

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Friday, February 25, 1977 10:00 a.m.**

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. CLARK: I'd like to introduce to you, Mr. Speaker, and through you to the members of the Assembly, a group of 35 political science and rural sociology students from the Olds College in the constituency of Olds-Didsbury. They are in the gallery, accompanied by their instructor Mr. Wayne Getty. I'd ask the students and Mr. Getty to rise and be welcomed by the members of the Assembly.

MR. ASHTON: Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud on this first day to be able to introduce a group of students from the world's largest hamlet. They attend Pine Street school in Sherwood Park. They are accompanied by their teacher and several parents. I'll ask them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file copies of two important letters for the information of members and citizens. The first letter is dated December 24, 1976, from Premier Lougheed to the Prime Minister. Attached to it is a brief on agricultural trade policy which was initiated by Alberta, supported by British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, and prepared to assist in the formulation of Canada's position at the multilateral trade negotiations under way in Geneva.

The second filing, Mr. Speaker, is a letter dated February 15, 1977, again from the Premier to the Prime Minister, which reaffirms the priorities Alberta places on trade with the United States, and sets forth our belief that Canada should do more to develop bilateral trade with the United States in addition to the multilateral negotiations under way in Geneva.

MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to table the report of the Ombudsman of Alberta.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table copies of orders made under The Government Emergency Guarantee Act.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table supplementary information to Motion for a Return No. 194/76.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a reply to Motion for a Return No. 218.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the reply to Motion No. 222.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to file a return to Motion 223 asked for by the hon. Member for Little Bow.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**Anti-inflation Program**

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Premier. Since the government will soon be making a decision on whether or not to stay in the anti-inflation program, the question to the Premier is: just how is the effectiveness of the anti-inflation program being reviewed by the Alberta government?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I refer that question to the minister charged with responsibility in this area, the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's true that during the last two weeks of March we hope to make an announcement as to the government's recommendation to this Assembly. At the moment we don't have sufficient information in a definitive way from the federal government to make a decision.

In the meantime, as we've been doing over the last year, we've been monitoring the effect of the program to the extent we can ascertain it. I think it's clear that for various reasons, perhaps, the rate of the cost of living has declined. That will be brought forward, and our reasons for the approach we recommend will be stated to the Assembly and be recommended after March 15.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Government House Leader and minister responsible. Is the minister in a position to indicate to the House the steps the government will take from now until the end of March prior to a decision being reached, how that decision will be arrived at, and what role the Assembly will play in reaching that decision? In other words, will it be a decision by the Assembly or by the Executive Council?

MR. HYNDMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I suppose that would depend on what we recommend, insofar as members realize that the act which was passed expires on March 31 unless something else is done. As members know, it can be extended by a resolution or, I suppose, by an amendment to that act if that were deemed to be appropriate.

What we would hope to acquire in the course of the next three weeks would be the best advice possible from all members of the Assembly. I very much look forward to hearing the recommendations of the Leader of the Opposition and other members of the opposition as to what they think Alberta should do after March 15. We want to hear that advice; then we will make a recommendation after March 15 but before March 31 as to where Alberta stands.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the Government House Leader. In light of the comments made yesterday in Ottawa by people in the Anti-Inflation Board itself when they are recommending that October 14 this year should be the end of the national anti-inflation program, has the Alberta government had discussions either with anti-inflation officials or the federal minister responsible leading up to this recommendation coming forward?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of discussions at meetings of ministers of finance and indeed at meetings of first ministers last fall. The most recent would relate to discussions we had in Edmonton about seven days ago with Mr. Pepin, members of the board, and members of the federal departments of National Revenue and of Labour. This was part of a travelling tour across Canada by that group to meet with every province to set forth and elaborate somewhat on the various options that have been put forward by Mr. Macdonald, the federal Minister of Finance. As members know, he has suggested two or three optional ways or times in which 'de-control' might take place. But so far we haven't got the definitive information we need.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, specifically to the minister. In those discussions last week, was the date October 14 of this year discussed as a possible conclusion of the federal anti-inflation program?

MR. HYNDMAN: Yes it was, Mr. Speaker, and my impression is that that is the option to which the federal government is leaning at the moment. However, at the moment we don't know what it will be doing. It's very important for Alberta, indeed for Canada, for the business and labor communities to have some certainty as to what's going to happen with regard to this 'de-control'. We indicated very strongly that we felt whatever is done in 'de-control' should not be done in a quick or surprising way. Ample notice of the federal government's intentions should be given in advance to this and other provinces. Members will recall there was no notice with respect to putting on anti-inflation on October 14, 1975.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, one last supplementary question in this area to the minister. I believe the minister indicated last year that 2.5 people were assessing the effectiveness of the program in Alberta. Will the results of that monitoring of the program's effectiveness be available to members of the Legislature prior to making a decision as to what Alberta does by the end of March?

MR. HYNDMAN: Yes, we have tried to keep the number of extra people down to a very minimum, Mr. Speaker, and I think we've succeeded. In addition to looking at the national and provincial facts and figures we have, I think the matter of the anti-inflation program to date is also very much a matter of judgment. That is why, assuming that members have been talking to people in their various constituencies and their electors over the course of the last year, we would appreciate and would place great weight upon advice from members of the Assembly

from all sides as to what they feel should be done after March 31.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of statements yesterday by Anti-Inflation Board officials concerning the possible separation of employees in the private sector from employees in the public sector in terms of the 'de-control' program, does the government of Alberta favor this sort of separation — in other words, the possible continuation of controls on the public sector where private sector employees would find the controls lifted?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, at the moment we don't have sufficient information. We think it is premature until about the middle of March to draw any valid conclusions on that particular issue.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. Has the Alberta government not in effect decided to continue with the anti-inflation program through the guidelines that have been placed upon its own budget?

MR. HYNDMAN: I suppose, Mr. Speaker, one could draw that conclusion in an indirect way, although an argument can also be made that the restraint program and the guideline percentage of 11 per cent last year and 10 per cent this year can be construed as running separate and apart from the anti-inflation program. Members will recall that the 11 per cent guideline restraint was initiated by our government some weeks prior to the federal government's action on October 14, 1975.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. Does the government of Alberta favor the concept of 'de-control' contract by contract? In other words, a date would be set and contracts expiring before that date would be free of the controls, but then it would be a contract-by-contract 'de-control' process.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think again that question is somewhat premature in the sense that we hope to have more information by March 15 to be able to state definitively our position on that exact issue. It certainly will be so stated prior to the end of March.

MR. TAYLOR: One further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Would the major factor in considering this question not be whether inflation is rampant or otherwise?

MR. HYNDMAN: That would certainly be one of the factors, Mr. Speaker. The initial program which we got involved in, wishing to be part of the national fight against inflation, was in part predicated on the feeling we had that the psychology of inflation had to be dampened and reduced.

Pipeline Contracts

MR. CLARK: I would like to direct the second question also to the Premier and ask if he had discussions with officials of the Alberta Energy Company or Syncrude

Ltd. prior to awarding of the contracts for the pipeline from Edmonton to Fort McMurray, the awarding to other than the lowest tender.

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

MR. CLARK: I would like to direct the supplementary question to the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources and ask the same question, if he had discussions with officials of the Alberta Energy Company or Syncrude, prior to their decision to award the contract to firms other than the lowest tender.

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker. The government's position with regard to the pipelines, as I have said on other occasions, was that they were being built by two companies and the management is responsible for those companies. Management decided how the pipelines would be built, engineering-wise, how their tenders for contract would be let, and who the contracts would go to. The government, at least myself, was not a part of those decisions, but was advised as a matter of courtesy after the decisions had been made.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has the minister had discussions with officials of Syncrude or the Energy Company since the awarding of the decisions concerning specifically the approach that was used here?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I haven't on any formal basis. There are ongoing discussions between me and the president of the Alberta Energy Company on a wide variety of topics, and I am certain this topic was discussed. But it was only as an aftermath to the decision. The hon. Leader of the Opposition said something about "the approach that was used here". I am not sure what he means by that.

MR. CLARK: Awarding the tender. It is going to cost all of us \$5 million dollars more.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it would be my position that it is never an easy thing to depart from the principle of awarding a contract to other than the lowest bidder, recognizing, however, that there can be certain circumstances when management of a company, as provided for in its tender bids, can do so.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. Is it the position of the government of Alberta that the circumstances in this case warranted the decision to give the tender to other than the lowest tender?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the decision was made by the companies. It's not a matter for the government of Alberta. Those decisions were made by the companies with information they had at hand.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. Would the minister have the information which would indicate whether that increased cost will be charged to Syncrude or to the fund from which the investors secure their dividends?

MR. GETTY: As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, because of the nature of the pipeline contract the Alberta Energy Company has with Syncrude, the costs would be picked up by the Syncrude project and probably in the long run by those who are purchasing the product, the majority of whom would be outside Alberta.

Syncrude Project Labour Agreements

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to either the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources or the hon. Minister of Labour. Is either minister able to advise the Assembly whether all 15 unions in the area have now signed the no-strike contract set out under the permissive legislation passed in 1974?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information at the moment. I'm sure it's ascertainable. The parties have always been very co-operative in providing information like that, and I'd be quite happy to obtain it.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Labour or perhaps the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Was the government or the Alberta Energy Company aware at the time the contract was let that the operating engineers had entered into a no-strike agreement with Syncrude and that the agreement had been held in trust pending a decision that the AEC contract would be built by union contractors?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as far as the operating engineers in particular are concerned, the answer is yes. I was certainly aware of that.

I might add that I think the fact that the government, and in particular the Department of Labour, is recognized by both parties as neutral ground, as it should be, was rather a compliment; that having made an arrangement subject to certain conditions, they chose government offices as the neutral place for lodging the agreement.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Can the minister advise the Assembly whether, prior to letting the tenders on the pipeline project, the Alberta Energy Company was in fact aware of this no-strike agreement that was held in trust, or at least that there was negotiation on a no-strike agreement between the operating engineers and Syncrude?

MR. GETTY: It's my understanding they were aware, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GHITTER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Labour. I'm wondering if the minister could advise the House whether he has any investigations or studies under way which would counteract such actions by unions operating in the province of Alberta, as exemplified by the situation with the Henuset contract.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't understand the question. I wonder if the hon. member could be more specific.

MR. GHITTER: Well, to be kind in my wording, I'm wondering if you have any studies under way, hon. minister, through the Speaker, which would stop the blackmail abilities of unions in situations, as was the case in the Henuset matter — in other words, this closed-shop expansion situation existing here which results in very unfortunate circumstances.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is into a very large issue which really raises at least two matters, perhaps more.

As to studies whether or not Alberta should continue to provide the situation as under the legislation at the present time — which is that employers and employees can if they wish bargain for and enter into closed-shop agreements — I've recently had the advantage of two and a half days of public hearings on The Labour Act and received a number of representations, predictably, on both sides of the issue. At the present time it hasn't left me with any conclusion other than that the legislation on the subject, which is now permissive rather than mandatory, is in good order.

MR. TAYLOR: One further supplementary to the hon. Minister of Labour. Has any estimate been made of the cost to the people of Alberta, had the agreement with the engineers been ignored, and had we been subjected to a very long strike in this province?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure calculations of that type are available and that it's one of the things Syncrude participants took into account.

I should add one thing, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note since two or three hon. members have referred to the question of negotiations. The negotiations spoken of, of course, are between whatever trade union is involved and the general contractor on the site, Canadian Bechtel Limited. The length of time during which the negotiations have been going on is probably since 1974. The bill passed by the Legislature at that time in regard to oil sands development did not require that parties enter into any agreement with respect to the Syncrude site, but allowed it to be entered into on the basis of a no-strike, no-lockout arrangement if the general contractor and the individual contracting trade unions were capable of arriving at such agreement. In most cases they did. The one, of course, which attracted the most attention was the one that had not yet been negotiated. But attempts to negotiate that had continued probably for two years.

Swine Flu Vaccinations

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health. What is the position of the government in regard to swine flu inoculations?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, we have released, through physicians, vaccine for those who wish to obtain it, and they obtain it on the advice and prescription of their physicians. They obtain it from the physician. We see no reason at the present time to reinstitute the massive clinics that were being held through the public health units. Of course we're continuing to monitor the situation and will be able to

put our plan back into action, should it become necessary. But we're very optimistic that the worst of the flu season has now passed, and such mass immunization will no longer be necessary.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. Has any physical or mental condition of any patient who took the inoculation in Alberta been traced to the inoculation?

MISS HUNLEY: The last information I had, Mr. Speaker, was that there was one case which could be attributed to it. But I believe it shouldn't be overlooked that not specifically the swine vaccine, but vaccines that relate to control of flu can create temporary paralysis such as the hon. member is alluding to. But to my knowledge there was only one case, and I have not been brought up to date on the status of it.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question to the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate what participation there was in the program before the problem arose?

MISS HUNLEY: I do have the statistics, Mr. Speaker, but not with me. I'd be glad to provide them. The takeup was very good, and a goodly share of our population had been inoculated prior to the concern that arose. But I would be prepared to make that information available for the hon. member.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. To the minister's knowledge, is any other province currently carrying on the vaccine program?

MISS HUNLEY: I'd like to check that out, Mr. Speaker, so I could be completely accurate. We usually keep in very close contact with one another and attempt to bring forward in consultation programs that particularly affect our neighbors. So I would like to verify what the other provinces are doing, but I believe they're following the same principle we adopted last December.

Alberta Game Farm

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, this is to the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife regarding the Alberta Game Farm question. Mr. Speaker, if I may, I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House the government's commitment to date regarding the Alberta Game Farm.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I assume you would like me to clarify the press release of February 1 where we, as a government, indicated again that we were not interested in purchasing the Game Farm outright, but that we would assist *any bona fide* non-profit organization, association, foundation, or municipal authority which showed interest in purchasing and operating the Game Farm, by the provision of a land base — and in the case of the existing site, the fixed assets by negotiation — or an alternate site. We also indicated that we were prepared to enter into negotiation with the successful organization [of] a long-term lease for that particular site.

DR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, if I may. I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House whether the recently announced Alberta Game Farm Foundation, a non-profit organization, will receive this land by lease if it indeed demonstrates financial and managerial capability.

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly that hypothetical question could be asked on a solid basis when those events come to pass.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Can the hon. minister indicate if there have been any discussions with the chairman of the present foundation and the minister on how the foundation is making out in its fund raising that's going on at present?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, that's a good question. I haven't had any discussions with the president of the foundation in recent weeks. Immediately after our press release I did have discussion with him to indicate to him that he and any other organization had equal opportunity to provide us with a proposal by the April 30 deadline.

DR. PAPROSKI: Will the minister indicate to the House whether there is funding via your department to municipalities that may assist such foundations for this particular type of project?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I have some difficulty with the intent of the question. I wonder if you would clarify it just a little.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I will rephrase the question if I may. Is there funding from the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife to municipalities that may be used for such a foundation in the purchase of the Game Farm?

MR. ADAIR: I think, Mr. Speaker, in its broadest sense the major cultural recreation facility program could provide that opportunity to a municipal authority if it so chose that as its priority.

DR. PAPROSKI: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House if the minister has any information to indicate that there are any other non-profit organizations at this time which have approached the minister regarding raising funds to purchase the Alberta Game Farm.

MR. ADAIR: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Not necessarily actual foundations or organizations, but quite a number of interested citizens have in fact discussed with me the possibility of putting a proposal together. They have asked that I not disclose their names in the interest of their trying to gather some information without outside interference — that was their term, if I may use that — so they can in fact get all the information together, then make a proposal. Quite a number of interested citizens have asked for backup information, the same that we have provided to the Alberta Game Farm Foundation.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, just a supplementary for final clarification. Will the minister indicate to the

House whether he is aware that The Alberta Game Farm Foundation is willing to amalgamate, join, or even transfer its funds to another foundation if it is not successful?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I did read that in some of the news media.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. I'm so pleased to see the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway has done a '360' on this issue. Mr. Speaker, my question . . .

DR. PAPROSKI: I never did that, ever.

DR. BUCK: We can read the paper; you've done a '360', Mr. Member.
Mr. Speaker, the question . . .

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I would like to ask the member whether he always believes everything he reads.

MR. CLARK: Or everything you say.

DR. BUCK: I can understand the member being very touchy on the issue, Mr. Speaker. The hon. minister . . .

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I wonder if the member would indicate whether he believes everything he says, too.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. NOTLEY: It's an unfair reflection on the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I see we've heard all we are going to hear from the hon. Member for Athabasca for this session.

Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Has the minister or the government entirely discarded the possibility of buying the Game Farm and the site outright and operating it as a provincial park?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure "discarded" is the proper word. We have not at any time considered that particular proposal. I did indicate [that] to the hon. member last session, from a provincial parks point of view. Certainly we did provide the opportunity to any interested citizens, non-profit organizations, foundations, associations, or municipal authorities — I have said that so many times, Mr. Speaker, I can do it fairly well right now — so they in fact can put an application together, and we would provide the land base. It may be that particular site or it may be an alternate.

Synchrude Plant Expansion

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to leave such a frolicsome subject. But I would like to address a question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources concerning Synchrude and ask whether or not the government has held any discussions, whether there has been any consideration of a massive

expansion of the present Syncrude proposition, as much as 50 per cent.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there have been what I would term very preliminary discussions with representatives of Syncrude regarding potential expansion of their plant. However, I think it would be fair to say that they are diverting their main efforts, and do not want to detract from that attention, toward getting this plant built and under way successfully. I think it's probably good management planning on their part to consider the potential for expansion in the future. They have discussed it in a preliminary way, not in very great detail.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to confirm that either Syncrude or Canadian Bechtel has on order a hydrogen furnace for use in a third-stream refining plant, which would be necessary if the plant were substantially expanded?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, if they have I'm not aware of it. But it would be information I think I could easily check on and advise the hon. member.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of the preliminary discussions, has any consideration been given to cost-sharing among the participants of any possible expansion? Would it be on the same basis as the present breakdown of ownership? Has any discussion at all taken place at this point in time?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker, it hasn't really. We haven't talked about whether the governments would be involved in the same percentage and so on. Probably that would be a complication which would certainly have to be discussed fairly early to determine who the actual expansion partners would be.

I might say, Mr. Speaker, that the expansion of the Syncrude plant might be a very viable means of increasing production from the oil sands, and one that I would certainly encourage when the right time comes.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. Was any consideration given to the possibility of expansion when the initial agreement was drawn up between the government of Alberta and the Syncrude consortium?

MR. GETTY: There were discussions, Mr. Speaker. They were precautionary I suppose because the tax status was discussed mainly with the federal government, not in relation to the government of Alberta, to ensure that they understood what the income tax situation would be on the area of reserves that might be used for future expansion.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question to the hon. member of the Legislature sitting on the Syncrude board. Has any preliminary discussion taken place with Canadian Bechtel concerning the engineering costs of such an expansion, in view of the fact that expansion would largely represent a duplication of existing designs and blueprints?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I certainly am honored to be asked a question today. In accordance with normal government policy, I would refer the question to the hon. minister responsible for energy and natural resources.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, in the preliminary discussions I had with the Syncrude company participants, they advised me that they were carrying on cost studies and potential incremental rates of return that might be obtainable in an expansion. So I would say in a general way to the hon. member's question that, yes, such studies have been carried on by the participants. But then I come back to repeat what I said earlier, that the company and their major contractor, Bechtel, are diverting their main attention to getting this plant in production economically.

Highway Construction Tenders

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Deputy Premier, in charge of transportation. Could the minister indicate the policy of the government in regard to local trucks working in an area where a general contract on a highway has been awarded?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, we've had some discussion relative to tenders. All the work — at least 95 per cent — in the transportation department is by tender. Wherever possible we encourage those successful tenderers to use local truckers and local labor. I think in a general way that usually is what has happened. The tender the hon. member refers to is one with regard to gravel crushing in which the successful contractor then negotiates with truckers to provide trucks for his operation.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is it possible for the general contractor to pay less than government rates in transporting gravel?

DR. HORNER: Again, Mr. Speaker, that's a negotiation between the contractor and the trucker. We do, as the hon. member is aware, set so-called government rates relative to a variety of unit work, and one of those is the gravel haul rate on a ton/mile basis.

European Ministerial Tour

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a question to the touring Minister of Business Development and Tourism. Can the minister indicate what the main purpose is of the recent European tour the minister has taken?

MR. DOWLING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can. First of all, it was undertaken at the invitation of two major banks in Europe. One is the B.F.G. bank. The only person that can pronounce that name properly is my honorable friend, Mr. Schmid. The other one was the Dreyfus bank in France. These people had been a part of the people that the European mission undertaken by the Premier touched. They were very impressed with what Alberta had to offer, and they invited our department to come back and tell them exactly what we did have to offer in Alberta.

There were two major meetings: one, as I said, with

the B.F.G. bank, the other with the Dreyfus group in Paris. The Dreyfus group, you should know, is a major purchaser and shipper of cereal grains, and we thought it was very significant that that group should invite us back. We found them quite successful and there has to be, obviously, some additional follow-up in order that we might realize something from the visit.

DR. BUCK: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Were there just the two countries that the minister visited, just France and Germany?

MR. DOWLING: No, Mr. Speaker, we additionally went to London to have a new look at Alberta House, to determine what was happening there from the standpoint of the department and whether we were producing what we thought we should, or what the people in the office were directed to produce. We found everything in order. In fact we find that our Agent General is doing an extremely good job and has the respect of that particular community. We're very satisfied with the results we saw.

DR. BUCK: Further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Were there any minister-to-minister discussions, or were they all just with banks and business leaders?

MR. DOWLING: Primarily the latter, with banks. But we did meet with Mr. Traittinger, one of the perhaps political figures in France. He hosted a luncheon which we attended, which was really in fact hosted by Pierre Sudreau. We found that extremely interesting and very valuable from a transportation standpoint.

The subject at hand was transportation in Alberta: the problems unique to this province, the problems of shipping coal from the mine to the powerhouse, from the mine to ports, and that kind of thing. I think the meeting we had with that group should be followed up by a meeting with those officials and our Minister of Transportation and his officials later on this year.

Mental Health Policy

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. I'd like to ask if the minister has initiated a formal review of The Mental Health Act, particularly in the area of involuntary commitment.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, in my opinion at the present time, and based on advice from the Mental Health Advisory Council, the amendments we put through last year are the principal ones that were interesting us, and we see no need at the present time for any further amendments.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Supplementary to the minister. In light of this week's incident at Alberta Hospital, Edmonton, will the minister be reviewing current practices whereby patients proven and judged to be criminally insane are liberally provided with day passes?

MISS HUNLEY: Well, I hope the hon. member is aware of the fact that the board of review is always

involved in these cases, and that no action is taken by the officials in the department without recommendation from the board of review.

Regional Air Lines

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Transportation. Since I've been transferred to the government side, I probably have to be more careful. [laughter]

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, has there been any validity to the fact that the minister is interested in buying Transair, the probable complementary [to] Pacific Western Airlines?

DR. HORNER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the government of Alberta has not made any approach relative to the acquisition of Transair. There may have been some discussion with management on both levels. After all, they are not really rivals but similar companies in regional air line operations, and I would expect good management would keep in touch with other companies of a similar nature.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Would the government of Alberta give its blessing to such a move?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, that's purely a hypothetical question from the honorable gentleman.

Coal Development — Sheerness

MR. BUTLER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Could he tell the House what the status is of the application of Alberta Power to develop a coal-fired plant at Sheerness?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as provided for in the Alberta coal development policy, the Alberta Power company has applied to the government for preliminary disclosure on a plan to develop power in the Sheerness area. That preliminary disclosure was reviewed by the government, and the company was advised that we had no objections in principle and that they were now free to proceed through the regulatory process as established within the coal development policy.

Matrimonial Property

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Attorney General and ask the minister if he can indicate if legislation on matrimonial properties will be introduced during this spring session.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I believe I indicated last fall that the matter of the matrimonial property proposal is still at caucus. That is its current state. If the hon. Leader of the Opposition is asking what the delay is in bringing forward a government position on the matter, I think my response would be that it is a highly complex problem. I think it is fair to say that many members of caucus feel this is such a fundamental change to the property regime in this province that we want to be reasonably assured that the changes proposed would not impact unfairly or cause

such a disruption in attitudes and relationships.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, the Ontario legislature introduced — I think it is Bill 40 — a very similar proposal to what is being discussed by this government. We have been following with interest the movement and the debate in Ontario. I understand from my colleague the Attorney General in Ontario that they are having similar discussions, and we may see a modified version. I understand there has been substantial public discussion and comment on the Ontario proposal. No doubt that advice and comment will be instructive to us as well.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. While the government back benchers wait to make up their minds, Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware that over 5,500 divorces were applied for in the province of Alberta last year, which works out to something like an average of 14 divorces for every working day in Alberta, and that we have the distinction of the highest divorce rate in Canada? Is the minister aware of these statistics, and can't he move the thing along? Has he lent his effort to try to do that?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to draw a direct relationship between the change in matrimonial property regime and the divorce rate of this province. The divorce rate of this province has been at a relatively high level for quite a number of years. I doubt I would want to argue that the reason for that level is that the existing property regime is causing marital relationships of that type.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister explain to us in some detail, if he would, what happened to that portion of the 1975 Speech from the Throne which said that initiatives in matrimonial properties will be announced during the 1975 session? That was after the election too.

MR. NOTLEY: They got lost in caucus.

MR. FOSTER: I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker, but one of the hallmarks of a very successful government is its capacity to be flexible. [interjections] When you discover that you may be moving down a road, legislatively or otherwise, that you have not clearly thought out, that you feel may do injury to some people, I think it's intelligent and responsible for a government to occasionally pause and . . .

MR. CLARK: Pause is one thing.

MR. FOSTER: . . . reconsider its intended course of action.

I might say, Mr. Speaker, that the report of the Institute of Law Research and Reform on this subject recommended a program of property regime called deferred sharing, with which I strongly disagree, which I feel would not be in the interests of Albertans. Almost the majority of the board of the Institute felt that.

Now I realize, Mr. Speaker, I'm almost embarking upon debate . . .

MR. SPEAKER: As a matter of fact, the Chair's interpretation of "almost" is a little different from the minister's. We have reached the end of this question period or debating time, whatever way the members would like to look at it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

Moved by Mr. Miller:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta as follows

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

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

MR. MILLER: As you know, Mr. Speaker, in everyone's life there are moments of very special significance. Such an occasion is the one in which I find myself today. I would like to express my appreciation to the Premier for the honor he has bestowed upon me, my family, and the people of the Lloydminster constituency in granting me the honor and privilege of leading off this throne speech debate.

I would also like, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate you for the outstanding contributions you have made in this Legislature. Your devotion to your family, to your church, to your profession, and to public life have earned you the reputation of being both fair and firm and a man who above all else is considered a humanitarian. Indeed, sir, both within and outside this Chamber you are a man who is held in the highest esteem.
[applause]

Mr. Speaker, there are two events to occur this year which are of special historical significance to the province of Alberta: the twenty-fifth anniversary of the reign of our Queen, a most gracious lady whom we all admire and hold in the highest regard; secondly, the hundredth anniversary of the signing of treaties nos. 6 and 7. We are indeed pleased that Prince Charles will be visiting our province this year to take part in these celebrations.

It is especially a pleasure to have at this time and on this historic occasion our own Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Mr. Steinhauer. We in northeastern Alberta are extremely proud to have as the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta one of our native sons and a man who farmed in our area. Mr. Speaker, his reputation as a gentleman and a humanitarian are recognized by all who know him.
[applause]

Mr. Speaker, we can be justly proud of our province of Alberta. It is an area of dynamic growth with a vibrant population prepared to meet the problems associated with this rapid growth.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are problems. These problems are recognized and are being dealt with by this government. In yesterday's Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, we outlined the commitments and obje-

citives of our government for 1977. That speech emphasized the need for continued rational economic expansion with social responsibility. That responsibility is recognized, and reflected in the expansion of housing programs, health care programs, educational programs, and the great concern all Albertans have for senior citizens and those less fortunate than ourselves both mentally and physically.

A 10 per cent guideline will provide positive and steady growth in a number of areas of importance to our citizens. We all know that runaway inflation had to be curbed. I am very proud, Mr. Speaker, of the difficult yet determined decisions this government had to make in restraining large-scale percentage increases in a number of areas. I am also proud to note that this government led the way.

Runaway inflation cripples many of our citizens, particularly those of our senior citizens who are on a fixed income and at times find themselves in a very difficult financial position. Additionally the Alberta government is determined that all our senior citizens, and they are our provincial pioneers, can enjoy comfortable housing, adequate incomes, proper medical care and, yes, dignity in their retirement years. We are continuing to ensure these basic needs, and the new programs outlined in the Speech from the Throne are another reflection of our total commitment.

Mr. Speaker, you will find definite priorities, particularly with regard to our educational system, housing, hospital services, and our land resource, which is one of our greatest resources. We will be looking at our educational system and the need to establish basic goals. You will find increased support for libraries and increased support for manpower training. This aspect of our educational system is particularly important because of the need for skilled tradesmen in the development of our province.

Mr. Speaker, in the five and a half years I have had the privilege of sitting in the Legislature, I have seen rural Alberta undergo dramatic changes. Gone is the day that saw constant movement of our citizens from rural areas to urban centres. Gone is the day — and it is important to remember it was only a few years ago — that our small towns were dying because of a lack of opportunity and challenges, particularly for younger people. Mr. Speaker, the emphasis this government has directed toward encouraging growth and renewal in rural Alberta is reiterated in yesterday's throne speech. The programs introduced in the past: the expanded program of senior citizen lodges and self-contained units, the large number of recreational, cultural, and agricultural society capital projects, the construction of health care facilities — and I'm only naming a few — and the new programs outlined yesterday, have all served to benefit rural Albertans. All have aided in bringing about a new attitude among rural Albertans. Now we find young people, professionals, and so many others returning to rural Alberta and our farms.

The decentralization of government operations, our philosophy of economic diversification, our emphasis on improved services for rural Alberta in transportation and communication have together had the desired effect of turning around the rural/urban population shift, so that now rural Alberta is gaining rather than losing people.

Mr. Speaker, this commitment to rural Alberta is

exactly that. It is a positive commitment, and the throne speech emphasizes it once again.

Mr. Speaker, our future looks rather optimistic. Dollars created out of resource development on the land and beneath the surface have given us universities, medical institutions an expanded agricultural base, and a diversifying economy. Our urban centres are developing logically. Where else in the world can anyone find rural areas with electricity, telephones, natural gas, recreational facilities, proximity to local services and urban centres, and an attitude that is exemplified by a desire to stay on the land?

Mr. Speaker, amid this prosperity I am very pleased that the Alberta government has chosen to look to the future by allocating a further transfer of 30 per cent of our resource revenue to the heritage trust fund. My children and yours, and our grandchildren, have a right to experience our prosperity, and have the right to live without want.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Margaret and myself, I would like to announce the arrival yesterday of our fifth grandchild.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's timing.

MR. CLARK: You're one day out for the Prime Minister.

MR. MILLER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have another Albertan. And I feel it is only fitting that at this time I should give this information to the opposition parties, so they will be prepared, should this grandson desire to follow in his grandfather's political footsteps.

MR. CLARK: Are those the Liberal or Conservative footsteps?

MR. MILLER: Middle of the road.

AN HON. MEMBER: By the time he's 18, he will be extinct.

MR. MILLER: The heritage trust fund, Mr. Speaker, is an outstanding example of this government's responsibility to those who follow.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of two very important things being done with some of this heritage money. The first is the cancer and heart research centre being built in Edmonton. I doubt whether there is a man, woman, or child in Alberta who has not had a relative or friend stricken by either of these two dread diseases. The information gained from this research will not only benefit Albertans, it will benefit everyone in Canada as well as the rest of the world; similarly, Mr. Speaker, the Children's Hospital in Calgary. I ask you, in what way could these funds be better spent? We have to devote moneys to research and technological development and, fortunately, our 18 million people in Alberta have the opportunity to be the most highly educated and technically sophisticated in the world. Surely it is our hope and vision, Mr. Speaker, that Alberta brain-power can become one of our new and great natural resources.

In regard to agriculture, Mr. Speaker, it remains our basic industry. Furthermore it is a renewable resource industry in which we have people employed who take great pride in their productive capabilities. We do need better access to world markets for Alber-

ta farm products. Mr. Speaker, the year 1977 could be the most crucial year in this decade in respect to international trade opportunities for Alberta and the other western provinces.

I welcome the thrust which the Premier of this province is making, not only on behalf of Alberta but on behalf of all western agriculture, to establish markets for our products. It is essential that we have input when the general agreement on trades and tariffs is drawn up. We must have trade arrangements with the United States. Above all I welcome the idea of providing better marketing information for our producers, so they can plan their production.

The need to get out and sell our agricultural products is very important. At the present time, cattle producers find themselves in an unfavorable market position, and the grain situation for the coming year doesn't look too good. We must find new markets, and we must also have better freight rates.

Our government views effective transportation as singularly the most important key to the continuance of our present economic growth and as a guarantee for our future economic viability. As a landlocked province in a country with considerable topographic diversity, we must have an effective means of moving people and goods not only within our province but within all of Canada, North America, and the world. We must move the expertise of our people and their products to markets, wherever those markets may be.

Effective transportation is vital to Alberta and its survival. Eighty per cent of our agricultural production is exported from Alberta. The percentage for the export of many of our natural resources is even higher.

Mr. Speaker, the disparity and unfairness of the freight rate structure between east and west is obvious to any producer shipping goods east. We Albertans will never be able to reach our full potential, we will never be able to fully diversify our economy, we will never be able to arrive at a broad industrial/agricultural base for all our towns, cities, and farms, as long as we are treated unfairly. It has been said before, and I must repeat, Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to pay our share. But we are not prepared to carry central Canada on our back.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words about the heavy oil industry, which is important to the people in my constituency. In the latest statistics available, 34 per cent of Lloydminster's direct and secondary employment is related to the oil industry. Unlike conventional oil fields, heavy oil production is highly labor-intensive. You can well imagine the effect that the announcement of curtailed export permits of heavy oil had on the whole community last fall, when some 700 wells had to be taken out of production due to a lack of markets.

Fortunately the National Energy Board announced an increase in heavy oil export allowables, effective January 1, 1977. A further increase was announced in February, thereby allowing the wells to be reactivated. On the short term, Mr. Speaker, the problem has been alleviated. However, the long term causes us some concern.

Mr. Speaker, we have an oil field containing an estimated 12 billion barrels of oil, and until recent years our recovery rate of 4 to 5 per cent was all that could be expected. Nowadays with increased recovery methods, and these are encouraged by the Alber-

ta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority — I have an advertisement they are placing in the daily and weekly papers asking for proposals. Some of these proposals are for steam injection and fire flooding programs. With these programs, a recovery rate of up to 35 per cent is a distinct possibility.

What is needed, Mr. Speaker, is a long-range market for heavy crude oil. Last year we found Ottawa subsidizing Montreal refineries to the tune of \$100 million for the importation of foreign oil into Canada, while at the same time the Montreal refineries would not use our own heavy Lloydminster type of crude oil even though we dropped the price. Ottawa would not allow it to be exported to the United States, where the refineries in the northern states were prepared to buy it. At least if they had allowed the exports, Mr. Speaker, there could have been, through the export tax on our heavy crude oil, a recovery for the subsidy paid for foreign crude oil coming into Canada.

Mr. Speaker, there are two ways to solve this problem. The first is to cancel the subsidy to the Montreal refineries. The other is to construct a flexicoking unit to produce a low sulphur, high-quality, desirable light crude oil. However, this costs money. I would urge the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources to insist that the federal government and those who will most benefit from the end products become financially involved in such a project along with our private oil companies.

I have always felt, Mr. Speaker, that the prime objectives of a provincial government should be not only to govern wisely but to create and maintain an environment where investment is welcome, jobs are created, and each and every individual is given the opportunity to work so they can fulfil their obligations and take their rightful place in society. As a government it is our responsibility to maintain and uphold the family concept. It is our responsibility to encourage individuals to develop to their fullest potential and strive to get the most out of life with due regard for their fellow men. We also have an obligation to care for those less fortunate than ourselves and to see that everyone is justly treated.

Albertans, like many other Canadians, are composites of a great number of people from nearly all countries of the world. Our traditions, culture, heritage, and beliefs have developed within the last 100 years or so. Mr. Speaker, we have chosen the best from all and we have been well rewarded.

The decades of the twentieth century have seen the dynamic growth of this province. Our citizens have grown, some at a pace more rapid than others, but we have all grown together. All in all, it has been a rapid and yet positive growth.

We have developed a province with organizational institutions and with institutions of academic scholarship. We have a technological base, a resource base, an agrarian base. We have fine medical facilities, communications system, and many other things. We have learned much about Canada and about the world. We have been rewarded with a standard of living and a way of life that is in many ways the envy of all. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to live in Alberta at this time.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne gives all Albertans an excellent overview of our government plans for 1977. It is a program of challenge and

strength with due regard for social responsibility. It is a legislative program of which all Albertans can be proud.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I join with the Lieutenant-Governor in asking for divine guidance in all our deliberations.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to second the motion proposed by the hon. Member for Lloydminster. May I take this opportunity to be the first to congratulate my colleague on his thoughtful, well-considered participation in this debate. May I also congratulate you on your grandson, and trust you will bring him up in the right party as well as the right province.

I wish to thank the Premier for the honor of being asked to second the speech, an honor to me but more particularly to my constituency of Medicine Hat-Redcliff. I know the people of Medicine Hat-Redcliff are pleased that I have been asked to participate in this manner.

I also wish to add my congratulations to those already paid to Mr. Speaker. I have only been in this House for just over two years, although I tried to get in before that. But I'm learning a lot from you, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you will continue to exercise in years to come the same type of fairness you have displayed during my two years here.

Yesterday was an event of real significance, I think, insofar as our Lieutenant-Governor was concerned. I was delighted that the Lieutenant-Governor came into this Assembly attired in his native regalia. I think it was significant and colorful and useful, because we as Albertans and as legislators in this Assembly must at all times pay attention to the importance of special days. As members of this Assembly, I know we have all had the opportunity of attending golden and diamond anniversaries in our constituencies. We know how important those events are to the lives of the families of those being honored. We've all shared in the joy of those events.

We are also reminded that we are celebrating two special events in this province this year: the silver jubilee of our gracious Queen Elizabeth II, and the hundredth anniversary of the signing of treaties 6 and 7. I look forward to the occasion when Prince Charles, the heir to the throne, will visit our province.

I think it's useful for us, on occasions such as this in a year of such significance to our province and its history, to pause and reflect upon the nature of the constitutional monarchy and its role in Confederation. As the Speech from the Throne says, our Confederation has proved to be flexible under our constitutional monarchy.

I've done this before, and I suppose some members have suggested, Mr. Speaker, that I shouldn't be telling them to read more, but I urge them to consider a book entitled *The Crown in Canada*, written by Frank MacKinnon, a professor at the University of Calgary. I want to quote briefly from this very interesting and well-written treatise on the constitutional monarchy:

Canadians have so many stable legislatures they are inclined to take parliamentary government for granted. Yet it cannot safely be taken for granted. Its long, slow evolution over many centuries indicates how hard it was to get a parliament established. And the impotence or disappearance of parliaments in many countries

emphasizes the fact that, however elegantly the principles of parliament may be extolled, their actual operation, indeed their very existence, is worthy of respect.

I should like to urge the citizens of Alberta to reflect upon the stability of our institutions and our Legislature and our Parliament in Canada.

Canada is unique in the world, a unique country comprised of 11 governments in Confederation, the first colony in the history of mankind which ever arose to nationhood and full independence without a major civil war or major violence within the country. Perhaps that may make us seem dull, but I suggest that rather than dullness it demonstrates the maturity and the very real worth of our system. We are a country unique as well in that we have been able to assimilate two languages and cultures initially, but now many cultures and many languages. That adds to the uniqueness of this Canadian experiment.

It is important for us as legislators to recognize, as the Speech from the Throne puts it so well, the stability and integrity of this Legislature and of our institutions. I want to pay particular credit if I may, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Culture for his efforts, on behalf of the people of Alberta, to preserve and protect our heritage. I know the members of this Assembly will share with me in encouraging him to carry forward the proposals for his department outlined in the Speech from the Throne.

I also want to pay particular tribute today to the Minister of Utilities and Telephones for an action that he and the board of Alberta Government Telephones have taken with regard to preservation of heritage within my constituency of Medicine Hat-Redcliff. I think this is wise for other departmental consideration as well: the new Alberta Government Telephones centre, which is shortly to be opened in my constituency, will be named the William Cousins Building, in honor of the first mayor of the city of Medicine Hat. I think we as a government should do this more often, to recognize those people who in the early days of our province devoted themselves to public service. I urge the continuation of this practice. On behalf of my constituents and in particular one of my favorite constituents, the sole surviving daughter of the mayor of Medicine Hat, I wish to thank the minister most particularly.

As members of this Assembly I think it is important that we set good examples as individuals in providing both moral and spiritual leadership in our constituencies and in our government. In that regard we need to look at the role played by our Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth, and the members of the Royal Family. In our province, the family life of our Lieutenant-Governor and our Premier is exemplary. As a government we have a strong commitment to the family. I think it is significant that in the Speech from the Throne there are no fewer than eight references to the family and action being taken by our government to improve the lot of the family.

A short while ago I was asked to speak to a church group in response to four specific questions about what our government is doing to preserve and maintain family life in this province. Those questions were thought provoking. I spent a great deal of time trying to answer them. I think that parts of the answers lie in the Speech from the Throne. On page 2 of the Speech from the Throne, I think it is significant:

My government recognizes that there is a developing consensus by Albertans that they may be asking too much of the government, that expectations must be reduced, and that desirable but non-essential activities must be the personal responsibility of the citizen, the parent, the family, and the community.

Approaching the balance of my remarks, in reference to what we are doing as a government for the family and individuals, we must look at our first priority; that is, a reassessment of the goals and objectives of basic education. What do we want from our educational institutions in the years ahead? There will be a full opportunity for members of this Assembly to participate in the debate on that subject in the weeks ahead. I welcome the views of all members of the Assembly on this most important function of government.

A few preliminary observations I'd like to make at this time, reserving the right to speak later in that debate, are these: I have a high regard for our system in Alberta, and I have a very high regard for the vast majority of teachers, educators, and administrators. This timely topic, however, serves to remind us that it is our responsibility as legislators to set the basic goals and objectives for education in this province. I reject the argument of those who say, leave education to the educators. It is our responsibility, Mr. Speaker, and I know the members of this Assembly will approach that responsibility with a great deal of careful consideration.

One of the things I think is happening in education, and it's regrettable, is to expect the schools will supply all the discipline necessary for children. Well, Mr. Speaker, I reject that notion out of hand. Without question, that is one of the most important responsibilities of the family unit. It is unfair in the extreme to send children to school expecting the schools to provide all the discipline those children will receive. Totally unfair. I think our schools have been asked to do a little too much in that regard.

I'm delighted once again to compliment the Minister of Culture in seeing that library improvements will take place in the coming years, and that there will be a major policy change and, importantly, increased finances. I know this will be welcomed in my constituency, and I'm sure it will be welcomed elsewhere in the province.

On our second priority which affects the family, the question of housing is being dealt with as well. The dynamic Minister of Housing and Public Works has not proposed any new names for his programs, which disappoints me. Perhaps we'll get something during the session. But I am delighted the second phase of SCHIP, the senior citizen home improvement plan, will be introduced to benefit and assist 20,000 additional Albertans of senior years in maintaining their basic homes, so important to the maintenance and the preservation of family life.

I'm going to try something here. It's good to be on the same SCHIP with you, because you've put us on the MAP. You're a CHIP off the old block, and it's good to be working in the same SHOP. [laughter] I'm also delighted that we'll see a debate on improvements in The Landlord and Tenant Act, for those citizens who maintain their family homes in places other than self-contained, individually owned units. That is important to Albertans, particularly to those

who live in our metropolitan areas and in our rapidly growing cities and towns which have benefited so greatly from the apartment development programs of the Minister of Housing and Public Works.

Quality of individual and family life: our third priority of course is to provide health care, research facilities, and those for the mentally ill and mentally retarded. The proposals in the Speech from the Throne in this area will be welcomed. As my colleague from Lloydminster has said, the family is affected by two dread diseases, heart disease and cancer, and I welcome those new initiatives. I also welcome the comments in the Speech from the Throne with regard to the Ministry of Social Services and Community Health, regarding the mentally ill and mentally retarded, and the effective functioning of a senior citizen advisory council recently established by the minister. I am delighted that a member of my constituency, Mr. Des O'Coffey, who is devoting his senior years to the service of his fellow seniors, has been appointed to that advisory council.

In addition, in this area, I am delighted of course that the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has seen fit to approve major expansion of the Medicine Hat district hospital. Having met with the district hospital board and the planning committee in my constituency, I know how happy they are that that major regional hospital will be further developed. Mr. Speaker, I know the Premier has a real interest in the Medicine Hat General Hospital. After a visit to Medicine Hat in 1971 — the temperature, I think, reached 100 or thereabouts — that was all it took to convince him that air conditioning was a must in the Medicine Hat General Hospital. That was one of the first actions this government carried out, even though the constituency wasn't represented by the candidate he had supported in 1971. Maybe that is one of the reasons I am here today, however. I know my colleagues across the floor are delighted that that helped me to get into this Legislature.

I want to pay particular attention as well, on the question of the quality of individual family life, to the fact that we are emphasizing physical fitness, and the development, through the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife, of major cultural facilities. That program is well received, and I am going to have a very delightful experience Monday next, in going into my constituency with an envelope containing a very large sum of money to assist the city of Medicine Hat in the development of the Crestwood Recreation Centre, an important part of my city.

I want to say a word or two about parks, because we as a government are developing a master plan for the Cypress Hills Provincial Park. One of the things we are doing, Mr. Speaker, is letting the public participate, through a series of open meetings, in the development of our proposal. I was interested that the Leader of the Opposition came to Medicine Hat to talk about that a short while ago. I would urge him to get his facts straight, before he comes into somebody else's constituency, about what the MLAs who represent the area are doing to let the department know their views on the subject.

MR. CLARK: A little touchy there?

MR. HORSMAN: Oh no, I'm not touchy, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that there is full opportunity

for the public to participate in this planning process, and that was never provided by any previous government in this province. Those are the facts.

However, in regard to the quality of individual and family life, all is not good in Alberta. I'm pleased to see that measures are being taken to help those members of broken families to adjust their lives. Custody order enforcements, young persons under the Department of Social Services and Community Health who will endanger themselves or others: action will be taken in that regard. Support for the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission — very important for those citizens who find they cannot cope with our life in society, and seek escape. We must assist in bringing them back into the mainstream of life and making them feel their worth as individual citizens and as members of families in this province. I welcome those initiatives in the area of social services.

The quality of the economic life is so important. Our government has an important role to play there, because really Albertans as individuals, as family supporters, want to have jobs that are meaningful and that provide them and their families with sufficient to enjoy the great benefits of life in this province.

The growth of Medicine Hat and Redcliff in the last few years has been phenomenal. In the 12 months preceding the end of June last year, the growth rate was in excess of 10 per cent in both the city of Medicine Hat and the town of Redcliff. That growth is a direct reflection of the policies of this administration to diversify, to decentralize, and to make sure that people, wherever they live in this province, have an opportunity for jobs in their own areas. It is so important, Mr. Speaker, that young people coming into the labor stream have the opportunity of staying in their own home areas with their families, to preserve and maintain their family ties.

I congratulate the government for the action taken to diversify the economy of this province. I congratulate as well the hon. Minister of Labour for his efforts to implement improvements for occupational health and safety. Once again I am delighted that a constituent of mine is a member of that council, and that he will participate as a responsible labor leader in the development of the policies so necessary in that vital area.

I look forward as well to the introduction of improvements to the Workers' Compensation Board act and regulations. I can assure you that I have heard a great deal about this area from my colleague from Calgary Millican, who has served as chairman of the legislative committee.

Our primary industries, agriculture and petrochemical production, must be developed so that we process here in Alberta the products which derive from those two elements. Of course I am delighted that reference is made to irrigation in the Speech from the Throne. I know that many of my colleagues would be disappointed if I didn't take this opportunity to bring up that subject again. It is so important to Alberta, to Canada, and to the world that these projects proceed so that we may provide food not only for ourselves but for the hungry, wherever they are in this world of ours.

So we must develop those industries, and we must process here. Then we must be able to transport

those products elsewhere. So it is important that this thrust, outlined in the Speech from the Throne under the Department of Transportation, be followed up by this government and receive the full support of all members of this Legislature. We must get fair freight rates for western Canada, we must have improved truck routes, and we must have major transportation corridors in our cities.

As a member of the trucking committee, under the chairmanship of the Member for Calgary Glenmore, I have had the opportunity in the past several months to travel throughout this province. That has been one of the most interesting and delightful experiences since I came into this House, because it helps me to understand what this province is all about. To travel to Peace River and Grande Prairie and all across southern Alberta and into central Alberta: that is important.

One of the features of throne speech debates in the past has been that members would rise and tell the Legislature about their constituency. More particularly, I think backbench members were trying to tell the cabinet what their constituencies were all about because the cabinet never visited the constituencies. That of course has been changed under this administration. I need hardly tell the members of the Executive Council about Medicine Hat and Redcliff, because they all have been there so often that I'm sure they feel it is their second home.

DR. BUCK: I'm worried about that constituency.

MR. HORSMAN: And I'd like to keep it that way.

I want to refer to the question of export markets and the thrust outlined in the Speech from the Throne. This government is going to undertake an extensive program, in co-operation with the federal government, in co-operation with the governments of western Canada, to go out and sell the products Alberta produces. I understand that some opposition speakers view this proposal with alarm. That's one thing opposition members are good at doing, viewing with alarm. But I can assure the members of the opposition who take this attitude that they should go home to their constituencies this weekend and find out what the people are talking about.

DR. BUCK: High gas, high taxes.

MR. HORSMAN: On the question of expanding our markets, they had better rethink their position, or after the next election their ranks will be even thinner than they are now. One member who espouses the philosophy found in the provinces to the east of us should ask what their governments are doing in regard to this question of GATT and the expansion of our markets for western Canadian products.

I attended the western premiers' conference in Medicine Hat last April, and do you know what? Mr. Speaker, out of that came a joint communique of all four western governments, under the leadership of the Premier of this province, to go forward in that area and sell the products of western Canada. So, Mr. Speaker, I view with alarm [laughter] the irresponsibility of statements being made in this area by members of the opposition parties.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the government on the speech. It is a conservative speech.

It is realistic and responsive to the needs of Albertans as individuals and as family members. It is the nature of a conservative to refuse to follow doctrines and ideologies, Mr. Speaker, and Alberta is a conservative province. But it is an essential part of Canada.

This government is dedicated to the unity of this country, and is taking no steps whatever to divide this nation. Anyone who alleges that is either misinformed or mischievous. Mr. Speaker, we are resolved to be a strong and proud member of the family within Confederation, and an equal partner in the development of this unique Canadian experiment that I, as a legislator, and this government have pledged ourselves to preserve and protect.

It is therefore with great pride that I second the motion before this House moved by my colleague, the gentleman — and I say that advisedly — the true gentleman who represents Lloydminster.

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

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

[The House adjourned at 11:47 a.m.]