring some restraints in some of the prices we are paying. We well know that when we buy any commodity by

credit card, that is now on top of the price. Everybody seems to budget for this — every department store, every restaurant, every hotel. Even the people in the oil business, the oil companies that provide gasoline and oil must, I'm given to understand, budget for X number of bad accounts. Cash discounts would possibly bring down the price of some of our commodities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak on Bill 200 this afternoon, not that I can add much by way of analytical discourse to what the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has expressed this afternoon, but partly because I have charge cards of my own. I have a small business, and in that business we accept credit cards, cheques, charge accounts, and cash. At the outset of that variety of experience, Mr. Speaker, I would like to [say] that I have some cheques in a folder in my office which I will gladly exchange with the hon. Member for Drumheller for a good, solid credit card.

Mr. Speaker, joking aside, as I interpret the bill, the issue before us is the concern which the hon. Member for Drumheller has brought to our attention about cross-subsidizing — the fact that some customers are subsidizing other customers. At the outset, Mr. Speaker, I want to advance — because I probably will not have time to complete my remarks this afternoon — a suggestion which I would have preferred if — if — we are to accept that objective as an objective which warrants legislation.

I would have preferred, Mr. Speaker, if the bill — and there is some question about whether this is *ultra vires* or whether the one I would propose would be *ultra vires* — had said that the merchant did not have to be responsible for any of the cost of the credit card, but rather that the credit card company would have to pay the full cost, and would have to extract same from the persons to whom it provided credit cards. If that were done, it would completely remove the issue of cross-subsidization, as I understand it, and it would solve the hon. member's concern.

Mr. Speaker, I have been asked a few times in business to give a cash discount because a customer has recognized that we accept credit cards. I take the point of view — with the credit card companies, I might add — that if I choose, I will give a cash discount. If I choose not to, I won't. If I choose to deny somebody the opportunity to pay his bill with a credit card, I will exercise that right. After all, the fact that I may have that privilege doesn't mean that I necessarily have to follow it.

For instance, we have sales which range all the way from pennies to thousands of dollars. If somebody offers me a credit card on a matter of several thousand dollars, I would just as soon have that person's cheque, which doesn't cost me anything other than taking it across to the bank. Mr. Speaker, I think there is a simpler way of solving the concern for cross-subsidization. More to the point, Mr. Speaker, I think we should look behind credit cards and why people have them.

I attribute the popularity of credit cards to the convenience they offer customers. There is no question — it has been put to me by customers when I've tried to analyse the situation — that some of them appreciate the credit card because it provides them

with a consolidated record of all of their expenditures. In other words, it does their bookkeeping. If it does their bookkeeping for them, and if that's the reason they have the credit card, then surely that customer or that individual should be willing to pay for the privilege of carrying a credit card and not ask for the subsidy from other customers. I think that would be fair. I think those people who look at it that way would be prepared to do it. The system has grown up in a different manner and it's accepted in a different manner.

Another aspect of convenience is that if the customer doesn't have a credit card, he may well be making frequent withdrawals from the bank. He is then caught in the dilemma of carrying more cash than would be regarded by many of us as prudent, or alternatively making frequent bank withdrawals. My experience with bank withdrawals is that they cost money too. Again, analysed in that light, surely the person who makes use of the credit card would be willing to pay for it.

A third convenience factor was identified by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs this afternoon, and that is for purposes of identification. That to me is a very valuable consideration. I don't as a rule carry very many credit cards, and make a practice of not carrying them.

I had an experience a few months ago which has led me to carry more cards with me now. The fact of the matter is, I had to go to make a speech some place in connection with my work as a member of the Legislature. I took the airbus to Calgary and tried to rent a car to go to Banff. I found, when I pulled out my wallet, that I didn't have enough cash to make the deposit. I went to several car-lease agencies and just about concluded that I was either going to walk, thumb, or take a bus at the convenience of the bus company. Finally I threw myself on the mercy of the third car-leasing agency and said, I'm a member of the Assembly. I have some identification here. I am sure you will get paid. Now please can I have a car? They said yes, we will provide you with a car with the kind of identification you have. I can assure you that when I came home I immediately applied for an additional credit card which I carry with me at all times now.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to emphasize there are many values involved. Values which, as far as I'm concerned as an individual, I would be willing — and I think if put in a different light, many people would be willing — to pay for at the time they take out the credit card. That would load the full charge onto the persons who use credit cards.

I want to make another comment in relation to the significance of the item before us. As a merchant, the kind of problem we have before us, the cross-subsidization of one customer versus another is a problem which is minuscule as presented to us relative to some of the other challenges merchants have.

I'm sure a merchant who tries to provide a personal service of any sort has run into the situation where an employee spends a half an hour with a person who either does not make any purchase, or who makes a two-dollar purchase, as opposed to spending 15 minutes with someone who may buy \$1,000 worth of material. How do we get around that problem? As soon as an employee starts spending

time with a customer, does the clerk — sort of with a pedometer approach — start clicking up the additional costs that particular sale should have attributed to it because of the time which isn't spent with another customer?

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, as to business tomorrow, insofar as it appears that the Assembly may well complete debate on the throne speech motion prior to noon tomorrow, if that is the case, we will proceed with the vote on the throne speech, then Government Motions 1, 2, and 3. Government Motions 4 and 5 will, of course, be moved — as is tradition — at the beginning of the budget at 8 o'clock tomorrow night.

If time is available tomorrow morning after comple-

tion of the throne speech, we would then move, with unanimous leave of the Assembly, to Resolution No. 6, moved by Mr. Kidd, on receiving the report of the Land Use Forum, in respect to which Mr. Butler adjourned debate.

That would be the plan for the Assembly's business tomorrow till 1 o'clock.

Mr. Speaker, I move the Assembly do now adjourn until tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion for adjournment by the hon. Government House Leader, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

[The House rose at 5:28 p.m.]