

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Thursday, March 9, 1978 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, today it's a pleasure for me to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly the 1978 president of Jaycees International, sitting in your gallery, Mr. Carl Peterson. Mr. Peterson was born in the United States and lives in Guam. He is the president of Jaycees International, which members will recognize as an organization essentially of builders and doers, an organization of some half a million people in more than 13,000 communities in 83 member nations. We are very delighted to have Mr. Peterson with us today.

He is accompanied by Mike Hodging of Edmonton, the national vice-president of the Canada Jaycees northwest region, and Elwood Skog of Edmonton, the honorary national vice-president of the Canada Jaycees. I ask that they stand, Mr. Speaker, and receive the welcome of the Assembly at this time.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 223
An Act to Amend
The Amusements Act

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being An Act to Amend The Amusements Act. This bill provides authority to censor games such as those that entertain by the simulated killing of human beings.

[Leave granted; Bill 223 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file with the Legislature a statement outlining the substantial savings achieved in the VS Services contract at Michener Centre and the very satisfactory results we've obtained therefrom.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Alberta Liquor Control Board for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1977.

MR. NOTLEY: Was it a good year, Roy?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table, as required by statute, the operating fund financial statements of the Gas Alberta division of the Depart-

ment of Utilities and Telephones for the year ending March 31, 1977.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, Mr. Dave Oliphant, seated in your gallery. Dave is the manager of the Medicine Hat Chamber of Commerce and also manager of the southeastern Alberta travel and convention association. But more particularly today, I wish to introduce him as the director of administration of the Medicine Hat Alberta Games society.

I wish to point out that the Alberta Winter Games, which were held March 1-5 of this year, were successfully concluded as a result of the work of 1,000 local volunteers, and the participation of 2,000 athletes, coaches, and officials throughout the entire province. All zones in the province participated, and all zones participated in the medal presentations, which I think is commendable. I would also like to point out that eight communities in Alberta had delegations in Medicine Hat planning for future bids for Alberta summer and winter games.

I would like to commend the Hon. Al Adair, Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife, his department, and the government of Alberta for their foresight in the development of these winter and summer games to encourage the voluntary participation by athletes throughout this entire province in this very worthwhile participation.

I'd like members of the Assembly, through Dave Oliphant, to extend to those many volunteers, athletes, and officials our thanks for a job well done.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to be able to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, a group of 32 elementary students from Collingwood Elementary School in beautiful downtown Calgary Foothills. The students are visiting the Assembly today for a lesson in government and will overnight with counterpart students in Braemar School, Edmonton, and will visit the museum tomorrow. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that they rise and be recognized by the House in traditional fashion.

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce 26 grade 7 students from Steele Heights junior high school in the constituency of Edmonton Belmont. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Dale Smith, seated in the public gallery. I should like to ask them to rise and get the welcome of the House.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, in the public gallery today is a number of bright-eyed and bushy-tailed young adults from grades 8 and 9 at the William Roper Hull home in Calgary. I am delighted they are here today along with some concerned adults. I would ask that they rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in introducing some 30 members of the Lendrum elementary school, grade 5, in the constituency of Edmonton Parkallen. They are in the Legislature

today to observe the democratic process and see how the Legislature functions and the beauties of this old building, which is not located in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. After all these remarks about Foothills and every other community, of course I would want to add that Lendrum is one of the finest. Accompanying the teacher, Mrs. Dingey, are two of the parents, Mrs. Stark and Miss Hanbrook. I would ask all of them, please, to rise now and receive the welcome.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, before I ask the first question . . . [Dr. Webber rose] The member isn't the minister yet. It has been drawn to my attention . . .

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise on a point of personal privilege . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly that's what the hon. Leader of the Opposition is about. I don't know yet.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, it was drawn to my attention yesterday, sir, by yourself that during Oral Question Period I addressed one of the hon. ministers as the "minister of gobbledygook". I'd like to take this opportunity to advise you and the Assembly that I intend no disrespect to the position of the Minister of Business Development and Tourism, to the Speaker, or to this Assembly.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise on a point of personal privilege. Yesterday the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview was talking about the marketing of cattle in the Montreal area. He said:

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.

I know the hon. member would like to increase the size of his caucus, but I wasn't part of any meeting with him or any hon. senator.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would welcome this opportunity to correct the record, both from the viewpoint of the hon. Member for Calgary Bow and most particularly from the viewpoint of the senator involved, by saying it was the hon. Member for Little Bow.* [interjections]

AN HON. MEMBER: That makes more sense, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Move over.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in responding to the correction and the point of order, I would like to say that we did discuss beef and I haven't a beef.

MR. SPEAKER: Now that we have our bows properly tied, I should say that there was no motion attached to the hon. member's point of privilege and probably it doesn't need to be dealt with any further.

Water Management

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to lead off Oral Question

Period, which I thought I was doing some time ago, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of the Environment. It deals with the seepage studies which were done by a consulting firm at Site 6 on the Red Deer River west of Red Deer. Can the minister now indicate to the Assembly how much additional expense will be incurred in the construction of the dam at Site 6 because of the seepage problems which were outlined by the consultants?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm not able to answer that question, because we don't know yet. The studies which were done at the request of some of the concerned residents of the region would under ordinary circumstances have been done at a later designed phase of the dam project itself. In this case they were brought forward in order to respond at an early date to some of the specific questions put forward by the residents.

They have estimated that the cost of the measures they are recommending be included in the final design of a dam at approximately \$2 million, but you cannot say that is \$2 million additional to the cost of the dam, which isn't designed yet.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then a supplementary question to the minister. Mr. Minister, in the course of correspondence your office had with one of the regional directors of Unifarm, I believe the minister indicated that the now anticipated cost of the dam is in the vicinity of \$60 million — between \$60 million and \$62 million — and that the revised estimate for a scaled-down model dam at Site 11 was in the vicinity of \$66 million. Does the minister's estimate of \$60 million or \$62 million include the \$2 million additional work as a result of the seepage problem outlined by the consultants?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, that's the question I am unable to answer at this time, because depending upon the final design of the dam, it may be that the \$2 million would be included in actuality in that total figure. And I believe the hon. leader is using the wrong figures. There are two sets of figures, and I know they're very confusing to deal with. One set of figures deals with the total cost of the project, which has elements of flood control, erosion control, pollution control, and flow control. The flow control element is the dam. In all of these comparisons, it's important always to be comparing the cost of the same elements or else the total program. The \$61 million is the total cost of the program, which includes the element of the dam at Site 6.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is it not so that in the course of comparisons, though, if the dam was built at Site 11, there would in fact be little or no need for erosion control — there'd be little or no need for flood control at Sundre?

MR. RUSSELL: No, that is not correct, Mr. Speaker. Even with the dam at what is called Site 11 or Sundre, the expenses for erosion control, pollution control, and flood control remain essentially the same. They are diminished in some respects, particularly for flood control at Sundre, but there are still figures needed for those elements. For example, if a

*See page 92, left column, paragraph 4

dam at Site 11 was built in a small size, the cost of the dam is estimated at \$85 million, but the other elements add another \$5.5 million. So there is not a net saving in those respects.

Perhaps it would be helpful if I sent to the hon. leader's office a copy of the summary which I made available to Mr. Lea of Unifarm. I think that has these comparative costs laid out in the clearest fashion.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask one further question to the minister. Mr. Minister, did you or your office indicate to the officials of Unifarm that the cost of the scaled-down version of the dam west of Sundre would be in the vicinity of \$65 million? Let me rephrase the question: did the minister or his office indicate to Unifarm that the cost of a scaled-down dam in the area west of Sundre commonly referred to as Site 11 would be in the vicinity of \$66 million?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker. I should correct the figure I just gave in my previous answer. I was reading from the column of the large dam at Site 11 when I gave you those figures. [In] the column for the small dam at Site 11, the dam itself is \$69 million and the total program is \$78 million, but the figures are still relatively the same.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. The most recent estimates that the minister now has — what is the difference in cost to the taxpayers of Alberta between locating a dam at Site 6 and the seepage work and other work that has to be done, as compared to the scaled-down version at Site 11 with the work the minister alleges to have to be done?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, depending on whether the seepage prevention work is, in fact, an addition to or included in the cost of the dam itself, that range of figures would be from \$15 million to \$19 million.

MR. BRADLEY: A supplementary question to the minister. Recently, a meeting was held in my constituency in regard to the Oldman River water management study. Twenty-three ranchers who'd be affected by a proposed dam at the Three Rivers site requested that the payments be made to them for co-operating with consultants during the final studies on the dam. Could the minister indicate what the government's position is with regard to these requested payments for co-operating with the consultants?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves in rather a new kind of situation in that part of that project for the Oldman River. The residents, quite rightly, have asked us to make sure that adequate studies are carried out prior to public hearings being held, and we have agreed to do that. I think that's a fair proposition for them to put forward. I'm now advised they are objecting to consultants either interviewing them or coming onto their land to carry out the studies that they asked be completed, and additionally that they are asking for payment to themselves for those activities.

This injects a kind of new activity in Alberta progress. What we're doing is saying that if there's any

damage to the person's property in any way, naturally the government, through its consultants, would pay for that; or that if in the course of the work a person is taken away from his duties or put to any expense in assisting the consultant in any way, those are reasonable expenses. But talking to a person about their concerns or about aspects of the proposals — we don't believe the public should pay for that time.

MR. BRADLEY: Further supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker, again with regard to the Oldman River studies. Presently the Oldman River study management committee has zeroed in on two on-stream storage sites and four off-stream storage sites with regard to their detailed sociological and environmental studies. Have these studies been expanded to include any further on-stream or off-stream sites?

MR. RUSSELL: The advice I have is that at present they are looking at three possible on-stream sites, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BRADLEY: Further supplementary. Is the minister in a position to indicate the three on-stream sites they will be studying?

MR. RUSSELL: Those sites have been identified as the Three Rivers site, the Brocket site, and the Fort Macleod site.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to pose a supplementary question for clarification on the Site 6 questions initially raised by the Leader of the Opposition, before we get into the debate this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated that figures were supplied to Mr. Dobson Lea, the past president of Unifarm. My question to the minister, though, is with respect to a letter which I understand Dr. Bell, the regional director of Unifarm, received, where the cost of the low dam — at least he advised us at a meeting — was \$66 million.

My question to the minister is: in fact, was a letter sent by the minister to Dr. Bell, where the cost of the dam itself, the low dam at Site 11, was estimated at \$66 million?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd want to check our files in the office; a number of letters have gone out to Dr. Bell and other interested citizens. I'm going by memory now, but I'm sure we enclosed for Dr. Bell the attachment we had sent to Dobson Lea, and those figures are fairly clear. The figure \$66 million doesn't ring in my mind, but I'll be glad to check our records and report.

MR. GOGO: Supplementary to the hon. minister, with regard to the question asked by the Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest. Does the position of the government still remain that a decision will be made this fall on the Oldman River water storage?

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker. As many hon. members are aware, there's great pressure and public demand, which was heightened by the drought spell last summer, for the government to locate a site, make its decision, and get the work under way. What the government is trying to do is balance the con-

cerns and questions of persons who are perhaps concerned about what kind of structure or where it might be, against those farmers who are very anxious to see this very necessary project go ahead. I've said publicly that I believe a reasonable deadline the government can meet is the end of this calendar year, and we're still working very vigorously to that deadline.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary involves the design of the proposed dam at Site 6. Will the engineers who are given the responsibility of designing that dam have the opportunity of checking the latest developments in dam construction, including the Daniel Johnson Dam in Quebec, the Gardiner Dam in Saskatchewan, and possibly other dams in the world?

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think that would be done as a matter of course. The process the department is using in the undertaking of this project is, first of all, to hire a project manager. That has been done. Dr. Ralph McManus has been hired for that. He has now advertised throughout Alberta for submissions from qualified engineering consultants. Those are in the process of being received. In addition to that, there will be what we call a management committee. This is a sort of accepted best professional practice. It's used in North American practices in having this management committee which would carry out the kinds of things the hon. member referred to.

PWA Crash

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my second question to the Minister of Transportation. My question pertains to the recent and tragic crash of the PWA plane at Cranbrook, British Columbia. I understand the federal government, through the Department of Transport, is investigating the accident according to the normal routine. My question to the minister is: has the Alberta government made representation to the federal Minister of Transport to have an independent inquiry as opposed to having an inquiry done solely by officials of the Department of Transport?

I ask the question, Mr. Speaker, in light of the controversy that surrounds whether the Department of Transport was in some means neglectful, if that's the proper term, or not. I really raise the question because I ask, how objective can the Department of Transport be in a situation like this, when the circumstances were as they are?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the board has not advised me of any request by management for an independent inquiry. I don't think that it's useful for the government to make any comment until such time as the report of the investigating team is made.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, could I ask a supplementary question of the minister responsible. Has the minister been advised whether the board of directors of PWA have in fact discussed this approach?

DR. HORNER: I just answered that question, Mr. Speaker, by saying that I hadn't been advised that they had.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is it the minister's intention to discuss the possibility of that kind of independent inquiry with the chairman of the board?

DR. HORNER: Well, Mr. Speaker, in normal and routine conversations with the chairman of the board, that in fact may come up. But I think that all of us would like to see as full an inquiry and investigation as possible and to get the necessary facts that it's possible to get. If that can't be done by a Ministry of Transport investigation, then I think an independent inquiry might be appropriate. But I wouldn't rule out that the department may in fact be able to have an adequate investigation.

MR. CLARK: My question to the minister was, though: has the minister discussed this with the chairman of the board? The minister shakes his head indicating he has not. Then is it the minister's intention to discuss it with the chairman of the board, prior to the release of the federal inquiry?

DR. HORNER: If it's an appropriate matter, I may discuss it with the chairman of the board, Mr. Speaker. But at the moment I wouldn't say that.

Parkland Nursing Home Strike

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Labour. It flows out of the unfortunate dispute at the Parkland Nursing Home. My question, Mr. Speaker, is with respect to the failure of Parkland to bargain between April 12, 1977, and February 22, 1978. My question to the minister is: is it the intention of the government of Alberta to prosecute Parkland for breaches of Section 155 of The Alberta Labour Act, that section that deals with bargaining in good faith?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member would know, the normal course in such a dispute is for the complaining party to initiate a prosecution, if that is what they would like to do. The government's position has been to give the consent in all cases where it's asked so that a party may proceed with a prosecution under that section. This consent is available to the bargaining unit in this particular case. They have for many months been aware of that, and whether or not they have proceeded with any prosecution I do not know. I believe not.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to confirm that on September 22, in fact, the representatives of the bargaining unit met with the Deputy Minister of Labour and indicated that they wished the government of Alberta to proceed, as the government has a right to do under that section of the act?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I've spoken of the policy, which I think is the traditional and correct policy which the parties would expect us to follow in such cases; that is, if one party or the other feels they

have a case that can be made out, that they proceed to do that.

The hon. member raises the question of the government itself taking proceedings. That has not been the normal course, and no consideration was given to doing so in this particular case. Not only has the deputy minister met with the CUPE representatives, as I'm sure he has — the hon. member says he has — but I myself have met with them and have made it quite clear that the government was willing, because of the extended and difficult nature of this particular case, to undertake some extraordinary measures. Those measures included more than what I've described as being the ordinary course of prosecution, or not, by the interested party.

In this particular case we obtained for the union a legal opinion and provided it to them. I understand this was done with their choice of solicitors. I think the meeting with the deputy minister was for the purpose of clarifying that the government would in fact pay the account, which I understand was done. My information is that the union has not proceeded further.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Labour. In light of a letter sent to the Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour on November 21 from the bargaining unit indicating a very large increase in the death rate — as a matter of fact threefold, from six in 1976 to 19 during the course of the strike up to that period — my question is: has the minister or the government had an opportunity to investigate the information contained in this letter of November 21?

MR. CRAWFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. My information is that not only must one take into account the fact that in a nursing home some of the patients are elderly and die in the normal course of things, but also that some of the names on the list provided were quite alive at the time of our checking into it. It may be that my colleague the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, whose department has monitored the situation there, might wish to add.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to supplement the answer of my colleague. The former Hospital Services Commission and now the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care have monitored the overall patient care situation during the entire course of the dispute between the parties, and have daily advised me that the quality of patient care — and that takes into account the matters raised as well by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview — has been satisfactory throughout.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care with respect to the answer coming from the Minister of Labour. Can the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care advise the House that in fact there was a check of the 19 names who I am advised, unfortunately, are presently deceased and the Minister of Labour indicates that some of them are still alive? It seems to me that's something we can in fact check out.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I think I answered that question. Officials of the former Hospital Services Commission and now, commencing January 1 of this year, the new Department of Hospitals and Medical Care have been investigating all such matters in Parkland Nursing Home, including the matters the hon. member refers to, and have reported that there is nothing unusual that is the result of poor patient care in the institution other than normal factors in a nursing home of that nature in the province.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. I am to take it then that the position of the government on this matter is that the rather large increase in the death rate is coincidence, and the government has satisfied itself that that is the reason as opposed to any other reason?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview has just inserted something which is conjecture on his part. If he actually has something he would like to provide to me, I am certainly prepared to examine it further. But the specific cases he was referring to have been checked, as well as other complaints we've received from other parties, and they have [been] found to be not unusual, and patient care in the institution has been found to be satisfactory on a daily basis.

MR. NOTLEY: I will send the list over to the hon. minister.

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary question. This is to the hon. Minister of Labour. Has any consideration been given by the government to amendments to The Alberta Labour Act which would clarify the right of government, where emergency situations are created, to look at trusteeship as well as a back-to-work order?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what relevance that might have to the Parkland case. The short answer is that no consideration has been given. And I'm not clear from the hon. member's question in what way trusteeship would differ from what the situation would be under Section 163.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, if I may, I'll put it to the hon. minister again. As I understand it the concern of the bargaining unit was that there is sufficient ambiguity in The Alberta Labour Act, that particular section, at the moment that it's the opinion of the government that they could not embark upon trusteeship. That was reported to me as a consequence of one of the meetings that took place. My question is: has the government at any time given consideration to possibly clarifying Section 163?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think Section 163 was clarified a couple of years ago. The Legislature debated it quite fully at that time. The government's policy in respect to the use of Section 163 is that it's used very rarely and only in the most extraordinary circumstances. I don't want to get into a dissertation on the contents of that section, but in all cases where there is public concern in regard to health care, or an apprehended danger, of course it can be used. And I don't think that is in any sense ambiguous. I suggest that in this particular case the suggestion has been

that the section should be used for other purposes; namely, to interfere by government in a very, very difficult negotiation which is still continuing. This section was not designed for that purpose and, for its basic purpose, would require no clarification.

Bingo Cheating

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Attorney General. In light of the fact that bingo is a \$65 million business in Alberta and there have been some allegations of cheating at community bingo games, can the minister indicate if complaints have been directed to the minister's department about this allegation?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, we have a complaint call system in the gaming control section 24 hours a day, which I think most people in the gaming world and organizations which receive licences are aware of. If they have any problems they are to call this number. Unfortunately that number is not in my office. As a matter of fact, I don't even know the phone number in this case.

From time to time we do receive some complaints about gaming. In almost all cases they are handled by the gaming control section. If you are asking me whether I'm aware of any recent complaints, more numerous perhaps than in the past, with respect to bingos in the province, no I'm not.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the hon. Attorney General indicate if there have been any prosecutions of people caught cheating at bingo?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information at hand, but I'll be happy to check and report to the House on whatever prosecutions we have under way in the gaming area.

DR. BUCK: At the same time the minister is checking that, can the hon. minister check to find out if the enforcement has been tightened up where these shady happenings have been going on? Have the regulations or the supervision been tightened up to prevent further cheating at bingo?

MR. FOSTER: Alleged cheating at bingo, I assume.

DR. BUCK: No, cheating.

MR. FOSTER: Cheating at bingo. You're a witness?

AN HON. MEMBER: Even worse than that.

MR. FOSTER: I just thought I might ask you some questions now rather than later. [laughter] I've forgotten the question, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: I appreciate that the minister is practising being a lawyer again, because we'll make sure he isn't back in a year and a half.

The question was: in light of the fact that there have been cheatings going on, which seems to be public knowledge, has the department been taking steps to tighten up to make that these things do not recur?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I think all members of the House are aware that we have our gaming control regulations under constant review, and that last summer we published to all who were interested a series of proposed changes to the gaming control regulations. I know the office of the Leader of the Opposition has been in touch with mine with respect to the proposals and the amended proposals on rule changes, and those have been provided to you. Those proposed changes are still before members of our caucus and are being discussed.

I'd like to emphasize, however, that I think it's fair to say we have in Alberta the best controls in gaming of any jurisdiction in North America. Having said that, let me also say that we are vigilant, however, that the gaming world is a changing one. We have constantly to be alert to changes in practice and approach and schemes. As a result, from time to time we find it necessary to change our rules, and we have those under active consideration.

Heavy Oil Development

MR. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. It concerns the proposed upgrading plant to be built in the Lloydminster area. I understand that Husky Oil company officials met with the government of Saskatchewan yesterday. My question to the minister is whether he has had the opportunity to sit down with officials from Husky to outline the many advantages of building the plant on the Alberta side.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I have had an opportunity to discuss the Husky proposal with them, and I think most observers of the Canadian scene can see the advantages of being in Alberta these days.

Home Insulation Program

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works. It involves the home insulation program.

Over a few months there have been several stages, and in view of these stages — first of all the government announced the program with a number of appendages. The Alberta government refused to accept the program with those appendages attached. The hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, I believe, brought some light before the federal government and it removed the appendages. Then the provincial government accepted the program. Then there was an announcement that the provincial government was going to add something to the program . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member getting close to the question?

MR. TAYLOR: I'm just about there. [laughter]

Now the people are wondering just where the program stands. My question is: would the hon. minister outline the present state of the home insulation program?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, that was an excellent review of a federal program by the Member for

Drumheller, but his dissertation wasn't exactly correct. The provincial government didn't announce any supplement to the federal program; it indicated it was considering the possibility of some form of supplement to the federal program. I should indicate, Mr. Speaker, that after due consideration of the federal program, as to whether or not there is need for any provincial involvement except for providing information where people can approach the federal government on this program, we have made the following decision after considering whether or not there is need for an additional incentive.

One should recognize first of all that there is a sufficient incentive in connection with energy savings itself. We have calculated that the yearly savings in the program, if the additional insulation were provided as per the federal program, would be in the order of \$140 to \$150 a year. That in itself is an incentive. Secondly, the federal refundable grant portion is in itself an incentive. Thirdly, we have an excellent loan program under the treasury branches at reasonable interest rates for home repair, which is in itself an incentive. And we have an excellent program of grants to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Is the hon. minister getting close to the answer?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I'm almost there. [laughter]

We have, Mr. Speaker, an excellent grant program for senior citizens or families on low incomes for repairing their homes, and indeed it's indicated that it should be used for insulation as frequently as possible, as well as for repairing other energy-saving devices such as furnaces, storm windows, and so forth.

So we had concluded, Mr. Speaker, after considering the matter thoroughly and looking at it from all aspects, that no additional provincial incentive was needed at this time to effect the federal insulation program which is now in effect in Alberta.

Hospital Construction

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. On May 13, 1977, he announced a holding pattern on hospital construction. My question to the minister is: will that holding pattern be lifted on March 31, 1978, as announced?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking will recall that the holding pattern was announced with an expiry date of March 31, 1978, attached to the announcement. Therefore at the end of this month the holding pattern will in fact expire.

MR. LYSONS: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker, if I may. Will the Vermilion hospital then be allowed to proceed with planning immediately the first of April?

MR. MINIELY: Basically, Mr. Speaker, throughout Alberta all the projects will be in a normal planning process. Now that's not to say that each project . . . The Department of Hospitals and Medical Care will

continue to examine the plans at the various stages they are at. That can vary from very early functional planning to a final design stage, depending on where the local board working with their architect and engineer have mutually arrived at a stage, and what stage the province has examined and responded upon.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of Vermilion, the hon. member's particular concern, it is in preliminary drawing stage. The major issue to be resolved between the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care and the Vermilion board and architect and engineering staff of the board is a review to ensure that the functional program is appropriate, and that the total overall physical facility meets both program and satisfactory cost parameters before moving to the next stage.

DR. BUCK: Think the election might change that too, Gordon?

MR. TESOLIN: Regarding the Fort McMurray hospital, I'd like to ask the minister if the schedule of construction is on target.

AN HON. MEMBER: Whose target?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray, the Fort McMurray project has been under construction. The status of that project is that basically to this point \$2,770,000 million of construction has actually taken place. The only matters — this one is under construction management, because of the magnitude and size of the Fort McMurray hospital project — that remain to be resolved before finalizing Fort McMurray are the shelling in of the upper two floors and, in particular, a review also of the psychiatric program of that hospital.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition, followed by the hon. Member for Grande Prairie.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, which could perhaps serve the question for the Member for Grande Prairie too. What is the target date for tenders of the Grande Prairie and Vermilion hospitals? When does the minister anticipate those two projects will go to tender?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has been a member of government and knows very well that local boards share a very large responsibility in terms of the actual construction date a project is completed. [interjections] Mr. Speaker, I realize the opposition doesn't like to deal in facts.

DR. BUCK: That's what we want, facts.

MR. MINIELY: Nevertheless, those are the facts. The building of hospitals in Alberta is a co-operative endeavor between local boards and the provincial government.

In the case of Grande Prairie, Mr. Speaker, this government has continuously and will continue to place priority on the construction of the Grande Prairie hospital. I would assure the House that Grande Prairie hospital will be built as soon as the Grande Prairie board and the province have resolved two or

three matters that are left with respect to the function of that hospital. The MLA for Grande Prairie has been meeting continuously with me on the hospital, and we anticipate that the Grande Prairie hospital will very soon be resolved and under construction.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, supplementary. What about Vermilion, Mr. Minister?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

DR. BACKUS: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. And the Leader of the Opposition doesn't need to ask questions for me, although I understand he spends more time in Grande Prairie than he ever did as a minister. [laughter]

SOME HON. MEMBERS: You've got a colleague.

DR. BACKUS: I'll talk about that another day.

When the minor differences have been resolved with regard to the functional plan of Grande Prairie, will it be possible for the board to use an accelerated route of construction, such as project management or contract management?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, one of the options we are examining with the board is what is referred to as a fast track approach. We will have to determine whether this results in any substantial additional cost. But as the MLA for Grande Prairie and I have discussed, along with the local hospital board in Grande Prairie in meetings to this point . . . We're meeting on March 23 with the Grande Prairie board — the officials of the department. In that meeting it is anticipated we will make a decision on that, as well as the other outstanding matters with respect to function and program.

Mr. Speaker, I repeat that this government will be building hospitals in Grande Prairie and in fact, as stated in the throne speech, throughout this province; hospitals that meet needs, not just wants, and meet them effectively in terms of utilizing public funds. We will be able to do more, because we will be using the funds effectively throughout the province.

MR. CLARK: Who's been the government the last seven years?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the minister relates to the work done by his department during this holding period. I'm wondering if he can advise the Assembly whether, during that holding period, it has been necessary to revise or alter in any way the concept of development of regional hospitals, which is of particular interest to me and other members from southeastern Alberta, with respect to the Medicine Hat district hospital and other district hospitals throughout the province?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, when the holding pattern was announced, I indicated that departmental officials would be examining policy with respect to hospital and nursing home construction to develop province-wide parameters on the construction of facilities. Health care concepts tend to be trends that have been established over 10 or 12 years. In meeting needs now, the concept of a regional hospital,

which the hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff is referring to, is one that by name is tagged a regional hospital. But I think it's fair to say, from my travels throughout the province, that that sometimes creates concern in smaller communities around a larger centre like Medicine Hat.

The important thing to emphasize is that as we have a larger centre like Medicine Hat, Red Deer, or Grande Prairie and are developing that type of concept in rural Alberta, what that concept is doing is in effect allowing patients in Medicine Hat and Red Deer to receive treatment [for which] formerly they would have been referred to Edmonton and Calgary. And that's the approach being taken in the development of, for instance, the Medicine Hat hospital, not jeopardizing any of the smaller hospital communities around Medicine Hat.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, while we are on hospitals, last fall the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care announced the setting up of an implementation committee to review the plans and costs for the Foothills complex, which was to include a cancer clinic. I wonder if he could advise what progress that committee is making with regard to the ongoing construction.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the new Deputy Minister of Hospitals, Mr. Chatfield, is chairman of that implementation committee and has other departments represented on the committee as well. They have had meetings with both boards, the Provincial Cancer Hospitals Board and the board of the Foothills hospital. The advice the Deputy Minister of Hospitals has provided me is that there is a very co-operative attitude with some priority resolving the matter again of the function and program and overall cost in order to allow that facility to move forward to actual construction at the earliest possible date.

MR. MUSGREAVE: One other supplementary, Mr. Speaker, if I may. Could the minister advise if a firm of consultants has been hired to review the work that has already been carried out by the hospital?

MR. MINIELY: As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will be happy to know that a Calgary firm has been retained on government's behalf, through the implementation committee, to examine the architectural and engineering designs that have been submitted to the board to ensure that the proposed costs — that government and the citizens of Calgary and southern Alberta will be receiving value for the cost expended on the southern Alberta cancer centre.

DR. WEBBER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, while on the topic of hospital care. In view of the rumors around Calgary regarding a hospital bed shortage, I wonder if the minister could inform this Assembly as to whether or not there is an acute-care bed shortage in Calgary?

MR. MINIELY: I'm happy for that question, Mr. Speaker, because I mentioned earlier that the opposition does not like to deal in facts.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. [interjections]

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the facts are that the Deputy Minister of Hospitals has met with all hospital administrators in Calgary, in connection with assuming his new responsibilities in the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care. They have agreed that there is no immediate, critical, or urgent shortage of beds. [interjections] Well again, Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader should be interested in the facts. Those are the facts. There is no immediate or critical shortage of beds in the city of Calgary — in fact they are above generally accepted and recommended bed standards throughout the country — and basically all hospital administrators have agreed upon that in a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Hospitals.

In addition to that, however, we recognize that the city of Calgary is undergoing dynamic population growth, as is the rest of the province. For that reason they have also agreed that they will watch and monitor the situation in Calgary very closely, Mr. Speaker, and in fact phase in some of the beds that are not now open in the event that those beds are needed. Further, they have agreed, again because of the population growth in Calgary, to place accelerated priority on the planning of Rockyview, which is the next planned expansion for the longer term bed needs in the city of Calgary.

DR. WEBBER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister could indicate what effect the opening of the extended care facilities of the Dr. Vernon Fanning Hospital and the addition to the Bethany Care Centre will have on the availability of acute care beds in Calgary?

MR. SPEAKER: If the information relates to something the hon. minister happens to have in his department, perhaps he might answer briefly. We're now one minute past the time for the question period.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I think it's a very important matter, and the additional question by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow is important to the overall issue of beds in the city of Calgary. The Premier, as a matter of fact, will . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. minister doesn't appear to be dealing with the question. He was asked concerning an effect.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the Dr. Vernon Fanning Extended Care Centre, which will officially be opened tomorrow, will certainly provide additional beds in the city of Calgary and relieve pressure for long-term patients that might exist on other hospital beds in that city.

MR. SPEAKER: I have to express my regret to the eight members who were not able to ask their first questions. I think it points out the need to revert more closely to the ordinary rules of the question period. Possibly there should be some additional brevity in both the questions and the answers.

Water Management (continued)

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, if you and the hon. members agree, I'm able in a few seconds to complete the answer [to] the question asked by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview earlier.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member asked a question about a \$66 million cost related to him by Dr. Bell for the proposed sixth site Dam. We've checked our files and there was no such letter written to Dr. Bell. My office phoned him following your question. He was quoting from the letter we had provided to Dobson Lea of Unifarm. So we're all working from the same figures. It appears to be a misunderstanding.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: **WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following questions and motions for returns stand and retain their place on the Order Paper: Question 107, motions for returns 101, 111, 112, 113, and 114.

[Motion carried]

head: **MOTIONS FOR RETURNS**

103. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the study of the analysis of projected energy requirements for selected industries in Ontario completed by Foster Research in December 1975 as listed in Return No. 226/76.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, responding to Motion for a Return No. 103, in reviewing the document it appears that in getting the information requested, which is an analysis of projected energy requirements for selected industries in Ontario, the consultant acquired some information in the body of the report which I feel, upon review of the report, does infringe on the competitive aspects of some of the companies involved. Therefore I would like to suggest, subject to the House's approval, an amendment to Motion for a Return 103 that would allow us to provide the summary and conclusions of the report. Therefore we would not have to provide the other information, which I think would in fact impinge on the company's competitive position.

So I would like to amend Motion for a Return No. 103 by inserting the words "summary and conclusions of the" after the words "a copy of the".

[Motion as amended carried]

104. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the study of the computation and analysis of data relating to coal roy-

alty rates completed by DataMetrics in February, 1976, as listed in Return No. 226/76.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, in responding to Motion for a Return No. 104 — I think it's perhaps because of the broad wording of the previous return referred to, No. 226/76. In trying to find the study of the computation and analysis of data relating to coal royalty rates, it appears that information was simply computer runs which were handled by DataMetrics as a consultant. The material was used by the department as a result of verbal instructions given to DataMetrics, but no report or compilation of those computer runs was kept. Therefore there is really nothing available to file with the House.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in that case perhaps I could ask permission to withdraw Motion for a Return No. 104.

[Motion withdrawn]

105. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the study of the historical review of the royalty concept as applied to Crown minerals development in Alberta completed by H. H. Somerville in August 1976 as listed in Return No. 226/76.

[Motion carried]

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, it's my intention to move that Motion for a Return No. 115 be dropped. The reason is that the minister has advised me the reports have not been printed yet. We'll be putting the motion for a return back on the Order Paper in about a month's time. The minister says they'll then be printed.

MR. SPEAKER: Since it hasn't been moved, the Assembly need not agree to the hon. member's withdrawal.

head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

207. Moved by Mr. Clark:

Be it resolved that the Assembly adjourn at the earliest convenient opportunity and that upon the adjournment the Standing Committee on Public Affairs meet to receive the representations of concerned Albertans with respect to the building of a dam on the Red Deer River.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, the reason we have chosen to move this designated resolution first is not because it directly affects a tremendous number of the people of this province. In fact the dam mentioned in this resolution directly affects some 22 families in that area west of Red Deer.

Mr. Speaker, the reason we felt it was important to move the resolution at this particular time is that if the House will agree to this resolution, members of the Assembly would have the opportunity to hear input from these people following completion of the seepage studies, and also before members of the House would be asked to vote on the budget consid-

erations which would enable the planning and possibly some of the construction to go ahead with this dam this particular year.

Mr. Speaker, I should also say for the sake of the record that my remarks today are going to be very short because under the . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Good.

MR. CLARK: I can appreciate members of the government side of the House saying "good". But the reason my remarks are going to be brief is because I know very well that this debate has to be finished and voted on by 4:30 this afternoon, or it goes to the bottom of the Order Paper. If that happens, the opportunity to have this kind of public hearing before the committee of the House will likely not happen during this session. I wouldn't want any member here or any individual outside the House to feel that because my remarks are brief they lack interest in any way, shape, or form on behalf of myself and my colleagues. Basically, going that route will allow a number of members on both sides of the House, and then hopefully enable us to have a vote on this matter before 4:30 this afternoon, which is less than 55 minutes from now.

Mr. Speaker, it's with real concern that I rise to speak on this motion. The open protest of area residents and concerned Albertans against the construction at Site 6 on the Red Deer is a testimony to the lack of sensitivity of this government to the concerns of a large number of Alberta citizens.

This government claims on many occasions, Mr. Speaker, to be open and responsive. Here is an opportunity for this government to show that in fact it is open and responsive, by agreeing to this resolution making it possible for people to come before the committee of the whole House, all members, to present their points of view, and then let members from both sides of the House question the comments made by individuals. There would be no better demonstration of openness and responsiveness of the government than to have the wisdom to reconsider this decision; the humility to acknowledge that, in my judgment, a mistake was made; and the graciousness to correct its error.

The government's decision to construct a dam at Site 6, amidst a variety of more feasible and less costly alternatives, was initially a serious error in judgment. I think the decision was unsound economically; socially it's certainly disruptive; environmentally damaging; and certainly politically it tends to look at political dictatorship.

The decision was economically unsound because the dam at Site 6 would involve both monetary and social costs. Given other feasible alternatives, Albertans cannot afford to pay these costs, especially when we take into consideration the amount of land to be lost. Seepage studies commissioned by the government, on which we asked questions earlier today in the question period, now indicate that water-logging would result in the surrounding area if the dam were constructed. In addition to the initial cost of building the dam, control of this problem would cost Albertans \$2 million, according to the minister; as high as \$6 million to \$8 million, according to people in the area and other consultants. But I recognize those are 'guesstimates', both by the government's consultants

and by other individuals.

But money is not the only economic measure. The flooding of at least 4,400 acres of prime agricultural land cannot be assessed merely in terms of dollars and cents.

Socially, the decision disrupts 22 farm families but, in addition to that, takes the agricultural land out of production. From an environmental standpoint, the decision is damaging because there are other alternatives to flow regulation that could have less adverse impact on the environment than a dam. For instance, on-site and off-stream storage would have minimal impact on the environment while providing adequate flow regulation for both Red Deer and Drumheller. As mentioned before, water-logging as a result of seepage problems arising from the construction of a dam at Site 6 poses a serious concern for the surrounding area.

Mr. Speaker, I should perhaps stop for a moment and say that my own preference, as an individual and as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for the constituency of Olds-Didsbury, would be that the dam be located west of Sundre in an area referred as Site 11. According to the figures the minister just made available to me, we're now talking of \$61 million for the dam at Site 6, not knowing whether the seepage costs are in there or not. The department's figures . . .

MR. RUSSELL: Point of order, Mr. Speaker, if I may.

The hon. member is doing what I mentioned some people were doing during the question period; that is, putting the total cost of the project and calling it the cost of the dam. That is not the cost of the dam the hon. member used.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then putting it this way: the total cost of the project at Site 6, some \$61 million; the minister admitting he doesn't know whether the costs of seepage are in there or not, which could run from \$2 million to \$8 million, according to the information I've received. Site 11, the small dam: total cost of the project, according to the minister's figure, some \$78 million — certainly figures I would want to question very much, when it comes to erosion control, the \$5 million the government has placed in that particular area. Suffice for me to say that my preference as an individual would be to go ahead with building a dam at Site 11.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the political decision that was taken by the government in this matter, I just remind members once again that at the ECA hearings there were over 340 briefs on this matter, of which only 13 favored Site 6. Petitions were circulated, and well over 1,000 people signed opposing the building of the dam in that area. Such responsible organizations as the Alberta Federation of Labour and Unifarm also lent their opposition to the project. The opposition to the Site 6 dam was not limited to those directly affected by the construction of the dam, but was the prevailing sentiment among Albertans from all walks of life.

I had the opportunity to be in Consort the other night at an Education Week venture. As I left, three or four people were arguing in the gymnasium whether or not the dam should go ahead. One of the comments made by one of the individuals who was just trying to defend the government's position was,

well, you know in that part of Alberta they get frost every year, and they don't raise much for crops out there. I don't know how that story got loose. But anybody who feels that way should simply go out in that area of Alberta two or three months from now and see the kind of agricultural land that is there.

DR. BUCK: You wouldn't say he had an orange and blue card.

MR. CLARK: Whether he had an orange and blue card, I didn't take the time to ask.

DR. BUCK: He'd have to, to defend that.

MR. CLARK: This brings me to the remarks the hon. Minister of the Environment made in this Assembly last October, when I asked him about the seepage studies. I was assured by the hon. minister that if serious seepage problems became evident, the government would reconsider its position and would look for alternatives to Site 6. In light of the recent findings of the seepage study at Site 6 it would now be apparent, from a responsible, open, and responsive government, to acknowledge new information. Not to admit the government made a mistake, but to acknowledge new information: that seepage problems are going to be serious and at the very minimum will cost an additional \$2 million, that the costs between that site and Site 11 are now getting much closer, more volume at Site 11. It is my hope that after the kind of public hearing we are urging in this resolution this afternoon, in light of this new information, the government would yield to the public information rather than attempt to save its face.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out that either the off-stream storage at Buffalo Lake or Sylvan Lake, or the project west of Sundre, could go ahead with a fair degree of haste, I'm advised.

In conclusion, I would ask the Assembly to seriously consider the legitimate concerns of local residents who could be affected by a dam at Site 6 and to carefully weigh the costs and benefit of such a dam to Alberta as a whole. I'm convinced that the need for flow regulation and water storage can be met adequately by other alternatives, which I've already mentioned.

I therefore ask this Assembly to grant the right to a hearing to concerned citizens. The Legislative Assembly, as a representative body of the people of Alberta and the province's highest court of appeal, has the duty and power to call for public hearings into the Site 6 question, and to listen to the grievances of those citizens who would be affected by such a large decision as has been taken, not by the Legislature but by the cabinet and never to this day approved or ratified by this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of the Environment was one of the six Conservatives to come into this House in 1967. He was one of the members who convinced the government of that day that a public hearing should be held on the question of the Bighorn Dam project. [interjections] The Deputy Premier laughs.

DR. BUCK: That was open government, Horner.

MR. CLARK: The public hearings were held right here, the same kind of hearings we're asking for on this particular occasion. On that occasion, rightly or wrongly . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: You were forced to.

DR. BUCK: Forced to? Garbage.

MR. CLARK: The government of that day listened to the opposition . . .

MR. R. SPEAKER: Six guys.

MR. CLARK: Six people over here in the opposition. The government listened on that occasion, then held public hearings. The government of the day wasn't afraid to hold those public hearings. Those public hearings were held on the Bighorn Dam project. The government of that day was not afraid to do that. That was in 1969; April 1, 2, 3, and 8.

Mr. Speaker, if the government of that day, in 1969, was not afraid to go ahead with public hearings on the Bighorn Dam project, [why] should the government of this day — from an opposition that in total is only six — be afraid to go ahead with a public hearing, as advocated in this particular resolution?

I would urge members on both sides of the House to seriously consider the proposition we put forward. It would enable all members to become much more familiar with the pros and the cons, the fiction and the fact. Then the Assembly could make a decision, when it comes to the budget, from the standpoint of being much more knowledgeable of fact rather than fiction. I urge members on both sides of the House to support the resolution.

MR. NOTLEY: I would like to rise to make a few brief comments. I certainly support the import of the resolution before us. Mr. Speaker, my only concern with the resolution is that I would like to see it expanded somewhat. I think it's very crucial that the people affected by the Site 6 debate at this time have an opportunity to appear before the Legislature. But I would also think it useful to have the same kind of hearings that were held in 1969, when officials from the Department of the Environment were there as well. I'm just a little troubled with the resolution. I think it could be a little more specific, so we not only had the people in the areas coming, but specifically included officials of the department.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I think we have to look at the issue itself. Should we have public hearings of the Legislature to assess the Site 6 dam proposition. There really isn't a great deal of point in repeating the many arguments that have been made on the Site 6 issue itself. The committee has prepared a summary, which has been sent to all members of the Legislature and, at least in terms of the appeal within the summary, I certainly support the concerns expressed by the Site 6 people.

We have some debate now over the relative costs of the two projects. I was at a meeting in Innisfail a week ago Tuesday. The figure of \$66 million versus \$61 million was presented during the course of the meeting. But whether it's \$61 million versus \$66 million, or \$61 million versus \$78 million — there is a significant difference admittedly. But even if that dif-

ference were accepted — and as one member of the Legislature I would want to have the opportunity to question members of the department on just how they arrived at these figures — I would still say that when one looks at the 4,400 acres of land that are going to be flooded, plus the whole question of seepage, in fact we are playing a form of Russian roulette with many hundreds of acres of additional land.

Mr. Speaker, during the course of that meeting in Innisfail, I couldn't help but be impressed by the views expressed by the local people themselves. Farmers who had taken the time to evaluate the report of the consultants, both the summary and the many background documents, rose one by one to argue that the cost of controlling seepage in the basin area will be somewhat larger than the \$2 million estimate that has been advanced to date, and that what we are going to be doing is having wells and pumps all over the region.

Mr. Speaker, they made a pretty impressive case. I took notes of each of them who spoke, and I could go over them. But because I think it is important that this matter come to a vote today and not be talked out, so to speak, I don't intend to review the submissions made by each of those individuals at the meeting, except to say that in my judgment they make a pretty penetrating case.

Mr. Speaker, in reviewing this resolution it is important that we look back at the 1969 precedent. As a matter of fact I mentioned this precedent at the meeting in Innisfail. I took the time to review some of the things various people said in 1969, leading up to the public hearings of the Legislature that year. I was interested in the Deputy Premier smiling and saying the former government was forced into holding the hearings in 1969. I think that's a fair comment. They were forced into holding the hearings, and I think a good deal of the credit goes to the obstreperous Member for Lac Ste. Anne, at that time. He led off the debate here on March 11, 1969, by making it pretty clear that in his view the government didn't know what it was doing; it had no cost/benefit analysis. As a matter of fact, he made all sorts of charges, and there were some countercharges. Then the Premier refused to table any cost/benefit analysis done by the government. You "... haven't got one ..." Dr. Horner was heard to say amid thunderous desk-thumping from Social Credit backbenchers. "Where have we heard that sort of situation before?"

The debate carried on, on [March] 14. We had the now Premier, when he was Leader of the Opposition, saying:

... if the government was going to ask the opposition to approve a \$6 million expenditure ...

and now we're talking about a \$78 million expenditure that the cabinet decides,

... without knowing if the project is in the public interest, then "the Premier. . ."

and this is the former Premier, Mr. Strom,

"... doesn't have a proper appreciation of parliamentary procedures."

Quite clearly the hon. Leader of the Opposition in 1969 was correct. No question about that.

March 19: the hearing was called by the Social Credit government after the Conservative opposition implied the government might be hiding information

on the project. Further debate. Then March 20. The hon. Deputy Premier . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Who?

MR. NOTLEY: At this stage of the game, the hon. Deputy Premier — at that time, the hon. Member for Lac Ste. Anne — made a few non-partisan remarks that it was "just another example of the government's autocratic method of trying to manage this legislature". Said with flourish, fanfare, and . . .

DR. BUCK: The leopard is changing his spots.

MR. NOTLEY: . . . a good deal of zip and whatever have you.

Mr. Speaker, we then had the commitment by the Premier that the whole dam proposal would have to have the approval of the House. In other words it wasn't just going to be a decision of the cabinet; it had to have the approval of the House. Then we had the debates that occurred during the hearings themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to say that the government in 1969, as a result of the most sober, thoughtful reflection, decided it would have these hearings. I suspect it held the hearings because there was a good deal of public pressure building up to hold them. I don't think governments have a tendency to hold public hearings that easily. I would include NDP governments as well. That happens to be one of the facts of political life.

But, Mr. Speaker, the issue at hand today is not what happened in 1969; that is, the motives for holding the hearings. The issue is that the hearings were held. The hearings were held because at that time there was a widespread feeling that more information was necessary, that there should be discussion in the Legislature, that people who are going to be affected should be heard. To the credit of the Strom government, it acceded to that request and the public hearings were held.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of Site 6, we have an issue that has been debated throughout the province, but there are still a lot of unanswered questions. Now the minister may get up and say, oh no, we've got all the answers. But even in his answers in the question period today, the minister had to indicate he's not sure whether the seepage problem is going to be solved when the dam is built, as part of the project, or at an additional cost to the project. That being the case, in my view holding public hearings at this stage is absolutely mandatory if we as a Legislature are going to be taken by the people of Alberta as having any serious interest in the preservation of agricultural land.

It just isn't good enough for us to say, no, no, the cabinet's made its decision, we'll set aside the submission of the Site 11 people, we'll ignore the recommendations of the old Environment Conservation Authority, and we'll go with the government, regardless. In my judgment the arguments for flow regulation, for the alternative cost of Site 11 compared to Site 6, all make a pretty strong presentation that this Legislature should take a second look. We have the submission of the former ECA that says we shouldn't even go the route of building a dam, neither Site 11 nor Site 6. They say Site 11 later, if neces-

sary. But at this stage the argument is made that the flow regulation and the requirements for the cities of Red Deer and Drumheller, as well as the projects which are projected, can be accommodated by off-stream storage.

Mr. Speaker, because there are so many of these questions that need to be answered — first of all by having in this House the experts from the Department of the Environment. With great respect to the Minister of the Environment, I don't think he would classify himself as an expert. I certainly wouldn't classify him as an expert, and I don't think any of the members of the House classify ourselves as experts. But I think we should have the top people from the department here before we make the decision; not after the decision — in Public Accounts, a year or two after the fact — but before we make the decision. Equally important, we need to have the people who are affected come and make the kind of submissions to the Legislature that I think they can make, as a result of the work done across kitchen tables in that region, reviewing the report on seepage, and all the other reports that have been compiled on this project.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude by saying there is one other important precedent for public hearings. I referred to the one in 1969, where the former government had hearings on the Bighorn Dam. But there were hearings in this Legislature, undertaken and initiated by this government in 1972, on the crucial question of royalty rates. This Legislature adjourned for a week so the members could question the top figures in the Canadian oil industry, to assess what the royalty rate should be. That was a good exercise, an important and a democratic exercise. It was to the credit of the government that we took time to go through the process of public hearings before changing the royalty rates.

Mr. Speaker, with that as a precedent and with the precedent of 1969, I simply say in conclusion that the resolution before us is reasonable, and it bears earnest and positive consideration by the members of this Assembly.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, in considering very carefully the resolution put before us by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, I had to examine two questions in my own mind in preparing my remarks. Would the requesters of this petition accept a decision the Legislature might reach after the hearings are held, if they are in fact held? That's a difficult question to answer, because I've heard both sides of the story. I've heard already from some of the affected landowners that they believe the decision is the right one, that the information we've provided is satisfactory to their needs. I've also heard from the other side saying, no matter what we do or what we say, they will fight this proposal to the very end. They've made that viewpoint very clear. So I'm not really sure if acceding to the request for a hearing would accomplish anything by way of having a decision accepted.

However, more important, I think, is: would anything new be uncovered? Would any new information be put forward for the consideration of members? I very much doubt that it would, Mr. Speaker. I want to put on the record the events that led up to the making of the decision, and the information that was public.

The planning studies which were initiated in 1973

— and here the times, dates, and expenditures are important to keep in mind — resulted in seven volumes of studies which were made public. During the development of those studies there were at least 100 meetings throughout the region, which involved the public. It involved a management committee of 10, technical advisory and public advisory committees of 38 and 30 representatives respectively, from both the provincial and municipal levels and the general public, plus numerous subcommittees. Those are outlined in the addendum to the planning reports.

After all that careful planning and public input involved in the planning studies, which cost \$430,000, we came out with a report that recommended Site 6. On that basis the government asked the ECA to conduct public hearings. These were preceded by establishing 16 information centres throughout the region, where all the documents and information we had were made available. In conjunction with those information centres, there was a series of 20 information meetings at which the general public was welcome and invited to go. In fact they were told about the project so they would be better informed and would clearly understand what they were asked to comment on at the public hearings.

The public hearings proceeded in two phases. Phase one consisted of hearings in five regions, and was held during November and December 1975. It led to an interim report and an adjournment, because during that first phase legitimate concerns and questions were raised to which we did not have the answers, notwithstanding the steps I've outlined. So three additional studies were done at a cost of \$180,000. When those were finished they were also made public, and phase two of the public hearings was continued during November and December 1975. There were again five public hearings. The total cost of those public hearings was \$233,000. So I don't think any effort was spared, Mr. Speaker, to make information known to anybody who was interested throughout the region. I'm amazed that the Member for Spirit River-Fairview can stand and say that there are lots of questions he'd like answered, because the opportunity was certainly there.

Following the public hearings and the decision, additional studies were asked for as a result of some concerns that citizens had brought out about possible seepage or ground water problems. Those were carried out in response to the requests of the citizens at a cost of \$350,000.

So in summary, Mr. Speaker, I'm saying that the public through the government has commissioned studies costing \$1 million, we established 16 information centres, there were well over 100 public meetings, there were 10 public hearings at a cost of \$233,000. All of this took three and one-half years, at an expenditure of \$1.25 million, and all it did was lead up to a decision being made. I hope the Leader of the Opposition isn't going to compare that decision-making process with the one they used on the Bighorn Dam, because there is no similarity.

Also, I want to comment on the aspect the leader referred to, about a decision being made by the Legislature. I'm going to quote from *Hansard* during the budget remarks when this question was discussed last year. I'm now quoting the Leader of the Opposition on April 26:

I welcome your comments about an early decision, Mr. Minister. I think the longer this thing drags on the more difficult it's going to be, not only for people in the area. Whether they come from Sundre or west of Sundre, or whether they are in the area of site 6, Drumheller, Red Deer — the sooner the government makes a decision on this matter, the better off the government and everyone else affected is going to be. I welcome the minister's indication of an early decision, and certainly will remind him of those comments if no decision has been made come the fall session.

Well we did make an early decision, Mr. Speaker.

As we've explained, it was a tough decision to make. Now the Leader of the Opposition seems to be having a change in heart, and wants the whole process to start again.

I want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the members of the House, what a careful and thorough decision that was. I can think of no other project of that magnitude that has had the exhaustive studies or reviews, public hearings: every kind of input one can imagine. It went to a cabinet committee on two occasions, both of which involved the MLA for the area, and then to cabinet for a final review. I say it was a very tough decision, but a very careful and thorough one. I believe it was the right decision and, by carrying it out and proceeding with the work, I think we can improve that whole region of central Alberta.

The thing that's left to be done is to work as fairly as possible with the 22 farm families who will be affected. With respect to the 4,400 acres that are mentioned, about half of that amount is cultivated land — class 1, 2, and 3 land — and the other half is not so good, it's grazing and pasture land. We believe that by working with the residents, we'll be able to satisfactorily relocate them on farms. I don't think all of them are going to have to be moved from the area, because in many cases portions or small pieces of farms are affected, and I believe that it's possible through consolidation to maintain about half that number of farms there.

We have met with the landowners in the area who are affected by the construction of the dam and the filling of the reservoir, and we've said: if you want to work with the government as a group, or work with us individually in even discussing the acquisition of your property, that would be your choice. And there are some landowners who have chosen either way, so we're working on both ways. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we're going to be able to work with the landowners, if they're willing to discuss the matter with us, in a very fair method. We've indicated to them that if we can reach agreement on the value of their property — and this would be done through their own appraisers and through ours — we would be agreeable to purchasing their farms now, and letting them have possession until either '79 or '82, when the construction starts or when the reservoir would be filled. So in most cases they would get another two or perhaps three crop years from their farm, which they would continue to possess, and in the meantime they would have the cash on hand and the time to get suitably relocated.

So the assistance and the willingness of the government is there in trying to help the residents who would be relocated. I'm not trying to say to the

Legislature that that's a happy part of the whole project. It isn't, Mr. Speaker. But all of us in this room know there have often been times when it has been necessary, whether for development in an urban community or for another development of this kind, to acquire private property for the good of the regional project. This is what we're trying to do in this case, Mr. Speaker.

In conclusion, I think the record of giving everybody an opportunity to have every question they could possibly think of answered, is there. Even as recently as last week, we offered again to meet with the demonstrators on the steps of the Legislature, who said they wanted to discuss this project further. That invitation was turned down. We've never refused to meet with the people, to answer questions if we knew the answers, or to get the information if it wasn't available. Certainly I don't think the government is open to that kind of criticism.

In conclusion I must say that looking at the record of time and effort that has been spent examining this, in leading up to the decision, in making information available to all interested citizens of Alberta, nothing more could be usefully accomplished by holding another hearing.

MR. DOAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take part in this debate this afternoon on the dam on the Red Deer River, because it's in my constituency and I feel I am fairly well acquainted with the effects that might come out of it.

However, having been out of the province at the time of the hearings on the seepage from this dam, which seems to be the concern today of our local farmers, anything I have to say this afternoon comes entirely out of this summary report, effects on groundwater conditions of the Red Deer River dam site. Mr. Speaker, because of the concerns of the farmers with land adjacent to the proposed damsite on the Red Deer River that there may be seepage from the dam, our Minister of the Environment authorized the detailed study to determine if this was so.

Eventually, Kohn Leonoff Construction Ltd. fulfilled the role of project co-ordinator, summarizing all studies performed by independent and qualified geologists and hydrogeologists to determine the effect, if any, on existing groundwater conditions by constructing the proposed Site 6 dam. The extent of land that might be affected, and the remedial measures that should be undertaken to minimize these effects, are covered. A very detailed study was made of types of soil in the area, the present groundwater level, the general conditions and the past history of development of the area.

Mr. Speaker, briefly, this proposed dam will be about 2,600 feet in length, with a crest at the top 30 feet in width, and a maximum height of 120 feet. The dam cross section will consist of a central impervious core. This impervious core will extend down to the *in situ* sand and gravel foundation, where it will tie into a cutoff trench that extends through the gravel. To ensure a sound cutoff, the cutoff trench will be carried several feet into bedrock and a grout curtain will extend 30 feet below the bedrock surface. Besides a regular service spillway to regulate the flow, an emergency spillway is also provided to mitigate the risk of disruption of service in a general storm condition that might occur, or conditions that could prevent

the opening of the gates due to power losses, access problems, or both.

Dikes are required on both sides of the reservoir. The left abutment dike, which is approximately 9,500 feet in length, is essentially a freeboard dike over 3,000 feet in length. The maximum water depth behind this dike will be 10 feet. The right abutment dike is approximately 8,500 feet long, of which about 2,600 feet is freeboard dike. The maximum water depth behind this dike is about 14 feet at full supply level.

After a very detailed study of all adjacent soil, analysed and tested — with technical terms, some of which I would not undertake to explain — the conclusion on page 16 of this record was that the recommended control works will maintain the water table — at or below the present level, despite the presence of the reservoir. On page 17 provided the recommended control works are constructed and maintained, there should be no adverse effect of the reservoir on the land in the adjacent area. However, Mr. Speaker, it is mentioned: seepage will occur into the sand and gravel that rest on the bedrock, but, on the north side of the river, the land slopes up to the north, and therefore will drain toward the river, not noticeably on the surface soil.

On page 19 of the same record: on the south side of the dam, seepage will also occur into the sand and gravel on bedrock. However, these gravels are drained within 500 feet of the Little Red Deer River. This is a smaller river that is adjacent to the big Red and joins it several miles down from the damsite. This side effect of the seepage toward the Little Red will likely be the development of some additional spring activity in the base of the Little Red Deer valley, but will not be discernible.

Mr. Speaker, in the summary of this record, seepage losses from the reservoir do not pose a significant problem to this Site 6. The major source of seepage loss will be through the Dickson sand and gravel into the Little Red Deer River. Conservative estimates of loss in this manner is in the order of less than 4 cubic feet per second, which is relatively insignificant. In any event, as this water re-enters the Red Deer River downstream from the site, it is not a loss to the Red Deer River system.

Mr. Speaker, as this progressive project of our government is in my constituency, I am quite aware that those people who are directly affected, who may be willing to settle fairly with our government, are being discouraged or stirred up and confused by the leader of the socialistic credit party, the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, and the hon. NDP Member for Spirit River-Fairview. At the same time, several farmers affected by this project have personally told me they were agreeable to fair compensation. A few have already settled and are reasonably happy.

So, Mr. Speaker, I feel that this has now become a political issue and is being carried far beyond reason. I am at a loss to understand the purpose of these two leaders, of supposedly separate parties, combining their forces to oppose such a progressive project as the dam at Site 6.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say a word or two in connection with this resolution. The people of my constituency have been asking for a dam for several years; as a matter of fact, for many,

many years. I don't think we need to argue about the need of the dam.

At my recent session of public meetings, some 25 throughout the constituency, this project was discussed in detail with a public question period and an observation period following that. When the vote was taken, 68 per cent of the people attending those meetings throughout the entire riding of Drumheller wanted the dam built at Site 6, and only 5.8 per cent said no. The balance did not vote. So I could say that close to 85 per cent of the people in the Drumheller Valley favored construction of the dam at Site 6.

The next point I would like to mention is that practically all these people felt very strongly that the landowners who are going to be displaced and whose land was going to be taken, should be compensated generously. They felt that was a proper thing to do, and I believe that will be done.

The other point I would like to mention is that it amazes me how many people are being misled by, in my view, misleading facts. I have every sympathy for the owners of the somewhat under eight sections of land that are going to be involved. I know it's not quite eight, but I'm going to say eight. I've said that was cultivated; I realize some of it wasn't. But assuming it was all cultivated, when I compare that with what took place on the Gardiner Dam in Saskatchewan, where 171 sections of land were taken, 32 under cultivation, and when we look at the results of the Gardiner Dam in diversification and in benefits to the people — the farmers, the people of Saskatchewan generally, and the people of Canada — it's almost impossible to estimate the value that has come out of that dam. In my view, similar benefits will come from the Red Deer dam.

As a matter of fact, I don't know how we're ever going to supply water for this modern world if we don't build dams. I think it will be impossible to supply the necessary water if we don't build dams. Every year millions of acre-feet of water are lost — simply running away, doing no good, but doing a lot of harm — that should be put behind dams and kept there for the benefit of our people.

The design of the dam does not worry me. I have every confidence in the engineers in this province, and I congratulate the government and the minister for choosing a man of the engineering calibre of Dr. Ralph McManus, an outstanding engineer of the world, I could say. I've never seen him do anything that wasn't just top-notch. He engineered the bridge over the Peace River, the first suspension bridge in this province, and did a tremendous job. He also has a tremendous realization of getting full value for every dollar spent.

I'm not worrying about the design. When I looked at the Gardiner Dam — and I took the pains to go and see that this summer — I didn't see any problem involved in seepage. Engineers have been able to overcome that. Having a hearing will not solve that problem. It's not a hearing of the engineers, so it would do nothing toward that type of thing, as suggested by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

When I look at the Daniel Johnson Dam, again an earth-built dam, there are no difficulties with seepage. Engineers' technology has advanced tremendously, and I have every confidence the engineers will meet every engineering challenge in conjunction with the dam.

Now I want to deal with one other point. Some information has been given that the government has not chosen the proper site. I've analysed this carefully and, based on the following facts, this is the conclusion I've come to. First of all, what were the alternatives? The alternative was off-stream storage. When I look at off-stream storage, costing \$47 million, and realize only 50,000 acre-feet of storage is possible in Sylvan Lake, Buffalo Lake, and the designated coulees, I say, well, that's one figure. At \$47 million we can get 50,000 acre-feet of storage.

Now that's going to do a lot of damage — I'm not going into that — around Sylvan Lake. I remember the day when the people of Sylvan Lake came to me when I was in Highways, and pointed out that we had to do something to get the water of that lake down — not up, but down — because it was flooding so many properties around that lake. I can see tremendous havoc coming about if we [inaudible]. But I'm not dealing with that; I'm dealing with the straight figures of \$47 million for that off-stream storage, and even the authorities said that would only provide storage for a very few years.

So I look at the next site, Site 11, costing \$85 million. There we get 235,000 acre-feet of storage from that river, probably more than we'd ever need in this province. That's the project — \$85 million. Then I look at Site 6, costing some \$52 million — \$51.5 million is the figure the minister has used — providing 155,000 acre-feet of storage which, it is indicated, is ample water to do anything we'll ever want to do on the Red Deer River.

If you were a businessman, and you were investing your money, which one would you choose? The off-stream storage at \$47 million? Well, you would only have enough storage for two, three, or a handful of years, and then have to go and build one of the other dams, as the authorities suggested. I don't know whether the authority thinks public money comes from trees or not, but in my view that would be a waste of public money.

Then, compare the two dams. You get everything you want out of one, at \$52 million, and the other one's costing \$85 million — \$18 million to \$20 million difference. Which one would you invest your money in? And besides that, Site 6 provides benefits that Site 11 doesn't provide, such as some flood control.

I've been in homes where people have cried and said, can't we do something about this river? I saw their basements filled with silt, and I saw their pianos, their chesterfields, their chairs, ruined by the floods in the Drumheller valley. I wish some of those who oppose this project could be in one of those homes in just one flood. Unless we do something, there will be another one of these years.

This will have a possibility of doing something toward the control of that flood, and with the diking we should be able to do a lot toward entirely controlling that flood in the Drumheller valley.

I want to mention one other thing; I don't want to speak very much longer. I feel sorry that we have to take some eight sections of farmland from farmers. I wished many times, as I'm sure the hon. Minister of Transportation wishes many times, that you could build highways and dams on skyhooks. It would be a wonderful thing. But you can't. If you're going to benefit the public you have to take land somewhere,

and you try to keep it to a minimum. Well, those eight sections are required.

But, what is it going to do? When we were discussing this, a farmer in the Munson area said yes, I'm sorry about the eight sections. But, he said, hundreds of acres in this special area will be able to be brought under cultivation if we can get the stabilized flow in the Red Deer River so we can move water up into that very dry area. So we replace it with hundreds of acres. I look at the erosion because of some flood condition that will be saved. Every year it's chopping off. Some eight acres alone have been taken from the Cambria area. When I realize the land we're going to save through that erosion control, again we have a tremendous benefit.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to speak any longer. I'm just going to say that in my view the government has gone the second mile in giving to the people the information that this has tremendous benefits for the people. We want some flood control, we want a stabilized flow of water, so when the people of Drumheller and Red Deer turn on their taps in the wintertime they can expect to get some water. We have tremendous benefits, and I say let's get on and build the dam.

DR. HORNER: I beg leave to adjourn the debate, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, before we vote on the motion. In light of the matter that if we don't vote on this motion this afternoon, we likely won't be able to get these people to come before the Assembly before we debate the estimates, I certainly would ask the Deputy Premier or the Government House Leader to seriously consider the possibility of us being able to continue the debate. I recognize it would have to be on a unanimous basis, because of the time, but that we use that approach so we can come to some conclusion here this afternoon.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I can't predict what the progress of the Order Paper is going to be on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons, being private members' afternoons. But certainly, depending on the course and speed at which the business is conducted, which to some significant degree depends on the activities or non-activities of the members of the opposition, we'll keep an eye on the way this motion is proceeding, bearing in mind the extent to which there is a full opportunity for debate in the estimates.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, might I simply make the point to the members of the House that the budget comes down next Friday. Within one week after that we get dealing with the estimates. That's why we chose to raise the matter here today, so that the opportunity would be provided to people to come before the Assembly prior to members dealing with the estimates. I would ask the Government House Leader, with the greatest sincerity, that we continue the debate this afternoon, and if necessary go past 5:30, so we can come to some sort of resolution on this motion this afternoon. Then we could have that hearing in the House, the House being agreeable, prior to discussion of the estimates.

MR. HYNDMAN: It's not possible to predict, Mr. Speaker, and I don't know how many other people would like to speak on the debate. But in order to change the rules of the Assembly, which is what the hon. opposition leader is asking for now, I think we would have to have unanimous leave of the Assembly. I believe the rules which we passed two days ago, interim for this session, as for the past three, relate to one hour, a period of 60 minutes, on Thursday afternoons. So I understand it's essentially a matter for the private members of the Assembly to make a decision on, not the Government House Leader. If the hon. member wants to make a motion or ask unanimous leave, he can do so.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would then ask for unanimous leave by the House to continue the debate until the motion is called.

MR. COOKSON: I was going to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that I believe under our rules the Leader of the Opposition could designate this to come forward a week from today.

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. Member for Lacombe, I think a second designation of the same motion is expressly ruled out by the standing order.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, I have some concern if we continue the debate this afternoon, inasmuch as the members of the opposition, in their [response to the] Speech from the Throne, did not raise extensively the matter of this debate. Thursday afternoon is a very short period of time for private members' public bills. If we eliminate that one hour today, or if we give up each Thursday afternoon or any number of Thursday afternoons, I think some of us feel very strongly about whether bills we have introduced will have an opportunity to be heard through the entire spring session.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, might I say that if the hon. member could see her way clear to giving unanimous consent, certainly we could be prepared to arrange for that early part of a Thursday afternoon to pick up the time lost for private members' bills, if that would satisfy the members of the House. We're very flexible, simply trying to get this matter to a resolution this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm obliged to put the request of the hon. leader to the House. Is there unanimous consent as requested by the hon. Leader of the Opposition?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The consent is not unanimous. We must therefore proceed to the next order of business.

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

Bill 202

The Ecological Reserves Act

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to give second reading to Bill [202], The Ecological Reserves Act, standing in my name. This is a subject which is significant for all Albertans. One of the greatest legacies we can bequeath to our descendants is the preservation of our natural environment. The establishment of ecological reserves provides us that opportunity. Ecological reserves can be thought of as living laboratories. I cannot stress enough the importance of maintaining these outdoor laboratories for the future.

Ecological reserves serve various purposes. They may be used as a base line or bench mark. This provides a basis for measuring changes in the environment. For example, we know now that the frost-free days needed to mature a crop of wheat have advanced approximately 200 miles north in Alberta. As I have mentioned already, they also serve as natural outdoor experiments for classrooms and students at any level in the education system.

Mr. Speaker, ecological reserves may be used as genetic banks — a sort of nature museum function which can provide us with the tools and safeguards against future adversities of unknown magnitude. Therefore, benefits are gained by the scientific community, students, researchers, educators, and other resource experts, now as well as in the future. The necessity, Mr. Speaker, of legislation is to clearly establish ecological reserves for the future, because destruction on a major scale has become tragically within the realm of possibility. If we establish ecological reserves now, it shows we have the foresight to meet the challenges of laying out a preservation framework for the future.

At present it is so easy to say, we have no reason to be concerned; we have more than enough land and a few people to populate and develop it; and the impact of people on the environment is insignificant. It is so easy to say those words. But what we should be doing is acting now to secure the future of our environment before preservation becomes a demanding need.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, it is a great tragedy if a rare or endangered plant or animal is lost to us. However, the greater tragedy is failing to take advantage of the opportunity to preserve our special plants and animals. We recognize the problem now; we must start working on a solution.

As I pointed out in the introduction of this bill last week, ecological reserves afford us the opportunity to study the recovery of the environment from human modification. That's a tremendous opportunity, to be able to predict with fair accuracy the results of a planned industrial project. If given forewarning, we can take measures to counteract environmental damage while industrial development is still being carried out. Consequently, benefits are twofold. They profit not only from industrial development, but also from an undamaged environment.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, this bill is a highly practical

proposal from many points of view. It is an act of fair play, generosity, and self-interest. The utilization of land is improved. As well, all Albertans benefit.

Mr. Speaker, 14 small portions of land have been proposed as sites for ecological reserves. Although this is not a large number, there is a great enough geographical distribution that many Alberta constituencies can benefit. Use of people in each constituency in establishing and maintaining ecological reserves will be necessary, for this work cannot be done solely by the people in Edmonton or in Calgary.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, certain areas of the province are not well represented. The northwestern, the north forest regions require considerably more survey time, as they are such large areas and not easily accessible. Many areas, especially in the aspen parkland, are unsuitable for ecological reserves, as they have been farmed or have oil or gas developments on them.

A few years ago, Mr. Speaker, 188 natural areas were designated hurriedly by order in council by members opposite. Many of these areas are useless as ecological reserves, because they are too small or are presently being farmed. At the present time the lands act is not sufficient protection, as it applies only in the white and yellow zones of the province. The green zone, which is under considerable development pressures from farming, lumbering, and energy interests, is not protected by the lands act.

Despite the fact that the province has huge wilderness areas, Mr. Speaker, they are not properly established to take the place of ecological reserves; for example, the ice caves north of Pincher Creek or Canada's only moving sand dunes at Fort Chip. Or they do not contain rare plants such as the Spanish bayonet, which needs and deserves protection.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, in the past I have tabled many items in this Legislature: a lump of coal on my remarks on the Dodds-Round Hill power project; a section of bush at the time we were debating a beautification project by Calgary Power; and a horse-shoe when we were establishing a horse industry department. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to draw your attention and that of my fellow members to this example of the Spanish bayonet.

AN HON. MEMBER: Looks wilted.

MR. STROMBERG: Unfortunately I am forced, due to the rare nature of this plant, to break with tradition and not table it as an exhibit, but I did want to share it with the members present here today. And by the way, this plant is most beautiful when in bloom.

AN HON. MEMBER: When's that?

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to see huge parcels of land set aside just for the sake of setting aside land. I'm merely asking that small areas be protected for significant and special use, but in a controlled situation. The controls in this case are permits required for access to the use of the reserve. If the particular management plan allows, even grazing, hunting, and fishing might be permitted in a specific reserve where such activities do not dispute the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to end my speech today with a statement Mr. Clifford Evans made to the Brit-

ish Ecological Society in 1975.

Conservation is often presented as a clinging to the past; not so — what we are engaged in preserving is opportunities for the future. In the long run probably the most important aspect of the conservation of ecosystems is the preservation of biological systems which may meet needs as yet [unforeseen].

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray caught the Chair's eye first, if that is not a mixed metaphor.

MR. TESOLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on The Ecological Reserves Act. The recently announced eastern slopes policy, the establishment of Kananaskis Park and Kananaskis Country, are examples of this government's concern for preserving our unique natural heritage.

The eastern slopes of Alberta's Rocky Mountains, predominantly covered by some 35,000 square miles of forest, will be preserved through this government's initiative. The establishment of Kananaskis Park provides Albertans with unique recreational and educational experiences. Many square miles of mountain country will be permanently preserved for all Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, The Ecological Reserves Act introduced in this Assembly expresses the need for the establishment of smaller representative samples of Alberta's environmental heritage. These ecological reserves are designed to serve two important functions. First, they are designed as bench marks against which to measure change. Secondly, they serve as outdoor laboratories in which to develop techniques of renewable resource management.

In an ever-changing world where the effects of industrialization are marked, it is essential that we preserve undisturbed for future Albertans examples of ecosystems unique to Alberta and, in some cases, Canada. Within the Lac La Biche-McMurray constituency, Mr. Speaker, Alberta's largest electoral district, we have many excellent examples of the boreal forest ecosystem. The features of this area illustrate a fascinating geological history.

Mr. Speaker, the development of the Canadian Shield began over 500 million years ago. The Shield has been shaped by the laying down of numerous layers of rock, each layer deposited at a different point in geological history. The rock layers were covered by an immense ice sheet. As this ice melted, the physical features of northeastern Alberta, as we know them today, began to emerge. These features include rolling spruce and pine forest interspersed with rock-bound lakes. Because these areas are unique, it is vital that representative areas of the Canadian Shield be preserved for the benefit of future citizens of Alberta.

In the Slave River area alone, over a dozen species of fish can be found. A large number of animals live along the river banks and uplands, ranging in size from the tiny shrew to the Canadian moose. Many species of migratory and resident birds are sighted each year, making the Slave River area a photographer's paradise.

Mr. Speaker, the Athabasca delta further to the

west is one of the most important waterfowl production and staging areas in North America. Literally millions of ducks and geese use the area each year. The best remaining examples of such unique environments deserve to survive. By supporting this bill and ensuring that a carefully chosen province-wide network of ecological reserves is established, we will guarantee that no part of Alberta will be totally depleted of its diversity of natural ecosystems.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, for reasons of scientific research and educational purposes, for representative examples of natural ecosystems, for opportunities to study recovery of natural ecosystems from human modification, for preservation of habitat for endangered native plants and animals in their natural habitat, and, Mr. Speaker, for the preservation of unique and rare examples of botanical, zoological, and geological phenomena, I wish to support this bill.

MR. BUTLER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise in my place and make a few comments on Bill 202. Unlike my other two colleagues, I do not support the bill. I have been a conservationist all my life. I'm an adamant conservationist. Particularly in the southern, semi-arid part of the province, I'm relatively well acquainted with how conservation has been carried out and what needs to be conserved. I am sure that throughout the years, and throughout the life of Canada, conservation has been foremost in the minds of the people who were in authority, because I believe a good job has been done on conservation.

Throughout the years, the buffalo roamed the plains. Things haven't changed that much; today the buffalo are replaced by cattle. We can go around ranches in the southern part of the province and find that things haven't changed very much for the last hundred years. There are plenty of places, and will be plenty of places, where all of these studies can be carried out.

Throughout the years, I find that an unused portion of the prairies soon becomes a detriment, and it's the same in the forest reserve. The quickest way to move game out of the forest reserve would be to move all the cattle and have no grazing whatsoever in there. You'd soon find the game would be outside the reserve on the fresh grass. This has been proven with studies in Montana, and I'm sure this will happen, because anyplace old grass is allowed to build up throughout many years, you run across two things: you create a fire hazard so it will burn and become fresh again, or you have a hard time to keep anything on it. Even with cattle, if you let part of your ranch build up to the point where there is a lot of old grass — this happens in dry years when water in certain parts of the grazing land disappears — you have a difficult time getting cattle back onto that.

You have two ways of doing it, either controlling your grazing with salt, going back and haying part of the place if it is level enough where you can cut hay on it, or you can winter graze it. But some way you have to get that old grass off, or nothing stays on it. Game will always follow grazing, where the grass is fresh. In the ecological part of the province the grass is as good today as it was a hundred years ago, and I'm sure it will be as good a hundred years from now, as long as it's looked after as well as it has been the last hundred years.

Mr. Speaker, I've spent my whole life in the open,

either in the forest, on the farm, riding the range, or in lumbering; I have helped fight forest fires; I've fought prairie fires; I've seen game come and go. My experience is very short, over about the last 45 years, that I've been involved in this, but I've seen nothing but improvement in the overall picture. So I'm sure that if we set aside ecological reserves, particularly in the southern part of the province, we would find that they would be more a detriment to us than a help. That is my feeling through experience, Mr. Speaker, so I cannot support the bill.

Thank you.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to speak for a few moments on Bill 202. I'm not quite as clear as the Member for Hanna-Oyen is on what my delivery is going to be, because I'm not sure whether I'm going to support or reject it. But I suppose that will work its way out through the system.

I'd like to commend the hon. member Mr. Stromberg for bringing in the bill, The Ecological Reserves Act, because, first of all, I think it's important that we debate these issues. This is the place where all legislation has to be debated, where ideas are presented, and where we try to represent the constituents who put us in this enviable position.

If you look at the history of Alberta in terms of habitat by humans, it is a relatively short history, and one of the members reviewed some of the geological history of Canada for us. We realize that Canada has been here a long time, has gone through a number of ice ages and periods of forestation. History indicates that our great oil reserves were a result of one, two, three, four, or more of these periods in our history. I think there probably has been more transformation in the surface habitat since man took over exploiting the minerals and resources of the province and of Canada than at any time prior to this. I know our native people probably couldn't be charged with destruction of our ecological characteristics to the degree the white man has. Perhaps I can refer to the statement of an Indian who suggested that the white man was crazy because he turned the grass upside down. It's a pretty understandable statement, and I'm not sure whether we were wise in doing this or not.

The hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen lives in an area where we found we couldn't turn the grass upside down, for a lot of the area, and it's probably better we found that out, because I think, in terms of production, we are wiser to leave the surface the way a lot of it is in that particular area.

I suppose when we're talking about ecological reserves and problems of ecology, we could include not only plant life. I believe the definition does include other things; but certainly it's an interrelation, as the definition of ecology is explained, between man and animal and plant life in their natural environment. So it does also include animals — birds, fish, and other types of animal life. So if we're talking in terms of preservation, we should be considering all these factors.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's safe to say our government, and perhaps to some degree the government before us, has to some extent helped to preserve the environment as it was when our forefathers came. I only have to review some of the departments involved. The Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife, for example, has recently defined the Kananaskis area as

a provincial park. I think that's a great step forward, for the province to have such a large area preserved for park. I might add at this point that even though the bill defines endangered species, et cetera, and primarily areas where humans are really restricted, even though it represents those areas, our parks do protect environment to a fairly large degree, and the different ecological problems that occur. We do this by legislation and regulation.

I suppose after that meeting last night — we had a very enjoyable meeting with the people who represent the snowmobile groups in Alberta — they have their own case to make that snowmobiles are not destructive to the ecology. But there are a lot of studies to indicate that they can be destructive to the ecology, again depending on, for example, snowfall and weather conditions. So I think we as a government have to lay down rules and regulations for humans if we are really sincere about preserving the ecology.

We have in Alberta the large federal parks, containing the largest areas in Canada. I know that the decision some years ago, for example, to control the expansion by Imperial in the Lake Louise area was partially based on concerns for the ecology. So we are taking steps to preserve our heritage.

Under environment many, many decisions have to be made to preserve our natural environment. The problem of pollution of lakes, and the pretty stiff regulations this government has brought in with regard to air and water pollution certainly are making their contribution toward preservation.

Under the fish and wildlife act we have restricted hunting to only certain types of animals and birds at certain times of the year. If you look very carefully at the list, we find that on the recommendations of our people and the specialists in the area, we are in fact closing certain areas for hunting. We are restricting the time limits and the kinds of birds that can be hunted, and the time of year in which they can be hunted. So again, I just want to re-emphasize to the Legislature that we are doing a lot to preserve the ecology.

Probably the greatest concern we should be addressing ourselves to, Mr. Speaker, would be the area of flora, or plant life. I believe the bill concerns itself perhaps to a larger degree to the flora and fauna situation. I think this is important. I really think it's important that we address ourselves to this. I remember, as a small boy, walking to school in the spring and enjoying the sights of the lady's-slipper, which perhaps some of you aren't familiar with. It's a little delicate flower which is becoming probably restricted in the areas in which it can survive. The lady's-slipper, and what we commonly called the shooting star, another beautiful little delicate flower which raises its head in the spring and has a very delicate perfume, have been confined to certain areas.

To the Member for Hanna-Oyen, with all due respect, there are certain areas in which these little plant life types don't get along too well with livestock. In this particular case these delicate types of flowers are found often along railway tracks. By the way, to the Minister of Transportation, if we do preserve, or are able to take over the vacated railway rights of way, we should give some consideration to that point, too, that it's perhaps one of the last areas of the

province, in the settled areas, that still has some of the native flora and fauna which was here when the white man came.

I just want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that as we go on from generation to generation, as our population increases, we are going to have a more and more difficult time to preserve some of these very delicate types. There are many, many hundreds of them. Anyone who has taken courses in botany or biology — but botany in particular, with reference to plants — will know that many, many species here in Alberta are becoming endangered because of the white man's settlement and turning the grass upside down sort of thing. Some of those specializing in these areas are finding it difficult to find areas in which they can do research and study, and I think it would be a tragedy if we did neglect this particular area.

I know that one of the great problems with passing new legislation, and then creating another branch of a department, or another responsibility for a minister, and subsequently creating more civil service, is that we lend ourselves to criticism, and justly so, for higher and higher costs in the capacity of government. I can't help but mention that the cost isn't over when one locates these areas and sets them aside. I think the Minister of Culture, because he is here today, probably realizes that that is often the case. When you as a government set aside an historical site for preservation, then you in a sense commit yourself to maintenance or long-term preservation. And that is a costly thing. I'm not criticizing the fact that we should or shouldn't be doing this. I'm simply stating that as we go along we'll find the costs of maintenance and so on will escalate. The same thing will apply to setting aside tracts of land for preservation of flora and fauna.

I'd just like to make passing reference to an area in my constituency which was set aside under the land act in 1976. If you're familiar with my constituency, it's in the Morningside area south of the town of Ponoka. Under the associate minister of minerals and resources we were fortunate to acquire a section of property almost totally in its natural state — and it can be done under the land act. Now that is a pretty unique piece of property in terms of the Edmonton-Calgary corridor, practically all of which has now been put into production under private ownership. I'm looking forward to use of that particular section of land which, incidentally, has large numbers of deer that move back and forth onto private land. It has a very heavy growth of coniferous, some deciduous, and many of the other types of wild fruit trees that 50 years down the road, or maybe less, will become quite an attraction, in particular to our young students coming up who will not have the opportunity to witness essentially what Alberta looked like at the time of settlement. So that's just one area that has been set aside. No major expense has been gone to as yet, but it is hopefully set aside in perpetuity, especially for students who may come out with their instructors to study the wildlife habitat. As I say, I'm looking forward to considerable use of this, particularly by students taking these special courses and those in colleges and universities.

I said at one time in the Legislature that it would be nice if we could perhaps tap something out of the heritage trust fund for this kind of preservation of our heritage. I throw this out to the Legislature in the

hope that it will be picked up and perhaps given some consideration by those who were on that particular committee.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I think the member has presented a worthy project to the Legislature. I again caution the balancing of cost with what a government should be doing, and I also throw out the suggestion that we shouldn't discourage private ownership of these ecological reserves. If the province is prepared to lay out money for such areas, then it is conceivable to me that private enterprise might be encouraged to do the same, and perhaps at considerably less cost.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, Bill 202 brings a very interesting item of legislation before this Assembly. I commend the Member for Camrose for presenting this bill to the House.

In this day and age, I believe that most of our population is concerned with our environment and the ecological considerations we have to face. The Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray has given a very descriptive account of what we have in northeast Alberta. It's quite fascinating and intriguing, describing some of the natural features in that particular part of the country, going back through the various ice ages, and telling us how these things developed.

There are many beautiful parts to Alberta and northeast Alberta; the lakes, rivers and, as has been mentioned here by other speakers this afternoon, features in other parts of Alberta that are worthy of consideration as far as our environmental concern is carried out. We have also, of course, to face the fact that no matter how far we as human beings can go in trying to preserve what nature has provided, nature itself will take a hand in changing its own ecology and the environment in which we live.

If we study our history of this continent, we find some contradictions in the matter of how various populations were started, and how they evolved. We can go into South America and study the land of Peru and the Incas there, the first natives that were discovered when the Spanish conquerors came to this part of the hemisphere. We can go into Central America and study the old civilization of the Mayas and the Aztecs, and the way their civilization developed. We are also told in our historical studies that perhaps 10,000 years ago or more these original settlers in these two continents walked to North and South America across a land bridge from Siberia, now the Bering Strait. I think that is a good illustration of how nature takes the course in deciding what our ecology is going to be.

We have many unanswered questions, as far as our ecology is concerned. I am not too sure that by taking a very definite step such as is suggested by this bill, in setting up various reserves for this particular purpose, we are actually going to achieve the desired objectives as they're stated in the bill. I think it's a worthy consideration, but I'm not too sure that we as human beings are going to be able to achieve this objective.

I also have to be concerned with some groups of people. I have mentioned the ones who have concern in our society. But then we have another group who say, yes, I would like to preserve our environment the way it is, and make sure it's maintained; but the bird or animal I shoot, or the tree I cut down, that one or just that few are not going to have any effect. Being

a very ardent conservationist myself, this brings me many misgivings on this type of thought.

Then of course we have yet another school, who have utter disregard for anything of an environmental nature and will destroy without any consideration. I think these are the types of people we have and, even if we set up reserves such as the bill suggests, I don't know if this would achieve the purpose. I do not think even small elements of reserves set up in that manner would be sufficient to preserve all the wonderful features of our environment and our ecological society.

As the Member for Lacombe has suggested, I think that perhaps within some of the framework, some of the structure of existing facilities, within government or the private community, some of these things can be done. But as for bringing another bureaucratic empire within the government to try to achieve this particular objective, I must say, Mr. Speaker, I have

considerable misgivings as to whether it will achieve its purpose. I really do not think, for that reason, that I would support the bill in its present form.

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

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Assembly will not sit tonight. I move we call it 5:30.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:23 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]