

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTATitle: **Monday, April 12, 1976 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 38****The Highway Traffic
Amendment Act, 1976**

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 38, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act, 1976. Primarily, Mr. Speaker, this bill clarifies the division of responsibilities, relative to motor vehicle administration, between me and my colleague, the Solicitor General.

[Leave granted; Bill 38 introduced and read a first time]

Bill 40**The Bills of Sale Amendment Act, 1976**

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 40, The Bills of Sale Amendment Act, 1976. The purpose of this bill is to provide some protection to persons lending money on the security of a chattel mortgage. It should assist the housing market of the province in clarifying the security which can be taken, particularly with respect to mobile homes.

[Leave granted; Bill 40 introduced and read a first time]

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all members of the Legislative Assembly will join me, sir, and yourself, in welcoming to the Assembly and showing our appreciation to the first Canadian ever to win an Olympic medal in the 500 metre women's speedskating event, capturing a silver medal in record time at the Winter Olympics in Innsbruck, Austria, in February of this year. She's accompanied by her coach from Calgary, Mrs. Jean Haggis.

We have in our gallery a young Albertan who has shown remarkable dedication and commitment. I understand from the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife that she opened the winter games in Banff with very stirring remarks about her commitment to participation in sports. Let us welcome to this Assembly, Cathy Priestner.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, a group of seven Korean

children from the Forest Heights Elementary School, accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Margaret Mason, who is teaching them English. The children moved to Edmonton with their families about five months ago. They are in Grades 1 to 6. I met earlier with Mrs. Mason, who claimed they are the most delightful and intelligent group of children she has ever taught. I would like to have them stand and be recognized by the House.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and to the members of the House, some 50 Grade 6 students from the High Park school in my constituency. They are here today with their teachers, Messrs. Adam, Eshenko, and Gunderson, and several parents. I would ask them to stand in the public gallery and be recognized by the members of the House.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted today to introduce some 50 Grade 6 students from the Laurier Heights Elementary School in the Edmonton Glenora constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Woodrow. These senior elementary students are in the members gallery, and I'd ask that they rise and be recognized by the Assembly at this time.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in introducing to you, and through you to the hon. members of the Legislature, a former long-time MLA and minister of the Crown in the person of Mr. Leonard Halmrast, now of Lethbridge. Mr. Halmrast is in your gallery. He was my desk mate for many years. Mr. Halmrast has always had a keen interest in helping people. In my view, he did very splendid work as both an MLA and a minister of the Crown. He told many cow and sheep stories to the Legislature, but he never tried to pull the wool over anybody's eyes.

Since retiring from public life, Mr. Halmrast has spent a great deal of time at the University of Lethbridge and with the senior citizens of Lethbridge. A few months ago a residence in that city was named after him. I'm sure we're all very happy to welcome Mr. Leonard Halmrast to the Legislature today.

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table with the Assembly a letter, with attachments, from the Prime Minister, dated March 31, 1976. It is in regard to the constitution, and was tabled or made public by the Prime Minister last Friday.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file the annual report of the Public Service Commissioner, and Motions for Returns 139 and 141.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file the report of the Condominium Study Group.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the response to Motion for a Return No. 111, in regard to 'compensatable' accidents under The Workers' Compensation Act.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a reply to Motion for a Return No. 106, as required by the Legislature.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file the 1975 annual report for the RCMP.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to announce that plans have been completed for Alberta to host the western premiers' conference on Wednesday and Thursday, April 28 and 29. The city of Medicine Hat will be the scene of the meeting, which will bring together the Premiers of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta, several of their ministers, and support staff. The sessions will take place at the Continental Inn in Medicine Hat.

Premier Lougheed will act as the chairman of the meeting and will be accompanied by the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. The Deputy Premier and Transportation Minister, Dr. Hugh Hornor, the Provincial Treasurer, Merv Leitch, and Agriculture Minister Marv Moore are also expected to participate in certain portions of these important meetings. The agenda includes transportation, agriculture, the constitution, fiscal arrangements, and western provincial co-operation. The city of Medicine Hat will host a civic dinner on April 28 for the four premiers, ministers, delegates, and the media.

Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today — a double pleasure indeed, with a tremendous athlete in the gallery, our silver medalist, Kathy Preistner — to announce a new program for Alberta athletes and officials who are presently preparing themselves for the forthcoming international competitions.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Olympic and Commonwealth development plan will provide a total of \$250,000 to assist in the costs of preparation by athletes and officials participating in the 1976 Summer Olympics, the 1976 Olympiad for the Physically Disabled, and the 1978 Commonwealth Games. This program, which will be administered through the recreation development division of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife, will replace the current Game Plan '76.

This new program has been expanded, Mr. Speaker, to provide financial assistance to participants competing in the 1976 Olympiad for the physically disabled, which for the first time is being held in Canada. This program will offer equitable assistance for the '76 Olympics, the '76 Olympiad for the Physically Disabled, and the '78 Commonwealth Games. In doing so, this is a first for Alberta and hopefully will serve to lead the way for the rest of Canada.

This new program, Mr. Speaker, will provide assistance with regard to such things as transportation to competitions, relocation expenses to special training camps, subsistence expenses en route and on location, and miscellaneous expenses connected with

medical requirements, coaching fees, vitamin supplements, and special facilities or equipment rentals.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Alberta has recently altered its policy with regard to leave for government employees competing or officiating in any national or international amateur athletic event. This new complementary policy will provide government employees with a maximum of two weeks per year special leave, with pay, to prepare for, or participate in, a national or international amateur athletic event, with a total of six weeks' such leave during a three-year period.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we would urge the private sector of Alberta to follow our lead to ensure that participants employed by them would receive the same benefits as those employed by the Government of Alberta, with regard to training and preparation for national and international amateur athletic events.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

PWA Move

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, may I direct the first question to the Minister of Transportation, the Deputy Premier? The question flows from the announcement of the Canadian Transport Commission that Alberta will have until April 23 to respond to the B.C. intervention on the PWA headquarters move.

I'd like to ask the minister if he's in a position to indicate to the Assembly the approach the Government of Alberta will take. What contingency plans will the minister be implementing in light of the announcement from the CTC?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I haven't received any notification as yet from the chairman of the CTC, other than the Canadian Press dispatch on it relative to the dates that the hon. leader refers to. Of course, Mr. Speaker, the position is that the CTC, in our view, does not have the right to designate where one head office is.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister in a position to indicate if it is the intention of the Government of Alberta to make a presentation to the Supreme Court of Canada? Or is the Premier going to discuss the matter personally with the Prime Minister? Where does the issue sit as far as the Alberta government is concerned?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. leader should appreciate that there are several issues. There is the question of our leave to appeal to the Supreme Court on the federal court's decision relative to whether the Queen in the right of Alberta is the same as the Queen in the right of Canada. There is another question relative to the more recent application by the province of British Columbia, under what we think is not an applicable portion of the CTC regulations, and that's the present one which is under review. We'll be making our position known to the Canadian Transport Commission prior to April 23.

MR. CLARK: A further supplementary question to the Deputy Premier. Is it fair to say that the position of

the Government of Alberta is basically that Alberta has made the decision to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada, and that any action by the CTC or anyone else should sit in abeyance until that appeal is heard?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I appreciate the relationship between the two areas the hon. leader is talking about. One deals with a point of constitutional law. The other deals with the question of whether a company has the right to locate its headquarters in one city or another.

MR. CLARK: Can I ask one further question of the minister then? Is it the intention of the Government of Alberta to ask the CTC not to go any further on this particular matter until the Supreme Court has ruled? Or does the government see no connection between the two?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, in our view, I think we've put it forward very clearly. They are not related. We don't feel that the Canadian Transport Commission, under any of its regulations, has or should have the right to dictate the question of where an owner has his head office.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just one further supplementary question to the minister. I wouldn't want to misunderstand.

Is it the position of the Government of Alberta that the CTC hearing will go ahead, as far as Alberta is concerned? There will be no requests from Alberta for that hearing to be held off until the Supreme Court has ruled on the constitutional issue.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the only request from us will be to the CTC, that they don't need to have any such hearing as they've now asked for.

MR. HYNDMAN: No jurisdiction.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. Has the CTC ever interfered with the location of the headquarters of any other air line?

DR. HORNER: Certainly not that we're aware of, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, they have suggested they don't have that kind of authority.

MR. TAYLOR: One further supplementary, if it can be called a supplementary. I'd suggest we tell CTC to keep its nose in its own business.

Serviced Land Shortage

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, with that kind of comment having such support of all sides of the House, perhaps I could go on to the second question, and ask it of the decorated Minister of Housing and Public Works today. In light of the comments that ... [interjections]

Decorated, I'll determine the distinguished part later.

With regard to the comments the minister made in Calgary recently on the shortage of serviced land, is the minister in a position to indicate to us what

immediate steps the government plans to take on this question?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated — and the budget has — a pretty substantive amount of money dedicated to the area of servicing land and land banking throughout the smaller centres of the province.

I also indicated last week that I met with Mayor Cavanagh with respect to the Edmonton situation, and indicated that officials of the Alberta Housing Corporation are working with officials of the city of Edmonton to bring an additional number of lots in the Mill Woods area onto the market this year.

With respect to the Calgary area, I must admit suffering a small setback with regard to the Airdrie subdivision and its faith in the last couple of days. But we are investigating, in every way possible, the methods available to us of increasing the number of lots coming on stream in the Calgary area during the next year.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has the minister had representation from independent builders with regard to the extreme shortage of serviced land available in the city of Calgary?

MR. YURKO: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Builders like to have their land approved for servicing, and serviced at the earliest opportunity. That's good business for them. They come to see me as frequently as they can, to press their case upon government and certainly upon me.

So that's nothing new. It has been known for some time that there is an apparent shortage of serviced land in the city of Calgary. I say an apparent shortage, Mr. Speaker, because there is a great deal of land within Calgary proper that is serviced and can be used for multiple housing. It's kept off the market for a variety of reasons.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister in a position to indicate what kind of monitoring his department is doing with regard to the Calgary situation, from the standpoint of availability of land for independent builders?

Also, some construction firms are now in the process of laying off people in the housing industry in Calgary. Once again, I relate to independent builders. Is the minister's department involved in a monitoring situation as far as Calgary is concerned?

MR. YURKO: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta Housing Corporation does engage in watching the situation very closely in the Calgary area. I might indicate to the hon. Leader of the Opposition that as late as this morning I met with the vice-president of the southern region of the Alberta Housing Corporation, Mr. Star- no, and discussed the possibilities available in Calgary with respect to bringing serviced land on the market at the earliest opportunity. I also requested that he keep me informed as frequently as possible on the total alternatives developing in Calgary with respect to bringing particularly low- and middle-income housing on the market.

MR. CLARK: A further supplementary to the minister. Has the minister met with the mayor of Calgary to deal specifically with this matter? I appreciate the minister met with the mayor on the question of apartments, but specifically on serviced land available?

MR. YURKO: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have met with the mayor of Calgary on several occasions in the last few months. I believe the last time was about three weeks ago, when we reviewed some of the proposals in relation to bringing lots on the market. We were particularly interested and impressed by one proposed by the Daon Development Corporation, which incorporated a very large percentage of low- and middle-income housing.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. Has the Alberta government given consideration to the approach with regard to subdivision used in the province of Ontario, where if the local municipality or government does not approve subdivision within a reasonable period of time, the minister is in a position to move? Is the Alberta government giving consideration to this kind of proposal?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, that question might be more appropriately addressed to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the legislation as it now stands provides in The Planning Act for some expedient moves on behalf of the government, but it is with the consent of the municipality. I refer specifically to the innovative housing projects section, which does allow that form of movement with respect to subdivisions.

BNA Act

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Premier. With reference to bringing the constitution back to Canada, would the Alberta government go along with a plan by the federal government that carried the judgment of a majority of the provinces of Canada?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, that is a very difficult question, if I take it that the hon. member's referring to the possibility we would accept the patriation of the constitution from Westminster to Canada on the basis of concurrence by the majority of the provinces in number.

This, of course, brings us to the difficult question of the amending formula itself. The view we hold, as I stated in the House on Friday, is that we don't feel it's in the interest of our federal state to have the federal government on its own, unilaterally, make that move without the concurrence of the provinces. Because of the nature of the situation in Canada today, until there is agreement on an amending formula, and perhaps an agreement on the constitutional amendments in total, it seems difficult for us to accept any move by the federal government without the concurrence of all the provinces at this stage.

But the matter is certainly a fluid one, and open to

what I'm certain will be significant discussions over the next weeks and months.

MR. TAYLOR: One further supplementary to the hon. Premier. Will this matter be discussed at the first ministers' conference in Medicine Hat?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I am certain that it will. As the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs mentioned, there's a concern by the western premiers, as I read reports I've received from across western Canada. So at the western premiers' conference in Medicine Hat later this month, the subject of the constitution will be a specific item placed on the agenda by Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for clarification to the hon. Premier. Do I take it from the Premier's comments that at this stage the position of the Government of Alberta is that any change, any agreement to patriate the constitution, would be dependent upon the consent of all 10 provinces, including P.E.I.?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, yes. I believe that ours is a confederation of 11 governments. Certainly at this stage, until there's an agreement on an amending formula, it's a confederation where the rights of the people in Prince Edward Island, [like] the rights of the people in Alberta, have to be respected. We don't think there should be a unilateral move by the federal government to move the constitution without the concurrence of the provinces. I think efforts should be made to try to reach agreement on both an amending formula and revisions to the constitution.

I frankly would have thought we had other matters of greater priority than this before the nation today. But if the matter is being developed as a matter of concern by the Prime Minister, certainly we'll follow through on it.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier, to ask a question and quote from the letter of February 10 to the Prime Minister, concerning the position that "any two western provinces should be sufficient".

Mr. Speaker, can the Premier advise the Assembly why the government feels that "any two western provinces should be sufficient"? As I understand it, the position in the Prime Minister's letter was: any two western provinces, providing they constitute the majority of the population of the western provinces.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, we felt that projected population trends would give a rather unfair position to the province of British Columbia in that particular provision. We are not looking for that sort of population growth in our province. We see steady, but certainly not abnormal, population growth. We feel that the situation with regard to British Columbia gives it a relatively unfair position in the scheme of things in the four western provinces.

As the hon. member is well aware, the situation in the Atlantic provinces is that it's any two of the four Atlantic provinces, regardless of their population. We think that if that is the appropriate amending formula — and we're certainly open-minded on that — we

don't see a situation where the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta would have to be involved in order to offset a situation that involved British Columbia.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Premier, again referring to the letter of February 10. Is the Premier in a position to advise the Assembly what type of input the province sees as appropriate in the appointment of judges?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, tentatively — but only tentatively because of the complexity of this matter — we feel the discussions on this subject that occurred in Victoria in June 1971 are a good beginning with regard to provincial input in the appointment of Supreme Court of Canada judges.

An argument has been made that, if there are only nine judges and three of them are to come from the province of Quebec, having regard for the traditional situation in Canada together with the potential growth in western Canada, the number of judges is something that should be reassessed. But generally speaking, we're looking tentatively at a starting place towards the discussions and provisions discussed in Victoria in June 1971.

Western Premiers' Conference

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the hon. Premier. It deals with the upcoming western premiers' conference. I understand the hon. Premier is the chairman of the conference.

Mr. Speaker, in light of remarks concerning cost-shared programs attributed to the Premier of British Columbia, I wonder if the Premier would advise the Assembly whether he sees a common western position developing on Ottawa's moves vis-a-vis both medicare and hospitalization — not cutbacks but reducing the increase in commitment from the federal government.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I believe I would be in a better position to answer that interesting question on April 29.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier as chairman of the conference. Will this matter be the priority item on the agenda, as indicated by the hon. Premier of British Columbia?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs pointed out, it's only one of five items. The other ones are very important as well, involving transportation, agriculture, the constitution, and western provincial co-operation. At this stage, I wouldn't want to say it is the primary item. I think there are five extremely important matters, and would prefer that we considered it that way.

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

MR. NOTLEY: Can the Premier advise the Assembly whether it's the view of the government that there is

strong merit in a joint position taken by the four western provinces on the issue of cost-shared programs?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, as hon. members are well aware, when it's possible to have a joint western Canadian position on these matters, it's certainly in the interests of all four western provinces. We showed that with the positions we took on matters such as transportation at the Western Economic Opportunities Conference. I would concur it is certainly desirable if that position could be worked out. These items are on the agenda in the hope we can have a position with regard to all four western provinces having a common view.

I think it's going to be very difficult on that subject, because hon. members will recall the advice received in this House from the Provincial Treasurer and the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, that the Prime Minister has called a meeting on tax sharing and fiscal arrangements for June of this year. It will be fairly difficult to deal with the matter with any degree of certainty until we are aware of whatever federal proposals are being contemplated or . . . [inaudible]

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. I wonder if the Premier would indicate to the House whether it's the intention to have federal counterparts invited to discuss the various issues that will be discussed at the premiers' conference?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I would have to have clarification on the term "federal counterparts". Is the hon. member referring to having federal observers attending the meeting of the western premiers?

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, yes, I am — those who would be in authority with regard to transportation, health, and so forth.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is, definitely not. In fact, at the annual premiers' conference a tradition had developed to have federal observers attend. When we came to office, we took the position that we did not think that was sound. We expressed it to the dismay of some, and have now reached the position that there are not federal observers at the premiers' conference. There never have been, and I hope never will be, observers from the federal government at the western premiers' conference.

Third-level Air Service

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Premier, Minister of Transportation. I would like to know the status of scheduled air service in northern Alberta that has been provided by Bayview Air Service Ltd.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, over the past several months we have attempted to provide some organizational and perhaps some additional financial help to Bayview, if a proper proposal could have been put forward.

After a thorough review of that company's operation, it is unfortunate, but we are not able to provide

any financial input to Bayview. My understanding is that Gateway Aviation Ltd. will be serving the routes on an interim charter basis, and that the federal MOT will then either reassign those licences or ask for applications from other third-level carriers that might be interested. We'll be following it up so that anything done in that area ties in with other things we are trying to do in northern Alberta relative to third-level air service.

Parks Policy

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife. Has the minister discussed the proposed new park west of Edmonton with the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission?

MR. ADAIR: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Some officials from my department have been attending the meetings of the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission. I should point out at the outset that we will be doing a study of the area, not necessarily with the idea of proposing a new park, but looking at the potential to see just exactly what is there. There have been a number of requests for a park in the area since as far back as 1955. As of this summer, we will be doing an assessment of the possibility of including that in our parks system.

MR. PURDY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Has the freeze that has been placed upon the land gone before cabinet? If so, have caveats been placed on all lands under question?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, not to my knowledge. The Edmonton Regional Planning Commission has been handling the hearings to that point. The freeze, Mr. Speaker, is to allow us time to have the study take place and to take a look at just exactly what potential is in the area. The area is referred to as the Glory Hills, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PURDY: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife changed its policy where previously parks were completed and fully utilized before announcing new parks? I'm speaking of Wabamun and Hasse Lake in my area, which are not complete at this time.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, may I clarify the situation. We haven't announced a new park. I believe that stems from an article in the *Edmonton Journal* as a result of a meeting of the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission at which the commission gave the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife the opportunity to study the area.

MR. JAMISON: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The municipal district of Sturgeon highly commends the government on its \$3.7 million commitment to a park at Cardiff.

I was wondering what scheduling this park would have.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, that refers to the same article in the newspaper. As of today I would hope

that will be clarified, relative to what assistance we provide to municipal parks, Mr. Speaker.

Freight Rates — Rapeseed

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I would direct my question to the Minister of Transportation. It's with respect to the announcement by Maple Leaf Mills Limited and Lever Brothers Limited of their intention to build a \$37 million oil seed crushing and refining complex in Windsor, Ontario.

My question is: will every effort be made to assure western Canadian rapeseed processors that freight rates for rapeseed meal and oil will be competitive with that of unprocessed rapeseed?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I think I mentioned in the House before that this matter has been before this Legislature for some time. As recently as Friday I had discussions with the federal minister, relative to an early decision by crushers in western Canada on the question of rapeseed oil and meal. He reaffirmed his earlier statement to the four western transportation ministers that he hoped to have an early analysis and an early order in council setting these new rates. These rates would apply to all the crushing industry in western Canada.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I received this morning some of the costing data that had been promised. It's being analysed in my department now. We hope to be able to get back to the federal minister as quickly as possible, relative to that costing data we've now received.

Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Hearings

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Could the minister indicate whether Alberta is making official representation to the Mackenzie Valley pipeline hearings?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, the answer is no.

Highway Accidents

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Transportation, the Deputy Premier. Is the minister in a position to advise the Legislature whether his studies of highway accidents have identified speed as the major highway accident cause?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, in a preliminary way, I'd have to respond that speed is a factor. The major factor in highway accidents is the driver behind the wheel, then a whole bunch of other factors tie in. An interesting result in Alberta is that there has been a 40 per cent reduction in fatalities on our highways in January and February of this year, as compared to a year ago. That has some interest relative to the announcement in Ontario that they had a 35 per cent decrease, and attributed it to mandatory seat belts.

MR. LITTLE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Would the minister advise whether the 65 mile an hour section of the Calgary-Edmonton highway has a different accident rate than the 70 mile an hour section?

DR. HORNER: I'd have to investigate that, Mr. Speaker. I know the reason that it's 65 south of Red Deer and 70 north happens to be that more intersections are causing us some problems between Red Deer and Calgary than between Edmonton and Red Deer.

MR. LITTLE: A final supplementary. Therefore, would the minister consider one speed from Calgary to Edmonton, rather than two?

DR. HORNER: Well, Mr. Speaker, before too long I hope to be able to announce in the House our position relative to speed limits and other matters of traffic safety. I want to re-emphasize that, in all of these, it's still the nut behind the wheel who's the important factor in traffic safety.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, to the Solicitor General a supplementary relating to the 40 per cent decrease. Could the minister advise the House if there has likewise been a decrease in the amount of alcohol consumed in the first two months?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, no. I would hesitate to attach too much significance to a drop in the accident rate over a short period of two or three months, any more than I would to the allegations that there's been a sharp drop in Ontario. I think we should look at this over the range of the year before leaping to assumptions. It might well be caused by the exceptionally mild winter we've had.

Nurses' Employment

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. What effects has the 11 per cent budgetary increase in hospital spending had on employment opportunities for nursing graduates with baccalaureate degrees?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I had a very nice half-hour meeting over lunch with a group of very nice nurses with bachelors degrees, graduating from the current class. They expressed their concern relative to employment opportunities in the nursing field in Alberta this year. While I appreciate their concern, I indicated to them, and I believe they accepted it, that on a comparative basis, we must assume accurately that when we are putting \$50 million and 11 per cent more into the hospital system in Alberta the employment opportunities in Alberta are certainly going to be better during the current year than they are in any province in Canada, relatively speaking. Most other provinces are freezing or reducing real funds in the hospital system.

One of the positive things the nurses suggested, which I think I can do, is indicate to the hospital boards during this year of restraint that, where a bachelor's degree nurse is required, they give priority to Alberta graduate nurses. This is something I hope to follow up.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. The Report of the Alberta Task Force on Nursing Education indicates that "by 1990 the minimum educational preparation for professional nursing be

the baccalaureate" degree. It indicates certain recommendations should be made to the university and non-university institutions to begin on that program immediately.

I was wondering what the government's or the minister's attitude to that recommendation is, in light of some of the relative statistics we have.

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, of course it's a matter that we'll examine in the estimates. There are two ways to examine the recommendation that the hon. member mentioned. One is on the merits of its case, and one in terms of the fiscal and other kinds of circumstances that attend upon the training of manpower generally, and specifically, in this case, nurses.

Yellowhead Highway — Edmonton

MR. JAMISON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Transportation, and ask if he could advise the Assembly whether he or his department has made representation to the federal government requesting financial assistance to upgrade and construct 125 Avenue, Edmonton, as a link of the Yellowhead Highway.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I can advise the Legislature that, jointly with the city of Edmonton, we have supported their request for additional funds relative to 125 Avenue as a connecting link of the Yellowhead Highway. Indeed, once we get the western section now under construction finished, it will be the major bottleneck on the Yellowhead. Continuing representations are being made to the federal government in that regard.

Cultural Grants

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Government Services and Culture. It has to do with grants.

I'd like to know if the minister is planning to bring in legislation this spring altering the methods by which he's going to hand out grants to cultural organizations.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, regulations have been established for the payment of grants to cultural organizations, ethnocultural groups, and other groups eligible to apply to the government for help under the philosophy that the government is here to help people help themselves.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister, coming out of his talk to the Canada Council arts workshop recently in Red Deer. Can the minister indicate how the matching grants portion of his speech will affect the new organizations?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, probably the hon. member is referring to the rearrangement of priorities within the Department of Culture, which had an overall budget cut of about 40 per cent. But we rearranged certain granting programs to enable the financially hard-pressed professional performing art groups to have better grant procedures and thereby have the grants paid in a

manner which would match any collections of moneys from taxable groups other than government agencies.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate what consultations he's had with the different cultural groups on this new philosophy of matching grants?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, we had a whole-day workshop with the professional performing art groups to establish which criteria would be the best incentive to get the people, the corporations, private donations, for that matter even, after a death, contributions established in last wills and testaments, and so on and so forth, which would then be matched by the provincial government.

Rail Line Abandonment

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. It relates to the announcement today of the western premiers' conference to be held in Medicine Hat towards the end of the month, specifically regarding the agenda item of transportation.

I wonder if the minister can advise if any hearings or discussions will take place in that segment relating to the current question of rail line abandonment in western Canada.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I expect so at this time. It is expected that Mr. Justice Emmett Hall, the chief commissioner of the commission on rail line abandonment, will be briefing the meeting on the morning of the opening day, Wednesday, April 28.

Dodds-Round Hill Project

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the government had any studies on the potential losses of agricultural production as a result of the Round Hill coal development?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is referring to the productive value of agricultural land in that area, indeed the Department of Agriculture does have access to land capability throughout the province. As well, we have access to the productive capability of that land.

MR. KUSHNER: A supplementary question. What would be the annual return to the government from the estimated royalties on the coal development if it went ahead?

MR. SPEAKER: I might suggest to the hon. member that this is a question which really should be put on the Order Paper. That also would give the minister a chance to get the necessary calculations together.

Wage and Price Controls

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. It is with regard to the signing of the temporary wage and price controls with Ottawa.

I wonder if the minister could indicate whether the

province made any commitment to set wages for municipal employees, or whether this is essentially an arrangement between municipalities and the temporary wage controls board. I'm thinking in particular of police forces in the province.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, the agreement signed a few months ago provides that the federal regulations under the federal Anti-Inflation Board relate to compensation in the provincial public sector. That is defined as including the public service of Alberta, employees of school boards, hospital boards, and municipalities. So if the entity to which the hon. member is referring is one which would involve a contract of employment between a group of employees and a county, a municipal district, an improvement district, the relationship in any collective agreement would be subject to the Anti-Inflation Board's guidelines.

MR. COOKSON: A further supplementary to the Attorney General or the Solicitor General. In the special provisions we've made for justice in the province and the plan to provide for special projects, could perhaps the Solicitor General indicate whether wages and salaries might be part of these special projects which may be submitted, or whether there's any relationship to wages and salaries?

MR. NOTLEY: Just the lawyers.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe there is any relationship so far as projects that come under the jurisdiction of my department are concerned. The incentive pay for an inmate in correctional institutions is 70 cents per day. I don't know if that's the sort of thing one would be referring to. Those who work on work-for-fine projects will be getting the minimum wage, and no more.

MR. COOKSON: Perhaps the question was misunderstood, or it wasn't phrased properly. I understand the province and this particular department will be making provision for extra funding for special projects in the area of police work.

I guess my question is whether salaries might be included as part of this kind of project which has to be submitted to the department for acceptance.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, once the police force has reached the minimum condition of an adequate standard of policing, it would then submit budgets for approved projects relating to enhanced policing or crime prevention. The budgets would be on a broad scale and would be accepted with maximum attention paid to the priorities accorded by local police commissions.

I don't believe it would be part of the function of my department to get down to such minute details as the salary levels of the people taking part in a project. One would presume that the salary paid to a policeman would be the same as that paid to the balance of the main police force after the bargaining process has been completed. I would certainly have no intention of directing our thoughts to exactly what wages are paid to the policeman on a particular project.

Preventive Social Services Funds

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the Minister without Portfolio, the Member for Calgary Foothills. I'd like the minister to advise the House, if he could, if some members of Calgary City Council were pressuring the government to deny a request for preventive social service funding for the year 1976-77 for the Calgary Birth Control Association, as approved by a majority of members of the city council.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether it's fair to say some members of the city council have been pressuring government to review the decision made on funding the Calgary Birth Control association. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the province will agree to the funding of local PSS programs if they are approved by the local authorities. Mr. Speaker, that program was approved by city council. To the best of my knowledge, the program will be funded by the province.

Highway No. 16 — Policing

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. During the discussion of departmental estimates for your department last week, hon. Solicitor General, I posed a question on the lack of policing on Highway 16 west of the city of Edmonton. You stated at that time that you'd be looking into it and reporting.

Have you a report for the House at this time?

MR. FARRAN: No, Mr. Speaker, I still haven't had a report from the commanding officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. I will let the hon. member know as soon as I do receive it.

Planning Act

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and ask if he's going to be in a position to introduce the long-awaited planning act prior to the Easter recess, so there will be more opportunity for input from local governments and individuals across the province.

MR. JOHNSTON: I answered that question on Friday, Mr. Speaker, and the answer was no.

Oil Well Drilling

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. How badly have the mild winter and the early spring thaw hurt oil well drilling in Alberta?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, from regular discussions I've had with the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors, I would say that generally they have not been hurt by the mild winter or the early spring thaw. Most available rigs have been tied up and operating within the province. We are now in a

period of spring break-up, which does reduce activity considerably. There have been some problems in the Northwest Territories and further north. But there's some question whether it is a result of the weather, or whether it's tied to the lack of federal land regulations in that area.

Generally, the mild winter has not harmed the Alberta drilling activity in any way. There may be the odd specific case. If we are now in spring, I think so long as the period is as short as normal, there won't be any problem in that regard either.

MR. KIDD: A supplementary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Without detail at all, and on a comparative basis, would the minister comment on whether this winter's drilling is greater or less than last winter's?

MR. GETTY: Generally it's been much more active than last winter, Mr. Speaker.

Coal Testing — Brooks Area

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could reply to a question that was asked by the hon. Member for Bow Valley regarding a coal test to be carried out in the Brooks area by CanPac Minerals Ltd. He asked me what the purpose was.

I also checked to make sure where it was located in relation to Bow City. Mr. Speaker, it's two and a half miles from Bow City.

AN HON. MEMBER: Downtown?

MR. GETTY: That's taking the crossroads of Bow City.

MR. CLARK: The crossroad.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there is no specific purpose or market currently in mind for the coal. They merely wish to test the quality: how it will perform, the ash content, et cetera.

There is a period of time now in which citizens in the area may file a notice of objection. So far, none have been filed, and if none are filed it will proceed within several weeks.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, may I revert to Introduction of Visitors, please?

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly we might do that on Orders of the Day, after we have formally concluded the question period.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of outstanding answers which I'd like to give to the House at this time.

Food Poisoning

MISS HUNLEY: The hon. Member for Drumheller inquired about whether hamburger had caused any bacterial food poisoning. The answer is no.

Calgary Social Services

MISS HUNLEY: The hon. Leader of the Opposition asked two questions about social assistance in the

city of Calgary. One of the questions was, had we given a commitment to locate and retain the regional concept in the city. The answer to that is no, although officials in the department are working with the officials of the city.

The second question asked by the hon. Leader of the Opposition was whether we would be retaining the work opportunity project. An indication has been given that it will continue until September, which was the termination date originally scheduled. But that's also under negotiation at the present time.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister, with regard to the work opportunity program in Calgary. Is the minister in a position to indicate the type of negotiations going on? Is it a matter of extending it past September, or in fact perhaps cutting off the program right away?

MISS HUNLEY: I don't have all the details of the type of negotiation going on, but I would expect it to be whether it could be amalgamated with some of our work opportunity programs, how it can best be utilized, and how we can make use of it, if indeed we can.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway revert to Introduction of Visitors?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS** (reversion)

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, some 11 to 15 students from NAIT, in the constituency of Edmonton Kingsway. They're from the NAIT building construction technology class, a high index of importance, of course, in view of the high rate of building in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate them for taking an interest in the legislative process. They're in the members gallery. I would ask them to rise and be recognized in the House.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair]

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS** (Committee of Supply)

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair]

Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply will now come to order.

Mr. Minister, do you have any opening remarks?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, we spent considerable time in the subcommittee going over various matters.

I'm sure that in turn may have produced some requests or thoughts about information in the program as set out in the estimates. I'd be only too happy to answer any further questions members might have.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that we all couldn't be at the same committee meeting. I wonder if I might ask the minister if he can perhaps give us an assessment of the work of the rent review people. I assume this is under departmental support services.

Where does the program stand now? What kind of response has his department been getting as far as complaints are concerned? Can he give us some indication of whether the program is now sufficiently operational, from his standpoint? Does he expect it to be beefed up in the next period of time? When does he hope to have people in place, recognizing that we now have 14 months left out of 18?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, of course, the program really had to start immediately following passage of the legislation on December 15 last year. That necessitated acquiring a staff of rent regulation officers. It necessitated the development of a training program for these officers. At the same time, as soon as January 1 came, we were immediately in a position of receiving not only complaints from tenants, but also the formal requests for increases of rents beyond the permitted increases.

I would say that so far the board has been able to put a number of rent regulation officers into position. A number of decisions have been given on applications for increases by landlords. I would suspect that probably within the next few days, a week, or two weeks at the most, we will be receiving requests for appeals of decisions given by the officers.

We have appeal boards in position in the cities of Calgary and Edmonton. I hope shortly to be able to have appointments to the boards in other locations throughout the province.

As of April 5, which was last Monday — I haven't got the statistics for today — we had received 428 landlord applications from across the province. We had also received 1,830 complaints from tenants, which made a total caseload of 2,258. The rent regulation officers so far have been able to resolve 641, leaving 1,617 outstanding. That will probably be improving rapidly as we go along and learn how to handle the cases.

Of the orders issued to landlords — orders have been issued for Edmonton, Calgary, and Medicine Hat — some 55 affected 1,049 actual rental units. Thirty-one applications were denied, 20 were varied, and four were granted in full.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, a question on rent regulation to the minister. Were the majority of the rent control officers with some other department of the government when they were taken on as rent regulation officers?

My other question is: what's going to happen to the staff after June 30, 1977?

MR. HARLE: In answer to the first question, I understand there's been a mix. Of course, many were acquired from other branches of government service and have simply shifted to this program to

carry out their duties. All are on notice that it is a temporary program that will come to an end June 30, 1977. If those particular individuals from other branches of government service are still with us, they will then go back to their original positions. Of course, it is understood that those who have been employed for the program are on a temporary basis.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, could I just follow along with the minister. He indicated the program was to come to an end. I think perhaps now is an appropriate time to talk of criteria the government is going to be looking at with regard to whether the program goes on at the end of the 18 months, or whether it doesn't. I notice under program support, under 1.0.6, the department has beefed up its research component.

I'd like to ask the minister, first of all, what kind of background information is the minister in fact going to be assessing? What kind of criteria is he going to be using when he goes to his colleagues in the cabinet and says, yes, I think the thing should be extended, or no, it's done its job after 18 months. I think it's important we know now the kind of criteria we are going to be looking at.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the question of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, I would say that at this time we have not yet developed any criteria that should be considered. The aim, of course, is to end the program on June 30, 1977.

With the research capability we have, I think it's very essential that we don't duplicate the efforts of other branches of government. Undoubtedly, an assessment will be made of the actual decisions and material that has come before the board. There will also be an assessment of the material that comes before the officials in the Alberta Housing Corporation and the statistics and material that come out of the federal government, from both Statistics Canada and the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

This material will no doubt be gathered together and presented in due course to assess the situation as the months pass. As I say, it is the intention of the government to be out of the program. I'm quite sure that, of course, another matter that would have to be considered would be the federal government's attitude towards the whole anti-inflationary program.

MR. CLARK: Just following along from there, the minister indicated that as far as continuation of the program is concerned, they didn't want to be involved in duplication of other actions of governments. Is the minister alluding to the possibility of the federal government becoming involved in this area, or some other government department in Alberta?

MR. HARLE: No, Mr. Chairman, I'm referring to the gathering of statistical material on which to base research. I wouldn't like to see us going out trying to duplicate work that is already being done. We're gathering it for use in assessing the program.

MR. CLARK: Just to follow that along, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the minister's comments, it seems to me that really no criteria were established. I would have to say candidly to the minister that I, for one, hope we'll be able to be in a situation where rent

control won't be needed in 14, 16 months, or whenever it is.

But at the same time, if we as an Assembly are to appear credible to people caught in the situation of having to rent during this period, unless we do have some fairly clearly laid out criteria as to what we're going to use for guidelines to make that decision, simply say we're going to be getting information from this agency, from AHC, Statistics Canada, and so on, I think we're going to be in a situation very much like we were before the legislation came in; if I might be so frank, saying, I'm not quite sure which direction we're taking.

I don't lay that blame at the minister's doorstep. But I would have to say, if some clear criteria for an evaluation aren't set out rather quickly that responsibility would have to lie squarely on the minister's shoulders. In addition to being responsible for the administration of the program, pretty candidly, some sort of criteria as to whether we get out of the thing or carry on has to rest from your department, Mr. Minister. I don't think it's good enough to say we're going to get information from the Alberta Housing Corporation and Statistics Canada, and that's where it's going to pull together. It would seem to me that one has to make some rather basic decisions as to what kind of information you want before you start to pull it together. Surely to goodness, you've made those kinds of decisions already.

So I'd urge the minister to have another crack at trying to indicate to us what kind of criteria he's going to use. What's he going to be satisfied with? Will an 8 per cent increase across the province be kind of reasonable? We had [an increase] in the vicinity of 10 to 11 last year, wasn't it? If it's at that stage in 14 months, are we going to be satisfied? I really think we can't slough it off that easily and say, well, we're going to wait and see what information we have. The information you have is going to depend upon the kind of information you seek from the standpoint of your orientation.

MR. HARLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition is making a very good point. However, I would point out that at this stage of the program, we're barely into it. To say we now have sufficient material which could predict the situation at the end of June — I think we have to be patient. We have to assess the material that comes out. We have to watch the vacancy rates across the province. We have to see what rents are generally as a result of this program, and in some way try to estimate what they might be without controls. This is a very complicated economic assessment. Certainly, as I've indicated, the research people will be asked to assess the material we do have, the material available from other sources, and to have in due course some material ready for recommendations.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, we're getting down to some of the specifics now. When the minister mentions vacancy rates, I assume that's going to be one of the major criteria, if I might use that term. If we're in the awful kind of situation we have been in, that's going to say one thing to the government. On the other hand, if we have a reasonable vacancy rate, the government would look more favorably at getting out of the rent control program. Now, the minister

nods his head. I wish he'd put the nod on record, so we have it that in fact the rate of vacancy is going to be one of the major criteria, along with what's happened to rents across the province when the 18-month period is up. We're really looking at likely a year from now, aren't we? And we've got to make that decision.

MR. HARLE: Well, that's right, Mr. Chairman. That's why I indicated to the Leader of the Opposition the sort of considerations I had in mind for basing whatever research we do. First of all, I think we have to find out what type of information is coming in, get it into some form that records are consistent, and in due course develop some material which will be of use, should the necessity arrive that we have to give further consideration to the matter. As I say, I hope not. I hope we can gradually get out of the whole program by June 30, 1977, and that at that time the gap between the current levels and what the levels might be without control, which is a very hard thing to assess, is such that we have a smooth transition.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, do I assume from that answer that the question of vacancy rate is one of the major criteria the government's going to be looking at?

MR. HARLE: I would say a vacancy rate is, obviously, of tremendous significance to the whole program. I might say I'm certainly very encouraged by the statistical information from the Minister of Housing and Public Works, not only on apartment starts, but on housing generally.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, just to follow up. I'm not sure if the Leader of the Opposition raised this question. If he did, I apologize. I was out for about five minutes.

It seems to me that the issue of the vacancy rate is really pretty crucial to deciding whether we're going to let the rent regulation scheme expire as planned, or whether it has to be extended. The reason I say that is that it seems to me, if we have a very tight vacancy situation — a virtual no-vacancy situation, which we have at the present time — and we take the controls off, there will be a very sharp spiral in rents, not 8 or 10 per cent but something rather more than that.

The reason I suggest that is probably going to take place is that unless you have the availability of accommodation, what will happen is that the prospective landlord, looking at this from the business point of view, will compute a rent based on the new value of his home. Between the time we slapped on the controls in December and right now, there's been an increase — one can argue over what the increase is, but even in the city of Calgary somewhere in the neighborhood of 27 to 28 per cent — in this period of four or five months. I don't know whether that will slow down. I certainly hope it will in the next year. If it continues to increase at that rate, we're going to have a very, very serious problem. I agree that increasing supply is a very crucial part of slowing down the overall rate of increase in homes.

If we have a situation where a house was valued at \$45,000 in November 1975, and rented, let's say, for \$325 a month, if that value is now \$65,000, and

when the controls come off it's \$75,000 or \$80,000, that landlord, if there is a very short supply of accommodation, is going to say, I now have a house worth \$75,000 or \$80,000. I can no longer rent it for \$325 a month. I have to have a rent which brings me a return on my new invested capital, otherwise it pays me to sell the house and invest the money in the bank. So you're going to have a very real problem, unless there is a somewhat more significant vacancy rate.

I would guess we'd have to have 3 or 4 per cent. I'm no expert in this field, but I think it would have to be reasonably significant, maybe even more than that, or we're going to have a very rapid escalation in rental rates: not 8 or 10 per cent, Mr. Minister, but I suspect rather more substantial than that. Landlords will be able to make a pretty cogent argument: why should we even keep our money in this house if we can sell the thing, take the capital gain, and then invest it out, even invest it in a trust firm or in the bank for that matter, and get a rate of return on our investment without any problems of maintenance and what have you?

So we really do have to get these criteria nailed down. If by the end of this year there is not a significant increase in the number of vacancies, I think renters in the province will be on your doorstep, and rightly so.

MR. HARLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, undoubtedly, as the hon. member has indicated, a number of factors have to be considered. I think it's fair to say an improved vacancy rate will go a long way not only towards showing that the housing shortage has been at least partially solved, [but] that it will have to be watched. I would hesitate to predict at this time what the situation is going to be in June 1977. I'm sure all of us are well aware of the very, very fast swings of the pendulum that have occurred in the housing market. Those of us who came into this city in 1972 found absolutely no difficulty, and yet a year later things had changed considerably. There is nothing to indicate that we can't see some fairly wild swings. One would have to believe, in fact, that the swing might be the other way by mid-June of '77. I say that because these things do have a cyclical nature. It would be wrong to say that the present inflation rate in house values would continue at the same rate as the last few months. I think we have to wait and see. If the necessity arrives, I'm sure the proper decision will be made.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I realize we've had an excessive increase in the last few months. I would be a little less optimistic than the minister about what will happen in the future. We've had an encouraging two or three months, no question about that. But that increase in the number of building starts has to continue through the year — then it will moderate the rate of increase. Frankly, I doubt that there's going to be any reduction. It seems to me that at this stage all we can really look at is moderating the increase, or keeping it at 3, 4, or 5 per cent. We could bring it down to the Ontario level of 5 per cent. I think we can live with that.

I notice the Land Use technical report on urban housing projected a doubling of the average house in Edmonton by 1981, in five years. The problem is if

we carry on at the present rate of increase — I don't want to say that will happen, because we all hope it won't. I would hope that if any government saw this happen for another six or seven months, it would bring in extraordinary measures to stop it, or we'd be in an absolutely impossible situation.

But even bearing in mind the technical report produced for the Land Use Forum, we're talking about very substantial increases by 1981 and beyond that to 1986, all of which will have a rather important bearing on the rental market as well. If you can get your money out of a house and reinvest it someplace else, you're not going to keep it in a house. It's just that simple. And if you're among the large number of people who aren't earning enough money now to be able to afford even a down payment, what do you do? The problems are just enormous.

I'd like to ask the minister, however, if he'd comment, and perhaps assess the complaints we've received in the last four months. By and large, what would be the largest single complaint we're receiving under the act? Do we have problems with evictions? What is the experience in the last four months?

MR. HARLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, the program, of course, has only been in since January 1, so we've got January, February, and March statistics. It will be some time before we can refine them to the degree mentioned by the hon. member. I'm hoping that in the next few weeks we can get the orders, the complaints, and the files actually examined by the research people so we can come up with those kinds of statistics. At the moment, of course, we don't have them.

MR. NOTLEY: We may move on. I'd just ask for clarification here. I've got several questions. We can either deal with them at once, and then let the votes go through faster; or as the votes come up, whichever is most . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's probably easier if we get them all cleared away at the start, then we can go through the votes.

MR. NOTLEY: Okay. Fair enough then, Mr. Chairman.

I wondered, Mr. Chairman, if we could ask the minister to comment briefly on the question of his meeting the other day with Alberta real estate agents concerning this question of trading on their own accounts.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, I had a very useful meeting with representatives of the Alberta Real Estate Association. I spent about an hour and a half with them. First, I think I can say that from the information they were able to give me, the Alberta Real Estate Association is concerned about the practice of real estate agents trading on their own account and the possibility that this has for abuse. I might say that there are disclosure requirements in The Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act, and the superintendent of real estate and insurance will be writing to all those licensed under the act, reminding them of the requirements of the legislation.

There are six real estate boards in the province. They also have rules regarding an agent trading on

account. The boards will also be asked to remind their members of those rules. Naturally, any citizens who might feel affected by a transaction should complain either directly to the real estate board, which has a method of solving those complaints, or to the Alberta Real Estate Association. And of course they can complain directly to the superintendent of real estate and insurance in the department. I can assure those individuals that their complaints will be looked into.

I might say that the superintendent has had only a very few inquiries or expressions of concern about the problem, and the boards also. No specific allegations of abuse have been brought to the attention of the superintendent or the boards.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, it would seem to me that part of the problem is that very few people among the public certainly — and I suspect even people not all that far away from the industry — would be aware of the provisions. As I understand it anyway, you're suggesting that the superintendent of insurance is going to send a letter or a communication to all the real estate agencies in the province saying that you're not supposed to trade on your own accounts, and that there must be a disclosure if in fact that's being done.

My question is: do you feel at this stage that the problem is sufficiently widespread that direct prohibition is necessary? Secondly, to what extent do we have the staff to police this question properly? It seems to me disclosure is fine in theory, but it's obviously not happening. Part of the reason may be that the public is not aware of some of the rights they have under the present act. To what extent do we have the manpower and the personnel to police this?

MR. HARLE: Well, as indicated by the estimates, there is, of course, a manpower content to the estimates themselves. The superintendent has so far been able to handle all the complaints that have come to his attention. So the mechanism is there to investigate individual complaints should they arise.

I might say that I think we have to look at the type of market that develops every once in a while. At the moment the market is of course escalating. There's inflation in the market price of property. A real estate agent has always had the right to trade on his own account, provided he disclosed the information required by the legislation. The boards also have rules that apply to individual agents and salesmen when they deal in this way.

I remember when it was very difficult to sell one's house, when if you were posted to another city you had a great deal of difficulty unloading it, because the market was particularly tight. At that time the industry developed, with the active encouragement of everyone at the time to develop a guaranteed sale approach so that property was advertised for a certain length of time, or taken on a listing for a certain length of time. If it wasn't moved, the real estate agent would acquire the property for later sale at the price the two parties had agreed upon.

I've had conversations with several people in recent days who, as a result of this information in the news media recently, have said, well, you know, it's all very well to talk about that, but I made a deal. I knew that the real estate agent was an agent, and that he would

likely be able to sell it for more than what I was able to sell it to him for, but I needed to do it at that particular time. The price was attractive to me and I took it.

Provided there is adequate disclosure — I may say that many real estate agents do not adopt a practice of trading on their own account. The reason they do not is that they're not set up to manage the properties they acquire in this way until they have a sale. There is an ethical problem. I think the ethics of the thing are such that, provided there is full disclosure of the market and the market conditions and that an individual makes up his mind to sell to a real estate agent with full knowledge of the existing market situation, this is the best protection we have. Because undoubtedly, if we were to move in some way which made it a prohibition, all of a sudden a number of individuals, even if they traded purely on their own account, would find themselves in a great deal of difficulty. I think that would be going further than perhaps is necessary.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, if we had a soft real estate market I could see some advantage to the guaranteed sale concept, where someone has moved from Edmonton to Winnipeg or Toronto, or whatever the case may be, and so you can get X number of dollars and then the firm trades on its own account. Really, in that sort of situation, we're talking about a stability in the market. To be fair, that has probably been the case for most of the last number of years. We've had a slow increase. So there was really no issue of windfall.

But where I think people now feel betrayed, in a sense, by the industry is that those who sold on that basis three or four months ago, when prices were escalating not at a normal [rate] but at a very, very fast [rate], did not really feel their agents provided them with the kind of professional knowledge they should have. They're agents. They should know the market. If the market is going as it is now, if they're to live up to the ethics of their occupation — I don't call it a profession, but occupation — that's the kind of information which clearly should be made available to the potential seller. It's a little frustrating when a person finds out that he has sold a house in December and then two or three months later the real estate firm has sold it for \$15,000 or \$20,000 more, \$10,000 more, and that information was not clearly made available to him — the kind of information about the market place which a realtor is in a position to know. If he is to live up to the ethics of his occupation at all, clearly that should be made available to the seller.

It seems to me that one possible variation of trading on account would be to have legislation which would empower the superintendent either to allow this or not, depending on the market situation. Where you have a soft market situation, I can see it may well be a useful service. But where you have a very tight situation, either you've got to have the most stringent sort of disclosure guidelines, and the public has to know about that. It's not the sort of situation where 99 out of 100 sellers would not know that that kind of right existed under statute in the province. I'm sure of it. It seems to me that either we have to make sure people are aware of their rights, that the realtor has to say that in no uncertain terms, and that there has

to be adequate policing; or, alternatively, some kind of flexible approach to trading on their account. In a time when you've got a relatively soft or medium market, fine. In a time when you've got a very tight market, that might well be something that is temporarily withdrawn.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might ask the Member for Spirit River-Fairview a question for clarification. When you kept referring to agent, regarding real estate, did you also include salesmen? It's the agent who's licensed, but he may employ a dozen salesmen who also buy for their accounts. I wonder if you'd clarify that.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman to follow the hon. member's question, the agent is licensed. The salesmen are in fact his agents. They're his representatives. But I was talking about the agency as such. The agency must be responsible for what their salesmen do, as far as I'm concerned, if they're going to act professionally. If you've got an agency with ten salesmen, in my judgment you are responsible for the actions of those salesmen.

MR. GOGO: Well, again for clarification, there are cases, and I'm well aware of them, where salesmen for agents have purchased properties in their name, not through the agent's name but from another agent in the city. I think it's important that that be very clear.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the point I was making for the hon. Member for Lethbridge West is that the responsibility still comes back, in my judgment, to the master-servant relationship. As long as a salesman is selling on behalf of any particular agent or agency, as I see it, the ethics of his profession or occupation should be such that clearly he makes all the information available to the prospective seller.

MR. HARLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, the point has been raised, of course, as a concern of the agent and of the salesman. As far as the ethics go, I think they're very, very similar. The responsibility for the action of the salesman falls upon the agent. It's for the agent to do his best for his principal, the owner of the property.

However, because we are dealing with a market that quite suddenly developed the way it did, we shouldn't become so concerned about that market; because by the time government moves, that market is completely changed and it's no longer appropriate to what could very well be a different situation. As I was saying earlier, when we were discussing rent matters, markets do change. Whatever rules should be worked out should be worked out keeping in mind that we do have very different markets, and it's continually changing. I wouldn't want to go and put us in a strait jacket whereby something that proved very, very useful at times when we've had a very sluggish market — because if that ever returned, by the time government got around to making any changes, we'd find we were out of date again. I think we have to keep some kind of perspective.

There are ethics in the business. The industry, the people who are involved in the boards and the association are very concerned about the potential for

abuse. If there is any [instance] where abuse has occurred, we'd like to know about it.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to say a word or two in connection with this matter. I have been in the real estate business. I think I know what I'm talking about. The vendor, or the owner of the house, himself or herself, can go a long way towards seeing that the thing we're now talking about doesn't happen, if they're on their guard. Because, in the first place, that person must sign the transfer. The transfer document must be signed before it's registered — and if there's anybody else's name in the land titles office. Unless they sign a transfer in blank and give it to the real estate agent, they know whether that's going to somebody else or whether it's going into the name of the dealer or the real estate firm. I think the fact that that can be watched right from the owner of the house puts some responsibility on those people as well.

I don't condone the real estate agents who are indulging in this practice. I don't think it's right. What they're actually doing is selling it for a lower price than the vendor could get on the open market, then realizing the difference and putting it in their own pocket. You may say, how about doctors, lawyers, teachers, or somebody else doing the same thing? Maybe that's bad enough. But it's still not the same thing. They aren't entrusted to sell the home. A real estate agent is.

When I was in the real estate business, before I asked anybody to sign a transfer, I was able to complete that transfer. They'd see everything that was on it. They were normally the last ones to sign the transfer, many times in the presence of the people who were buying the home. If the real estate agent is having them sign transfers in blank, then along with the responsibility of that agent, there's the responsibility of the owner of the house. He's asking for difficulty if he does that, unless he knows the real estate agent very well and knows with whom he is dealing.

I don't like to see real estate agents put in a blanket tub on this thing. I think the number doing it are very, very few in relation to all the real estate agents. That doesn't say it's not just as bad. If it's only being done by one, it's bad. It's not fair to the owner of that house, who is trying to sell it and get the best price possible. Nor is it really fair to the new buyers, who might have to pay more because the real estate agent is upping the price once he has it in his own name.

Another thing I don't like about that practice is that the real estate agent doesn't even have to transfer it into his own name at the Land Titles Office. A search of the records there reveals nothing. He can simply take both transfers himself when he has finally sold it, register it without going into the other name, and do it all in one transaction or one fell swoop. I'm hoping the real estate agents' associations will be able to take the necessary steps, and that the information will get to the people [on] how to pinpoint these people who are, in my view, misleading the people and misplacing a trust.

I have one or two other points I want to speak of in connection with the department, but possibly I'd better deal with those in the right section.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, being in the real estate business myself, I appreciate the information going to the agents. I think this is very well. However, I find the biggest problem is that too many of our consumers aren't aware we have a superintendent of insurance. Very few complaints come from the consumer to the superintendent of insurance, where they can complain.

I certainly think it would be beneficial if we did some advertising, as we're doing for rent controls, so that customers are aware that we have a superintendent of insurance. Or, Mr. Minister, if we could even change the name to superintendent of insurance and real estate, I think that would possibly help. Many people who have a complaint get in touch with me. They don't know where to go until you indicate where they should go.

Mr. Chairman, another area I would certainly like the minister to take a real good look at is the present real estate exam. I mentioned in the House a few days ago that I don't think it's an adequate exam. I think we should educate our real estate agents. We should also educate our salesmen. I think this would solve a lot of problems we're facing as far as real estate is concerned today.

MR. HARLE: I'd like to respond to the last point particularly. New course material is in preparation and will be published very, very shortly. Before the session ends, I hope I can file that course material with the Legislature Library, so members can see what the industry is doing towards improving the general professional capability of its members.

As you know, there has been a set exam, on which everybody was well briefed and could answer 100 per cent. If they couldn't, they hadn't done their homework. It was as simple as that. With the preparation of this course material, that will be discontinued. I've been asked by the superintendent not to file the exams, because he's going to be changing them. We'll have a set of exams and a set of material which can be used to test people coming into the industry. It will be changed as time goes on.

The other point is that we are changing the bonding requirements as a result of the legislation last fall. The industry itself is concerned with the high turnover of salesmen. Hopefully, with the change of the bonding requirement and the greater emphasis on the agent to make sure he hires responsible people as salesmen, we'll get at that problem as well.

MR. R. SPEAKER: [Not recorded] this examination. I asked this question the other night. I still wasn't quite clear on it. Will the questioning be more extensive with regard to legislation? I've never seen the exam. Or [will there be] more questions about terms used in the selling business, or ethics of salesmanship? Where will the main expansion of the exam lie?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, I haven't seen the exams myself. I know the course material will cover all the types of things you're talking about. I'm sure along with that will be an exam which is much more meaningful. We have about a 4 per cent turndown on the present ones. I'm sure that will be increased substantially.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, just one further question. I appreciate the exam getting harder. Does the minister anticipate coming up with any type of educational program to educate our salesmen and agents, so they are prepared for this new type of plan they're coming up with?

MR. HARLE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. That will be the course material. As I say, I will have it all ready and will file it in the House so you can see it.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to bring up one point I think we have missed. When the seller of a piece of real estate can't sell his house, the agent — say after a period of 30 days or so — gives the man who is selling the house the price he wanted, the price he felt was fair and just. That piece of real estate stays in the hands of the company or the agent for 30 days or 60 days. Then a sale becomes available and the agent makes [what] might even be a large profit. At that point, I think the agent is possibly entitled to that profit. He has fulfilled his obligation to his client to move his house for him.

But at the same time I say that is justified, I know the genuinely concerned members of the real estate fraternity are really concerned about this other trading in their own account. I have confidence that the minister and the real estate people will overcome this problem. I think that possibly we in the Legislature, by bringing this to the attention of the public, will expedite the real estate people policing their own members. We can legislate it in this House if we have to, but I have confidence in the minister and in the people in the real estate business themselves to overcome the problems we're having.

But I just wanted to make this small point, that the client has been served if his house has been sold and at a later date the agent does make a profit on that piece of property. So everybody's really happy. There isn't a complaint there. But this other one is certainly an area to look at. I'm sure the minister and the real estate people will look after it.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make one or two comments on that matter. Then I'd like to deal with one or two others while I'm standing up, so I won't have to get up and down.

In connection with the examination, I haven't seen the examination for real estate agents in the last two or three years. But I did see it prior to that, and it certainly was no easy examination. To pass one of those examinations a person has to be pretty well versed not only in the terms, but also in the transactions, in business, and in handling money. It's no pushover and no easy task to pass those examinations. You were mentioning that there's a 4 per cent failure. In many years, I think it was far higher than that. I'm not sure that the government is under obligation to carry out an educational program. If it can be done, well and good. Certainly the point I want to make is that the examinations I have seen are no pushovers, are certainly difficult enough and indicate whether or not that person has a realistic view of how to sell houses, draw up the transfers, secure titles, et cetera. Those are the things most relevant to this type of deal.

Secondly, I would not agree with the hon. Member for Clover Bar in the case that he just cited. That

would lead to unending abuse, if that's ever recognized. In the first place, an unscrupulous real estate agent could simply feign the sale, that he just can't sell it. I've held houses in my office on signed listings for more than three or four months before a buyer came along. I could very well have secured [the houses] for half the price and sold them for double. I don't think that's fair to the person who owns the house. I think it's unethical for an agent to do that type of thing.

If a real estate agent wants to buy and sell, he should get out of that, or do it from another agent and not do it as a real estate agent where he accepts a signed listing from someone. Once you permit that, you're going to lead to unending abuse, even after he holds it for a month and even if the seller is satisfied with the price at that particular time. He might be satisfied. But if he's entitled to more and the house is going to sell for more on the open market, why shouldn't he get it instead of the speculator who happens to be the agent? I think that's the part to which most people object.

The next point I'd like to mention is in connection with the federal Anti-Inflation Act. Under the act a manufacturer may not raise his price for goods by more than 11 per cent, and a worker may not increase his salary or wages by more than 11 per cent. But there's nothing in the act to prevent a manufacturer from diluting his product or making his product with much cheaper components and continuing to sell the product at the price it was sold for when it contained better components. Manufacturers who do this can raise their profits by much more than 11 per cent without raising their prices at all. In my view, this is inflationary and is not giving the purchaser the benefit of a reduced price. This is now going on, I believe, in some provinces.

The second point I'd like to raise is in connection with something going on in Ontario and possibly in other provinces as well. It has been pinpointed in Ontario where, due to the price and wage freeze, the present situation is that consumers are cutting down on the number of items they purchase. Consequently, the manufacturers are beginning to stockpile their goods. Since the market for their goods is dwindling, the manufacturers are cutting back their working hours to 20 or 25 hours a week. Consequently, the worker is suffering. However, these cutbacks do not show up in the unemployment figures as the person working the 25 hours a week cannot collect unemployment insurance. It's quite possible the same thing may be happening in Alberta. We should watch the effect of such a situation very closely, as it's not only unfair to the workers but, in my view, also to the buyers.

One other item I'd like to mention is in connection with insurance. This case has been referred to the superintendent of insurance, and will be referred later. It's a case where an insurance company in this province is using The Limitation of Actions Act to get out of paying a proper, legitimate claim to a person who should have secured the money. This insurance company is saying, we told you — "you" being the man entitled to the insurance — this was your last offer. You either accept \$650, or you won't get anything. The man involved tells me they never told him any such thing. The company tells me they never sent him a letter saying they would not give him one

cent if he didn't settle right there and then.

Actually the insurance company is using The Limitation of Action Act to get out of paying a proper claim. I don't think that's right at all. The Limitation of Actions Act, in my view, is to limit the time for action in the courts. Surely to goodness, by the widest stretch of the imagination, it wasn't intended that an insurance company should refuse to pay a legitimate claim, even though the insured thought he was entitled to more. To refuse to pay the amount adjusted by the adjuster and then say, it's too late now, two years have gone by, so you're not entitled to anything, is nothing short of highway robbery, in my view. I think that's exactly what it is.

I've been in correspondence with the insurance company. I'm still trying to persuade them that it is not only immoral but illegal for them to use The Limitation of Actions Act in this way. If they refuse to come through and pay this man his \$650 to which they themselves and their adjuster said he was entitled even though he felt he should get more, then I will have no objections to raising their name right in this Legislature and letting the people know what kind of business this insurance company is conducting in this province. Their adjuster said he was entitled to \$650. They dilly-dallied for months before they even examined the car. Then they refused to pay the \$650 because The Limitation of Actions Act now forbids an action in the courts.

Surely to goodness, it was never intended that The Limitation of Actions Act would permit an insurance company to not pay a sum which their adjuster said they should be paying. This is a black eye to every automobile insurance company. No wonder people are getting weary with private insurance companies when they get this type of deal. No wonder many people are looking towards government insurance as the answer. This is the type of thing that turns people off.

I'm going to send the insurance company a copy of what I've said in this House. I will expect them to pay that man what's properly coming to him according to the adjuster. If they don't, I think they should get all the bad publicity possible in this province. Also, the superintendent of insurance should clamp down on this type of thing before it gets going very far.

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Chairman, at this time I wish to say just a few words regarding the moral aspect of real estate and their agents in acting as agents for selling either homes or farmland. The reason I'm saying this, Mr. Chairman, is that just over the weekend an elderly couple came to me who had their land appraised at \$78,800 some two or three months ago. After a client had appeared from Calgary over the weekend and had a cup of coffee with them, he found that his land was listed with them for \$109,500. When they started dealing, it became apparent this was what the land was listed at.

I believe measures have to be taken to protect the elderly — when an agent comes to them, gets an appraisal, that the house be listed or the land be listed plus the costs of their commission. Surely, as members of this Legislature we can't stand by and see \$30,000 change hands as profit as an everyday occurrence.

I also know of a house in this city that was sold by an elderly couple for \$24,500. It was purchased by

the real estate agent because the person who was going to purchase the land could not come up with the money. The real estate company said they were obliged to pay this amount of money. A few months later, the same house was listed for \$37,500.

I don't know whether to put legislation or to call upon the real estate people to clean up the mess they have created in this province. Most of the public, at least the people I've talked to, have no faith whatsoever in dealing with a real estate company.

I just wanted to bring this to the attention of the committee at this time. Although listed and agreed to by the seller to the agent for \$78,800, the land and buildings sold for \$109,500. It just doesn't make sense to me, but I'm hoping that somehow the minister can bring pressure on the real estate people in the province, or the people in charge of the personnel of the real estate companies. Something must be done to rectify these injustices now coming to light in the province of Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, might I follow up that point raised by the Member for Drayton Valley for a moment. I think it's a valid concern. The Member for Bow Valley raised the issue that I think is probably a good one, which will deal with most of the problems, and that is that there should be some additional advertising. God forbid that we in the opposition should talk about advertising for this government, but I think there is a valid point here. Advertising so that people's rights as vendors would be more widely known would be a step in the right direction, I think. However, that does not really deal very well with the individuals who for one reason or another — it could be any number of reasons, it might even be that English is not the first language — are just not aware of what their rights are.

Now I don't happen to know what the precise penalties are for failure to disclose. I wonder if perhaps the minister could tell us what the specific penalties are at present. It seems to me that there may be some argument for increasing the penalties for failure to disclose if an agent is not acting professionally.

MR. HARLE: To answer that question first. I don't have the legislation in front of me. It's just a matter of checking The Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act.

Responding to the Member for Drayton Valley, I would suggest that if he does have any specific complaints, he document them and bring them to my attention or directly to the attention of the superintendent.

I'd just like to comment a little on some of the points raised by the hon. Member for Drumheller. He raised the issue of an agent not trading on his own account, and indicated he would feel more comfortable if it were another agent who purchased the property. The difficulty, of course, is that the same person could own both agencies. I'd rather see something done openly, aboveboard, and directly, rather than create potential for something being done which looks okay on the face of it but, in fact, it's the same individual doing it. I'm just more comfortable with it.

I note the comments the hon. member made about adjustment of an automobile claim. On that point I would suggest that he might also bring to his constit-

uent the matter of using a private bill if the necessity arose, because we see those periodically in this Assembly as well.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could give us some indication as to what portion of licensed real estate agents in Alberta are under the real estate boards in Edmonton and Calgary. Can he give us some kind of ballpark figure across the province? Are we looking at 50 per cent or 80 per cent?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, I think it's in the neighborhood of 70 to 80 per cent.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would want to move on to another topic, so if there are any other questions on this, I'd defer to members.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a very brief comment on this. I wanted to say, Mr. Chairman, that surely the increased cost of homes is not caused by trading by real estate agents alone. We're making such a big issue out of this that one is almost convinced, after listening to the conversation here this afternoon, that this is the central and most important item.

Frankly, I don't think it is the main item by any means. It's mainly caused, I would think, by citizens and individuals themselves trading and expecting a fair market value, but also, of course, increased land costs, building costs, the high demand, and inflation.

Mr. Chairman, I would hope that after hearing the comments this afternoon, the minister would take into account the obvious need for adequate public relations by real estate agencies, and he's indicated that already: to assure that the public understands the terms of the contract, their ability to get out of a contract, the floating commission, and their rights as individuals. I think that's the main cause of some of these problems. The problems may be isolated. I suggest that probably on a percentage basis they are isolated. The individuals don't know what their rights are, and maybe this is the area the minister should really be concentrating on, and it will be self-correcting. I have confidence that the citizens of Alberta have common sense and will exercise that common sense accordingly. If they want to sell to a real estate agent, they should be able to do that, because obviously that price is satisfactory to them at that time.

Thank you.

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Chairman, to just make an observation on the comments made by the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway. I would say, in looking at the total picture, that the percentage of people dealing in real estate in the manner we've heard this afternoon is small.

But I think the owners of the old real estate establishments, and maybe some that came on stream 15 years ago, are not in a position to practice that kind of con we hear about.

In years past people selling real estate would normally go to the real estate agent to get an appraisal, first of all, and expecting to sell it at the profit percentage agreement they had with them.

Now if this is changing, I think the percentage is

small. I am sure the real estate board will try to clean this up. I have every faith that they will. But surely, before we issue any more licences to start new companies dealing in real estate, I think it's got to be just a little bit tougher. Maybe only .5 per cent are dealing in the manner described today, but I have every faith that they can clean it up. Let's hope they can do it soon enough so as not to cause any more of these things going on right now.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, I think we're dealing with an issue here and trying to identify it as being the responsibility of real estate agents, when in actual fact we're looking at a practice that applies to a great many people outside the real estate industry itself. A great many individuals throughout this province are speculating in all types of real estate, trying to buy it at a very low cost, and selling it for as much as they can get. I don't think we're going to solve this problem by saying, you real estate people try to clean up your own house, because it's outside their jurisdiction.

MR. NOTLEY: We got into such a long debate over this matter, I thought there might be some more comments. But if there are not, I would like to move on to another question. That's the issue of what is happening to the rural electrification associations.

I gather this was discussed in subcommittee. I was in the other subcommittee, so I didn't have an opportunity to take part in that discussion. But I have had discussions with a number of people in REAs around Edmonton who have expressed some concern about the present move, by Calgary Power in particular, in purchasing or taking over REAs. I wonder if the minister is in a position to advise the committee what the policy of the government is with respect to this matter, what he sees in terms of this issue, and what future the government sees for rural electrification associations in the province of Alberta.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, that's a fairly large topic. At the outset I might say that I'm having the officials in the department prepare a briefing for me of the present state of the REAs and their particular problems. Of course, we try to monitor the meeting of the Union of Rural Electrification Associations and the resolutions they pass.

I tried to indicate at the subcommittee hearings that rather contradictory resolutions were passed by the union. Unifarm has an interest. Both have given us briefs on the subject. I'm in the process of having those briefs analysed to see whether there is some solution to their problems. They have a number.

One arises, of course, because of the purchase of REAs by Calgary Power. It seems to be quite clear there are situations where the local members of the REAs are no longer willing to take on the task of doing the work. The burden has fallen on a few. It just becomes so heavy, and with the lack of interest by many people who were on some of these boards, they eventually give up the ghost. The recommendation is that they sell out to Calgary Power or Alberta Power.

The other problem, which I think is much deeper, is that unfortunately the deposit accounts have not kept pace with the rate of inflation in other costs, with the result that many REAs are going to find it extremely

difficult to do any extensive rebuilding or brushing of their lines. There's also the problem of funding interventions before the Public Utilities Board. So they have a number.

I have sat down and had meetings with representatives of Unifarm and of the Union of Rural Electrification Associations. Given a period of time and a lot of understanding by those representatives and government, I'm sure we can come up with some solutions to their problems. It disturbs me at times, when I see requests that it should become public power, that the answer is to have one large union.

It seems to me we have to look at the historical development of the REA system: the fact that it did a tremendous job of providing electrification to rural Alberta at a time when the industry — by "industry" I mean the large power companies — was not prepared to do so, the loss on those kinds of loans has been extremely minimal, the method of long-term financing developed over the years of the program, the fact that today we are extending that rural electrification to people who have never had electric power. For example, I understand 810 additional farms have been served by power as a result of that program.

So basically, while we do have a great percentage of rural people served by power, there are still some to serve. Unfortunately, they tend to be fairly expensive. But it has been a program that served us well, and I would hate to see, or even think, that the solution is to tear it all down just because there are some problems.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, just to follow that question along a bit — I know the minister and I are not going to agree on the wisdom of public power as introduced in British Columbia several years ago by the Social Credit government, or by the Conservative government in Ontario in 1919, or what have you. But, I would be interested . . .

MR. CLARK: Alberta's a very unique situation.

MR. NOTLEY: Alberta's a unique situation.

As we look at the unique situation, I wonder what the minister's response is to the rather unique resolution proposed in 1972 by the now Minister of Agriculture. That resolution was not that we get into acquiring ownership of the production of power — we'll leave that with Alberta Power and Calgary Power — but in fact that we acquire all the REAs through the province and set up a provincial network, if you like, a publicly owned agency which would be in charge of rural power in Alberta. We would buy the power from Calgary Power or Alberta Power or whoever, and would then be in charge of taking over the assets and operation of the existing REAs.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, I certainly don't have a government response to that point of view. I tend to support the existing REAs and the system we now have. But that's a personal observation. I recognize a time may come when there has to be a change in that point of view.

Certainly, I think the government would be most reluctant to see the disappearance of the REAs and the service they have provided to the rural people in the past. That can be done in the future. The problem with any large organization [is that] it

becomes more inefficient, and you immediately lose the voluntary contribution by people doing something in their own communities. Once you lose that, of course, somebody has to be paid to do it. So I have no doubt that the end result would be higher costs.

Again, that's a problem I don't think the government as such has an absolutely firm position on. We will watch the developments.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, have there been any moves, any investigations, any studies at all, that the minister can tell the committee to follow up the resolution proposed in 1972 by the Minister of Agriculture?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, is the hon. member asking whether there were any actual studies?

I think I have already indicated that I'm having the officials prepare a fairly extensive briefing on the development and the history of the REAs. I think nothing has really been done in this area since around '62. So I think there is considerable assessment to be made of the progress and problems of the REAs, which I hope would eventually suggest some ultimate changes.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, my question to the minister really dealt with the issue of the motion which was presented in 1972 and whether the government at any time actually entertained an assessment of the merit of that particular motion. Should they go that route or not? Were there any studies or considerations?

While I'm on my feet, I'd also like the minister's comments on the long-standing issue in rural Alberta as to whether or not REAs are in fact obtaining power at cost. The minister will recall that in 1948 a plebiscite was conducted in the province along with the 1948 general election. That plebiscite was to decide whether there would be public power or private power. The undertaking of the then government was that there would be power at cost. The minister will also recall that the vote in that election was very close, I think 500 or 600 votes between the two proposals.

That's ancient history, but the fact of the matter is that a controversy has been going on since that time as to whether or not power has been supplied at cost, and whether power at cost means at cost, or bearing in mind a reasonable return on the investment of the power companies, and how you calculate power at cost.

MR. HARLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, as to the resolution of this House, I would have to look back in Votes and Proceedings, but I suspect it was defeated.

MR. NOTLEY: I believe it was passed, Mr. Chairman, but I could be wrong on that. I'll have to check. It was proposed by the now Minister of Agriculture. It was either passed or talked out, if I can use that phrase, in 1972. I know it wasn't defeated.

MR. HARLE: Well, certainly, a look in the Votes and Proceedings would be able to determine that answer.

As for the issue of power at cost, that's another of the old chestnuts that surround the understanding of the rural electrification issue. The last work I had

done on it by an official in the co-operative activities branch was an assessment of the situation, I think up to and including even the early '70s. In fact it could be demonstrated that the rural electrification system was getting power at cost.

Of course, once the system was put under the Public Utilities Board — in a sense there is a power-at-cost feature of the board, because there is a rate of return that the power companies obtain, and then a basic splitting of the income to be received from the power rates. It seems to me that while this has always been an issue, the best view of it is that in fact power has been obtained for the REAs basically at cost.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have just one final question here. It deals with the issue of various contracts for services obtained by the REAs and supplied by the power companies. I raised this during subcommittee estimates last spring. But it really deals with some way by which the . . . I'll just wait. I think they're discussing whether or not the resolution of the Minister of Agriculture was passed in 1972. But it would be interesting from the viewpoint . . . [interjections] Was the motion passed or not? Mr. Chairman . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: It was passed.

MR. NOTLEY: I think probably it was passed. I know it wasn't defeated. It could conceivably have been talked out, but I have the recollection it was actually passed. In any event, it was one of the motions I had spoken in favor of, and I thought I had given it the kiss of death. Then much to my astonishment other members supported it. So it seems to me it did pass.

However, the issue I want to raise really deals with this question of how the REAs can monitor the price of services they receive from the power companies. The example I used in subcommittee last year occurred in 1971, but just shortly after that subcommittee meeting in June last year I had another case with the very same REA. We wrote and obtained information from Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and found that the price quoted in this instance was a little high. Now in 1971, after obtaining information from the other two provinces, the power company dropped its estimate very substantially, the point being that it would appear that the original estimate was just a little on the high side. Now that's fine if you can obtain this kind of comparative information, but in most cases that kind of information isn't available, and the REAs simply have to pay it.

The other point I want to raise deals with the question of the resolution of 1972 of the Minister of Agriculture, because it seems to me that one of the problems we are going to have to face, especially in northern Alberta, is that the costs of brushing these lines — the minister himself made reference to it — is going to be somewhat greater than the resources of the REA can stand. You can get people very enthused and active, going out and talking to their neighbors, and encouraging people to participate, when you're setting up an electrification system, exactly as we've done with gas co-ops. When you're getting the show on the road, fine. But the problem is what happens after the system is in place. What happens is that interest declines. Membership

doesn't turn out to annual meetings. Six or seven people arrive at an annual meeting. You've got to 'joe' somebody into the job of being a director. Somebody else has to have his arm twisted to be secretary. You've got a network which really did a good job for many years, but now a large number of people are, quite frankly, getting a little tired.

Now, under those circumstances what route do we take? Do we take the route of a provincial agency, or do we let these REAs fall into the hands of power companies? Frankly, I'm not even sure the power companies would want to pick some of them up, because with some of the more expensive ones there's no money in it. It's not likely that they would be overly enthused about moving into these areas. With some of the more lucrative areas around Edmonton, we're looking at a somewhat different situation, with acreages and what have you.

It seems to me that at some point the government is going to have to meet this issue head-on.

MR. HARLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe the resolution in '72 related to a power grid system, rather than actually taking over the individual REAs. Also, I think it is the answer that it was talked out.

Of course, the concern of the costs and the ability of the REAs to be able to replenish their system is very real, whether it arises in brushing, or reconstruction, or any other improvements that have to be made to the system. From a point of view of dollars and cents it's very real. I'm not sure there's any particular hard answer, except that the fees, assessments, and charges that should be made perhaps have to increase if they are to be realistic. As with every endeavor, sometimes these things are left and not attended to at times when the increases should have been put in place. I think the whole system of having deposit accounts is to provide for the eventuality, and as cost goes up, those charges and assessments should go up. So I think there has to be a really hard look by government, and obviously by the REAs, to make sure that they do keep in line with current costs.

On the other point on the various co-operative activities, and an REA is a form of co-operative, I think it has always been the problem of co-ops to keep loyal members. I suppose it will be ever thus. At times in all community activities somebody's got to ring the bell and get everybody in, in order to do something and to meet a particular problem. I don't think it's one that government should all of a sudden get in and try to solve; because, as I say, I'm sure it would be more inefficient and more costly if it does.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister if he's in a position to give us some sort of indication as to the total amounts of guarantees we've got under — I suppose it would be correct under Vote 2 — the rural gasification program, the co-op program. I'd also like to ask the minister: do we find them all here, or are some of them over in his colleague's Department of Utilities and Telephones? Do we find all the provincial commitment on rural gas co-ops under the minister's jurisdiction here?

I'd like to ask the minister if he'd give us some indication if any of the co-ops are in serious trouble from the standpoint of repaying or meeting their obligations — I recognize some of them have had

problems; we'll get to those problems at a more appropriate time — but from the standpoint of simply living with their commitments under the rural gas co-op program.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, on the rural gas matter, I'm sorry I don't have the amounts with me at this time. I had them when I was in the subcommittee. I believe I mentioned the figure at that particular time. I'm sorry, I don't have the figure. I can easily get it for the hon. member and will do so.

The program shown in the estimates as Vote 2 covers the guarantees, not the grants. The grants are handled by the Department of Utilities and Telephones. All we handle is the guaranteed portion of the loans.

MR. CLARK: Are any of the co-ops behind in repayment of their guarantees?

MR. HARLE: As far as I know, they're not, but I would have to check. As far as I know, none are in difficulty that way.

MR. NOTLEY: An additional question on this issue of rural gas co-ops. I'm really going to ask it of the Minister of Utilities and Telephones, but I think it's also relevant to raise it now. We have the REA revolving fund at a very low rate of interest. Has any consideration been given to expanding that concept and applying it to the rural gas co-ops to finance the costs above the 50 per cent and the 75 per cent over \$3,000?

MR. HARLE: No, we haven't looked at it from that point of view. Sufficient funds have been budgeted for the grant portion. The other funds are acquired, of course, by the co-op from the chartered banks and treasury branches. So far, these have been obtainable with the use of the provincial guarantee.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, just to follow that along with the minister. Has there been any discussion or has the minister been involved in any discussion on the possibility of taking some of the liabilities through the rural gas program and considering lodging that as a portion of the heritage fund? To date has the government given any consideration to that? Has the minister been involved in any discussions of that nature with regard to the heritage fund and this rural gas program?

MR. HARLE: I have not, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the issue of the REA revolving fund is not really an academic one, but a rather important one. The minister says the gas co-ops can go to the bank. That's true. The only problem is that [the difference in] the interest charged at a bank and the interest at which they can obtain money from the revolving fund is the difference between night and day. One of the problems I know, dealing especially with both the Birch Hills and the North Peace gas co-op, is the interest charges, which are just killing them. They have to borrow money, often waiting for grants which sometimes take — I don't want to trespass into the area of Utilities and Telephones, which we'll be getting to by and by. The

interest charges that have to be met by the co-ops at this stage are a very serious problem in making them viable. I would like to suggest to the government that they look at the feasibility of expanding the scope of the REA revolving fund so that we have some very low-cost interest money which might be made available to the co-ops.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, it is certainly a method which no doubt would be considered, depending on the times, the progress, and the difficulties that might be faced by the rural gas co-operatives in the future.

Agreed to:

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| Vote 1 Total Program | \$814,075 |
| Vote 2 Total Program | \$456,613 |

Vote 3

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, just one short question on this vote. It has to do with the Automobile Insurance Board. Does the Automobile Insurance Board do any monitoring, or are they undertaking to do any studies to determine the high cost of insurance in the province? Are the insurance companies charging too much for insurance, or is it repairs by body shops, or what? Are they doing any studies or monitoring in these areas?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the hon. member is aware that the Automobile Insurance Board in effect approves the prices of insurance premiums for the compulsory part of an automobile insurance policy. That really necessitates continuing monitoring of automobile insurance rates. I might say that the majority of companies also file their rates on the non-compulsory portion of the package with the board. The board has the benefit of the information put out in the green book by the Insurance Bureau of Canada and employs independent actuaries to examine the rates when rate increases are applied for by the companies. A great deal of monitoring goes on. Along with that, of course, the superintendent of insurance has responsibility for the company end of the insurance industry. There is continuing monitoring of the companies and rules which are applied to the insurance industry generally.

I'd say this: the insurance industry — and this includes the automobile industry — is probably one of the most regulated industries we have in this province. It is regulated from a point of view of being able to provide and ensure that if claims are made on companies, those companies will be able to meet the risks they have incurred.

In the last two or three years, the companies have had a period of sharply increased payouts in comparison to their premiums. The Alberta companies, of course, have not paid a dividend for the last several years. Only one company in one year since 1970 — and this is a very small company — has been able to pay a dividend. All the premiums and claims are monitored. Right now, we're in the neighborhood of 80 per cent payout. That means some of them are up over 100 per cent. So a great deal of monitoring of the insurance industry is done, not only by the Automobile Insurance Board, which is concerned about keeping pace with premiums, but also on the

other side of the industry, the regulatory side performed by the superintendent of insurance.

MR. NOTLEY: Is the minister in a position to advise the committee whether there's been uniform compliance with the driver education program announced, I believe in the spring of '74. At that time the then Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs announced there would be a reduction. I forget the exact amount, but it was a reduction for young drivers who had undertaken the driver education program.

My question really is: has that uniform reduction been applied to all people who have passed a driver education course or courses? Is any specific monitoring done by the department to ensure that that reduction is in fact passed on to the consumer?

MR. HARLE: Sorry, Mr. Chairman, I don't have an exact answer for the hon. member. I'll certainly make inquiries. I would say, though, that no complaints have come to my attention, either directly or through the superintendent, of any companies that have not followed this procedure. All of them are only too happy to see that a young driver who wishes to have insurance does in fact have the training, because they're quite obviously a far better risk.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister two questions with regard to 3.5, trust companies. What's the status of any charges as to the report by Mr. Justice Kerans and the Cosmopolitan thing? Charges have been pending for some time, and I think we've been told several times in the House that once the charges have been laid, the other volume of the report will be made public. As yet, we haven't had the benefit of that report. So that's the first question. What's the situation as to recommendations from Mr. Justice Kerans and charges being laid?

The second question is: is the minister in a position to give us an overview of the state of trust companies in Alberta? I think we all recognize that for a period of time we had not the best state of health in the business. Just how do we stand now? In fact, is the minister reasonably assured that those companies operating in Alberta are solvent? I recognize the minister isn't in a position to name names on an occasion like this, but I think a general statement as to the economic well-being of the trust companies would be helpful.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Chairman, first of all, on the report and the aftermath of the Cosmopolitan matter: of course, several charges have been laid. I believe it would not be proper for me to make any comments while they are still in the courts.

MR. CLARK: Are they in the courts now?

MR. HARLE: They are in the courts right now, as I understand it.

MR. CLARK: All the charges have been laid that are going to be laid?

MR. HARLE: I wouldn't like even to say that, because I don't know. I know charges have been laid as a result of the Cosmopolitan report. I would ask that

the matter perhaps be raised with the Attorney General. Because of the interest of the hon. member I will certainly inquire of him whether there is anything further to be done as a result of that report.

With regard to the trust companies, I think all the trust companies, by and large, that have been in a position to do so have done very well with the present financial climate, with a lot of funds available, and obviously some companies have increased their assets tremendously. The director of trust companies is continually striving towards improving the security to the public offered by the trust companies. A number of legislative changes were put through last year, as the hon. member will recall, and as the result of that, I think, we will of course be moving to make some changes in the regulations authorized by these legislative changes. It's a matter that keeps on from day to day.

I suppose at any one time the director has concerns about some company and some particular problem. He seems to get after these things, and they get straightened out. Then they go on to the next one. So it's a continual matter and a continual striving by the director, who I think has done a pretty good job of nurturing the trust companies along, to try to keep them onside at all times.

Agreed to:

Vote 3 Total Program

\$2,821,878

Vote 4

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister — I'm sorry I wasn't able to be in the committee — would be in a position to explain the grant. I hope that's to such organizations as the Better Business Bureau and other groups like that. Can the minister elaborate just what he has in mind?

MR. HARLE: This is the grants? Did I . . .

MR. CLARK: Yes.

MR. HARLE: We had a lot of difficulty trying to get that information out in the subcommittee, but we did get it all out in the subcommittee. If you like, I'll go over it again.

There was \$10,000 to the University of Alberta for textile analysis, an ongoing [grant] that is made; \$12,500 to the Edmonton Better Business Bureau and a similar amount to the Calgary Better Business Bureau; \$15,000 to the Consumers' Association of Canada, Alberta branch; \$50,000 for consumer education. This is a new grant provided in this estimate. It's intended to be a grant to assist the community colleges in some of the extension programs for senior citizens and for works with native people. Another \$5,000 is rather a miscellaneous category we can use for eventualities that come up.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, how does the Better Business Bureau compare with last year? I seem to recollect, either in '74 or '75 in estimates, there was a reduction in grants in one of those years. It could have been '74. This \$12,500 doesn't seem like a lot of money.

MR. HARLE: I think the Edmonton Better Business Bureau got \$15,000 and Calgary got \$10,000. Because of the size of the two cities, we felt they should be more nearly equal, and we split it \$12,500 to each for this year. So the total is the same, but it has been split up differently.

Agreed to:

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|--------------------------|-------------|
| Vote 4 Total Program | \$2,075,327 |
| Vote 5 Total Program | \$1,350,864 |
| Total Departmental Total | \$7,518,757 |

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

[Motion carried]

[Dr. McCrimmon left the Chair]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

DR. MCCRIMMON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the following resolution, begs to report same, and asks leave to sit again.

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$7,518,757 be

granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1977, for the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, Subcommittee A will sit tonight to proceed with the estimates of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife. The Assembly will sit tomorrow evening to continue the study of estimates.

I move that the Assembly call it 5:30 and the Assembly do now adjourn till tomorrow at 2:30.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

[The House rose at 5:25 p.m.]

