

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Friday, October 22, 1976 10:00 a.m.

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 76
The Municipal
Taxation Amendment Act, 1976**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 76, The Municipal Taxation Amendment Act, 1976. This amendment, aside from improving the administrative efficiencies and assessment of taxation, provides for greater discretion in the assessment of single family dwellings found in commercial zones in urban areas.

[Leave granted; Bill 76 introduced and read a first time]

**Bill 77
The Consumer and Corporate
Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 1976**

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 77, The Consumer and Corporate Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 1976. This bill affects The Bread Act, The Companies Act, The Co-operative Associations Act, and The Credit Union Act.

[Leave granted; Bill 77 introduced and read a first time]

**Bill 82
The Petroleum
Marketing Amendment Act, 1976**

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 82, The Petroleum Marketing Amendment Act, 1976. The main principles of this bill, Mr. Speaker, are to place the marketing of condensate in the province under the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission to allow for the orderly marketing and placing of condensate in our province; secondly, to assure that there will be a supply of condensate as a future source for feedstock of a liquid based petrochemical industry in the province of Alberta.

[Leave granted; Bill 82 introduced and read a first time]

**Bill 73
The Environment
Statutes Amendment Act, 1976**

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Environment Statutes Amendment Act, 1976. Mr. Speaker, reflecting Alberta's leadership role in environmental legislation, this bill, through amendments to The Clean Air Act and The Clean Water Act, will provide for a maximum degree of enforcement for environmental protection, balanced by a degree of flexibility to provide for unusual circumstances.

[Leave granted; Bill 73 introduced and read a first time]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 73, The Environment Statutes Amendment Act, 1976, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

**Bill 238
An Act to Amend
The Provincial General Hospitals Act**

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being An Act to Amend The Provincial General Hospitals Act. The purpose of this bill is to increase the representation of the public interest on the provincial hospital boards by providing for the appointment of two MLAs to each board, one being the MLA from the constituency or district in which the hospital is situated.

[Leave granted; Bill 238 introduced and read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a response to Question No. 208, the response to Motions for Returns 214 and 219.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual report of the Securities Commission.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table an answer to Motion for a Return 190, as ordered by the House.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report of the Alberta Racing Commission.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Associate Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, the MLA for Wetaskiwin-Leduc, who is unfortunately away from the Assembly today due to hearings by the

Electoral Boundaries Commission, I am pleased to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, some 45 students and their teacher, Mrs. Hatridge, from the Leduc Junior High School. They are in the members gallery. I would ask the students and their teacher to rise and receive the accustomed welcome of the Assembly.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Department of Education

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to announce the implementation of a long-term testing program for Alberta high school students to establish durable provincial bench marks of achievement. The groundwork for this program was established in 1972 before the compulsory departmental finals were terminated.

Under this program we expect to administer two or more examinations to Grade 12 students during each school year. The examinations will be written by all Grade 12 students registered in the specific course in that semester.

Over the past year many teachers and some systems have been using Form A of the tests available to date: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics. Samples of these are available for the perusal of interested hon. members of the Legislature.

We will be using Form B, which was reserved for use by the province. The examination questions cover the subject matter of Grades 10, 11, and 12 to provide a better measure of general skills and knowledge than just measuring Grade 12 content. The tests are likely to be administered towards the end of a school term.

The tests will not be used by the Department of Education as part of the final mark for a student. However, should teachers choose to use the scores as one of the factors in determining the final mark they will be free to do so.

The individual student achievement will be supplied as information to the student, his parents, and the school. We will be publishing results on a regional and provincial basis as public information.

We have had discussions with the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta School Trustees' Association on this program, and are forming a committee to further discuss details regarding the administration of the tests and the specific nature of reports on a classroom, school, and system basis.

The question of whether or not it is in the public interest to re-institute annual compulsory departmental final examinations is not affected by this decision.

Our first test selection will be from Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, or Physics. A test in French should be ready by June 1977. I am informed that good tests in Social Studies and English are much more difficult to construct properly, but our time lines indicate their probable availability in January 1978 and June 1978, respectively.

We hope to administer one of these tests in January 1977, and certainly will administer one or

more in June 1977.

Mr. Speaker, your government believes that this program will provide valid provincial bench marks in a manner which will permit comparison from year to year of the achievement of our high school students.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Heavy Crude Oil Market

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and ask if he's in a position to indicate to the Assembly whether the representation made to the National Energy Board yesterday by the Energy Resources Conservation Board on the question of future markets for heavy oil is basically the position of the Government of Alberta: that export markets should be opened up to the United States above and beyond the quotas the federal government has established.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, this matter was raised in the House just last week by the hon. Member for Lloydminster. I responded then that we were concerned about the heavy oil marketing situation, that it was not the government's policy to go before federal boards but rather we would present our views as a government directly to the federal government, that the Energy Resources Conservation Board is one of the most respected energy boards in North America [and] would be going before the National Energy Board, providing them with information and solutions to a very difficult heavy oil marketing situation. I've reviewed their brief and certainly agree with it.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then a supplementary question to the minister. Has the minister had discussions with the Petroleum Marketing Commission with regard to further incentives by the Commission to open up markets for western, particularly Alberta, heavy crude?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we've discussed the matter on several occasions.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. In light of the fact that the Petroleum Marketing Commission is selling heavy crude at something like a 60 cents per barrel lower price, is it the intention of the Commission or the government to announce additional incentives relating specifically to a broader market for Alberta heavy crude?

MR. GETTY: No, not at this time, Mr. Speaker. The reduction in price was a matter that was considered by the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission to be helpful in getting additional heavy crude oil into the Montreal market, which will be connected by the extension of the pipeline from Sarnia to Montreal. That has been helpful to some extent, but it certainly has not basically solved the problem of marketing heavy crude oil from the Lloydminster area. As the

Energy Resources Conservation Board pointed out, I think there will have to be additional solutions. One that seems sensible is that, as exports of conventional light crude oils to the United States are reduced, the heavy crude oils still be allowed to flow to markets in the northern tier states.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister, flowing from his remarks with regard to the extension of the crude oil pipeline to Montreal and the submission made to the National Energy Board yesterday that in light of the provisions built into the line, it can be reversed within five years. Is it the policy of the Government of Alberta, as a result of this rather short-term flow situation to Montreal, that buyers in Montreal have been reluctant to take Alberta heavy crude because of the turnaround capabilities in five years?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that is one of the considerations.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has the minister had representation from the industry with regard to the specific problem of the market in Montreal not opening up nearly as rapidly as many of us had hoped it would, because of this turnaround potential?

MR. GETTY: I have had representations from heavy oil producers regarding additional markets for heavy oil production, but the point the hon. Leader of the Opposition has just mentioned has not been raised with me.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, one last question to the minister. Now that the ERCB has made its recommendations to the National Energy Board, what approach will the minister or his colleagues be using in their direct government-to-government approach with the federal government?

MR. GETTY: I have already raised the matter with the federal Minister of Energy, Mines, and Resources, Mr. Speaker. He felt we had a good case. He wanted to hear the results of the National Energy Board hearings and see what recommendations they might make to the federal government. I intend to raise the matter with him again at the earliest possible time, because there are other matters on which the federal government is seeking co-operation from our province. I want to make sure that if we are going to co-operate, they should as well.

Tri-level Conference

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the second question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and ask if he is in a position to indicate to us the status of, I believe it was referred to as the tripartite discussions between the federal government, the provincial governments, and the municipalities.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is referring to the tri-level meetings, annualized last September, which bring together the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, the various participating

ministers at the provincial level, and delegates from both the rural and urban municipalities. I can advise the House that this year, on December 9, the second tri-level conference will be held. It is my understanding, barring some adjustments in the federal cabinet, that Mr. Danson will be in attendance.

MR. CLARK: One further supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister in a position to indicate to the Assembly whether the rather important matter of revenue sharing has been placed on the agenda at the request of Alberta?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I will be meeting with the participants to decide on the agenda. I am sure the municipalities will make their case at that time.

MR. CLARK: A further supplementary question to the minister. Perhaps the minister didn't understand the question. Has the Alberta government made representation to the upcoming conference in December to have the question of revenue sharing placed on the agenda?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, because it is a tripartite consultation process, we hope that all principals and all people who participate will have equal opportunities to suggest the agenda. As I stated, that will take place this afternoon.

MR. CLARK: The answer is no.

Dam Site Studies

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. The southern region of the Alberta Fish & Game Association has referred to the study on flow regulation of the Oldman River and the recommendation to consider the Three River dam site as an industry-government proposal. Is the study on the flow regulation of the Oldman River an industry-government proposal?

MR. RUSSELL: No it isn't, Mr. Speaker. I think the studies the hon. member is referring to are the preliminary studies towards flow regulation of the Oldman River in southern Alberta. They are strictly preliminary studies put out by the Government of Alberta through the Department of the Environment.

MR. BRADLEY: One supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. At what stage is the department in considering the recommendations of the preliminary planning studies on the flow regulation of the Oldman River system?

MR. RUSSELL: Insofar as the problem on the Oldman River is concerned, Mr. Speaker, we tried a new process based on experience with public response gained from the Red Deer River hearings, and that was to go to the public in two stages. The first is the release of our stage one reports, inviting response so the final studies can be done with a better understanding of public concerns, which will be the subject of public hearings at the completion of stage two. I

sincerely believe that this first stage, the invitation of response to the stage one reports, is a good level of public communication, and I'm sorry it has been misinterpreted by groups such as the Fish & Game Association.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise the Assembly the extent of the phase two studies? Will they include alternative sites as well as the Three Rivers dam proposal? Or will it be fairly narrowly defined?

MR. RUSSELL: There would be fairly extensive comments on all alternatives, whether off stream or on stream. I think the supposition in some circles seems to be that the Three Rivers site is the site. We've identified several sites, and I think have quite properly said that at this stage the Three Rivers site appears to be the best. But we've gone no further than that. The stage two studies would be the more detailed ones, as the Red Deer River ones were.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for clarification. It will be the government's intention then to study fully and completely the other alternatives in addition to the most discussed one of the Three Rivers site?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am not certain what interpretation the hon. member is putting on the words "fully and completely". You can go into detailed engineering design and studies for a site or several sites at a fairly extensive cost. But up to a point, and this is what happened in Red Deer, you can make comparative studies that to a degree allow full public understanding and participation leading to a decision. If the hon. member is suggesting that full and complete engineering design be carried out on every identified site, I don't think that would be realistic.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Would it be a correct assessment that the priority the government will be placing on the phase two technical study will be on the Three Rivers site as opposed to other sites?

MR. RUSSELL: I can't answer that question at this time, Mr. Speaker, because that is the purpose of this first phase study being released and an invitation for response from the public. We need to assess their responses to phase one to see what direction we can or should go with phase two. If it appears that southern Alberta is overwhelmingly opposed to what appears to be the best site, I would think the chances of us proceeding would not be very high. All the responses aren't in yet, and I can only say they're mixed.

MR. NOTLEY: One last supplementary question. In the absence of ECA hearings between the first and second phase of the studies, what will the mechanism be for public input? Will it be directly to the minister or to the department? How will public input be evaluated?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, just to review for the members what is happening, about 80 or 90 sets of the first phase studies were distributed throughout southern Alberta to every group or agency that we could imagine would be interested in the proposal, as well as to public and educational institution libraries. Public response directed to the Department of the Environment has been invited. Based on that, the phase two or detailed studies, which would then be the subject of public hearings by the Environment Conservation Authority, will be held. Based on past experience, I would suspect that the full, complete, and detailed public response would occur at that stage.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a brief supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister in a position to give his assurance to the House, when the government has more detailed plans, that prior to any final decision public ECA hearings will be held, similar to the kind of hearings held in the Red Deer area?

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that commitment has been made. This first phase is to help us get the kind of information we think the public will want in order to have good public hearings.

MR. GOGO: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Regardless of which dam site is chosen for the ultimate supply of water in the south, I think the needs of the Lethbridge northern irrigation district have been fairly well known.

I would ask the minister if he views it as a critical factor that the decision regarding the dam site be made within one or two years.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I would be unable to put a time limit of the kind the hon. member suggested as to when a decision would be made. But this process has been going on for some time. As hon. members are aware, the \$200 million investment of Alberta funds for the improvement of irrigation projects in southern Alberta was made known to the Alberta public prior to the last provincial election. Judging from the response, I think the public wants to see that happen. The flow regulation of the river is one detail of that very important program, and what we're doing now is simply trying to find the best way to do it. In that regard we're inviting substantial public response.

Coal Project — Sheerness

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Has Alberta Power made any commitment to proceed with Sheerness?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, in terms of having requested and had approval at the preliminary disclosure stage of a coal project, as outlined in the coal policy statement. I perhaps didn't make that clear yesterday when I was replying to the hon. Member for Drayton Valley. Alberta Power has submitted a preliminary disclosure proposal to the government for the Sheerness area, and the government has advised

Alberta Power that it has no objections in principle to that project going ahead.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary. Will the development by Alberta Power be on stream and completed in time to meet the need for extra power by Calgary Power?

MR. GETTY: That would be strictly conjecture on my part, Mr. Speaker. The procedure now is for a public meeting in the area, then for an application to the Energy Resources Conservation Board. Assuming that the various departmental approvals, laws, and regulations of the province were met, and that Executive Council approved a recommendation from the ERCB, I believe the time frame is such that that power could be on in time to assist Calgary Power.

High School Examinations

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Education. It deals with the ministerial announcement he made this morning regarding bench mark or guideline examinations. I was wondering, Mr. Speaker, why the minister says it is necessary to take almost two years, that is to 1978, to develop the examinations for English and Social Studies.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of these examinations is to obtain results which would permit a valid testing of the store of knowledge and abilities of students over the course of their high school years and to do so on a system which would permit valid comparisons of achievements of students from year to year. It's much easier, Mr. Speaker, to develop an examination which will permit comparisons within that one year of all students who write the examination, but to develop examinations which will permit comparison from year to year requires a great deal of preparation and development.

In the case of the tests that are already completed, the four I've mentioned, certain segments have been field-tested with students before the full development, so that information could be available which would indicate how students would react to certain questions, whether the distractors that are put in will provide the type of information that would ultimately be necessary to lead the way for the teacher to see where the error in the students' method of thinking lies.

So these are not the normal types of examinations which can be put together in the course of a few hours or a few weeks. They are scientifically developed to be able to provide a means of comparison of student achievement in the province from year to year.

MR. APPLEBY: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister indicate then that once these examinations are established they will be rigid and not flexible in the future, and that further adjustments will not be made?

MR. KOZIAK: I'm not quite clear, Mr. Speaker, as to the nature of the question, whether the actual form of the examinations will be rigid in the future or

whether the giving of the examinations on an annual basis will be rigid.

MR. APPLEBY: The form.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, there are two types of forms, Form A and Form B. The Form B examinations, to which reference was made in my statement this morning, are under security with the Department of Education and will not be released to school systems. Two or perhaps three of them will be administered to students this year. The examinations will be kept under security, will be marked, and the information will be made available. The examination forms will then go back in security and be re-administered, perhaps in three or four years, to determine the comparisons between the bench marks arrived at in 1977 and the bench marks that would be arrived at in 1979 or 1980.

Form A examinations are available to school systems and to teachers. These have been available for, in some cases, a year or two. I believe about 14,000 of these have already been used. Again, these are kept under security, not by the department but by the school systems themselves and are used by the school systems, in many cases, to award the marks of students in the final examinations.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Who will be marking these examinations, and will there be a fee from the Grade 12 students before they take the examinations?

MR. KOZIAK: There will be no fee for the Form B examination that I referred to in my statement this morning, and the marking will be by the department with whatever assistance is necessary. In the case of the Form A examinations, generally the marking is by the system. However, we do provide some assistance to some of the boards in the province for those examinations that require machine scoring and the systems do not have the facilities available.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister, and I don't have a copy of the ministerial announcement. Late in the course of his announcement, the minister made reference to the idea of the reinstitution of compulsory examinations in Grade 12. My question to the government is: is the government reconsidering its ill-conceived decision in 1972 or 1973 to remove compulsory examinations?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall if the hon. Leader of the Opposition was in the Assembly on Tuesday last when the resolution placed on the Order Paper by the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray was debated. The decision of the Assembly at that time on that resolution, which was passed, was that the government "consider the effect of the non-compulsory nature of Grade 12 departmental examinations on the quality of education in Alberta today", which was a welcome decision of this Assembly, in light of the efforts that are going on at the moment in determining what evidence is available to show whether or not students in this province are in a stage of increase or decline in terms of their abilities, in terms of their level of achievement.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. What form will this consideration take, and what time line are we looking at re the consideration of re-establishment of compulsory examinations?

MR. NOTLEY: Now is later.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, as I say, that decision has not been addressed. The effect of the resolution is only to determine what in fact have been the effects on quality as a result of the elimination of compulsory departmental examinations. That resolution can be studied. That does not preclude in the meantime a decision which would reinstitute departmental final examinations. If the hon. members in this Assembly have feelings, have representations from their constituents that would indicate either one way or other on the topic, I would be pleased to hear from them in this Assembly and otherwise.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In view of the myriad of consultants we have in this province, has the government not given any consideration in the last four years to studying this question and having an evaluation conducted?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, the period involved, I believe, is three. I don't know if the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview was in the Assembly when the debate took place last Tuesday, Mr. Speaker, and I provided the Assembly with certain information with respect to the marks that had been awarded in the period prior to the elimination of the compulsory departmental examinations, and in the post-elimination period.

We have been monitoring marks that have been confidentially provided to the department by principals in the period 1966 to '69, those marks which students achieved on departmental examinations during the period '66 to '72, and of course the marks awarded students by systems in the period 1973 to '75. Information on those marks was provided to hon. members during debate on the resolution on Tuesday.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. Has the government, or is the government giving consideration at this time to hiring the favorite consulting firm of Downey Associates to do yet another study, this one in the area of reinstitution of Grade 12 examinations?

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?

MR. CLARK: You've studied everything else.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, as I informed the House, there are representatives . . .

DR. HOHOL: You hired them, Bob.

MR. KOZIAK: . . . of a number of groups such as the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the conference of Alberta school superintendents, Alberta Federation of Labour, the Chamber of Commerce, and many others that I have not mentioned who are interested in the level of achievement of students in this province. I expect to

receive some advice on whether studies should be undertaken in particular areas, who in fact should undertake those studies, and whether they should be undertaken by the friend of the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. Perhaps I should just ask him this question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary.

MR. CLARK: . . . financial friend?

MR. KOZIAK: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I didn't catch the question.

Civil Marriage

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister for Social Services and Community Health. Could the minister indicate to the Assembly what response has been received in regard to the suggestion that civil services be made compulsory for marriages in Alberta?

MISS HUNLEY: I do not have the statistics, Mr. Speaker. The information is being gathered through the legal section in the department. My own mail reflects a variety of opinions, some for and some against.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister anticipate any legislation in this area in the near future?

MISS HUNLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, I do not.

Professions/Occupations Guidelines

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the Attorney General. As there has been a successful prosecution in Calgary of some massage operators for plying a profession other than that advertised, I would like the minister to advise the House when the government will be making recommendations based on the Chichak report on professions and occupations.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I thought there was something in that question that tied both issues together. I thought prosecutions were the common factor, but I was having difficulty with professions, occupations, prosecutions, and body rub parlors.

Mr. Speaker, it's true the government is considering a response to the Chichak report in terms of legislative guidelines for professions and occupations. That matter is currently before the government, and I would expect that sometime in the course of the next couple of months we will be in a position to indicate to the professional and occupational groups of the province what guidelines we have in mind.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Attorney General advise if those professions such as certified general accountants or physiotherapists, who have a four-year university course,

would possibly receive legislation regarding their professions, rather than having to wait for the entire report to be acted upon by legislation.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't anticipate that the government would entertain any new major legislation on professions or occupations, that is to say the granting of self-government to occupational or professional groups, until these guidelines have been approved by government and discussed with the various professional organizations. However, Mr. Speaker, that isn't to say the government would not be prepared to consider, for indeed we have, certain minor adjustments to existing professional legislation in keeping with the major principles of the Chichak report.

Japan/Alberta Trade

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Premier. In light of the trade mission to Japan conducted by the Alberta government several years ago and the importance of trade with the Pacific Rim countries, is the government in a position to assess the impact of the umbrella agreement signed yesterday between the Government of Canada and the Government of Japan?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure the hon. member will agree, it is rather difficult in these circumstances to respond in that way until the officials and those responsible, both in Intergovernmental Affairs and Business Development and Tourism, have had an opportunity to fully peruse the document and its implication for Alberta. Because of our mission to Japan in 1972, which had a number of very important effects — certainly in terms of agricultural products, in terms of the overall interest of improving markets for Alberta — we've kept close attention on developments in the Pacific Rim area. We will of course be responding to and making an evaluation of the particular document that was executed by the Prime Minister.

I might say, and it was one of the difficulties with communications on an intergovernmental basis, that we have communicated directly to the Prime Minister in advance of his trip, making certain very specific suggestions of areas he should consider relative to the Alberta interest. I would hope that during the long airplane ride he would be in a position of reading the letter we sent to him and taking it into consideration in his discussions.

It occurred to us that this letter is one that should be placed before the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, and the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is now requesting concurrence so the letter may be tabled and members may evaluate our representations on this important matter. At the same time perhaps we can report with regard to the agreement.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I certainly think that would be agreeable. Is the hon. Premier in a position to advise the House whether or not there is any renewed interest by the Japanese in joint venture projects, particularly as they relate to the coal industry and the oil sands?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could respond to assist in that regard. I think there have been expressions of considerable interest by Japanese businessmen in the coal reserves and the oil sands reserves in our province. They presently are the recipients of exports of coal and are interested in additional exports. One such proposal destined to provide additional supplies to Japan is the Gregg River development, which Executive Council has approved under the coal policy.

I might also say that the people visiting my office are expressing interest in the oil sands development as well. However, their concern there is whether or not they would be able to obtain a supply of the resource rather than just participate in its development.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I might just supplement my earlier answer and the response by the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. One week from today we in Alberta will be pleased to host a very significant economic mission from Japan, and they will be in the gallery. They are coming to Alberta and making Alberta a very important part of their overall visit to Canada. At that time perhaps we might be able to further elaborate on the matter.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, if I could just pose one supplementary question, either to the Premier or to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, because of the importance of the agreement and the response of the province of Alberta. Is either the Premier or the minister able to advise when a response will be available? Is the Premier suggesting that by next week when the mission is in Alberta the province will be in a position to have fully evaluated the impact of the treaty and that a response could be expected at that time? Or would that be premature?

MR. LOUGHEED: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. member would realize it's difficult to assess and give an answer to a document that requires that sort of evaluation and should have the benefit of a number of affected members of the public service and various departments involved. I was really trying to imply that we would hope to give some preliminary response to the document and its implications and relate it to the submissions we made to the Prime Minister, when — and presumably it won't be too long — we receive concurrence from the Prime Minister's office to table the letter. We would see that at some future date there would be a more complete follow-up and evaluation by the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, the Minister of Business Development and Tourism, and the Minister of Agriculture.

At this rate I'll be telling them what they should be doing next week.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier. As a result of the Premier's trip to Tokyo several years ago, did the Prime Minister of Canada request a list of people he should see while he is there?

Nurses' Education

Please be seated.

MR. R. SPEAKER: My question is to the Minister of Advanced Education. Can the minister indicate what action is being taken to implement the recommendations of the Alberta task force on nursing education?

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, that report is getting very close and careful consideration by department officials in terms of assessing the responses to the task force report by many constituent groups in the health education field with respect to nursing education. We received about 100 carefully considered and well-prepared responses. We are doing a text on them and a cataloguing of responses, and trying to make some assessment of them.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Would the minister indicate whether we will have a clear government position on some of the task force recommendations in the spring session?

MR. NOTLEY: Later.

DR. HOHOL: We will have a clear position on the recommendations, and we are regrouping them because they are not particularly in that kind of arrangement in the final document. But I think I would exercise some discretion in saying they necessarily will be in spring session, although I guess they would be.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I have received a certain message from His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, which I now transmit to you.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order.

[Members of the House stood]

MR. SPEAKER: This is the message from His Honour:

The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required from The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund during the period ending March 31, 1978, for the purpose of making investments pursuant to section 6, subsection (1), clause (a) of The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act in projects which will provide long term economic or social benefits to the people of Alberta but which will not by their nature yield a return to the Trust Fund, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Ralph G. Steinhauer

Edmonton, Alberta
October 18, 1976

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a copy of the Estimates of Proposed Investments, and move that in respect to the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund (capital projects division) the message of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, the estimates, and all matters connected therewith, be referred to the Committee of Supply.

[Motion carried]

4. Mr. Lougheed proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

Be it resolved that this Assembly approve the fiscal policies of the government relating to the making of investments in projects which will form the Capital Projects Division of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, pursuant to the Act.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the motion, all hon. members will recall that the historic and unique Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act was assented to by this Legislature on May 19, 1976. Members will also recall that it provides for the setting aside of an initial sum of \$1.5 billion to be transferred from the general revenue fund to the trust fund, being a portion of the funds received from the sale of non-renewable resources owned by the province, essentially oil and gas production.

In addition, hon. members will recall that the act provides that 30 per cent of the non-renewable resource revenues received in each fiscal year shall also be transferred from the general revenue fund to the trust fund in accordance with the provisions of the act. Mr. Speaker, for the current year it is anticipated that this will involve the sum of approximately \$600 million so that, as of March 31, 1977, the fund should amount to approximately \$2.1 billion.

As reflected by The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act, the purpose of the trust fund is to set aside funds each year — from resource revenues derived primarily from selling our oil and gas reserves — to assure that the province is still in a strong financial position when revenues begin to decline dramatically in a few years as the wells begin to run dry. The concept behind the legislation is to preserve such a fund so that a decade from now Albertans will not be in a difficult position to maintain our current high standard of general prosperity and low taxation.

Mr. Speaker, in response to those who propose we spend all these moneys today on current needs, it should be recognized that the Alberta government is already spending more on services to people than any other provincial government in Canada, and is utilizing 70 per cent of these depleting resource revenues each year for today's needs. This provides low levels of taxation — no sales tax and the highest overall quality of government services for the citizens of any province in Canada.

As required by The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act, Mr. Speaker, the initial transfer of \$1.5

billion was made from the general revenue fund to the trust fund on August 30, 1976. This was five years to the very day that the present government was elected, and we feel a sense of deep pride, a sense of significant accomplishment that after five vital years the government was able to be in a position to establish this fund for the preservation of prosperity for future Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, I have already outlined to the Legislature, in my remarks on October 13, the details of the basic original portfolio. You will recall that there were no investments in the Canada investment division to this date. You will recall that all investments to date except for the marketable securities and cash transfers were in the Alberta investment division. You will further recall it was anticipated that the yield from the housing debentures and the other Alberta investment division investments should average approximately 9.4 per cent per year.

Members will further recall that the act provides that the capital projects division shall not exceed 20 per cent of the assets of the trust fund. It specifies that the capital projects division shall be used for, and I quote from the act, Mr. Speaker:

... the making of investments in projects which will provide long term economic or social benefits to the people of Alberta, but which will not by their nature yield a return to the Trust Fund.

The act further provides that investments in the capital projects division shall only be made or approved by the investment committee in accordance with directions contained in any resolution of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we have submitted today specific estimates of proposed investments. The intended procedure is for the Legislature to go into Committee of Supply for approval of each of the individual investments. Each minister responsible will explain in some detail the basic reason and the parameters for each investment, and will also outline how the specific investment fits within the capital projects division in terms of either long-term social or economic benefit to the people of the province.

It is my understanding from the Government House Leader that the Committee of Supply will then report to the House, and at that stage the capital projects division appropriation bill itself will be introduced by the Provincial Treasurer.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my intention to describe the major highlights of the proposed estimates for the capital projects division of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for the period to March 31, 1978.

Mr. Speaker, this year the major emphasis is in terms of social benefit and in providing improved health care to Albertans. It features major new initiatives in improving care and attempting to reduce the extent and severity of both heart disease and cancer suffered by Albertans. It thus commits support to the extent of \$10 million for new programs in these two areas for applied health research.

Mr. Speaker, let me now develop the basic reasons and thrust for these two very exciting new initiatives.

There are two major and mounting health care challenges in Alberta which require priority attention for our citizens. They are heart disease and cancer.

More Albertans are affected by heart disease than any other single disease. For that reason, as part of an applied health research program, it is our intention

to develop a comprehensive new cardiac care program for Albertans. It will provide a balance of prevention, diagnosis, treatment, surgery, and rehabilitation to meet the needs of Albertans. As part of this new thrust, we will be expanding existing diagnostic treatment and surgical programs through various hospitals in our province, building upon the existing base in a co-ordinated fashion. In addition, we intend to develop a trial rehabilitation facility with balanced voluntary citizen and health professional input.

We will undertake these programs in close co-operation with the medical profession, the Alberta Heart Foundation, and other associated groups. All these programs, geared to heart disease in Alberta, will be the subject of ongoing assessment and are capable of further expansion if their effectiveness is proven. In this area there will be a request for new facilities, equipment, renovations, and applied research in the estimated sum of \$6 million for the period up to March 31, 1978.

Mr. Speaker, the second disease which must receive high priority is cancer treatment and research. In Alberta we have developed considerable facilities capable of expansion into other areas of the province. In particular we must now provide similar services in southern Alberta, centred at Calgary, to those which now exist in Edmonton. Here again, cancer treatment and cancer research will be expanded with recognition that they are indivisible. Our aim is not only to improve the quality of cancer service for Albertans, but to ensure the availability of those services to more citizens as Alberta grows and expands.

Through the Provincial Cancer Hospitals Board, we intend to improve and to expand existing treatment and research programs which now exist as a base in order to meet not just the needs of Albertans now but the needs of Albertans in the future who may suffer from this major disease. We also wish to ensure that generations of Albertans yet unborn will be able to afford and benefit from this care. This will therefore involve a request for provision of funds for social investment of \$7.5 million for the construction and equipment of a new cancer institute in Calgary to expand diagnostic treatment and research capabilities as part of a southern Alberta cancer centre.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, there will be major applied cancer research programs. This will provide funds for new facilities, equipment, and renovation, as well as operating expenses associated with applied research programs at specialized cancer referral centres. In total this will involve a sum of \$4 million up to March 31, 1978. Here again, we will work in close co-operation with the medical profession, the Cancer Society, and other associated groups.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to add a comment that is not in my prepared notes. I think these initiatives I have just described are something that will be of lasting benefit, and when we refer to a phrase such as "quality of life for Albertans", I frankly can't think of anything more meaningful than as a Legislature being able to appropriate funds of this nature and this nature of priority. We can talk all we want about quality of life, but if we don't have health care we really have very little.

Mr. Speaker, supplementing these new initiatives respecting heart disease and cancer, we will be

requesting the Legislative Assembly to approve social investments in the capital projects division in the sum of \$10 million to provide funds for the construction of a child health care centre in Calgary for diagnostic assessment and treatment of children throughout the province with complex health problems. You know, Mr. Speaker, I doubt that anything more appropriately fits the concept of "heritage" than this thrust, oriented towards the future health care of young Albertans. It's anticipated that this centre will possibly be the finest children's health care centre in the nation. It will advance our knowledge in research, education, and treatment of disease from which our children suffer.

Mr. Speaker, the final major item requested for health care facilities will be the Alberta Health Sciences Centre at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. The health sciences complex will act as a patient referral centre for citizens throughout the province by providing them with the finest diagnostic and health care services available anywhere. I might just add extraneously to the hon. members that the view that these facilities are tied in a particular location doesn't take into consideration for you, in discussing it within your constituencies, the recognition of the high degree of referral by the medical practitioners within your respective constituencies throughout the province to the University Hospital and, in due course, to this health sciences complex.

Health education facilities will make up part of the new Health Sciences Centre and will enable doctors and nurses and other health professions to keep pace with rapid changes taking place in medical research and technology. The centre provides an opportunity for the University of Alberta Hospital and the health-related facilities of the university to work closely together to provide advanced treatment and diagnosis, ongoing applied research, and health professional education. This extension of research application to patient care, as well as the partnership between the hospital, the faculty of medicine, and the university will facilitate the phasing in and the phasing out of pure research, applied research, and health care application, all within the patient care area of the new centre.

Mr. Speaker, it's a very extensive and expensive project — in its first stage, as you know, some \$86 million. We will be asking this Legislature, therefore, to approve a request for \$30 million to provide the necessary construction funds up to March 31, 1978, for this Alberta Health Sciences Centre. I would reiterate the answer I gave to the Member for Drumheller in the question period yesterday: that we are indeed fortunate in total in the medical profession in this province in their skill and their reputation in many areas, and of course at the University Hospital in Edmonton, to form a nucleus for the development in this area.

Mr. Speaker, I now would leave the first major area, where the emphasis was obviously placed as you look through the estimates, to other important areas in the first of these bills for the capital appropriations.

The next major area, Mr. Speaker, is in rehabilitation and expansion of irrigation facilities. The government believes that a significant portion of the capital projects division of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund should be invested by taking funds from a

non-renewable resource, oil or gas, and applying those funds to strengthen our renewable resource base. I think we've all heard about the forecasts with regard to the need for food supplies throughout the world. It's appropriate for us to have long-term planning. So we will be investing funds by taking funds from these non-renewable resources. The specific purpose will be to increase Alberta's economic capacity to produce food and to further diversify the base industry of agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that to a very large degree the appropriation of these funds will find themselves towards the southern portion of the province. Over the course of the last period of time since March 1975, I have discussed this in other parts of the province just to see whether or not there was an acceptance in other parts of the province of that commitment to funds which do have a geographic nature in southern Alberta. I'm pleased to say, and I think hon. members from the rest of Alberta would agree with me, that the logic is clearly there. Therefore a request will be made to provide \$14 million as part of a multiyear program to upgrade and bring into full operating condition the distribution system to certain irrigated areas in the province, and also to extend irrigation services to new areas — and there's quite a potential there. In addition, some \$9.5 million will be requested to provide funds to improve irrigation headwork systems and to provide an assured water supply for irrigation and other multipurpose uses.

In addition to this commitment of funds in the field of irrigation, the first capital projects division investments should have additional investments in our renewable resources as part, Mr. Speaker, as we've said many times in this House, of our overall strategy to shift our dependence from non-renewable to renewable resources in Alberta. In this regard there will be a request for an initial \$9 million to provide funds for the construction of an Alberta reforestation nursery in northeastern Alberta. This will develop within the province an expanded capacity to produce seedlings in support of a stepped-up reforestation program — I think we all would admit that to some extent it has been a part of our province that over a period of time has not been given the attention and emphasis from an economic point of view that it requires — therefore will facilitate the replacement and the maintenance of one of the province's vital natural resources.

Mr. Speaker, it's also recognized that our cow-calf operators, particularly in northern Alberta, could have their position significantly strengthened by the expansion of available grazing reserves. For this reason we — the Minister of Agriculture, the Associate Minister of Energy and Natural Resources responsible for public lands, and others — are in the initial stages of developing a multiyear program. It's felt that such a program fits well within the concept and the parameters of the capital projects division. Hence, as an initial step — but only an initial step, one that will be substantially expanded in the future — the sum of \$1 million will be requested to provide funds for the first stage of this program. The funds will be used to develop public grazing lands and hence increase the productivity capacity of our gray-wooded soils area which is primarily in northern Alberta, thereby developing pasture lands to permit

further diversification by farmers engaged in the livestock industry. Again I believe that the Members of the Legislative Assembly from southern Alberta will support this balance.

Mr. Speaker, finally, in the area of environment, the province of Alberta — and I can't follow a prepared text with this one, because it just strikes me as something so unique that simply nobody in Canada is close to even thinking about doing it. I guess I've had the privilege, although others may question that it was a privilege, of spending a lot of time flying around this province in a helicopter. As I was flying it came to me, and to others who were involved, that isn't there something we could do to take the results of these industrial projects — and they were well-conceived industrial projects over many years when, frankly, as all of us would admit, there wasn't the same attention given to conservation and reclamation that there is today. Frankly, I think the young people in this province deserve a lot of credit for stimulating all of us in this Assembly in terms of environmental protection. But we brought in pretty strong conservation legislation in '73. We want to commit \$2.5 million, and it's a step taken, to apply these moneys to those areas which had been disturbed for good and valid reasons in the past and left that way, and hence improve them in a way that would improve both the environment and the attractiveness, the recreational potential, of the province. It's a first in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we must recognize that this Heritage Savings Trust Fund and the funds we are requesting today in these very important and beneficial areas are coming from our conventional crude oil reserves; that those conventional crude oil reserves are declining; that we haven't had a significant major new discovery of crude oil since 1966 in the Rainbow field in northwestern Alberta. We're doing a bit better in natural gas, but not all that well in terms of crude oil discoveries, even though the exploration is up.

So we have to say, how can we look to the future and a long-term economic investment? We feel that it's reasonable to make a request for \$44 million to provide funds for pure and applied research to develop systems for the economic recovery of oil from that part of Alberta's oil sands that cannot be mined — and also for our heavy oil reserves that we were talking about in the question period today — to replace the diminishing supplies of conventional crude oil. This will be done through the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority, and you had tabled in this Legislature just a few days ago a very exciting initial report. It was interesting that as I was about to rise in my place today, something twigged in the mind of the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources in relationship to the capital projects division, because the wording is that it would not provide a return by its nature. It was a long-term economic benefit. And of course he has, and I'm glad he has, the sense of optimism that the investment and commitment we will make through the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority will in fact, as the MLA from Banff-Cochrane who was involved feels, provide a return to the people of this province. But in any event, it's our judgment that appropriately it would be within the capital projects division at this stage.

As you know, the Authority, by way of grants and loans for exploratory and fundamental research and

engineering studies, co-ordinates and promotes oil sands and heavy oil research. And it creates, as I mentioned in my remarks on October 13, a very effective partnership between industry and government to carry out pilot plant and field experimental programs. I guess every Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, would realize that a breakthrough by Alberta in the area of oil sands technology to recover oil from these deeper deposits would simply be of enormous benefit to the province. Over 90 per cent of the oil sands reserves are in this category. Therefore it's clearly an appropriate long-term economic investment in this first bill under the capital projects division.

Finally, in this first appropriation bill, the estimates include provisions for establishing and improving recreational facilities for Albertans, primarily for new and easily accessible provincial park recreation facilities in the two metropolitan regions. Again, a first in Canada: metropolitan provincial parks. They involve a fairly heavy commitment of funds. We had some good debate on this subject when we were on the cabinet tour in Medicine Hat. I think I put it this way for those citizens outside the metropolitan regions: if you have effective metropolitan parks and they are available for the citizens in the two metropolitan regions, you will take the pressure off the parks and the rest of our effective provincial parks system and therefore reduce the overcrowding that would occur, and make the utilization of those other provincial parks even that much more desirable. It will involve the provision of funds, Mr. Speaker, for both the Capital City Park in Edmonton in the sum of \$28 million, and the Fish Creek Park in Calgary in the sum of \$17 million. Mr. Speaker, this is of course a supplement to an ongoing provincial parks program, but it is here in the capital projects division because, I suppose, it's something we wouldn't be able to do if we didn't have a Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

Mr. Speaker, the total amount that is therefore being requested for approval of the Legislature for this first stage of capital projects division investments is the aggregate of \$182.5 million. Plans are being developed for investments in future years. This is just one first step in the capital projects division, and there will be others. Next year in the area of education there will be some important projects. This year the emphasis was in terms of health care, as I noted. I should say though that the funds in the area of education will not be provided simply to pay for increased operating costs or salaries, recognizing that Albertans already spend more per capita in the field of education than any province in Canada. What we're planning and what's being contemplated are new longer term initiatives in the area of special projects to improve the quality of education in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, in future years there should also be additional commitments in the areas of medical research of both a pure and applied nature. Various other diverse projects are in the process of being considered for future investment in the capital projects division of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, Albertans are truly fortunate that they can make investments of this nature both to improve the quality of life for Albertans and to strengthen our renewable resource base, thus reducing our dependence upon non-renewable

resources.

It should be noted that 80 per cent of the fund will be invested in contemplation of a reasonable return or profit to the citizens. These returns and these profits will be accumulated within the trust fund. Only 20 per cent has been set aside for long-term social and economic gain not requiring a financial return to the trust fund, although in many ways one could well argue, and perhaps the MLAs will argue, that the long term return to the people of Alberta of improved health care, improved recreation, [improvement] of our whole environment, has an overall effect upon the strength of this province.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an exciting first step today as we develop this concept of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. It is a concept unique in parliamentary democracy in the world, and one that will truly make life better for our citizens, both today and in the future.
[applause]

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Leader of the Opposition adjourn the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS** (*reversion*)

MR. SHABEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, a group of important northern Albertans. These ladies and gentlemen are from throughout northern Alberta and come from the Peace River and Lac La Biche-McMurray constituencies as well as my own. They are directors of the Isolated Communities Advisory Board, which does a great deal of useful work for the isolated communities in northern Alberta. They are seated in the members gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the customary welcome of the House.

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS** (**Second Reading**)

Bill 66 **The Attorney General** **Statutes Amendment Act, 1976 (No. 2)**

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 66, The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1976 (No. 2). On first reading I dealt specifically with the individual acts being amended, but I'll run through them briefly again.

The Assignments of Book Debts Act amendment is to provide for a postponement provision and a late filing provision. The Bills of Sale Act is being amended to provide for the postponement provision. The Bulk Sales Act is being amended essentially to change the procedure and requirement as to who has to consent to proposed sale. In future it will be unsecured creditors rather than all creditors, if this amendment is approved by the House. The Conditional Sales Act is being amended as well to provide for a postponement provision.

Also, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned on first reading, we are making an amendment to The Conditional Sales Act similar to the one we made to The Bills of Sale Act last spring, with respect to the bill that's on the Order Paper now. Section 16 is being redrafted, which we hope will clarify the law in this area.

The District Court Act is being amended to bring it into consistency, if you will, with The Judicature Act in the same provisions. The Judicature Act is being amended to increase by one the number of judges in the appellate division, to a total of nine including the Chief Justice. It is being changed to clarify that the Attorneys General for Canada and for Alberta must be advised when the paramountcy of certain legislation is or may be an issue. The third significant change to The Judicature Act is to validate the rules of court, which may now contain substantive law. I would be happy to deal with that in further detail if members wish. The Partnership Act is being amended to do away with the obtaining of a fiat for late filing.

Perhaps the most significant change, Mr. Speaker, is in The Small Claims Act, administered by the provincial court, which will enable that court under that legislation to increase its civil jurisdiction to \$1,000 in actions for debt or damages.

I might pause for a moment and say that we currently have a study under way on the supposed amalgamation of the district court and the trial division of the Supreme Court. It is a study group composed of the provincial court, district court, trial division of the Supreme Court, and the appellate division, together with my department, the Law Society of Alberta, the Institute of Law Research and Reform, and the representatives of the Alberta branch of the Canadian Bar, with a view to making a recommendation on this subject. I have expressed the personal view that in my judgment it should be done, but recognizing I may not be addressing myself to all the relevant considerations, this study group is now under way. I might also say it has attracted considerable interest from a number of national groups as well as from other provinces in Canada. I hope we will be in a position to review that matter and make a decision in the course of the next several months.

If in fact we proceed with amalgamation, Mr. Speaker, I expect it will result in a further change in the civil jurisdiction of the provincial court, which then brings us into a discussion concerning unified family court and other matters which probably are too numerous and too extensive to debate under this heading on second reading.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, The Trustee Act is being amended to add an investment provision which is also contained in The Trust Companies Act.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, on second reading of The Cancer Treatment and Prevention Amendment Act, 1976. Two parts, in the working section, the Provincial Cancer Hospitals Board

... may, with the approval of the Commission, provide for the manufacture, purchase or sale of pharmaceuticals or radio-pharmaceuticals for use in any hospital defined by The Alberta Hospitals Act.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I believe we are a little ahead of ourselves. I know the act proposed by the hon. member is one we want to hear about, but I think we should complete and allow an opportunity for debate on No. 66 before proceeding with second reading.

MR. KROEGER: Oh, sorry. I thought the Speaker nodded to me.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to delay the debate, but I would like to mention two or three points in connection with Bill No. 66.

The first is in connection with The Small Claims Act. I think it is very appropriate and certainly very timely that this sum be increased from \$500 to \$1,000. The Small Claims Act is of real benefit to people who have small claims. It is a relatively inexpensive and much easier way of collecting money that should properly be paid.

I also like the feature that permits someone to abandon any amount above \$1,000 and take the \$1,000 through the small court. I think this is a move in the right direction, because many people would otherwise lose the whole thing. Sometimes when there is \$1,250 or \$1,500, it does make a good compromise.

Another point I would like the hon. minister to enlarge on briefly is in connection with the increase in the number of judges in the appellate division. Were eight judges not able to carry out the work, or what is the thinking behind the increase to nine?

A third point that bothers me somewhat is the section under The Judicature Act that states, "The Alberta Rules of Court are hereby validated notwithstanding that any provision therein may affect substantive rights." I wonder if the hon. minister would deal with what rights are going to be affected in the pursuit of that particular objective.

I believe one further point will come in The Judicature Act, but I'm not certain. That is a point I raised a year or so ago in connection with the urgency and need for increasing the number of Crown prosecutors in the province. I wonder if the hon. minister would have time under this bill to give a few words in that connection.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the hon. Member for Drumheller for his observations.

With respect to the appellate division, Mr. Speaker, the thinking is that with eight judges, including the Chief Justice, it does not allow the court to break down into more than two courts on most occasions

because the court usually sits as a panel of three at the appellate level. I must say they are really quite busy at the moment, and the Chief Justice of Alberta has assured me that with the additional member on that court, which will allow them to sit in three courts of three for a total of nine, he cannot foresee an extension above that for a very long period of time. The appellate division should be a very small court, but this gives them the capacity, I think, to handle their business expeditiously and will not result in significant increase in the court now or in the future.

With respect to the rules of court and what you might describe as legitimizing some parts of those rules today, Mr. Speaker, I think the difficulty over the years has been that in completing the rules of court which are proposed by a committee representative of the courts and then confirmed by Order in Council, I think you could argue — and I wouldn't want to make this argument in court — that some of those rules have gone beyond dealing with procedures and have in fact dealt with the rights of some individuals. In short, they have dealt with substantive law. I think we would agree that substantive law should be in Statutes or should be expressly authorized in a statute, and under the rules of court we may find some areas with respect to exemptions of individuals and how much they may be exempt in the process of the courts.

Mr. Speaker, some judges have made comment from the bench that they're worried that some areas of the rules of court may indeed be substantive law. I think the courts are reluctant to strike them down, because if they did the courts would be in total confusion until such time as this could be cured by an act of the Legislature. So we have taken this step of legitimizing for now the rules of court, recognizing that substantive law may be built into them. From this point forward, Mr. Speaker, we must be careful that in changing these rules we deal only with the procedural rules and not with substantive law.

In short, I want to legitimize the rules today to avoid the possibility of having them struck down and the courts brought to a grinding halt, and from this point forward review all the rules and bring back to this Assembly those aspects of the rules which deal with substantive law so that at some point down the road we have the substantive law clearly in the Statutes of Alberta and the rules of court dealing essentially with procedures. It's an interim step, but I regret that unfortunately it's necessary.

With respect to the Crown prosecutor situation, Mr. Speaker, perhaps you will permit me to make a couple of brief comments although it's not specifically dealt with in this bill. We have been most successful in employing many additional Crown attorneys since the spring, and I would say something like an additional 20 Crown attorneys in the province since probably May. I am now pleased to report to the House that with the exception of some aspects of Kirby and the recommendations there, we are fully staffed with Crown attorneys in Edmonton and Calgary and the major urban areas of the province, and I think in most rural areas as well.

We have not yet achieved the position where we can fully accommodate all of Kirby's recommendations, but we are in a much, much improved circumstance with respect to the administration of justice today than we were six months ago. We're finding

that no longer are cases getting by us that should be properly appealed, and no longer are as many cases — there are some, but no longer as many — getting into the courts that should be screened out. We have specifically assigned Crown attorneys to Edmonton and Calgary with the sole function of ensuring that only the proper cases get before the court, as opposed to our previous circumstance where the file was often opened by the Crown attorney as he walked into the courtroom to proceed with the case, which of course is completely unacceptable but regrettably it happened.

So I'm pleased to report very briefly, Mr. Speaker, that we are in a substantially better position. This I think has been reflected by the number of cases that have gone forward in some sectors. My colleague the Solicitor General has remarked on the accident rate in the province. This is in part due, I think, to a faster and a more complete enforcement of many of these laws by these people.

We have a long way to go, Mr. Speaker, and I'd be happy on some later occasion to give a full report to the House on where we are on Kirby, and in some detail.

[Motion carried; Bill 66 read a second time]

Bill 64

The Cancer Treatment and Prevention Amendment Act, 1976

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make a comment that in the past campaign the former member from the Sedgewick-Coronation constituency apparently kept track, in that he said he spoke in the House 46 times in his term. I can see how you can get your average up if you speak twice, once out of turn and once in turn. I did not intend to do that, Mr. Speaker.

I will repeat what I started to say: that the part of the act we're talking about deals with permitting special pharmaceuticals to be manufactured in qualified Alberta hospitals such as the W. W. Cross Hospital. They have the capability to do this. This authorizes them to do it, which I hope doesn't imply that they have been doing it in an unauthorized manner.

The second part, Mr. Speaker, deals with the wording that suggests the Alberta Hospital Commission does the negotiating on salaries. They do not; it is the hospital board. So this clarifies that section.

[Motion carried; Bill 64 read a second time]

Bill 75

The Improvement Districts Amendment Act, 1976

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 75, The Improvement Districts Amendment Act, 1976.

As I said in my introductory comments, interestingly enough the bill does two things. It expands the assessment base which allows the industrial improvement districts to transfer further funds to an urban area. As you know, the improvement districts

house many urban municipalities which support the people or the human settlement side of a community, and the urban settlement does not have the opportunity to tax the basic or the hard industrial tax in the improvement districts. So what we have done in about 10 cases over the past few years is to transfer funds from the improvement districts into the urban areas to support the human settlement problems. Examples of this are of course Fort McMurray and Canmore, among others. We want to continue to do this because we think this allows a municipality to meet its objectives of providing basic service structures. In this amendment we wanted to expand the assessment base to allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs further potential for assessment in the improvement districts.

Along with that expansion, Mr. Speaker, we are restricting somewhat the flexibility the Minister of Municipal Affairs may have insofar as the transfers themselves are concerned. Previously we've been able to transfer more dollars than we've collected in the improvement districts, but by the second amendment in Bill 75, we're restricting the amount of transfer to the amount collected.

[Motion carried; Bill 75 read a second time]

Bill 81

The Metric Conversion Statutes Amendment Act, 1976

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 81, the Metric Conversion Statutes Amendment Act, 1976.

As I indicated on first reading, the purpose of this bill is to provide for a change from imperial to metric measurements in those matters of speed, distance, and area where they occur in the existing statutes or acts of this Legislature.

While researching this material I found out a few interesting points with regard to the conversion to metric, a good number of which I hadn't known before. The decimal system on which the metric system is based is attributed to a Flemish mathematician named Simon Stevin. This occurred back around 1600. The metric system itself is a product of the academy of sciences of France. I hesitate to use the correct French name because of my pronunciation. I am sure it will be painful to the hon. House Leader who is fluent in the subject, but I believe it is L'Academie de Sciences de France. Anyway, it was ... How's that?

MR. HYNDMAN: It's close enough.

MR. CHAMBERS: It was adopted in France in 1793. In 1875 the first Treaty of the Metre, as it was called, was signed by 18 nations, and in 1884 Great Britain also signed.

The metric system has been legal in Great Britain since 1897, although they haven't begun using it until recently. In Canada the metric system has been legal since 1873 but because our two major trading partners were not using metric, there wasn't much emphasis placed on its use in this country.

Following Great Britain's announcement in 1965 that it would embark on a 10-year metric conversion

program, a number of organizations, which included the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Teachers' Federation, the Canadian Home and School and Parents-Teachers Federation, the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association, the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers, the Canadian Hospital Association, the Chemical Institute of Canada, and the Canadian Construction Association, made representation requesting that the federal government embark on a program of metric conversion. Subsequent to that, in 1970 the federal government issued its white paper on metric conversion in Canada wherein it established a policy of the eventual adoption of metric or more specifically, and here I am going to have trouble again, *Le Systeme International d'Unites*. I would translate that as the International System of Units, which is more commonly referred to as the SI system. SI is actually the particular metric system that was adopted in 1960 by the world General Conference on Weights and Measures and the International Standards Organization. It is interesting to note that France also at that time agreed to standardize on the SI system.

In 1971 our federal government established the Metric Commission to plan, guide, and co-ordinate the national process of converting to metric. Since that time the Metric Commission has, of course, established a number of working committees to develop the plans for metric conversion in various economic sectors of the country. All the provinces, Mr. Speaker, have agreed with the target date of 1980 which was established by the federal government as the date for accomplishment of normal day to day transactions in the economy in SI units.

The Metric Conversion Statutes Amendment Act, 1976, covers measurements which the Metric Commission has established for conversion during 1977. I might add that a plan is being developed to convert to SI in September 1977 existing traffic signs across Canada so far as speeds and distances are concerned. The SI units selected to replace the measurements in The Highway Traffic Act and in the other acts do not change existing parameters. Through the Road and Transportation Association of Canada as well as the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, there is an attempt at national standardization on signs as well as on units of speed. It might be interesting that regulatory speed limits, if this goes ahead, would be in units of 10, while cautionary speed limits would be in units of 5. I think that would probably be a helpful change.

The construction industry has established January 1, 1978 as the date on which on-site construction will commence in SI units. A related sector which deals with real estate, town planning, and surveying, has established July 1, 1977 as its target date, in order that the site plans are available when the construction industry goes on SI. Some of the existing terms that we are all used to, such as section, quarter section, legal subdivision, will not change, and sections of land and new surveys would, of course, have the same dimensions as existing ones.

This bill actually deals with 42 acts and more than 80 acts are measurement sensitive. It is expected that most of these can be dealt with prior to 1980. The provincial input into the national program is through the metric branch of Alberta Government Services, as well as personnel from other depart-

ments who serve on the various committees of the Metric Commission.

Some people have asked a fairly common question, as to why we are adopting the metric system ahead of our largest trading partner, the United States. Although it is true that the United States did not proclaim a metric conversion act until December 1975 — that is the date their president signed the bill — their conversion program has been extremely active since that time with co-ordination through the American National Metric Council, a body established by the American National Standards Institute in 1972.

One of the catalysts in the U.S. program is the decision by the European Common Market, Australia, and other countries to actually restrict the import of non-metric goods within two years. Another catalyst that prompted the U.S. to proceed rapidly is the lack of input by the U.S. into international standards, with the ultimate necessity of having to accept standards which do not always adequately serve the best interests of the United States. Therefore they are motivated to move rapidly in this area.

Canada and the U.S., through the Metric Commission and the American National Metric Council, are actually in the process of exchanging information in order that the proper timing of conversion within the two countries is assured. I might add that Canada, Great Britain, and the U.S. are the only major countries in the world today that are not using the metric system in normal day to day transactions. It appears fairly likely that almost every country will be on the metric system by 1980.

The following target dates for the commencement of metric conversion have been proposed by the sectors: 1976, and I think this is pretty well accomplished, feed manufacturers; 1977, textiles, motor vehicles, parts manufacturers, real estate, land surveying, town planning, road and urban transport, and bulk grain handling; 1978, construction, forestry, electrical power, business machines, scientific and professional equipment; 1979, radio, television, communications, electronic equipment and parts, furniture and fixtures, petroleum refineries, wholesalers, and gasoline service stations. During 1977 decisions by other sectors with respect to their conversion programs will, of course, affect provincial programs, and these will be monitored and provincial plans developed to ensure an orderly and rational conversion in concert with the federal government, with industry, and with other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, I have, for the interest of the members, some metric slide rules which I would like to distribute. I believe there's one for every member.

Thank you.

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say a few words regarding the metric system and the conversion method. It is going to affect the businessman, the small garages, the small manufacturers, and in general the small operators of this province and of this nation.

Although it may seem preferable at this time to change to the metric system — for many years we have been on the imperial system and the United States at this time is not contemplating a change until well in the '80s and '90s — I wonder if we can measure the dollars and cents, the inconvenience

that is going to be caused by the change-over at this time.

I had a talk with a small machine shop operator in my constituency. He said, who is going to face the cost of conversion? Consumers, the people who are going to be affected, are going to pay the bill. I venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that the conversion cost to the province of Alberta is going to run into the hundreds of millions, if not into the billions. Can you imagine the change for the small operator — take a small garage that has wrenches that today, or a year or two ago, cost somewhere around \$2,000 to \$3,000. Those wrenches are going to be obsolete. He is going to use them only part time because the new machinery is going to the metric system.

I think we have a responsibility to those small manufacturers and to the small operators. Every scale in this province is going to be changed whether it costs \$5,000.

I know that some of the co-ops that have established in my area, since we are removed from elevator services — we've just finished paying, and by way of government grants also. We've paid in the neighborhood of \$20,000. I don't know whether we should spend those millions and hundreds of millions of dollars in the conversion to a metric system at this inflationary time. It may have been wiser if we could have started some years ago when the prices of material and services were lower. But it is going to cost the people in our constituencies, the people we represent, thousands and thousands of untold dollars in making the conversion.

I had hoped that it would have come about that, say, by the year 2000 the youngsters now in the schools would be in the position more readily to accept the metric system than the older generation, and I'm speaking of those who are in business now. A gradual conversion would have been much more acceptable, and for the life of me I cannot understand why the people of this province and of Canada are going to have to pay. We, as consumers of goods and services, are going to be the ones who pay. It was said at one time that total conversion for all of Canada was going to cost approximately \$6 billion. I think it's a relatively low figure.

When our trading partner to the south is stepping much less into the metric system at this time and is going to convert to the metric system at a much slower degree, and is our greatest trading partner . . . We're not into the European market to a great extent. We're mostly dealing south of the border and in the Pacific Rim countries.

I know the conversion is acceptable to the people of Canada. But most of them ask me, why the haste? I only want to leave with this House the message that we are part of the haste. We are going to force this expenditure onto the people, the consuming public. Because as sure as we're sitting here, when that conversion is complete you and I, the consumers, are ultimately going to pay for it.

MR. COOKSON: Just a few words, Mr. Speaker, to make a comment about the importance of this legislation. As the Member for Drayton Valley has pointed out, it does involve a large number of dollars and a large number of people. It certainly involves all the people in my constituency in one way or another.

It seems that someone higher up than this Legisla-

ture makes a policy of telling us what we should do, and we all nod our heads in acquiescence and follow. It wasn't very long ago, Mr. Speaker, that someone suggested that the Celsius temperature would be an improvement over Fahrenheit. So we nodded our heads in acquiescence and agreed to accept the new system. I'm not satisfied yet, Mr. Speaker, whether that was any improvement.

I think it's unfortunate that we converted. In fact one might be interested to know that we found this summer that a lot of our neighbors to the south still work on the Fahrenheit. Our Minister of Business Development and Tourism is not here, but he might be interested in this. The information I have [is that] as soon as they checked the temperatures — for example, their temperature of 70 to 80 degrees is really comfortable — and got word from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, that the temperature here was in the 35-degree range, there was a lot of reassessment as to whether they were going to come north for a holiday. Ours was based on the Celsius. They know it's cold up here, but they didn't realize it was that cold in the middle of July.

There's not enough range to detect differences in the Celsius formula even in body temperature. One Celsius degree, for example, is almost two Fahrenheit degrees and, as I've suggested, that range isn't sensitive enough. I just don't understand why that change was made. But it was made, we've agreed to it and we seem to accept it, although I don't think they've accepted it across the line yet.

The Premier has often pointed out that that is one of our biggest trading customers, one of our most important customers in North America. I don't know where these plots start, and the metric system may be one, but we seem to go along with them. I don't think there is much we in Alberta, along with all the other provinces, can do about it. Somebody has made the decision that we're going metric, and here we are into the thing.

I remember attending a meeting in a school. Someone had come up from one of the other institutions and was talking to the teachers about the simplicity of the whole thing — there was nothing to it, there weren't going to be any problems, and so forth. There were about 25 farm children at that meeting, young people, and I suggested to them that they had better be careful just exactly what they impose upon these young people, because they've heard at home that to convert the equipment and machinery, the problem of the thread difference in a bolt and a burr — all these factors, when you add them up, amount to thousands of dollars of conversion. It's not a simple matter. It's a damned expensive matter.

Sometimes I wonder how we sit here and casually accept this when 99 per cent of our electorate isn't in agreement with it. However, we're faced with it, and I guess there's not too much we can do at this stage. We have to phase in with the rest of Canada, a federal statute. Someone told us this is what we have to do. It seems strange to me that the Americans, our good neighbors to the south are moving much more slowly in this area. There may even be some question as to whether they move at all.

Most of the farm equipment we have, for example, is on standard thread as we know it. I would venture

to assume that 80 per cent of our equipment on the farms is on the standard thread, not using the metric system. And it's going to be that way for maybe 20 or 30 years, because we don't change equipment every year. We just can't afford those types of conversions, which means essentially that we're going to have to deal with two types of equipment over this period of time. You just can't move this too quickly. We're going to have two sets of wrenches and tools in order to function.

I just want to register my concern, and express the concern of my constituents, that I'm not sure where we're going. I guess we're going this way. One constituent pointed out to me, I guess the only answer, which it has been for a long time, is the crescent wrench. For all those city members, including the Member for Calgary Buffalo, the crescent wrench is self-adjusting.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, again I'm not going to delay the debate, but I think there's a lot of substance in what was said by the last two members. Unfortunately the elected people of Canada have not had very much to say about this conversion. The member of the House of Commons for my riding tells me that it was not even brought before the House of Commons. It was simply thrust upon them. The same thing has been done across Canada, and as such I don't think we really have any choice in regard to the conversion. Because certainly we could hardly have one province in Canada on a different measurement system than the other nine provinces and the territories. So this is what happens when the real essence of democracy isn't followed at our federal capital.

Had this thing been debated in the House of Commons, I'm sure there would have been members raising the points that were raised by the two members who have already spoken, and probably many other points, and [they] could have worked out a schedule that would be more realistic than simply saying it's going to be done and setting a year. But apparently the years have been set and the provinces of Canada don't have much to say about it. Apparently it comes under the jurisdiction of the federal government, so we're going to have a national conversion.

I too am a little concerned about some of the costs involved for the consumer, the working people, the farmers, the mechanics, and so on. While I haven't been able to get any assurance on this point, I would be hopeful that there would be some way of converting the present measurements to the metric system without changing every wrench and bolt and every piece of machinery, or changing acres and sections and so in our land system.

This table is simply saying that one acre is now 0.4 hectares. So that will mean it's a matter of simply getting acquainted with the fact that one acre is 0.4 hectares, and eventually I suppose we'll talk about hectares just as we talk about acres and sections now. But until that does take place, there's going to be a lot of confusion and quite a bit of chaos.

I like the way the Department of Transportation has done this in regard to the conversion on our highways. For several months now there have been signs up giving the distances in kilometres, then 500 feet or so further on you get the distance in miles. Automatically, I think most drivers have been converting and

trying to work out the similarity between the two. I found that in using Celsius as against the Fahrenheit system there was utter confusion as long as I was trying to convert every time I heard a Celsius temperature, multiplying it and dividing it and working out the real temperature. I finally gave up and said, I'm not going to convert any more. I'm going to experience what the temperature is so I'll get to know what 10 below is in Celsius, what 30 above is, and so on. I think that's going to be the experience in all of these things. As long as we try to stick to the old and then convert to the new, we're going to have a lot of confusion in our minds.

I think had the matter been discussed carefully in the House of Commons, a schedule could have been worked out so that this metric system could have been taught more thoroughly throughout our schools on a crash course over two or three years. We would have had the nucleus of young people particularly who knew the system, and that would have helped a great deal. However, that wasn't done, and we're stuck with it. Now I think it's going to amount to trying to make the best out of it that we can.

I don't anticipate too many difficulties. The questions I raised to the hon. Minister of Transportation the other day came to me from people who were concerned. They said, I don't know how long a kilometre is. How am I going to know whether I'm breaking the speed limit or not? So I guess it's a case of getting to know exactly how long a kilometre is. I think it was an excellent idea when the minister said the other day that they were considering marking distances of kilometres on the highway so people could see it with their own eyes and there'd be no need of trying to convert it into miles.

I hope there will be some crash system on metric in our schools, in spite of the way it's been presented in Canada. I think if we could get all our schools having courses on metric, it would do a tremendous amount to ease the conversion in real life.

When it comes to costs, I suppose it's going to cost everybody money. I suppose every record in the Land Titles Office is going to have to be changed. Records in almost every government department are going to have to be changed. I really don't see any reason to start a wholesale change-over overnight. I would think it could be done over a period of time. As files are dealt with, the change could be made at that time. This may ease the burden of taxation and costs in that regard.

I don't think there's any doubt about it, there are going to be a lot of costs shoved on to the consumers. This is unfortunate in this day and at this time when we're trying to fight inflation, when the working people particularly are having a hard job making the dollar go round to meet all the needs. But as I said before, I can't see any way out. We're stuck with the way the federal government presented it or gave it to Canada.

When I got the bill I was anxious to find out what the effective date is going to be. I was very pleased to see that it's going to be fixed by proclamation. I would think this would be one of the ways of easing it into the province of Alberta. I would also hope that the bill is broad enough so the proclamation could be done on certain sections of this bill ahead of other sections, if it proved to be necessary. Simply to say we're going to convert the whole thing holus bolus

into metric might cause a lot of confusion, whereas if we did a few acts at a time, gave the people a chance to get the feel of it, to get acquainted with this new system, then I think it would be more readily accepted by our people. I'm hoping that Section 3, the proclamation section, can be looked at, although I feel that the cabinet has already dealt with this problem because they say, "on a date or dates", which gives some indication that it may be done in sections. I certainly commend the government if that is the intention.

The only other point I want to mention in connection with the bill is a thought that I would like to leave with the government, that some survey, not a complete study but some survey or calculations be kept to see what it is actually going to cost the average working family in regard to conversion. Maybe we're worrying about something that isn't going to amount to too much. On the other hand, if it does happen to be a large sum of money, I would hope we could make some way of easing that burden, helping each other to carry this increased cost in this time of inflation, the increased cost that's going to result in many segments of our society because we are converting at this time.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I just have five rather quick comments. Three are in the form of questions to the hon. member who is supporting the bill and hoisting it through the House.

The first question is: is the hon. member in a position to give us some indication of the cost of conversion to the Alberta government? That's within the government services itself, the variety of government departments, the Department of Transportation changing over scalewise, in terms of land titles which has already been mentioned, just a wide variety of areas.

The second area is: can the hon. member give us some indication of the anticipated proclamation dates? The point made by my colleague from Drumheller is well and valid. Are we looking at a number of dates, and can the member give us some indication of what those dates are? On the question of the cost of conversion, if the hon. member doesn't have the information with him today, perhaps he could have that information in the House when we do the bill in committee.

The third comment is that, unaccustomed as I am to agreeing with the Member for Drayton Valley, on this particular occasion I find myself seeing the wisdom of his comments from the standpoint of the impact it's going to have on small businessmen.

MR. ZANDER: Now I am worried.

MR. CLARK: You'd better be worried in a couple of years.

As far as impact on the small businessman. From speaking to a number of independent businessmen across the province, that's perhaps one of the most often-heard complaints and concerns that I get — the cost that they're going to face conversionwise, also some indication of what deadlines the province is looking at. I say to the hon. member sponsoring the bill, don't underestimate the concern of the small businessmen for the additional cost they're going to have during a period of time when they're having

problems with expansion, problems of getting staff, and this is just one more thing being hoisted upon them.

The fourth comment I'd like to make centres around the comments by the Member for Lacombe when he said someone made the decision for us. I had an interesting experience this summer. I asked four Alberta MPs how this thing was dealt with in Ottawa. I have to say that not one of the could tell me how the matter was dealt with. One of them suggested that it never came to the House of Commons. It was never discussed there. So I asked him, well what did you do about that? Did you raise it in the House? What kind of position did you put forward as my MP and an MP from Alberta? Suffice it for me to say that I got four different answers from four of the Alberta MPs. Perhaps we could have more fun with that in committee.

But I'd have to say, without trying to bring down the wrath of the whole Conservative throng in this Assembly, that the MPs I spoke to, two of whom were urban and two of whom were rural, were more than a bit hazy as to just how this all started in Ottawa and what really took place there when this matter was being dealt with. The unfortunate fact is, though, that whatever happened on that particular occasion, we've got to live with the thing now.

The fifth comment I'd make to the hon. member is: is the hon. member in a position to indicate to the Assembly what kind of special assistance school boards and hospital boards can expect when it comes to conversion? The Alberta School Trustees' Association, the Alberta Teachers' Association, and the Alberta Hospital Association have drawn this problem to the attention of the government on more than one occasion; and now that we have this legislation before the House, I don't think it's unreasonable to ask, either at this stage or in committee, what kind of assistance these particular groups can expect from the province.

The last comment I want to make is simply this: as so often happens, it's going to be the consumer — be it the consumer who is serviced by small business, the consumer who makes use of government services, or the consumer who deals in the market place — the taxpayer is really the person who is going to pay in the end.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, just a few comments on the bill before us and some of the remarks we've heard this morning. I have no doubt that the conversion to the metric system is going to be an inconvenience, and in fact is going to be an additional cost. Mr. Speaker, I think it matters little whence the decision originally was made or how we came to be involved in it. The fact of the matter is that we live on a planet which is finite in its circumference, that the nature of our society in this day and age has increased the degree of communication and trading. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the problem we have before us this morning has arisen because the majority of the people on this planet use a different system than we are used to in the English-speaking world, at least this portion of the English-speaking world as of now.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think the kind of commentary this morning from the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury is really the sort of leadership in certain aspects that one would expect from a member in that

capacity. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that what we should be doing in this Assembly is recognizing that we are part of a global community, part of a North American community. I might point out, Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the United States has already committed itself to metrication, that it's already on that path, and that indeed the rate of progress in that direction we are making in Canada may not be much greater than that in the United States. Indeed, while I don't propose to be an authority, it may even be a little slower in the final analysis.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard a lot this morning which reminds me of the saying, the devil you know is frequently more friendly than the devil you don't know, simply because you feel you know him. I think a lot of the commentary this morning was of that nature, that in fact we feel more comfortable with something we're accustomed to.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me each of us has to make the effort to become familiar with metrication and to get our constituents to look on the positive side of it, because it has many positive aspects. Mr. Speaker, I realize it's going to cost small businessmen, large businessmen, governments, hospitals, schools, and consumers to make this conversion. It will cost less today, Mr. Speaker, than it will in five years, when there are a million more people in Canada and another 200,000 people in Alberta, if my arithmetic is correct and we continue to increase in the province of Alberta at the rate we have in the past year. So let's get on about it in a positive way.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to some of the costs, I would like to add one more comment. I don't think anyone really knows what it's going to cost certain business people. For some I would suggest the cost will be minimal, if practically nil. For others it's going to be a significant cost. But again, Mr. Speaker, I think it's something that will cost less if we look at it positively and start to consider how we may do it best, rather than be dragged kicking and screaming into the metrication evolution we have before us.

My last comment, Mr. Speaker, is that it's my understanding that this matter has been studied and given very close scrutiny over quite a considerable period of time, in fact years, by federal and provincial governments working together. It is my hope that the program will go smoothly, although I recognize it's not going to be without cost.

Mr. Speaker, I trust that the comment I have made about looking at it positively rather than negatively may be of some value to the hon. members.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to take part in this debate this morning, but the remarks just made by the hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place have encouraged me to take a somewhat opposite point of view. It seems to me that the point raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition is valid. I think it was his third point.

I would like to know as a member of this Assembly just how this whole thing started, and when Canada decided to enter the agreement with this world community we are a member of. I have yet to hear explained to me, and I'd certainly be willing to be convinced, that this in fact was entered into with the full knowledge of the elected representatives of the Members of Parliament of this country.

Was it in fact brought about as a result of United Nations conferences on the subject in this world community? Is that where it arose? Or is it something that somebody somewhere thinks is good for us, and therefore we have to accept it? It seems to me the approach taken by the Member for Edmonton Jasper Place this morning is somewhat along the line that if something unpleasant is going to happen to you, you might as well relax and enjoy it.

If there is some rational reason for going into this costly program, I'd be willing to hear it. But the proponents of this metrication thing seem to be failing to come forward and state positively where the decision came from, why we are in fact subservient in such a manner to the will of the federal government on this issue. We aren't always so subservient to the will of the federal government in other matters. Why we should accept this with such alacrity is beyond me, without hearing a much more rational explanation than I have yet heard from anyone on why Alberta or Canada should accept this metrication with such readiness.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I want to answer just briefly some of the concerns relative to the statements that both the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff talked about. In fact, if they will go to the library and look up the question of metrication in *Hansard*, I believe it was dealt with by the House of Commons in the year 1965-66, when a federal metrication commission was set up. At that time, some 11 years ago, a timetable was set out. It was a matter of education that was taking place over a number of years, and has taken place.

I would suggest we can't be an island in the middle of the world, sticking to our present system of weights and measures. I think the hon. members should think about it a little further than they obviously have, relative to the remarks that have been made in the Legislature today. If they did some research, they would find that indeed there was a great deal of debate in the House of Commons with regard to this matter. As a matter of fact, I don't recall participating in it directly, but I was certainly there when some of it took place.

The benefits to Canada far outweigh the costs that are going to be incurred, far outweigh that, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, it would be a disaster for Canada if Canada had not moved. I refer honorable gentlemen who are interested in this to examine the results in Australia, which has moved ahead of us in this matter.

The two honorable gentlemen who questioned whether or not the United States was moving ahead are not aware of the facts. Every major manufacturer in the United States today is retooling in metric. What the government of the United States is doing, of course, is related to some activities that are going on in that country at the present time. I would suggest that matter should also be looked at relative to the whole question of conversion.

Mr. Speaker, of course there's going to be some cost. There will be some disruptions. I would venture to say that the small businessman is already affected by those costs because of the importation, particularly in the machine field, of metric machines, which have been coming into this country for a number of years.

Indeed, most of the tractors and other specialized machines that are coming into our country right now are based on the metric system.

So I would think, Mr. Speaker, that honorable gentlemen should reflect upon the whole question of metric conversion, and not just upon the disruptions or costs. Of course, they're there. But the benefits are there, and they're very substantial. They come right down to whether or not we're going to be part of the world trading nation. I would ask honorable gentlemen to reflect very closely as to the meaning of this bill, because it is important to Alberta and to Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I'll attempt to answer a few specific questions that haven't already been answered.

As the hon. Deputy Premier pointed out, it's an erroneous thought that the U.S. is behind us in this. The truth is, of course, they're not behind us. President Ford signed the metric conversion bill in the U.S. last December, and they had already been moving in many areas prior to that time. Many states have held metrication weeks, and manufacturers in general down there are in the process of converting and retooling.

I think we're all aware of how efficient the Americans are when they decide to do something. When John Kennedy said they would put a man on the moon within 10 years, of course they did. So having made the decision to go metric by 1980, there's no doubt in my mind they'll be there. We're going to have to scramble to keep up with them, quite frankly.

When you think about the various problems, one that might arise would be in the area of weights, measures, and scales. There is a desire to not move in those areas right now, for example, because of digital scales, the technical conversion from the old scales we have had for many years to a digital measuring device. These won't be readily available until about 1979. The Americans, of course, will be converting about the same time, so one could foresee a potential problem in supply. The Americans undoubtedly will be converted by 1980, as they've said they will. So I think it should be obvious to us that we have to follow suit and try to convert as rapidly as possible.

I think we probably overestimate the problems we might encounter. There is no question that there will be significant costs involved, but perhaps not as great as we think. For example, I have heard that the rapeseed plant at Sexsmith is a metric plant. The drawings arrived in metric and apparently there was not even a training program required. As I understand it, no problems at all were encountered by the construction industry in assembling that metric plant.

I don't know that the actual true cost of conversion will ever be known. I don't think it's ever been known for sure in any country that's converted. Incidentally with everybody that has converted, and I

think it's the Canadian plan also, there is no special budget for metric conversion. In other words, the costs lie where they fall. That's probably a more economical way to do it.

For example, I heard about some Lands and Forests instruments, weather instruments of some kind, that would have cost many thousands of dollars had they been replaced, which was the original thought. But since there was no budget for it, the fellows got looking at it and by making a simple plastic overlay of some kind, they were able to effect the change in those instruments for something in the order of \$100. So I am sure many innovative ways can be implemented to reduce costs as compared to, say, a budget approach. Because I think if you budgeted X dollars to make the conversion, sure as heck it would be spent.

I might add that our metric branch department has a director, a research officer, an information officer, and a secretary. The total budget for that department is \$96,000. From a government cost standpoint, the administration aspect isn't very high.

The hon. Deputy Premier informs me that the cost of converting signs in the province, which I think would have to be one of the major cost components, is somewhere in the order of \$200,000 to \$250,000.

I think though that the cost of not converting would be fantastically greater. We'd be an island in the entire world using English measurements, with all machines, tools, containers, and everything we have coming into this province in metric. Of course anything we exported out of the province would have to go out in metric. So it is mind-boggling to think of the cost if we didn't convert to metric.

Bill 81, Mr. Speaker, is an act to provide for the implementation of metric conversion. You know, it's true, it's an accomplished fact. There's no question as to whether or not we're going to do it. All the provinces agreed in 1974, all provinces, to convert to metric.

I'm trying to read my rather bad handwriting, Mr. Speaker, to see if there are any questions that I haven't answered. Oh yes. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Drumheller with regard to proclaiming individual sections of the act, yes, that is the intent. Section 3 is in there with that intent, "comes into force on a date or dates to be fixed by Proclamation".

For example, as mentioned previously, the date for highway signs conversion is September '77, and other areas will be required at different times during the year. So as the particular item is required — of course there is an attempt across the nation to dovetail these conversions so there is standardization across the country. Then that section of the act that is required may be proclaimed.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have answered the questions raised by the members. I would be happy to attempt to answer any more in the event that I have missed one. Certainly we have committee to do that in and to get into more detail.

But on the matter of principle, I really would urge all members, especially those who expressed some doubts about metric conversion, to think hard about it and reconsider. I think the conversion to metric units, SI units, in the long run will be a money-making conversion for us.

It's a better system. I think most of us recognize

that. It's a simpler system. In fact one member mentioned to me, I think it was yesterday, that if we had been on the SI system during the years we were at school, we might have been able to complete our formal education a year or two sooner. So I really do think every member should give support to Bill 81.

[Motion carried; Bill 81 read a second time]

Bill 72
The Hospital Services
Commission Amendment Act, 1976

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 72,

The Hospital Services Commission Amendment Act, 1976, be now read a second time.

[Motion carried; Bill 72 read a second time]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move we call it 1 o'clock.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Having detected a note of agreement from the Assembly generally, the Assembly stands adjourned until Monday afternoon at half past 2.

[The House rose at 12:40 p.m.]

