

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTATitle: **Wednesday, March 8, 1978 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, it's my very great pleasure today to introduce a distinguished visitor to you, and to members of the Legislature. In your gallery, sir, is the Hon. Donald W. Craik, Minister of Finance, government of Manitoba, also chairman of the Manitoba Energy Council. I'd very much appreciate it if the members of the Legislature would join me and you, Mr. Speaker, in welcoming this visitor from the fresh, new, and progressive government of Manitoba.

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to take the opportunity of introducing a guest of mine who's seated in your gallery, accompanied by my wife and my good friend Father Woloshyn. He is an internationally known tenor, born in the hills of the Ukraine, the Carpathian region. He studied music and singing at Trinity College of Music in London, then at St. Cecilia Conservatory in Rome.

His first mark in singing was at the world exhibition in Brussels in 1958. Later he was invited to provide a recital at the Academy of Music in Rome. In 1961 he won the first prize at the international singing competition in Belgium. His singing tours included Italy, France, Holland, Belgium, Austria, Germany, the United States, and Canada. He is fluent in seven languages, and was of great assistance to the Edmonton group that travelled in Europe last year — the Cheremosh Dancers and the Kashtan Singers — through our own Alberta House staff in London.

It is my pleasure to present to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members of the Assembly, our guest today, Volodymyr Luciv, from London, England.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 212****An Act to Provide for Warranties
in the Sale of Consumer Products**

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, I would ask today that I be given greater latitude in the Introduction of Bills than is normally granted. My reason for this request will, I think, quickly become self-evident. Today is a day of special significance in that it is International Women's Day. It is with that in mind that I thought today would be an appropriate day to introduce legislation, a private member's public bill, inasmuch as perhaps the application or relevance of the bill will have its impact to the greatest number of consumers, and perhaps we might consider that the consumer in

the greatest percentage is the woman in our society.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore beg leave to introduce Bill 212, An Act to Provide for Warranties in the Sale of Consumer Products.

The purpose of this bill is threefold: to eliminate ambiguities in consumer product warranties; to provide consumers with methods of governmental and legal recourse where warranties are not properly honored by sellers, retailers, or manufacturers; and thirdly, to provide some protection for sellers and manufacturers not to be held unfairly responsible in claims. Mr. Speaker, this legislation is introduced to perhaps bring about a greater balance between the consumer and the manufacturer and/or seller, as to the responsibilities of each to the other.

MR. SPEAKER: There would, of course, have to be equal time on international men's day.

AN HON. MEMBER: Well done, Mr. Speaker.

[Leave granted; Bill 212 read a first time]

Bill 218**An Act to Amend The Jury Act**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being An Act to Amend The Jury Act. Many blind people want to play a full role as citizens of our country. Antiquated thinking which severely limited what a blind person was capable of doing is gradually being dissipated. This bill will help to hurry that dissipation. It will remove blindness as a ground for disqualification to sit on a jury.

[Leave granted; Bill 218 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the motions for returns 160, 161, and 162.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce two schools from Edmonton Whitemud today: first some 40 grade 9 students from the D.S. MacKenzie Junior High School, accompanied by Mrs. Chorley and Mrs. Covey; and 21 Grandview Heights grade 5 students, accompanied by Mrs. Maslen. They are in both galleries, Mr. Speaker, and I ask them to rise and be recognized by the House.

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce to you, and to the members of this Assembly, a class of 23 grade 5 students from a new school in my constituency, the Elizabeth Seton school. They are accompanied by their teacher, Sergio Magliocco, and are seated in the public gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of this Assembly.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in introducing 27 members of a grade 5 class from McKernan Elementary School in Edmonton Parkallen constituency. They are enjoying a tour of the building today, and learning of the government process. They

are accompanied by a teacher, Mrs. Goldring, and one of the parents, Mrs. Roy. I would ask them now, in the members gallery, to stand and be recognized by the members.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Department of Social Services and Community Health

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the introduction over a four-year period of a province-wide co-ordinated home care program. A co-ordinated home care program has five basic goals: one, to meet appropriate health and social needs of patients in their homes; two, to facilitate more effective use of institutional beds; three, to promote greater personal and family responsibility for health; four, at the same time, to relieve undue strain on families who are trying to care for an ill person in the home; and five, to provide continuity of care by inserting an intermediary service between institutionalized care and that point at which there is no further need for medical care in the home.

The program we have designed incorporates a number of the best features of the existing home care programs already funded by your government through my department, as well as suggestions received in the numerous briefs on home care which were submitted to the department.

Local health authorities have wide responsibilities for health at the local level. They also have able and experienced staff. Therefore, at the community level, health units will be responsible for administering the co-ordinated home care program. Each program will have a home care co-ordinator and a management committee which must include, wherever possible, representation from preventive social services boards, hospitals and other health care institutions, physicians, voluntary agencies, and associations representing recipients of home care services, such as senior citizens. The management committee will act as an agent of the local health authority.

Approximately \$3 million will be allocated for home care in 1978-79, rising to an annual allocation of \$14 million, in 1977 dollars, at the end of four years when the program is fully implemented. It is expected that most health units will obtain funding for home care by the end of 1978-79. It is anticipated that by the end of 1979-80, almost all health units should have achieved a 50 per cent implementation level.

A co-ordinated home care program will enable Albertans, especially the elderly and handicapped, to receive health and support services while they continue to live in their permanent residence. It is anticipated that, in time, home care will reduce the need for costly institutional care. Furthermore, home care will stimulate the more effective utilization of existing community resources. A variety of ambulatory and in-home health care services are now available in varying degrees throughout the province. The co-ordinated home care program is a mechanism to bring together physicians, public health nurses, rehabilitation therapists, social workers, homemakers, user groups, and many others on a co-ordinated basis designed to best meet the assessed needs of individuals with health problems.

Only patients requiring health services, such as home nursing or rehabilitation therapy, that can be provided effectively in their residence will be admitted to the program in its first phase. Eligibility is based on an assessment of the needs of each referred patient, and will depend in part on the ability of the family to provide some of the required care. All medical treatment is to be prescribed by the individual's personal physician. Those individuals requiring a support service but not a health service are not eligible for admission to home care, and will be referred to the appropriate community agency for assistance.

It is estimated that at full implementation, approximately 20,000 to 25,000 persons will receive home care services during a 12-month period. Because individual needs will be assessed for each patient, a wide variety of type, intensity, and duration of services can be provided. Some patients will require a short period of intensive services — for example, post-surgical patients from acute hospitals — whereas other patients will require longer periods of care with less frequent services.

To assist local health authorities maintain sound financial management, the co-ordinated home care program contains a number of features designed to provide for expenditure control and careful use of resources. Home care regulations under The Health Unit Act will specify controls which must be applied at the individual case level. These include specific admission criteria, assessment procedures, and preparation of an individual case plan which sets treatment goals for the patient. After an initial two-week period of home care, patients will be charged a portion of the cost of the support services they receive. The amount charged to the patient will be determined according to a provincial fee schedule which is based on level of income and number of dependants. No fees will be charged for the health care services provided — home nursing and rehabilitation therapy.

Program evaluation will be another important control feature for both cost and quality of care. This will be primarily a responsibility of the local health authorities, but a standardized reporting system will enable the department to monitor cost control and some aspects of program effectiveness.

Mr. Speaker, the implementation of this exciting program reaffirms our government's intention to encourage in the citizens of Alberta a high degree of self-sufficiency. We all know and appreciate that an individual's capability for independence bears directly on that person's self-esteem, dignity, and general well-being. It is for these reasons that I am both pleased and proud to make this statement.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in responding to the announcement made by the hon. minister, might I say that we agree with the basic objectives of the program as I believe they are outlined by the minister. The minister says that indeed the government is pleased to be able to make this announcement today. I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, there are many people in the cities of Edmonton and Calgary who for the past several years — at least three years that I can recall — have been trying to put whatever pressure they can on whoever would listen that in fact we'd move in this particular direction of a home care program announced today. I'd be less than fair if I didn't also pay tribute to the two motions my colleague the

Member for Little Bow has raised in this House successively for the last two years. And I'd remind the government, with its enthusiasm for the announcement today, that in the last two years this was the very government that said it couldn't afford a home care program.

This is a progressive announcement today, Mr. Speaker. It's regretful, though, that we're going to have to wait until the year 1980 before 50 per cent of the people who should be involved in a home care program today are going to receive the benefits of this program. Surely in a province where we've got \$3 billion in the heritage savings trust fund [interjections] we can aim more quickly to get this program into effect than saying, half the people who need the program will have it available to them by 1980.

Let me make one last comment, Mr. Speaker. I would urge the government to go very slow on passing regulations that are going to tie up people in health units. I'd urge the government to go very slow on passing all sorts of regulations that are going to hamstring local health units with this program. This is an area where I think the government should have no qualms at all about trusting those health units in the province who have already developed this program, and to encourage them to move forward.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Matrimonial Property Legislation

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my first question to the Attorney General and ask when we might expect the legislation to be introduced on the question of matrimonial property.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, Bill 102 has received, I think, relatively wide circulation in the province, and discussion. Certainly I've been involved in a number of meetings in that regard. I was pleased to announce on behalf of the government two significant changes to the matrimonial property bill. Those are currently in the stage of being drafted, and I would expect that the bill will be re-introduced to this Assembly sometime in the next few weeks.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I caught the last portion of the hon. minister's announcement when he said he hoped the legislation would be introduced in the next few weeks. In light of the paragraph in the Speech from the Throne that indicated members would have one week off to consult their constituents, my question very specifically to the Attorney General is: is it the government's intention to have the legislation introduced prior to that one week when, according to the Speech from the Throne, MLAs will be encouraged to consult their constituents?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, we will certainly do everything we can to get the legislation before the House as soon as possible, in order that members may have the opportunity to discuss it with their constituents. That's certainly a very important function, and the Easter break is of course an appropriate time to do so.

I want to make it clear to the Leader of the Opposition that I know he designed a bill, one page in length, and introduced it last year, and that was his

solution to the matrimonial property law. I'd like to advise him, if he doesn't know, that it's a fairly complicated process, and a fairly complicated legal matter. As a result we're taking our time to ensure that the draft we do is thorough, complete, and fully comprehensive and workable. I'll have the legislation before the House as soon as possible, but it certainly won't be in the form proposed by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Attorney General. In light of the thoroughness that the Attorney General is putting in this matter, and the speed at which he's moving, is it the government's intention to move towards approval of this legislation at this spring session, or to hold this legislation over to the fall session?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I think all members of the House will agree that the matrimonial property law reform is an important matter. It's received a great deal of discussion in this province in the past, and that of course was the reason for the government's introducing the bill last fall.

I would anticipate that the legislation will be introduced relatively early in this session, and could probably be dealt with by the House sometime this spring, and passed this spring. That, of course, depends on members in the official opposition, and of course we're interested in hearing their contribution to the debate. You may have some useful suggestions to make that may cause us to amend it. But I would expect that the bill will be dealt with by the Assembly this spring. [interjections]

I beg your pardon? I'm listening, Walt.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I think the comment has been made over here that the record of the government accepting those well-thought-out amendments is not impressive.

Education Goals and Objectives

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the Minister of Education. It flows from a question that was asked of me during an Education Week event in Consort last night. The question basically is: what is the government's timetable for that portion of the Speech from the Throne that talked about [how] goals and objectives for basic education in the province are to be set from within the Legislative Assembly? What kind of time line and format is the government using to meet that objective as set out in the Speech from the Throne?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, the time line I would see for this discussion would probably begin this spring, and may in fact end during the course of the spring session; though again, useful suggestions coming from the other side would be taken into account. I expect we'll proceed by way of a resolution on the Order Paper, which would see the Legislature debate and subsequently approve specific goals for the educational system in the province.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the minister. Is it the government's intention to spell out the proposed goals and objectives, and in

fact have those in a piece of legislation; or is it the government's intention to spell out the goals and objectives and then have them as a subject of debate?

MR. KOZIAK: As I indicated, it would be my view that the procedure we would take would be in the form of a resolution, with the goals being spelled out in the resolution for debate by the Assembly.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. Having regard for the hearings on the thought-provoking work done by Dr. Harder and the hearings — I believe some 20 of them — being organized across the province, where trustees, teachers, and parents will be involved, what mechanism is the minister using to take the feedback from those meetings and implement those reactions in the discussion of goals and objectives? In fact is each MLA being asked or given the opportunity to attend the meetings in his or her own particular area, to start off with?

MR. KOZIAK: To begin with, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure every MLA is welcome to attend any meetings that are being set. What must be understood is that the discussion paper was prepared by Dr. Harder at the behest of the Curriculum Policies Board and not my own. The reactions to that paper will be consolidated and presented to the Curriculum Policies Board for further recommendation to me.

The area which that paper touches upon deals with the process that takes place and will be taking place once goals of education have been adopted by this Legislature. This is preparatory work for the discussion that will follow.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just one last question so there's no misunderstanding among members of the House or the public who are taking part in the discussion on the Harder paper. The reaction from the Harder paper will then go to the Curriculum Policies Board, and that will have no impact on the goals and objectives which will be spelled out in a government resolution which will be debated and voted on in the House?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, basically that statement is correct. The goals and objectives of education that will be set by this Legislature for our education system in this province do not depend on the present discussions taking place relative to the Harder paper.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just one last question to the minister. Mr. Minister, is it the government's intention to inaugurate or to initiate this discussion on goals and objectives in a resolution form at this spring session?

MR. KOZIAK: I believe that's the answer I gave earlier to a question, Mr. Speaker.

Social Services Funding

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. I understand that agreement has been reached between the federal government and the provinces with regard to social services funding. I wonder if the

minister could indicate what effect that will have on funding for Alberta relative to those programs.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, the approach that was taken with the federal government over the past three to four years, I guess, in consultation with the provincial ministers, was to redesign the Canada Assistance Plan. We have achieved that goal in part of the social services area, and would deal with social services that do not relate to social assistance but to social services as the programs are delivered.

The effect of the negotiations and the resolution reached in Ottawa yesterday is that Alberta stands to benefit financially to a rather dramatic extent. But what is more important is the fact that block funding is our second choice, our first choice being of course tax points. The second choice in federal funding is block funding, and that was agreed to yesterday. That means of course that we are masters in our own house when it comes to the design of the programs and the reporting. That was the goal we achieved yesterday.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Provincial Treasurer. Will the budget that will be presented to us within a week plus a few days consider the funding that will come from the federal government? Has that been entered into the budget picture?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest the hon. member be here Friday night, and he will get the answer to his question.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I will, Mr. Speaker. I certainly will.

MR. CLARK: The Treasurer may not understand the answer, but you'll be here.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. What is the time line, then, to bring the program into effect in Alberta?

MISS HUNLEY: The time line's the same across Canada, not only in Alberta. The year on which the formula takes its base is '77-78, which means they take the programs that qualify to arrive at the dollar value as of March 31, 1978. The program will not be implemented, though, until 1979-80, and that's when the first funding will be going forward to the provinces.

There is also another \$50 million for capital construction, which will be available to the various provinces, once again on another formula. There is not a delay in that particular funding process. It will be available to the provinces when they submit the type of program for which they feel they're qualified for funding.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the minister for clarification. The minister speaks in terms of significant or substantially more funding. Could the minister elaborate on that remark?

MISS HUNLEY: The federal offer included, among other things, a \$5 per capita contribution for every province. So that is rather dramatic. But the first indication, according to the formula which we

reviewed with the federal officials and which my officials have been reviewing, is that our base year — that is, '77-78 — is estimated to be \$33 million, which is what we expect the federal component to Albertans would be. In 1979-80, when it really takes full effect, it would be \$56.6 million.

Transport of Chemicals

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the hon. Deputy Premier and Minister of Transportation. This deals with the recent disasters in the chemical industry as it goes to transportation through communities. I'd like to know if the minister has had any discussions with his federal counterpart re the rerouting of the main line of the CNR around the town of Fort Saskatchewan, in light of the fact we will be moving large numbers of tank cars through that community?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, that's an important consideration. Over the past two years, as a matter of fact, I've asked Alberta Disaster Services to head up an interdepartmental group including those from Labour and a variety of other interested departments to work with the federal government relative to their hazardous products transportation act, which we expect will be introduced shortly in the federal House and which is a very important piece of legislation relative to safety in the movement of these goods.

Insofar as the situation in Fort Saskatchewan is concerned, we are having discussions with both railways relative to how those plants in Fort Saskatchewan can be adequately served by both railways in a competitive mode as well as in the safety situation.

Rail Line Rerouting

DR. BUCK: Supplementary to the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate if the department is considering a complete rerouting just for the chemical portion, or is the minister or the department looking at complete abolition of the line through the town?

DR. HORNER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not in a position to say whether or not we can effect a complete abolition of the line through the town. However, having regard to some of the present regulations with regard to switching and so on, which we will have to get the federal transport commission to change, I hope in the very near future to have some important discussions relative to that matter with both railways and with the CTC. As my hon. friend may be aware, Mr. Speaker, the federal government has now withdrawn a great deal of support for relocation of lines. However, we will press ahead and see whether or not something sensible can be done in the Fort Saskatchewan area.

Propane Supplies and Prices

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones. Has the minister's department made any assessment of the availability of propane in the province?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, we have not made a departmental assessment of that matter. I've had no

indication that there is a problem with the availability of propane. Certainly if the hon. member does have such indications, I would appreciate that information being shared with me so we might take the matter up. The question of energy supply matters, including propane, is a matter that from time to time is assessed by the Energy Resources Conservation Board. It may very well be that my colleague the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources might have some additional information.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I've discussed the matter of propane supply with the Energy Resources Conservation Board as late as Friday, February 24. It just came up in another conversation, and the chairman of the board at that time made the comment that propane in our province was in great supply.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question to the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate whether he or his department has compiled any information as to what effect it's going to have on the price of propane when it's removed from the PUB on March 31?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, I think judgments about that would be hypothetical at this point. As the hon. member will know, the question of price regulation for propane distributors was released in a decision of the Public Utilities Board some time ago. In addition, later this year in the spring the freeing of price to market forces will take place with respect to producer prices of propane. I think it would warrant attention — and I sense this is the thrust of the hon. member's question and comment — to review and monitor that matter very closely when that event occurs, so the price of propane is fully released to market forces as distinct from regulated by the Public Utilities Board.

MR. MANDEVILLE: One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the government given any consideration to giving a subsidy program to propane users, similar to the subsidy program for natural gas users in areas where we do not have co-ops providing gas to rural members?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, we have reviewed that matter. The possibility of providing a subsidy, or allowance if you like, to propane similar to natural gas is not the same for propane as with natural gas, just out of the practicalities of the matter. I think the question really separates into two parts: one, those areas where for some years now they have had the opportunity to install natural gas systems in rural Alberta if they wish to do so; and alternately, the other situations where for one reason or another, including geography — and examples to date might be High Level and Fort Chipewyan — they have not had the opportunity for the rural natural gas program to come into those areas. It seems to me that in those latter cases some help is better justified than in the former.

Cow-Calf Program

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask if he has any information from his federal counterpart

regarding the payment to the Alberta cow-calf producers through the federal stabilization program.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, only to say that there are in excess of 20,000 Alberta producers registered under the federal government's cow-calf stabilization program; that payments of something in excess of \$10.40 per calf on the limited number were announced last week; and that the provincial Department of Agriculture offices throughout the province have been assisting and will continue to assist with any difficulties producers may have in registering or receiving their grant.

I'm also advised that although June 30, 1977, was the cut-off date for receiving applications, until at least last week the federal government was accepting herd registrations, but without making any commitment as to whether individuals would actually receive payment.

MR. PURDY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Some farmers in my constituency have heard that the government of Alberta may make another payment, because of the low price set by the federal government at \$10.40 per animal, to bring the price closer to the market price. Can the minister confirm or reject that rumor?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, as I said a year ago in this Legislature, the 1976 cow-calf program that we developed — and paid out some \$43 million to in excess of 24,000 producers — was a one-year-only program. It was developed on a sound basis that was recognized by the federal government, and that is the very reason the federal government finally saw its way clear to bringing cow-calf producers under the national stabilization program. Were it not for the program developed in Alberta, supported by this government and this Legislature, there would not be any payment at all from the federal government today. I can assure you of that.

We do not intend to supplement the federal government program this year. The program is based on an expected market price return, or an actual market price return for the period September 1 through December 1, relating to the cost of production that cow-calf operators have.

I said a year ago as well that it was our hope that the market price would improve sufficiently that payments of this nature would not be required. In fact, that has occurred in late 1977 as opposed to a year earlier; the market price has substantially improved. We're confident that it will improve even more. I hope that in the fall of 1978, Mr. Speaker, we will not need a subsidy program payment to cow-calf operators, either from the federal or the provincial government, and that the market price will be there to support their operations.

Alcan Pipeline

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism. Are any companies in Alberta gearing up to compete in supplying pipe for the Alaska pipeline?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, there appear to be at least three companies that could participate directly

in supplying pipe for the Alcan or Foothills pipeline. They are IPSCO, Stelco, and obviously Steel Alberta, since that is a part of the IPSCO organization. Our department and I have meetings slated with all three of those organizations for the first part of March, at which time we would hope to be apprized directly as to what they consider the potential for their involvement.

Preliminary estimates by the principals involved in Foothills indicate that Canadian companies could participate to the extent of 90 per cent in the total value of products supplied to the pipeline during its passage through Alberta. We in the government have established a committee under the chairmanship of the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and perhaps he might want to supplement that answer.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question, then, to the hon. minister. The minister indicated a figure of 90 per cent. Is he in a position to advise the Assembly what the government bases that estimate on? Have there been specific studies? Has there been any discussion, for example, with the promoters of the pipeline, any indication of Canadian preference in the bidding process on the supplying of pipe for the construction of the pipeline? How does he reach that figure of 90 per cent?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, that figure was quoted after having read some of the press releases emanating from the principals of the Foothills pipeline.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In view of the importance to western Canada of this question of supplying pipe for the Canadian section, is the department taking any other action to assess whether or not that 90 per cent target is reasonable? Has the government given any consideration to pressing for a Canadian preference clause with respect to the supplying of pipe on that section of the pipeline which goes through Canada?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will realize that any negotiations between the two governments are federal in nature with regard to the pipeline passing through — if it proceeds. It is a proposed pipeline at this time, and not really guaranteed to proceed.

Obviously we are doing everything we can to assure the Alberta entrepreneur has an opportunity to participate in the various contracts that will be let as a result of the pipeline passing through Alberta, if it proceeds. What we want is an opportunity for those entrepreneurs to bid. We do know that they are very qualified and have some of the best technology available in all the world. Therefore we feel their pencils are sharp enough to compete favorably.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question. Beyond reading the press releases of the pipeline promoters, has the minister made any direct representation to the federal authorities negotiating with respect to the pipeline, prior and subsequent to the discussions on the treaty itself?

MR. DOWLING: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's very difficult to do that at this time, since we don't really know

whether the arrangement with regard to pipe size and pressure has been agreed to finally. It's a hypothetical situation in any case. We believe, if the pipeline does proceed, our Alberta entrepreneurs will have adequate opportunity to participate. We feel preference doesn't need to be shown to Canadians above anyone else. We believe the expertise is there, and they will be able to compete with everybody who might bid.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister. In view of the fact that the pipeline size is one of the crucial questions in whether or not Canadian firms can in fact bid competitively, or even supply the pipe on the line, my question to the minister or any other minister in the government is: was any representation made to federal officials with respect to the size of the pipeline itself?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important in answering the question posed to remember that this is a federal undertaking within the British North America Act, under Section 92(10)(a). It's important that we remember it is that kind of undertaking. The question as to Canadian content and pipe size is, of course, therefore a matter within the determination of the Parliament of Canada, in debating the bill, as they now are in committee.

So when it comes down to the question of the involvement of Alberta industries, that is something on which we will be constantly monitoring the federal government, and we will be involved as a province in the agency in the consultative mechanism.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question for clarification to the hon. minister, whose recent answer would do justice to the best of Mackenzie King's comments in the House of Commons. My question is: was any representation made from the government of Alberta with respect to the pipeline size?

MR. HYNDMAN: To my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, not in the matter of pipeline size, because that clearly would be within the jurisdiction of the federal government under Section 92(10)(a); although I find it strange that the hon. gentleman from Spirit River-Fairview would be indicating that he is now concerned about jurisdiction in Alberta, not having done so for three or four years. While we are prepared to fight as Albertans for Alberta jurisdiction, we do respect the federal government when it is very clear in the BNA Act that they have jurisdiction, as in this case with an interprovincial pipeline.

AN HON. MEMBER: Only when it suits your purposes.

MR. NOTLEY: Selective provincial rights.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. Are the Alberta companies capable of building almost any size of pipe chosen?

MR. DOWLING: No, Mr. Speaker, they're not capable of building any size of pipe, but their capability is such that if certain sizes are chosen in this proposed pipeline, they would be able to compete favorably, and

probably in a better position than some of the American counterparts.

MR. TAYLOR: One further supplementary. In view of our location, for a change it would appear that in a competitive bid, Alberta producers, if they are able to sharpen their pencils sufficiently, should have an advantage in bidding, because of lack of freight — a very complete change from most bids that Alberta companies have to contend with.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a supplementary question to the minister. In one of the minister's earlier answers, he indicated — and I wanted to check that I got this accurately — that Canadian firms didn't need any preferential treatment as far as the pipeline contracts are concerned. Is it the position of the government of Alberta that Canadian firms or Alberta firms don't need any preferential treatment with regard to the pipeline contracts?

MR. NOTLEY: And it's a federal jurisdiction on size, too.

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is suggesting that the cost to the consumer, whether Canadian or U.S., doesn't really make any difference. If you offer a 10 per cent position or a 15 per cent position to anyone, of course that price could easily be added to the price of the contract and would be reflected at the consumer level.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rephrase the question to the minister of gobbledygook and ask once again . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order, order.

MR. CLARK: . . . is the position of the government of Alberta that Canadian and Alberta firms don't need any preferential treatment with regard to getting the contracts for the pipeline?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, what I did say was that the capability, the expertise, is most assuredly in Alberta, and we believe that Alberta firms are in a position to compete very favorably with anyone.

MR. CLARK: Then can I put this question to the minister: once the federal government makes its decisions with regard to size, pressure, and so on, is the Alberta government prepared to make the strongest possible representation to the federal government, if it's needed on behalf of Alberta pipe-producing companies, to assure that Alberta . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. Leader of the Opposition is now making his question clearly hypothetical.

MR. CLARK: I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the recent exchange, I might say with regard to the pipeline that there have been questions which would obviously be eliciting opinions. But the Chair has assumed that those questions were directed to getting information that might be in the hands of the government, and conse-

quently they would not necessarily be seeking opinions.

Women's Rights

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, following the point the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood raised with respect to International Women's Day, I'd like to ask the hon. Minister of Labour whether or not the Alberta government is giving any consideration to amending The Individual's Rights Protection Act in a number of areas but specifically with respect to discrimination on the basis of marital status — problems that have arisen in banks and trust companies for loans, automobile insurance, and what have you. Has the government given any consideration to amending The Individual's Rights Protection Act to accommodate that problem?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I can only ask that the hon. member contain his patience, or lack of it, a little while longer until such time as the government presents a bill proposing some amendments to The Individual's Rights Protection Act. I would simply want to add that a number of proposals were made by the Human Rights Commission and that those are under review at the present time, pending a draft bill.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Labour, particularly in view of the fact that we have our guest from Manitoba sitting in for part of the session today. Has the hon. Minister of Labour, in his consideration of changes in The Individual's Rights Protection Act, given any consideration to the Manitoba formula, which allows the human rights commission in that province the authority to initiate and approve affirmative action programs?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, once again, the whole subject of affirmative action programs is up for consideration. Prior to presenting any bill to the House, I think I should note that we have taken the position in Alberta that the existing legislation in fact provides sufficient scope for affirmative action programs, and some examples of those programs are in existence.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. A year ago the hon. Provincial Treasurer indicated a unit had been established in the office of the Public Service Commissioner which would seek out and assist women applicants for higher offices within the provincial public service. In light of the fact that today is International Women's Day, does the minister have any figures on the success rate of that unit in terms of increasing the number of women in the top echelons of the Alberta public service?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I don't have any recent figures for what I regard as a very progressive unit, but I'll be happy to get them and pass on the information to the hon. member when I do.

Firestone Layoff

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Labour. Has the Minister

of Labour been informed or is he aware that 110 employees of the Firestone plant in Calgary will be out of work next week?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think the economic condition of Canada is well known at the present time. As a result of those and perhaps other circumstances, some companies, employers, owners of projects have found it necessary to take steps which result in the layoff of some employees. Those situations are not confined to the rest of Canada, although the most notable have certainly occurred elsewhere.

The hon. member's question in respect to the situation in Calgary has come, I think, to the attention of hon. members generally by way of a public statement today by the company. Our principal concern in regard to the labor situation would be that the collective agreement is being complied with in regard to whatever termination provisions there are. We have no reason to think that wouldn't be the case.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to supplement the answer by the Minister of Labour on that matter, and point out to the hon. members that this is a very clear example of a situation where, if the economy is weak in the rest of the country, even though it may be strong in Alberta, there are entities within Alberta dependent upon a strong economy in other provinces and in the balance of the western region. It indicates again that we are not an economic island in this province.

MR. GOGO: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. Could the minister indicate the position of unemployment in this jurisdiction relative to other jurisdictions in Canada?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. NOTLEY: Public information.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I think we are getting very markedly outside the scope of the question period. The hon. Member for Calgary McKnight followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a supplementary question of the Minister of Labour. Has his department been requested to assist in developing a program whereby the work that is available can be shared with all the employees, rather than severing a third of the staff, as the union has suggested is being done? In other words, is his department going to assist in sharing all the work rather than just sticking to the union contract?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question raises two matters, one of general and one of particular application. The whole question of whether or not traditional collective bargaining patterns, as they've been known in Alberta, might adapt to the sort of philosophical change the hon. member implies in his question is certainly very interesting. I think that the greater flexibility there can be in contracts of employment — either collective or otherwise, but I think speaking in the sense of collective

agreements at the present time — the greater variety and flexibility there can be in those is no doubt better for all parties.

Now in respect to whether or not the Department of Labour has been asked to assist the parties in exploring any possibilities there might be in respect to that in this particular case, I would have to say that I do not have any information at the present time that they have been in touch with the department. But I would add that in the event it would be useful for the department to become involved in some way, not limiting it in any way to the area mentioned by the hon. member's question, but in general terms, in all respects in the interests of the parties, we would certainly be glad to do that.

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Can the minister inform this Assembly in any way if the department is taking any steps to protect the jobs of Albertans, probably in encouraging other industry or whatever, like the Cold Lake plant and so forth?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member's question raises in general terms again the concern that he and other hon. members would have in regard to employment opportunities for those without employment as a result of that decision, and of course equally for others in the same position. But having noted that Alberta can't be an island unto itself in these matters, and that the economy of the province is still the bright point in the Canadian picture as a whole, we would say that the facilities of the government in regard to programs primarily under the jurisdiction of my colleague the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower are certainly likely to be helpful in situations like this.

Water Management

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, on Monday I had proposed a question to the Minister of the Environment regarding the Cooking Lake moraine study. The minister replied that it's standing on the edge of the stove and not cooking.

With a lot of experience in cooking, Mr. Speaker, I know that you need water for cooking on a stove. I would like to ask the Minister of the Environment whether the regional water study is completed; and if not, at what stage it would be now.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, that study is in a good state of progress. It is nearly completed. The consultants hired have reported on an interim basis on two occasions quite recently to a standing committee of the Executive Council. On the basis of their last report, we decided to slightly extend the terms of reference of the study in order to get a better look at some additional options in two areas of the region. The study deals not only with water, but also with sewage treatment facilities.

MR. BATIUK: A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister advise whether there is an indication from urban municipalities around that would be interested in a water system such as this, if the study proved feasible?

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I think the preliminary signs are very strong that many municipalities are very interested in a regional approach to those kinds of municipal utilities.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. In talking of water studies, I wonder if the minister would indicate the progress of the studies on the Oldman River basin, as to whether they are on target and will meet the deadlines established by the minister?

MR. RUSSELL: They're very close to being on target, Mr. Speaker. Some of them are completed, and I believe three of the consultants have asked for a two-week extension, which is a very small additional time in light of the overall time frame involved.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. In light of that progress report, will the minister still be able to meet his projected date as to an announcement with regard to a physical feature on the Oldman River or some other kind of storage? Will he be able to meet his deadline as to a public announcement?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm well aware of the great interest in that region of the province to see the government reach a decision and get on with the job. At a public meeting I made that commitment that we would try to do our very best and get that decision out by the end of this year. That's still our target. Even with this two-week extension to the three consultants I mentioned, we still propose to make that deadline.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker . . .

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

MR. R. SPEAKER: Yes, a final supplementary to the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Speaker. In a recent visit to southern Alberta the minister indicated there was a possibility of putting more money into the heritage savings trust fund for irrigation. Was that with the thought of requiring more money for the structure on the Oldman River system, or was that to be diverted toward irrigation rehabilitation within the districts?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I made that statement in response to a question from a *Lethbridge Herald* reporter, who asked about the hypothetical situation that the recommendations or decisions would amount to a larger financial commitment than had been made in 1975. I said that the funds allocated by way of the heritage savings trust fund could be increased by the Legislature if necessary.

MR. SPEAKER: The time limit for the question period has expired. I did anticipate we'd reach the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray sooner. If the Assembly agrees, perhaps we might deal with his question notwithstanding.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Protected Bird Species

MR. TESOLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife. Today I'm hoping for a more specific answer than I received yesterday. Would the minister consider limiting the potential for human disturbance of nesting white pelicans at the Slave River rapids by restricting access to the nesting colony between April and September each year?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, in trying to be more specific than apparently I was yesterday, I would like to say that when we placed the restrictions on the six sites in the province of Alberta — recognizing that there were some studies going on at the Slave River or the Mountain Rapids site — we publicly asked that the public co-operate with us in that particular area and that our people would also be working with the pelicans to actually see . . . [laughter] I'm trying to be as specific as I can, Mr. Speaker . . . with the pelicans to see if we can in fact move them to a site physically and see if they will survive. And it's very important. It's not a laughing matter, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESOLIN: One short supplementary if I may, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Could the minister indicate if his department will monitor any future development of roads, trails, picnic areas, garbage dumping, and timber harvesting in the Slave River rapids area to ensure potential developments do not adversely affect the white pelican colony and the natural and historical features associated with the rapids?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. [laughter]

MR. SPEAKER: I must apologize to two members who did not have an opportunity to ask their first question. It's sometimes difficult at the beginning of the question period to know how many supplementaries can be fitted in, because we can't always anticipate how many questions there are going to be. If the same number of members are interested in asking questions in the future, perhaps it's going to be necessary to go back a little more closely to the rules of the question period with regard to questions, answers, and supplementaries.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

AN HON. MEMBER: Ask your questions in caucus.

ORDERS OF THE DAY**head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

1. Moved by Mr. Hyndman:

Be it resolved that the Assembly adopt the following amendment to Standing Orders, to be effective until the prorogation of the Fourth Session of the 18th Legislature:

Standing Order 7 is struck out and the following is substituted:

- (7) (1) The ordinary, daily routine business in the Assembly shall be as follows:
 - Introduction of Visitors
 - Presenting Petitions
 - Reading and Receiving Petitions
 - Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees
 - Notices of Motions
 - Introduction of Bills
 - Tabling Returns and Reports
 - Introduction of Special Guests
 - Ministerial Statements
 - Oral Question Period (not exceeding 45 minutes)
- (2) When "Introduction of Visitors" is called, brief introductions may be made with the prior permission of Mr. Speaker, of visiting parliamentarians, diplomats, officials and others who are to be specially recognized.
- (3) When "Introduction of Special Guests" is called, brief introductions may be made of groups of school children and, with the prior permission of Mr. Speaker, of other visitors in the galleries.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, this is the third year in which this temporary change to the daily routine of business has been proposed. I believe it has been working well. Unless over the course of the next year there are any indications of a problem, during the opening days of the fifth session of the 18th Legislature I would propose that the changes be made permanent.

[Motion carried]

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

Moved by Mr. Gogo:

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

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

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

[Adjourned debate March 6: Dr. Webber]

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to participate in the 1978 throne speech debate on behalf of my constituents in Calgary Bow. I too would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the members from Calgary West — pardon me, Calgary Glenmore — and . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I apologize to the hon. member. I wouldn't like to interrupt him later. I have a request from the hon. Member for Cypress to revert to Introduction of Special Guests. Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association gentlemen, a very distinguished bunch of gentlemen from southern Alberta. At present they are standing in the gallery. Could they receive the usual welcome of this House.

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

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'll continue, and correct the mistake I made about Calgary West. It was the Member for Lethbridge West who moved the Speech from the Throne and the Member for Calgary Glenmore who seconded it. I'd like to congratulate both those members for, in my opinion, an excellent job. We heard a good balance of the social and economic issues in this province. I've also enjoyed listening to speeches by other members in the Assembly to this point, and hope that I can make a contribution.

I'd like to comment on some aspects of the throne speech affecting my constituents and those aspects related to my responsibilities as an MLA. First of all, I'd like to congratulate the Minister of Social Services and Community Health on her ministerial statement today on the home care program. I know this particular program will make many of my constituents very happy.

Three areas I have discussed often with my constituents, and which arose during the pre-session meetings in the communities of Bowness and Montgomery, are utility costs, the issue of matrimonial property division, and the matter of gaming regulations. I'd like to discuss each of those topics.

First of all, utility costs. This matter has been discussed by a number of members in their speeches so far. Certainly rising utility costs are a concern to our citizens, especially those on low or fixed incomes and our senior citizens. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, the same citizens are in agreement with our policy of getting a fair return on our oil and gas. However, they feel there should be some protection against increased energy prices for Albertans. I'd like to congratulate the Minister of Utilities and Telephones for his recent announcement on the natural gas price protection plan, whereby 75 per cent of future gas price increases will be absorbed under the terms of this plan. Next I would like to say how disappointed I was with the Social Credit leader, the leader of the official opposition, when he said on Monday:

The natural gas protection plan has been absolutely little help to people on fixed incomes. To say that it's been of assistance to someone like that is ludicrous.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate how this program will help people on fixed incomes in Calgary Bow. As we know, there is an approximate 17 cent per MCF increase in the price of natural gas associated with each \$1 increase per barrel of oil, which will occur every six months for the two-year period which began January 1, '78.

This will mean four increases of 17 cents each,

resulting in a total increase of 68 cents per MCF. Now, using the fact that the average city household uses about 225 MCFs per year, this 68 cents per MCF increase would result in a monthly increase of \$12.92 in the gas bill, without the natural gas price protection program. However, with the natural gas price protection program, the actual increase to a resident of Calgary Bow will be \$3.23 per month. This means that the protection program covers \$9.69 of the total increase for each household. Mr. Speaker, this doesn't even consider the current protection that's built in for the program.

What I'm saying is that two years from now a householder in Toronto will be paying \$12.92 per month more than what he is paying today, whereas a resident of Calgary would be paying only \$3.23 extra. These calculations take into account the price increase of natural gas, and do not take into account such factors as inflation, capital expenditures, and operating costs of the utility companies. In any case, Mr. Speaker, I ask: how can the Social Credit Party say that the program is of little help to people on fixed incomes?

Mr. Speaker, while on the topic of gas, I would like to comment on the rural gas program. I am pleased to have had the opportunity, with some of my colleagues and with the co-operation of the Minister of Utilities and Telephones, to visit some of the rural gas co-ops and to meet with members of the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops and of the Department of Utilities and Telephones. As the Member for Lesser Slave Lake indicated the other day, the enthusiasm and tremendous amount of work these people have put into the rural gas program is indeed impressive. Certainly some gas co-ops are having difficulties, such as cash flow, pipe leakage, and lien note problems. But I'm confident these problems can be resolved.

Mr. Speaker, I have to conclude that it was a bold and progressive decision to begin the rural gas program in the first place. I think it is recognized that the basic approach in initiating the gasification of rural Alberta through the co-ops was the correct one.

Mr. Speaker, a second matter I would like to talk about is the matrimonial property division. The legislation proposed last fall certainly created considerable interest among my constituents, and the matter rose at both the pre-session meetings I mentioned earlier and was also discussed with individual constituents. Generally the discussion centred around the concepts of judicial discretion with guidelines versus the deferred sharing concept. I think it's interesting to note that approximately 98 per cent of the people at these pre-session meetings voted for judicial discretion with guidelines, provided that the judge start with the criteria that there be a fifty-fifty sharing position between the two parties.

As probably all members in this Assembly have, I've received letters and notices from different groups in the province supporting the deferred sharing concept. However, I'd like to read a section from a letter to the *Bowmont News*. I don't see the reporter from the *Bowmont News* in the press gallery. In fact I don't see any members up there.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, there's one.

DR. WEBBER: I don't think he's from the *Bowmont News*. This particular letter is written by a single

parent, and she says:

The "judicial discretion" method of deciding is the only method which might be considered fair by both sides; subject, of course, to specified criteria.

She goes on to say:

At least with this method, a supposedly impartial person, the judge, is in a position to assess both sides of the argument. True, it is quite possible for a judge to be biased towards one or another; but this, as compared to the "deferred sharing" method, will provide the flexibility needed for individual consideration of each case.

Mr. Speaker, I think that opinion reflects the views of the majority of my constituents.

The third area I want to discuss — and this has arisen not only at my pre-session meetings, but as a result of a number of phone calls from community associations and community groups — is related to the matter of gaming regulations. The Member for Lethbridge West pointed out the other day that revenues from gambling in Alberta have risen dramatically in the past few years. It's my understanding that revenues from community bingos in Calgary have levelled off, or in some cases decreased, but the revenues from pull-ticket sales, or from the Nevadas, have increased sharply. I believe the Member for Lethbridge West mentioned that in this province estimated sales this year are in the vicinity of \$90 million.

Mr. Speaker, I think we as elected members have to be concerned with the control of gambling, and have to be sure that any regulations are directed toward the possibility of involvement of the criminal element. However, I'm receiving many complaints of overregulation in that these regulations are restricting organizations such as senior citizen clubs, community associations and their charitable and social activities. For example, recently one small senior citizen organization in my constituency called me and indicated they've been holding Friday-night bingos for the last 26 years. Their revenues were small from both the bingo and the pull-ticket operations, but what profits they do make go to charitable cases such as the Canadian Epilepsy Association. Theirs really is a social event for some 100 or so senior citizens who attend, and they recently shut down their operations because they felt they could not abide by the new regulations and because there was some concern about their not being a charitable organization. Mr. Speaker, these are not the kinds of organizations we want to put out of business.

DR. BUCK: Tell Foster that.

DR. WEBBER: On one hand we do need the controls, but on the other hand we don't want to overrestrict our community organizations. Mr. Speaker, I believe the whole matter of gaming regulations needs immediate attention and that consideration needs to be given to the possibility of a gaming control act.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Alberta Government Telephones Commission, I would like to comment on some important matters related to the Alberta Government Telephones system. In my view, one of the more important decisions of the commission in the last year was the policy of regionalization, which provides local management of all telephone systems

within a specified area. The regional offices are located in Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, and Vegreville.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech refers to a significant construction program to assist in meeting the growth needs of this province. Included in this construction program was the reference to a \$9 million Alberta Government Telephones northern project to be undertaken this year. Some 20 communities north of the 55th parallel will benefit from this program. When the project is complete, in approximately 1979, 16 communities formerly with just a single telephone will enjoy the benefits of having dial service in their areas, and five communities with or without telecommunications will have coin radio telephone offices, or CRTOS, connecting them with the outside world. The CRTOS, like a normal pay phone, will replace earlier versions like the radio toll office, making the installation easier to maintain and eliminating the need for an on-site telephone agent for collection. This system will operate on a radio network. When the program is complete, Alberta will be 100 per cent direct distance dial.

During the past year emergency calling from pay telephones became available in Calgary and Medicine Hat, where pay phones were converted to allow customers to call emergency without depositing a coin. Access to this kind of service has been available in a number of other centres in Alberta for some time.

Mr. Speaker, a number of other members have referred to the economic activity in this province. There's a statistic I'd like to put forth that is an indication of the type of economic activity that has existed in Alberta in the past year. There was a 23.9 per cent increase in toll messages originating in this province; that is, long-distance telephone calls from Alberta to outside the province. This compares with an increase of 6.5 per cent in British Columbia, and a national 13.4 per cent increase. And that 13.4 per cent increase would reflect the 23.9 per cent increase in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, a final comment with regard to the telephone commission is that I would like to indicate at this time my appreciation for having the opportunity to serve as a member of the commission. It's been a pleasure serving with the members who were on the commission. They are concerned with providing quality telecommunication service to Albertans, and I believe the telecommunication industry has an exciting future in this province.

Mr. Speaker, before I sit down I would like to publicly pay tribute to a Calgary who recently passed away. I am referring to Mrs. Grace Johnson, who was president of the Indian Friendship Centre in Calgary. She was one of the prime movers in the recently announced plans for a new Indian friendship centre in that city, and her contribution to the assistance of the native people who have come into the city over the years has been outstanding, in my view.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I am saying that I am very proud of our throne speech. I am proud to serve my constituents as a member of this Assembly and of this government.

Thank you.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in the throne speech debate. Before getting to the thrust of my remarks today I'd like to

pay tribute to your work as Speaker of the Assembly. In reading over the Speech from the Throne I was also pleased to note that Her Majesty the Queen not only will be coming to Alberta for the Commonwealth Games, but will be able to spend some time in northern communities in the province. I would just like to extend the hope that during her visit to northern Alberta she would be able to come to the community of Fairview, which is commemorating its 50th anniversary as a town this year.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with a couple of rather important constituency cases before moving into a discussion of provincial issues.

I am pleased to see that some additional money will be spent on highway construction in the area, but I would like to underscore the importance of completing Highway 49 and Highway 64 and resurfacing Highway 2.

The Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has frequently been criticized by me as much as anyone else on different matters. But I do have to say that as far as the new hospital in Fairview is concerned, the hospital that was opened last fall, I think there is a good deal of genuine support for that move. I would just like to pay some tribute to the local hospital board that worked very hard and long in attempting to secure the hospital in Fairview, as well as the government for its decision to move. [interjections]

The hon. minister in charge of Calgary is applauding me. I don't want to set too bad a precedent there, so I'll move on from the hospital in Fairview, where I think the government deserves plus marks, to the incredible situation in Grande Prairie, where they deserve to have a good deal of criticism. Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, the promise was made in 1975 that the hospital would proceed in that city. My concern is that the delay tactics the government has undertaken for the last several years are going to end up costing us a good deal more in the long run. There's a very real danger that if we don't get the show on the road, we'll start construction of the Grande Prairie hospital and will be competing with the Alcan pipeline. Quite frankly that is not a recipe to keep costs down. The only result of that sort of situation where our hospital goes on stream at the time they're building the pipeline will be extremely high increases in the cost of construction in that area. I would say very frankly to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care — and I'm sorry he's not here in his seat today when I say it — that if this government is concerned about health care in northwestern Alberta, it should press ahead and push forward the projects that are planned in that area or the final cost to the taxpayers of the entire province will be considerably greater.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to move from those introductory remarks to assess the Speech from the Throne in a number of significant areas.

First of all, let's take the question of the overall agricultural picture in Alberta. Members will be aware that agricultural net income has dropped. In 1975 the net income of farmers in this province was just a little under \$900 million. In 1976 that dropped to \$722 million. The preliminary figures compiled by the statistics branch of the Department of Agriculture indicate there will be just a little over \$600 million in net income for farmers in 1977, a drop from \$900 million to \$600 million.

Mr. Speaker, all one has to do is look at commodity prices and you'll see that rural Alberta and rural Canada are in some serious trouble. I don't want to quote at length, but just remind members of an article contained in the UGG publication *Grainews* in December of [last] year that looked at the price of wheat and then examined that from a perspective of the cost of production, the input cost as well as the price of wheat. It's rather interesting, Mr. Speaker, that while the price of wheat is obviously a good deal higher than it was in the dirty '30s, the input costs are so much higher that if one compares the years, taking a weighted average — and I'm quoting from the United Grain Growers' paper — we would today see prices in the neighborhood of the dirty '30s period, 1934 to be exact, when one takes the increased costs of production into account. Quite clearly there is no doubt that rural Alberta, and farmers in particular, are facing some difficult times.

I noted that a number of the hon. members, when they participated in this debate, indicated that the opposition have concentrated on the input question and haven't examined the whole issue of marketing. I want to take just a moment then, Mr. Speaker, in analysing the Speech from the Throne from my perspective, to assess the government's initiatives in international marketing. Of course we all know the problems the late, unlamented Export Agency encountered.

But let's take the issue and look back from the statement made in the throne speech on March 2:

emphasis on international tariff and trade arrangements to assist Alberta's agricultural and other [sections] in acquiring new, more stable and expanded markets.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that that should be the primary objective of the Alberta government, and I'm glad we are now at that point.

But I look back over the position taken by the Alberta government over the last several years. We've indeed had an intriguing series of moves, bobbing and weaving that would do justice to the best boxer in the field. For example, back in 1976 we weren't looking at multinational agreements; we were talking at that time, Mr. Speaker, about bilateral agreements. On October 19, 1976, page 1542 of *Hansard*, the Premier says:

In the area of agriculture, what we are proposing and presenting in various ways through officials arises out of a hopeful negotiation on a bilateral basis for agriculture trade relationships between Canada and the United States.

So that seemed to be the line for a while: not multi-lateral trade talks, not emphasis on the GATT negotiations, but a bilateral arrangement between one country and the other.

Then things began to change a little. We had what you might call the *quid pro quo* argument: we'll increase or accelerate the export of gas to the United States, Mr. Speaker, in return for certain tariff concessions from that country for . . . At first it was agricultural products — petrochemicals and boxed beef. Then it was boxed beef and petrochemicals; and then we dropped the petrochemicals, and it was boxed beef and rapeseed products. One has to conclude that at least some of this talk had a relationship to the political motives of the government.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, all of a sudden after

Vice-President Mondale's visit much of the rhetoric about this trade-off and bilateral talks disappeared. We are now back in the Speech from the Throne emphasizing where we should have been all along, and that is that the action is going to be in Geneva; the important discussions are going to be multilateral discussions; and if this province is seriously worried about the future of Alberta agriculture, our emphasis has to be in those Geneva talks and our emphasis has to be on the multilateral negotiations. It's fine to posture back at home about some kind of *quid pro quo* international deal. Entering the international stage, the little province of Alberta is suddenly becoming a big shot among the nations of the world.

But in actual fact, Mr. Speaker, we have to recognize that the role for this province is at the Geneva talks; working with other western provinces. Yes, that's an area of federal jurisdiction. But I would say to members of the Assembly that I quite frankly concurred with our Premier on the argument he made at the first ministers' meeting that the provinces should, on a confidential basis, have access to the offers list. Too often in the past we've seen critical agricultural interests, not only of the west but of the maritime provinces and other parts of the country, traded off at GATT negotiations. I think the stress is now in the right place, Mr. Speaker, but it comes, as I say, after two years of bobbing and weaving, with a maximum of politics and, in my judgment, a minimum of representation where it counts.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me move from the question of international trade to several important areas of agricultural income. First of all, the question of cattle prices. In my constituency in the pre-session meetings — and I was pleased that the hon. Member for Calgary Bow mentioned he had pre-session meetings. That's a very encouraging sign. Most of us in the opposition have had them for some time. But the pre-session meetings I held centred in good part on what kind of approach we should be taking toward the whole issue of marketing cattle.

I think it's fair to say that there are probably two major schools of thought on the marketing of cattle in this province and in this country. I think there's a general consensus that the present arrangement, where you have that so-called Montreal market determining the price, is not a satisfactory arrangement for marketing cattle in Canada. I don't know anybody who can define for me how the Montreal market works. The Senate of Canada has been carrying on discussions and investigations for some time now, and the hon. Member for Calgary Bow and I met with one of the senators.* After these discussions had been carrying on — and he'd been an active part of the discussions — he wasn't in any better position than anyone else to tell us.

I think there are two major schools of thought: one is the proposal of the stock growers' position, which is essentially a form of reciprocity on beef. That is, take down the tariff barriers; we should be able to export beef into the northwestern United States. The advantage of this sort of situation is that we would have lower freight costs. On the other hand, beef that is produced in the midwest could go into the eastern Canadian markets — if you like, a form of continental free-trade policy on the flow of beef. I believe the hon. Member for Bow Valley has made

this proposal in the House on a couple of occasions.

Mr. Speaker, there are certain advantages to that proposal. It would allow us to by-pass the so-called Montreal market; it would give beef products in this part of Canada access to the more competitive market places of the northwestern United States; and as the Western Stock Growers pointed out, it would lower the freight hauls, and that would mean less freight costs. The disadvantages, as I see them, include the problem of lower costs for producers in the United States, particularly the southern United States, and the fact that American import regulations can change very quickly. Americans are always having elections. Every two years they're having elections. So the problem is that a system of reciprocity can still be upset by allowing large amounts of oceanic beef into the continental market in order to keep the price down for American consumers. And United States politicians are no different from Canadian politicians when it comes to manipulating the import regulation to achieve that sort of objective.

The other concern I would have with the position taken by the stock growers is: there is growing evidence that the markets of the northwestern United States, where we would be shipping our beef, are becoming less competitive and more dominated by the same firms that tend to be dominant in the Canadian market place.

The other school of thought that came out during the pre-session meetings I held, Mr. Speaker, is a proposal for some kind of national meat authority. First of all, I think it's important to note that Canada is not self-sufficient in red meat products. For example, beef production in this country is a little less than 2.4 billion pounds. On the other hand, the consumption is 2.56 billion pounds. There's a deficiency of about 160 million pounds.

One of the arguments for a national meat authority is that the authority itself would have the licensing rights, so we could bypass the packers or the wholesalers who are quite prepared to bring in cheap foreign imports in order to depress the price whenever it's in their interest to do so. A national meat authority would, of course, allow farmers to by-pass the so-called Montreal market. More important, it would allow Canada to strive for some kind of international meat agreement, yet at the same time afford protection to the producers in this country so we don't find ourselves swamped with offshore imports.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that as long as Canada is in a meat deficiency position, we're able to move in the direction of supply management without necessarily moving toward quotas. That would not be the case if we suddenly find ourselves in a surplus position, but at this stage of the game, both in beef and pork, we're in a significant deficiency position.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move from there, because the question of whether we go the route of free trade, as proposed by the stockgrowers or the national meat authority, leads me to what has happened in the hog industry in Alberta. We have the most mystifying situation in this province. According to the figures supplied, again, by the Department of Statistics, we have a market situation in Alberta and British Columbia where 45 per cent of the consumption comes from outside the area. In other words, we're deficient. The old law of supply and demand used to read: if you've got pigs you've got no price; if you've

*See page 104, left column, paragraph 8

got price you've got no pigs. If there is a deficiency in the supply, the price should go up.

But unfortunately that hasn't worked in Alberta. We have the lowest prices for hog producers. There have been occasional weeks where that hasn't been the case, but taken over the last year, we have the lowest farm-gate prices in North America. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that's true, one would assume that every consumer in Edmonton and Calgary would be laughing and smiling, because we would have the lowest prices for the consumer. But a very strange thing has happened. Instead of having the lowest prices for the consumer, we have the highest prices in North America. So you've got the lowest prices to the producer and the highest prices to the consumer. I think the chairman of the Hog Producers' Marketing Board has put it rather well in the winter edition of their publication. He says:

Alberta hog prices defy any rational interpretation. Over the past two years surplus production of hogs has ended in the Alberta/B.C. market but surplus style hog pricing, which logically should have ended, has not. In contrast to pork prices at both retail and wholesale levels, hog prices are absurdly low.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, while the consumer is paying through the nose, the producer is not receiving any benefit at all. I think that raises some very important questions. When the Speech from the Throne was delivered, there was very scant mention of the hog industry and no commitment on the part of the government to do anything about the Harries report to rectify the present situation. I could go on to quote from the comments of Mr. Price, the chairman, where he lays the blame completely at the doorstep of the packing companies, who are in a strong enough position to manipulate the market place.

We have a response from the government, if you can call it a response, on March 6, 1978. We have Mr. Moore saying to the board: gee, wouldn't it be nice if the board would just sit down with various segments of the industry and work out the problem as they've done in Ontario. Well, it would be very nice, Mr. Speaker, if we had the same sort of packing situation that they have in Ontario, but in Ontario — as members who've studied the problem at all would know — a much higher percentage of the packing industry is in independent hands. We don't have any significant independent packing industry in western Canada. We have an industry where more than 60 per cent of the pork goes to the two major companies.

So, Mr. Speaker, for the government to say, just sit down with the firms that the board has tried to sit down with now for all these many years, and has concluded that there is no pricing competition in the market place — and if one reads the Harries report, the same thing comes through loud and clear: no price competition by the buyers — all we are asking our hog producers to do is not subsidize consumers, but to subsidize the inefficient operations of Canada Packers, Swift and Burns.

Mr. Speaker, I say that it's one thing to have a cheap food policy. I've never supported cheap food policy. We should have a reasonable food policy that gives the producer a fair rate of return on his investment. But it's a scandalous thing to have a cheap food policy to the farmer and an expensive food policy to the consumer, with the middleman going scot-free

in the whole process.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think the question of what has happened in the hog and cattle industries calls out for action by the government. And simply talking about increasing markets is not going to solve the problem. We are now in a deficient position in terms of our production in the hog industry, as members from rural Alberta should know. Forty-five per cent of our consumption comes into Alberta. The real issue . . . I'm not arguing that we shouldn't be looking for long-term markets; almost everybody in this Legislature would agree we should. But the real issue in the next few months is to resolve this question of the monopoly control of the market place, which is forcing farmers to practically give their hogs away.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn from there to look at the question of agricultural cost inputs for a moment. We had quite a speech from the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones, patting the government, and incidentally himself, on the back and saying that we had the lowest cost inputs in Canada. Unfortunately the hon. minister is not correct. He was comparing Alberta and Saskatchewan, and I thought I would take the trouble, Mr. Speaker, to assess those figures — not that I didn't believe the Hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones, but I thought it would be useful to sort of look a little beyond the simple first glance the minister has too often used as a yardstick in running his own department.

We find that if you look at the total picture — and this is information presented to the Agricultural Outlook Conference — the cost comparisons between the two provinces are not favorable for Alberta. We could look at one item, and one item might be higher in Saskatchewan than it is in Alberta. We could look at another Saskatchewan item that might be lower, but the only way you can get any sort of overall picture is to look at costs as a percentage of income. Mr. Speaker, when you do that, you find that in Alberta cost as a percentage of income — the whole shebang: property taxes, fuel, insurance — the total costs of operating that farm amount to 59 cents on each dollar. But in the province of Saskatchewan it works out to 51 cents on each dollar.

So here is a government that is patting itself on the back a little prematurely, Mr. Speaker. With all the money we have in the heritage trust fund, by george, we still have cost inputs that are higher than our neighboring province to the east. And of course when one looks at some of the increases that have occurred . . . For example, in power bills: Calgary Power, the rates for REAs up 16 per cent. In the case of Alberta Power — and I'm sorry the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones isn't here — they've done pretty well as far as the REAs go. Their increase between January 1, 1977, and January 1, 1978, was 74 per cent, so Alberta Power is struggling by with a 74 per cent increase in their rural rate. Admittedly, they were slightly behind Calgary Power, and they were allowed by the PUB to catch up. But that's not the point, Mr. Speaker. The point is that when you look at the total inputs, they are rising very sharply.

One area I think we could examine is to take a leaf out of the budget presented in Saskatchewan yesterday. The Saskatchewan government has indicated there will be no increase in power rates during the coming year. I think we should consider the same proposition.

The second area that seems to be one that can be examined is this business of farm fuel. Rather than taking the royalty off the fuel sold in Alberta, I would like to suggest that the government seriously consider moving on legislation that was passed in the Legislature in 1973, which allows the Crown to take part of its royalty in kind; that is, to take the oil instead and place a price on that oil, which is not the price determined as a result of the political negotiations between Alberta and the federal government or the machinations of the Arab oil states, but a price that would be based as much as possible on the replacement cost of that oil. Every barrel we use, Mr. Speaker, we would be paying enough to replace that oil from conventional sources — not oil sands sources, but conventional sources. In terms of supplying a price, if we did that we would be able to work out a price that would be relatively constant over the next several years and wouldn't continue to go up every six months, every time the price of oil rises by a dollar a barrel.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal very quickly with several other issues dealing with agriculture. We have the whole problem of land-use conflicts, the question of Site 6 being pushed ahead regardless of the overwhelming weight of public opinion in central Alberta, and I would just like to add my voice to those who are saying the Legislature should hold formal public hearings so that those who favor the dam can present their views at Site 6 and the people in the area can also present their views.

We have the question of sulphur emission in the Peace River country. As far as I'm concerned, I think it should be part of the cost of doing business for these companies. If they are setting up gas plants where they have sour gas, sulphur recovery units should be engineered into the construction of those plants. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, with the price of gas going up, that's one of the very elemental things we should be demanding, and not playing a form of Russian roulette with thousands of acres of Peace River soil, which is subject to soil acidity problems.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal briefly with the question of some of the double standards for workers. I see that during the last year we had compulsory arbitration in four days for Alberta nurses, but the Parkland dispute now has dragged on for almost a year and still no action by the Department of Labour.

We have no commitment in this Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, for a tenants' bill of rights, if you like, to guarantee some tenure for tenants.

We find a double standard in some of the increases: 6 per cent for provincial employees; but, as I say, 43 per cent for Alberta Power across the board, apart from their rural users; 19 per cent for Canadian Western Natural Gas; 23 per cent for Northwestern Utilities; 48 per cent in the case of some apartment dwellings in the province. Small wonder that the labor movement finds the position of the government a little hard to accept.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close my remarks today by coming back to a rural issue. The latest information compiled by the federal monitoring agency on foreign ownership indicates that by far the highest level of foreign ownership is in the province of Alberta. I think that's an unfortunate situation that can only lead to a tremendous impact on our balance of payments as interest and dividends go out of the

country.

One of the areas of industrial ownership that is clearly Canadian is the co-operative movement, and one of the areas where I think we need a strong co-operative presence is in the manufacture of farm machinery. Many years ago, in 1940, farmers in western Canada got together and organized CCIL. The purpose of organizing CCIL was to inject some genuine competition into the market place. Now, as a result of the tough times on the farm, CCIL has encountered some problems that I hope will be only temporary. But they will be rather more severe problems, Mr. Speaker, unless the governments come to the aid of CCIL with, in my judgment, a reasonable financial package.

I raised questions on this matter on Friday of last week. A meeting apparently occurred on Monday. The federal government is interested in helping, but unfortunately no commitment will be made on their part until such time as we get a commitment from the three prairie provinces. Saskatchewan is prepared to go; it is my understanding that Manitoba is interested; but Alberta, at this stage of the game, is sitting on the fence.

It's an important issue, Mr. Speaker, because if CCIL goes under, it's not just a question of one company going under and all the depots that will be affected, but there's about \$80 million worth of farm machinery out on Alberta farms. What is that farm machinery going to be worth if this company goes under? How will the farmers be able to get parts? What about all the work that went into organizing CCIL?

I know when this matter was raised on Friday the hon. Member for Whitecourt got up and said, wouldn't it be unfair to give assistance to one farm implement company and not another. Well, that might be a reasonable argument if we were consistent all the way. But we've made financial assistance to one rapeseed plant in the Peace River country and not to others; we've made financial assistance to some alfalfa plants and not to others; we've made a financial investment in one oil sands plant and not in Great Canadian Oil Sands. We've got all sorts of examples, Mr. Speaker; where the public interest is at stake, we are prepared to make an investment.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I feel strongly enough about this matter that I am moving an amendment that would read as follows:

... that the address in reply to his Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech be amended by adding:

but that this Assembly regrets the absence of any provision for participating with other governments in some financial arrangement to maintain the financial integrity of Canadian Co-operative Implements Ltd., and urges the Government to move quickly on this matter in view of the need to stabilize the company's financial position.

I have copies of the amendment which I will circulate to the hon. members of the Assembly and to the Speaker and Clerk.

Mr. Speaker, very briefly before concluding my remarks, I say that what is at stake is the requirement that some kind of assistance be made, and quickly. And in my judgment, it's important that this Assembly take a stand by, in general principle, favoring our

province working in tandem with Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and the federal government. Some members will say, no, maybe we should study it. Well, we've been studying it now for eight months. Members will know full well that unless action is taken very quickly on this question, the opportunities of CCIL to sell equipment during the coming year will be almost non-existent.

Therefore, what is at stake is the continued operation of the only really independent Canadian farm machinery firm. At a time when as much as 90 per cent of our farm implements have to be imported — and as a consequence with the decreasing value of the Canadian dollar pushing up the price of farm equipment to our farmers — it seems prudent to me that we should keep operating, strong and viable, a concern which is owned exclusively by the farmers of this country.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would like to question the propriety of putting in an amendment to a Speech from the Throne, which lays out a program for a government for the year to come, and regret that the government itself is not doing something. It doesn't seem to me to be in accord, and I would like to question, Mr. Speaker, whether the motion is in order.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, if I may speak to the point of order, I took the trouble of having this matter discussed with the Legislative Law Clerk. The issue is very clear in the amendment. The amendment is regretting the absence of any provision in the Speech from the Throne to deal with CCIL. I would simply say to the hon. Solicitor General that if he doesn't like the amendment, he of course is in a position to vote against it. I would hope that he would vote in favor of it, but in my view the amendment is completely in order and consistent with the rules of this House.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, how can you put words in the mouth of Her Majesty to regret that something is not in the Speech from the Throne, which lays out the program of the government? It just cannot be in order. How can the Lieutenant-Governor, speaking for Her Majesty the Queen, reading out the program of the government for the year to come, say that she regrets that something is not in the program? She, under our constitutional monarchy, is expressing the views of the government, and the government's program for the year to come.

Certainly, one might have been in order to have added something to the government's program, but how on earth can the members possibly vote on something which regrets the absence of a provision in a speech which is laying out a program? It's just so discordant that I believe it must be impossible, so I move again on a point of order to say, Mr. Speaker, that you would rule that this is not in order.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, with great respect to the hon. Solicitor General, whether the Solicitor General likes to admit it or not, in our system of government the Executive Council is completely responsible to the Legislative Assembly. There is a rule in our system that parliament is supreme. That being the case, it is perfectly in order for an amendment to regret that a speech delivered by the Executive Council does not

contain a particular matter. Whether or not the other members agree that it is prudent and they want to support it is up to them. But it is clearly in order. Otherwise parliament would not be supreme.

MR. FARRAN: Well, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: With respect, there have been two interventions now: two each by the hon. Solicitor General and the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. I think we should not continue with the exchange. The hon. Solicitor General, of course, is at a disadvantage in not having seen the precise text of the proposed amendment. I have the advantage of having a copy here. It would seem to me, in my limited observation and experience, that this pretty well follows the standard practice in regard to amendments, and sometimes subamendments, to motions for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. It would appear to me that the amendment is in order as an amendment to the Speech from the Throne.

With great respect, however, to the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, I would question whether the opinion of the Law Clerk of the Assembly should be interjected into a debate on a point of order or otherwise, because that might well inhibit the Law Clerk in the freedom of expression he should have in advising members of the Assembly.

But insofar as the amendment is concerned, I would say that it's in order.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I would submit that this perhaps requires longer consideration than one would normally give, because the reading would be totally incongruous: if one started with the address of the Lieutenant-Governor, speaking as the Queen — the first context — and added this paragraph to that opening, it's totally incongruous and doesn't even read as good English.

DR. BUCK: Keep trying, Roy.

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. minister, I haven't had an opportunity to see how smoothly the amendment will read when coupled to the motion. But I've expressed the opinion that it is in order, and I am not at liberty to change that opinion. That would have to be looked after by the Assembly by a motion on notice.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address some brief remarks to the amendment to the Lieutenant-Governor's speech proposed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, I had wished to ask the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview a question at the conclusion of his remarks. I would like to do that now, if I could, before we are removed from his remarks.

I would like to ask the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview if he could advise the House as to the source of his comparison between farm costs in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Possibly in addition to advising us of the source, he could provide interested members with copies of the information.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would be very pleased to do that. The source is information presented to the Canadian Agricultural Outlook Conference. I have the notes, and I'll make a point of having a number of them duplicated. I would be very pleased to supply the information to the hon. member.

MR. KING: Edmonton Highlands is very concerned.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, if I might address some brief remarks to the amendment that has been proposed and say, first of all, that the amendment is not correct, in my view, in suggesting that there is an absence of any participation by the government of Alberta with the government of Canada and the governments of Saskatchewan and Manitoba in a resolution to the problem of Canadian Co-op Implements Limited. For that reason the amendment, if not out of order — I think, Mr. Speaker, you've ruled on that and concluded that it is in order — nevertheless I believe it's certainly not appropriate, does not reflect the true facts of what's occurring today, and should be defeated.

In order to advise members of the Assembly of what actually is occurring in this regard, I need to take a few minutes. As I've said in this Assembly — and outside the Assembly as well, before March 2 — the government of the province of Alberta has been involved over the course of the last six to eight months in a number of discussions which may or may not lead to the continuation of CCIL. First of all, this government was provided with information some months ago that requested a guarantee of bank funds to CCIL, which in the view of some individuals — and I'm not sure that it was shared by either the government of Saskatchewan or the government of Manitoba of the day — would have solved CCIL's financial difficulties. We made a fairly thorough review of that proposal, Mr. Speaker, and concluded on the basis of that review that the financial proposal of some \$7 million of guaranteed funds from three provincial governments would in no way solve the continuing operating deficits and losses of CCIL.

Our review also indicated that the management of Canadian Co-op Implements Limited, however good their integrity, had not in fact made a very good job of financial management, production, and operation decisions. In the years 1972, '73, '74, and '75, when grain sales were relatively good, with prices better in terms of input costs than they had been for many, many years, with farm machinery sales at an all-time high, the company had in fact fallen into a position of losing money on an annual basis. My information is that for the year ended October 31, 1977, the company suffered a loss of some \$9.1 million.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that hon. members in this Assembly and the public of Alberta would be entitled to seriously question the integrity of a government that, for political purposes or otherwise, entered into a financing scheme which they knew full well 12 months down the road would still result in the failure of this company. It was on that basis that this government rejected the proposal put forward in 1977. At the same time, however, we did say we would be willing to listen to and discuss any financial arrangements for Canadian Co-op Implements Limited that would, in our view, provide a lasting solution to the financial problems which they had

incurred.

Since that time, Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that a group of core co-op people in western Canada — some of them being Alberta Wheat Pool, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Federated Co-ops, co-op credit union people, and so on, who have substantial investments in CCIL — have moved in and substantially taken over the operations and management of Canadian Co-op Implements, perhaps not in the legal and technical sense of the word, but certainly in the practical sense. Those co-ops, which have a long background of successful financial management, recognized on their review of the situation that \$7 million of guaranteed money wasn't going to help either. I want to say again, Mr. Speaker, it would have been entirely irresponsible of this government to have entered into such an arrangement with the knowledge we had that it was only at best a 12-month solution.

Since that time, the core co-op group have gotten together with the board of directors and the management of CCIL, with representatives of the federal government, and proposed about 10 days ago a new financial arrangement which would involve the government of Canada providing, I believe, \$8 million by way of a loan which may or may not be recoverable by the federal government.

In addition, there has apparently been a commitment by the core group of co-ops involved to place a substantial amount of new equity money — and I believe the figure there is \$7 million — into Canadian Co-op Implements. The request, then, is that in addition to that \$15 million which is being proposed, substantially as equity investment, the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta join together in providing an additional loan of some \$7 million.

Last week, in response to the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Gaetan Lussier, I advised that our officials would attend the meeting in Ottawa on Monday of this week to discuss the involvement of the government of Alberta and the other two provincial governments I referred to. That meeting was held on Monday. Officials from both my department and Treasury returned on Tuesday. While I have an interim report on the results of that meeting from those officials, I do not yet have a detailed report that considers a number of things.

First of all, I advised the federal deputy minister that the government of the province of Alberta did not have a system of non-recoverable loans in place, that in fact we did have the ability through the Ag. Development Corporation and the Provincial Treasurer's office to provide guarantees, but that those guarantees could only be provided on the basis that we felt the company's financial problems would be solved by the entire package and that there was some reasonable expectation of repayment of those loans.

Mr. Speaker, that's where the matter stands at the present time. This government, officials of my department and Treasury, myself, the Deputy Premier, and others have been actively involved in trying to find a solution to the problems of Canadian Co-op Implements Limited. I want to say in conclusion: for any member of this Legislature to suggest that that solution can be found by participating in a scheme which you know will not solve the problem is wrong, in my view. I think the matter of this government's participation in the financial solutions to Canadian Co-op Implements is in good hands and is proceeding

at the present time as fast as it can.

I don't believe there's any reason whatsoever to accept the amendment to the Speech from the Throne moved by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. I would urge this Assembly, in view of the statements which I've made, to defeat the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: May I ask hon. members who have indicated their readiness to speak whether they are intending to speak on the amendment or on the main motion.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, I feel that I have to respond to this kind of amendment. Before I do, I have to say I have a vested interest, as a member of the business community that deals directly in the kind of thing we're talking about. That could weaken the comments I might make. Conversely, having lived in this business for 34 years qualifies me to make a judgment on what is going on now.

The kind of business we're discussing — I can see why the CCIL people are in some trouble. As the Minister of Agriculture commented earlier, we're not just talking about the amounts of money that would be required to bail out this kind of organization. We're talking about the total lack of management. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, you could pour unending amounts of money into the system and not solve the problem. The reason I say that is that we meet these people on the firing line every day. We know what's going on, and we have known for a long time that it was just a matter of time till this kind of thing occurred. I can be specific with you.

First of all, you have to look at one or two points. The management we're talking about is hired, of necessity. There isn't the ownership that we have in the kind of business we operate. The funding starts with local participation by co-op members, and that's fair. But when you keep in mind that in this kind of business the actual dollar selling, in straight-out selling, amounts to about 10 per cent of your business, and 90 per cent is trading, you therefore would have difficulty hiring someone to go out day by day and assess the value of used farm equipment in a very sensible manner. You would have to be spending your own money in order to make those kinds of judgments.

So you have a combination of funding coming from farmer members, and hired managers who don't have to come up with the kind of profit that's required to keep it going. So you have irresponsible bidding going on in the field. I can be very specific, Mr. Speaker. Keeping in mind that in the 10-year period from 1960 to 1970 the average profit margin for the industry was 2.6 per cent, you haven't got very much of a cushion to make mistakes. When we get into the field and bid against the kind of thing that CCIL local managers do, where we will bid a piece of used equipment that is worth \$500, using an arbitrary figure, we will overbid that by 100 per cent and probably talk a figure of an allowance of \$1,000. The next day that farmer comes back to us and says, hey, you fellows are crooks. Do you know something? I just got a bid of \$2,000 from CCIL.

That's horrifying for two reasons: one, we lose the deal; and two, we are purported to be crooks, whereas we actually know that the value of a \$500 piece of equipment bid at \$2,000 can't possibly con-

tinue. Yet this is what is going on. We know, because we live it, as I've said before, day by day.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, there's no way this government could get behind the kind of management that allows that kind of thing to happen with any guarantees. I would suggest we're not in a position to talk about money now. We have to talk about management. Before any consideration is given to underwriting this kind of operation, a very careful assessment of the management has to be made.

Not having expected to talk on this kind of notice, Mr. Speaker, I think I should not say very much more. I think the point is there, that underwriting this kind of sloppiness in business simply is not the way for a responsible government to go.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, in addressing briefly the amendment, I question the word "absence", that there is an "absence of any provision for participating with other governments". In the first place I don't think that's quite true. I think we can participate with other governments. I don't think we have to have that specifically worded in the Speech from the Throne.

I would like to suggest too, Mr. Speaker, that Canadian Co-operative Implements is a democratic company, and being a democratic company or a co-operative, so often management isn't replaced when it should be. I'm not suggesting that the management of the company is entirely to blame in this situation, but certainly management, from whatever level we look at it, has to carry the responsibility.

Probably the most serious thing western or prairie governments could do would be to suddenly inject a bunch of money into a company, purely for the political or the showboating aspect of it, without fundamental consideration of all the factors. As the Minister of Agriculture has said, other core co-operatives and core farm groups certainly have looked at this very seriously. And the main problem with this particular co-operative, as I understand it, and several others that I'm aware of, is the lack of equity capital in the first place. I don't think there is anyone here who doesn't realize you can be given a company, regardless of the size, and if it's not moving its goods properly, or not building them for the market, even a gift company can break you.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest, along with others in this House, that we most definitely defeat this amendment on the basis that I don't believe it's a fact, in the first place. In the second place, I certainly wouldn't want to see this government ever rush madly into something just because it may be on the front page of some newspaper we could all be reading.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, in addressing myself to the amendment this afternoon, I would compliment the Member for Spirit River-Fairview on a great political ploy this afternoon. However, he makes several assumptions here that I don't think we can accept, and the hon. Solicitor General has pointed one out. The amendment says:

... that this Assembly regrets the absence of any provision for participating with other governments in some financial arrangement to maintain the financial integrity of Canadian Co-operative Implements Ltd. . . .

I think the member makes an assumption that the province is not prepared to assume negotiations and some responsibility for its operation. I think that's an incorrect assumption. The Minister of Agriculture has pointed out very carefully and clearly that our government is concerned in carrying on negotiations with this co-operative organization in hopes that something can be resolved.

The other point I'd like to make is: if we were to adhere to these kinds of amendments to the throne speech on some of the financial difficulties that organizations get into in this province, I don't think there would be enough pages after the Speech from the Throne to cover some of these problems. As you probably know, co-ops are made up of consumers, producers, any groups that want to participate together in an operation. In a sense we have some responsibility as government for them because we write the legislation under which they operate.

Some are very successful. I recently read a financial statement of a consumer co-op in Calgary that has a tremendous turnover, profit picture, and is successful in every way. However, this doesn't apply to all co-ops; some of them have some problems. In my own constituency, at the present time we have a feeders' co-operative that has had considerable difficulty. I know there are other feeders' associations, which are types of co-ops, throughout the province that are also in financial trouble, partly because of the economy and partly because of things that are often beyond their control.

However, Mr. Speaker, it is fundamentally important that certain things are within the control of an organization, and one of them is management. The other is that it is extremely important that those who support the co-ops support them totally.

I underline this because CCIL, if I may use the abbreviation, is an organization that was established to provide some fair competition with other large machine companies throughout Canada — in particular, western Canada. I think the objectives were worthy and noble, and I really believe that CCIL over the years has provided some competition. I think the Member for Sedgewick-Coronation would even admit that they have provided competition in certain areas. I know that CCIL has turned out, for example, an excellent swather. They have a pretty good combine — perhaps that would be subject to debate, but I know that a large number of these pieces of equipment have been sold over the years, and the farm people I talked to are quite well satisfied with their construction, with the cost, and generally with the type of machine.

However, one of the problems that CCIL has had over the years is changing the type of equipment they put on the market. Part of that might be attributed to management. Because of this rapid change of types of equipment, they have, with all due respect, lost a certain amount of confidence among the farm population. One never wants to lay out \$10,000, \$15,000, or \$20,000 for a large piece of equipment, and then not be too sure two or three years down the road that the organization will be able to supply repairs for that particular machine. In this respect, I think it would be fair to say that the large national and international machine companies have done a better job in supplying parts, and I give them credit for it because it's extremely important.

A few years ago CCIL decided to redirect their administration through retail outlets. I personally was involved in my own constituency with encouraging CCIL to locate there. At that time they were considering that depots would probably be the better route to go. So what they did in Alberta was establish these depots, and they actually did away with the retail outlets they had.

I suppose, in retrospect, this may have been a bad decision for CCIL. Certainly they have found in this last year or two that their financial picture hasn't been that good. Two to three years ago they made a major expansion in their Winnipeg plant, and I thought they were really on their way to total recovery and expansion. But they found that they just were not getting the kind of farm support they needed to move the volume of machinery that was required in order to operate successfully. They were competitive, there's no question about that. But in the process of being competitive, they weren't sufficiently wise or astute to realize that one has to have a pretty fair markup with regard to machinery in order to cover operational costs and capital investment. It's a classic judgment error that not only co-ops make, but even companies which are closely tied to their shareholders and to the management of the operation.

So it's nothing unusual. Because of this error in judgment and of the present financial picture of farm people across western Canada — one only has to look at the gross and the net incomes, for example, of farmers across Canada to know that this last year or two have been pretty tough. Grain prices have slipped severely. During the period of high grain prices, most farmers naturally have to replace their capital investments; they put out sufficient moneys toward purchasing machinery, which is good policy; they get capital depreciation and solve some of their income tax problems. Then they go into a sort of lull when their net income is down. So they consolidate, which is only what anyone operating a business properly would do, and they discontinue purchases of new machinery.

So if you look at the statement of CCIL, you're only seeing essentially what has happened in many of the other major national and international machine companies. I think I mentioned last week what has happened, for example, with Massey-Ferguson, which has had a severe drop in the share value of their company. They're even now considering moving out of industrial machine construction. So the situation is not unique by any means.

I guess the question, Mr. Speaker, is really what we as a province should be doing. We have an interest in CCIL in this respect: we write the kind of legislation under which they operate, in conjunction with the other prairie provinces, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I think if the figures were shown, Saskatchewan probably makes the largest purchases of CCIL equipment, even though the major plant is in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Because we have some interest in this, I suppose it would be fair to say that we have to give some consideration to their request.

But I also would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the motion the Member for Spirit River-Fairview has proposed is out of order. I suppose we could put 15, 20, or 30 of these before the Legislature, and I'm not sure whether we could survive long enough to cover all of them.

The member presumes that we are not doing anything, which is a false presumption. The member asks the government to move quickly in view of the company's financial position, and I don't think that's a fair request either. I think we have to take our time on something as important as this. I think about the Innisfail sheep plant, a co-operative which collapsed, and which eventually had to be taken over by the province. It is still wandering through the wilderness and will be for some time.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think we can move quickly on these kinds of things. I think we have to move carefully and considerately, but not quickly, either to get further involved or to completely disregard the position the co-op finds itself in.

In conclusion, I suggest to the members that we defeat this resolution, request, or amendment to the throne speech, because in fact much of what is being suggested here has already taken, and is taking, place.

[Motion on amendment lost]

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I take pride in participating in this throne speech debate. At the outset I would like to join my colleagues in congratulating the mover and the Speaker, and also on how eloquently they made their presentations.

It's approximately one year since I spoke on the throne speech, and many exciting things have happened in the constituency and the province. Some of them were favorable, some of them were less favorable. However, I would like to dwell on several areas.

First of all, I would like to talk about the Dodds-Round Hill project that was halted last year. Though I concur in and accept willingly the decision of the government, I would like to assure the House that it was not a unanimous acceptance. The Dodds mine is in my constituency. It abuts two villages in the Vegreville constituency that were looking forward to this project. When I spoke to many of the people, I felt that the majority of my constituents wished that this project would have gone on. However, listening to the people, I think our government acted rightly.

For purposes of record, I would like to commend the people of the Shaw community who wrote to me, to the Premier, and to the Minister of the Environment. There were 37 signatures; 37 families who indicated they would rather not see this project go. However, if the government felt there was a necessity, they would not object to it. I speak very highly of these people, because they requested a few areas. One of them was that, should the project go ahead, they be compensated reasonably for their farms so they could relocate and purchase land comparable to what they had. I think it was a reasonable request. They asked that they be compensated for the cost of relocation, which I think was also a reasonable request.

They also asked for a small severance for the inconvenience they would have suffered. They would have to move to a new district, the children would have to make new friends, they would no doubt attend a different school. I think that was reasonable. But the most important was that they asked that when this project would be completed, the government would see that this land be reclaimed to bring it back to its agricultural status.

Another area of concern for me is the Beaverhill

Lake area. I am glad that the Minister of the Environment mentioned on Monday that the Cooking Lake moraine study was halted. However, at a recent meeting in Ryley, the leaseholders of [Beaverhill] Lake did express concern. They have made their livelihoods and supplemented their incomes for a good number of years by using these pastures around [Beaverhill] Lake.

When I think back approximately three years ago, when the former Minister of the Environment announced the Capital City Park for Edmonton, which would cost approximately \$35 million, I supported that concept. I knew that one-quarter of the population of this province was living in Edmonton, many of them in apartments and high-rises, and these people needed a place outside their working hours. Not all of them could drive cars; not all of them had cars. Many were senior citizens, and I felt that a park such as this was very important.

However, sometimes when people get something good, they want more and have a tendency to get greedy. This is what has seemed to come about at [Beaverhill] Lake. Already numbers of people from Edmonton have been requesting the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife and the Minister of the Environment to raise the waters at [Beaverhill] Lake to make it a better place for them for hunting, for boating, and so forth. As I say, I could not see that concept, to take away good agricultural land for this purpose. If [Beaverhill] Lake and its topography — if it had to be raised any significant amount, it would spread over many thousands of acres, and I could not see that this would be very acceptable in the area.

There is one very important area I would like to dwell on for some time, and that is the Alberta Grain Commission. Because it is involved with a trade mission of which the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture, and the chairman of the Alberta Grain Commission were part of the team, I would sort of put these two together. Why I refer to this is: when this mission had gone to the Soviet Union and to Iran — I have many copies of clippings from papers where there was strong opposition. As an example: a Premier's place is in the province, says Bob Clark. And it says: Premier Peter Lougheed went to the wrong place at the wrong time when he took off for Russia and the Middle East this month. Another statement I have here: Lougheed statements criticized; Alberta Conservative government is overplaying its hand on the issues of provincial rights, NDP leader Grant Notley said today.

Mr. Speaker, when this mission went to Iran, they were asked whether it would be possible to purchase wheat from Canada — we had surpluses — and they were told that Iran, with its population, is in need of wheat, but we do not have the type of wheat they would want. They were interested in the hard white wheats, and those wheats in Canada are not licensed. When this mission came back, the chairman of this Grain Commission brought it to our meeting, and we put pressure on the Canadian Grain Commission to license this grain, and maybe we could have a market for it.

I must tell you that these white wheats, whether Norquay or NB 112, would grow very favorably anywhere north of Highway 14. They yield approximately 30 per cent more than our hard red wheats. So, if there was a market for them, this would increase the

cash flow to the farmers. Looking at the low grain prices, this would definitely supplement and bring a bigger income.

Sometime last August or early September, the government of Iran requested samples of our grains from the Alberta Grain Commission. We felt The Canadian Wheat Board would be the only one who could provide us with such samples. We asked them to make a batch of samples and have them sent to Iran. The wheat board agreed, with the proviso that the Alberta Grain Commission, through the Alberta government, pay the transportation. The Premier and the Minister of Agriculture had given their blessing to this.

What really appalled me most was last December when the oil seed growers' association and the plant breeders' association held a meeting here in Edmonton. The chairman of the commission and I invited ourselves to that meeting, and I asked the director of marketing for the wheat board whether such samples had gone. He said, no, what's the use of sending samples; if Iran would want to buy such wheat we have nothing to sell; that wheat is not licensed.

At the other end of the conference room was a representative of the Canadian Grain Commission, and I asked him why they are refusing to license this wheat. His answer was, why should we license it, we have no markets for it. Mr. Speaker, with an attitude such as this, I think our Premier must get involved and be concerned with agriculture as it pertains to Alberta.

However, with that attitude, the Grain Commission decided and made arrangements to visit Ottawa. In the middle of January we went for two and a half days. We met with The Canadian Wheat Board, the Canadian Grain Commission, and other sales groups, and our meeting was very receptive, the first time it's been receptive since I've been on the Grain Commission.

The new chairman, Mr. Jarvis, accepted our pleas and he felt we had a good point. Within 10 days of that time, 12 tons of various grains were shipped to Iran. The Alberta government has paid the cost.

Not only that, but the government of Iran has asked the Alberta Grain Commission whether arrangements could not be made to have their research chemists come to Alberta to learn the bread-baking trade. I have a telex here that I think would be worth reading. It's to John Channon, chairman of the Alberta Grain Commission, and it says:

Dr. Kadis said that they are ready to send chemists now. Can you start making arrangements? The only restriction that they need is three or four weeks' notice to arrange exit visas, et cetera, so cannot go until after March 15. Commercial section of the Canadian Embassy, Tehran, Iran.

Mr. Speaker, it was too late to get a telex, but I was told today that a telex has come in and this research chemist is coming on April 16 to spend two months in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Spirit River-Fairview can stand in this House and say that the Premier of this province should not be concerned, he should not interfere in federal jurisdiction, I think something is very wrong. When we in Alberta produce approximately 40 per cent of the cattle, almost 50 per cent of all the agricultural products in Canada, I think there is a real concern for the Premier to be interested in what goes

on.

I spoke to the rapeseed growers' association on the twenty-fifth of January here in Edmonton, and some of these things are what I said to them. After that meeting, at least a dozen people came to me and told me they were glad that somebody is interested in these things. Those people were not from the Vegreville constituency. Most of them were from Peace River, Fairview, Smoky River, from the northern parts of the province where they would gain the most.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Alberta Grain Commission, several maltsters from Germany have indicated they will be willing to buy Klages barley. That's a barley our commission has persuaded the Canadian Grain Commission to license; it's a good producer, and it seems that some markets will be found.

But as we see, it's always a different story. The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview just very recently, when the Premier was in Ottawa at the first premiers' conference, opposed the idea when the premiers agreed that the governments of these provinces shall restrain their spending. Yet how many times in this House has the hon. member stood up in his place and said that Alberta's spending money lavishly. But it's always one way or the other.

Through all my years, whenever there was a political speech from the old CCF and now the New Democratic Party, there was one thing that was always brought back, and that was the cow. She pastured in western Canada, central Canada milked her, and eastern Canada got what came out from the back. Mr. Speaker, since our government has taken office, this cow has reversed. She is fed in Alberta, she is milked in Alberta, and the fertilizer goes elsewhere. [laughter]

The hon. Leader of the Opposition spent time in his speech and mentioned that even today, three farmers are leaving every day in Alberta. It's too bad that he didn't have the statistics, how many of them do come into the area. I have noticed that in my constituency many farm homes are being filled. Agriculture may be bleak, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition has said. But the provincial government cannot set the prices of wheat, beef, or any other farm product. I agree that they are low.

But our government has gone far in supplementing the income of farmers: the cow-calf operators, the rural water supply, unharvested grain assistance, purchase of haying equipment, the REA shelter cost, installation of grants for gas lines, Alberta property tax reduction plan, grants to agricultural societies, fuel transportation allowance, feed freight allowance, and many others. If you put all these subsidies and grants together and apply them to the price of a bushel of wheat, I can assure you it wouldn't be \$2.59. It would be considerably higher. If you want to put this to your beef or dairy products, it would raise the figure considerably. So even though I am unhappy with the prices of the farm grains and commodities, we in Alberta are standing much better than any other province that does not yet have programs such as these.

When we talk about people moving out . . . I recall very well in 1965 when 1,200 people sat in the Jubilee Auditorium and listened to the Premier of that day. He said very bluntly that within 10 years, 85 per cent of the population of this province is going to be

in Edmonton and Calgary and that nothing could be done about it. I accepted that concept because it was happening. Farm homes were being barred, business places in town were left vacant. Had the previous government stayed that 10 years, I am sure it would have happened, and maybe would have happened sooner than in 10 years. But when our government took office one of the first programs we did was to decentralize government services to be able to stabilize and provide a balanced growth for Alberta.

We knew that Edmonton and Calgary would continue to grow, and it was never the intention of this government that they shouldn't grow. But we felt that with a program such as this, they would grow at a slower pace, and when they did grow they would not grow at the expense of rural Alberta.

Looking back, in my constituency all the towns and villages with the exception of one have grown remarkably. Chipman, which was one of the smallest four years ago, with a population of 135, has reached a population of 300. Only one village has lost a little population, one that would have been close to that Calgary project. I'm sure that would have helped it; however, the village of Holden has lost about 25 people over the last five years, and I'm going to try very hard that this gets repaired. [interjections] I

don't mean in population only. [laughter]

Approximately 5,000 people are moving into Alberta monthly. It's gratifying to see that less than 50 per cent of those are going into the big city. They are locating in rural Alberta. At present Alberta has the lowest unemployment rate in Canada, and if we took away all these people who are coming in every month, and took away those who do not want to work, I could honestly say there would be no unemployment whatsoever in this province.

Mr. Speaker, in lieu of the time — I have several things I would like to mention; I guess about 15 minutes would be left — I would beg leave to adjourn debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:28 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 5, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]

