

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Friday, March 10, 1978 10:00 a.m.

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 15**
The Motor Transport
Amendment Act, 1978

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 15, The Motor Transport Amendment Act, 1978. This bill does not have any policy changes, but it improves the enforcement provisions of the act.

[Leave granted; Bill 15 read a first time]

Bill 14
The Alberta Games Council Act

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 14, The Alberta Games Council Act.

Mr. Speaker, the principle of this bill is to establish the Alberta Games Council as a Crown corporation with the responsibility of conducting the successful Alberta winter and summer games. Such a corporation, having the general support and approval of government, would encourage participation of communities, private industry, and organizations in terms of contributions of goods, services, and financial support for the said games.

[Leave granted; Bill 14 read a first time]

Bill 206
The Adult Publications Act

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a private member's bill, Bill 206, The Adult Publications Act.

The purpose of this bill is to restrict the sale of pornographic materials to stores specifically licensed for this purpose, and to deny minors access to such stores. It shall also be an offence under the provisions of this act to sell, give, or supply in any manner whatsoever pornographic materials to a minor.

[Leave granted; Bill 206 read a first time]

Bill 229
The Mortgage Payment Penalty Act

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce private member's Bill 229, The Mortgage Payment Penalty Act. The purpose of Bill 229 would be to prevent mortgage lenders from charging penalties against persons who pay out their mortgage before the full term of that mortgage has expired.

[Leave granted; Bill 229 read a first time]

Bill 231
An Act to Amend The Individual's
Rights Protection Act

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 231, An Act to Amend The Individual's Rights Protection Act. The objective of this bill is to allow an individual the maximum opportunity to follow his or her own choice whether to work or retire. Under the current provisions of The Individual's Rights Protection Act, no recourse is available for persons who wish to remain in the work force beyond age 65 and are prevented from doing so because of age. In essence, it is a move to get rid of compulsory retirement at age 65.

[Leave granted; Bill 231 read a first time]

Bill 207
An Act to Amend The Alberta
Health Care Insurance Act

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 207, An Act to Amend The Alberta Health Care Insurance Act. This act makes it possible to provide dental services for persons under the age of 12.

[Leave granted; Bill 207 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I have the honor to table the ninth annual report of the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation for the year ending March 31, 1977.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I would like to file the manifest of Alberta Government Services aircraft with respect to air travel of the Executive Council and government agencies for the calendar year 1977.

DR. BUCK: Oh, it's getting bigger every year.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Legislature an important document relative to a corridor study from Fort MacKay to Fort Chipewyan, a very important and unexplored area of our province.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, a provincial essay contest has traditionally been a highlight of Education Week. Over the years this contest has been open to several different grade levels in Alberta schools, and has covered a number of interesting subjects. The calibre of writing and obvious quality of thought that have gone into these essays have been an annual reminder of the talent and diligence of our province's students.

It is my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, as we near the close of Education Week, 1978, to introduce the winners of this year's competition to the members of the Legislature. The six winners, representing grades 4 to 9, are

seated with their teachers in the Speaker's gallery.

In keeping with the important events that we'll all be enjoying later on this summer, Mr. Speaker, and referred to in the Speech from the Throne, the theme for the competition this year was the Commonwealth Games. The six winners were chosen from over 70 finalists from all over the province, and represent the best at their grade levels.

Mr. Speaker, grade 4 students were asked to write about the theme "I like playing games because ...". The winner expressed these thoughts:

When I think of all the reasons why I like playing games, the number would be large, but they all fit under two different groups. First of all I play games to learn the good things in life. These things include, self respect, fun, challenge, sharing, and cooperating. The other thing I like about playing games is to learn from the bad things. I hate things like cheating, hurting, disrespect and tempers. For these reasons, games will be important to me, no matter what my age is.

Mr. Speaker, the winner of the grade 4 essay contest is Miss Tracy Gunsch of the Thorsby Elementary School in the county of Leduc. She is accompanied by her teacher, Mr. Oswald. I would ask Tracy and her teacher to stand and be recognized.

In his winning essay, the grade 5 student expressed these thoughts:

Television shows poor sportsmanship by lots of professionals. How much better it is when the coach teaches the younger players to shake hands and say, it was a good game. Players should learn how to be cheerful losers and not to be proud winners.

The winner of the grade 5 essay competition, Mr. Tom Wambeke of Longview school. High River, is accompanied by his teacher, Cathy Reay, and I would ask them to stand and receive the recognition of the Assembly.

The grade 6 students, Mr. Speaker, were asked to incorporate in their essays the theme "If I Were an Athlete at the Commonwealth Games". The winner expressed these thoughts:

The day that tells the tale comes and will prove how hard I have worked. I find I am somewhat nervous. During warm-up exercises the words of my coach come back to me, "You have strength — stamina — agility. You have desire. Are you an average athlete or are you a champion?"

Suddenly I see myself mounting the victory stand, and I see the Canadian flag being raised, just for me!

For one glorious moment my name is not Shawna. It is Canada!

The impossible dream?
I wonder!

The winner, Shawna Kuzio, again of the Thorsby Elementary School, accompanied by her teacher, Mrs. Chranowski. I would ask them both to stand and receive the recognition of the House.

The junior high school students were asked to incorporate in their essays the theme "Why the Commonwealth Games are Important", and the grade 7 winner expressed these thoughts:

It takes many people working and playing together with trust and honour to show other countries of the world that we really can live and compete

together in harmony. Therefore, we must practice peace and have respect for our fellowman before we can truly live in peace forever. When the contestants and their friends and families visit our country for the Commonwealth Games we must show them that we are glad they came to compete in our great country and we want them to feel "right at home".

The winner of the grade 7 essay competition, Mr. Stuart Cutter of the Rosedale Junior High School in Calgary, is accompanied by his teacher, Mr. Cave, and I would ask them to rise and receive the recognition of the House.

In grade 8 the winning essay incorporated these thoughts:

Goals achieved, records set, recognition acquired, money earned, national pride upheld — these can, and most likely will, fade and possibly disappear altogether with time. But if the motivation for excellence comes from the love of a sport, from a deep-felt desire to learn, contribute — to both give and take from the sport — then there is a powerful motivation and commitment that will not likely fade or tarnish.

The grade 8 winner, Kimberley Rae Forrest, of the Ian Bazalgette Junior High School in Calgary, is accompanied by her teacher, Mr. Nelner. I would ask them to rise and receive the recognition of the House.

And the winner of the grade 9 essay competition expressed these thoughts:

I urge the support of the upcoming Commonwealth Games because they are so vitally important to our present society. When people have little in common except for history it is almost miraculous that they can come together in such magnificent harmony to celebrate their pasts, presents and to dream and hope together for their future.

Mr. Speaker, the winner of the grade 9 essay competition is Joy Gregory of the St. Thomas Aquinas School at Provost. She's accompanied by her teacher, Mr. Doetzel. I would ask them to rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, these six fine students and their teachers are to be commended for the excellent work. I'm sure all hon. members would like to join me in wishing them equal successes in all their future endeavors.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I should express the appreciation of all hon. members for those who shared in the work of the education committee. Three are with us, in the members gallery, and I would like them to receive the recognition of the Assembly. They are Mrs. Doris Christie, Beryl Balhorn of the Alberta Home and School Association, and Nick Chamchuk from the Department of Education.

MR. SPEAKER: This altogether unique form of introduction necessarily demands that the hon. Leader of the Opposition be given full and ample opportunity to deal with the same topic.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in taking part in paying tribute to the winners of the essays for Education Week, might I say on behalf of the members of this side of the House: our very sincere and genuine congratulations today to those young people who

have shown not only members of this Assembly but the people of this province that young people in this province do, in fact, have the ability to communicate very effectively. I most sincerely congratulate the winners.

Might I say to those individuals, the teachers: having been a teacher myself, I can appreciate some of the sense of pride and accomplishment and achievement you would have on this particular occasion. I say to the winners, and to all those associated with Education Week: indeed this is a fitting way to conclude Education Week. I think it indicates to the people that the young people in our education system in this province are a very able group.

MR. DOAN: Mr. Speaker, on your behalf, it gives me pleasure at this time to introduce to my colleagues in this Assembly 35 grade 5 students from the James Gibbons School, located in the Edmonton Meadowlark constituency. I understand, Mr. Speaker, you've already met with these students this morning, to welcome them and to take pictures. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Watters, and are sitting in the public gallery. I would ask them to stand and receive the welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure this morning to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, four members of the Pipestone 4-H Club from my constituency. They are: Esther Lang, Jean Cameron, Shirley McKinney, and Marie Kemp. They are accompanied by their assistant club leader, Mrs. Irene Minchow, and their driver, Bill Kemp.

Mr. Speaker, they were here this morning with representatives of Palm Dairies, and the delightful animal which I'm sure each and every one of you saw in front of the Legislature Building — a dairy cow named Linda. Together with the Minister of Agriculture, they are here to kick off the first selection of Alberta's farmer's daughter contest. The winner of this contest will receive a \$1,000 educational scholarship. It's my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. Minister of Agriculture did successfully milk the cow for the press.

Our guests are seated in the members gallery, and I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. Government House Leader. I just wanted to inquire whether Linda was here to be introduced. [laughter]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me this morning to introduce to you, and to members of the Assembly, almost two dozen grade 5 students from an elementary school in my constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Pelensky.

I can testify personally that they are getting a good start in life at Glenora School, because I spent from 1940 to 1943 there myself. I ask that they stand in the public gallery and be recognized by the Assembly at this time.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in introducing three very special guests this morning, too: Mr. and Mrs. Archie Klaiber of Strathmore, and Mrs. C.G. Johnson, formerly of Strathmore, now of

Edmonton.

Mr. Klaiber spent four years on the county of Wheatland council and 15 years on the town council of Strathmore. He's an irrigation farmer; he raises cattle and grain. You may say, what's special about all this? The thing that's special is that Mr. Klaiber is blind. He's a tremendous inspiration to the people of the Strathmore area, a tremendous citizen of Canada. He was recently honored by receiving the Queen's Medal.

I would ask Mr. and Mrs. Klaiber and Mrs. Johnson to stand and receive the welcome of this Legislature.

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Member for Calgary Foothills, it is my pleasure this morning to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 19 Girl Guides from the 157th, 158th, 180th, and 47th Calgary Guide companies. They are accompanied by their leaders, Captain Ellen Seiferling, Captain Ruth Motyka, and Captain Doris Friedenreich, and by their bus driver, Walter Dick. They are seated in the members gallery, and I would ask them at this time to rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

PUB — Interveners

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Attorney General, in his capacity as the minister who reports to the Assembly as far as the Public Utilities Board is concerned. My question flows from comments made by the chairman of the Public Utilities Board on February 7, 1978. The chairman said, or is reported to have said, that as far as Public Utilities Board hearings are concerned, it was his feeling that interveners should be limited to municipalities only.

I ask the Attorney General: has he had any discussions with Mr. Horton, the chairman of the Public Utilities Board, in light of his public statement that as chairman he feels that only municipalities should be able to file interventions before the Public Utilities Board in Alberta?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I assume the Leader of the Opposition is referring to some press reports or documents. I must say that I have not had the advantage of reading those documents, nor indeed of having been aware of the statements attributed to Mr. Horton. Certainly I have not had any discussion with him about interventions being limited only to municipalities. Of course, now that I have notice of that matter, I will certainly take the opportunity of discussing it with him.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Can the Attorney General give assurance to the Assembly on behalf of the government that the government does not plan to introduce any legislation that would limit the scope of interveners to appear before the Public Utilities Board?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, there is no such policy consideration under way at all. There is certainly no

such legislation in the mill, and I don't propose any such initiatives.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the Attorney General. When the Attorney General is meeting with the chairman of the Public Utilities Board to discuss his view of limiting the interveners that should be able to appear before the board, would he also discuss with the chairman the trend which appears to be happening now in Public Utilities Board decisions pertaining to that portion of interveners' costs which is being picked up by the board? I ask the question in light of the fact that one of the most recent interveners have had their costs of intervention slashed by some 50 per cent, with the end result being, of course, that it becomes increasingly difficult for interveners to make a complete presentation before the Public Utilities Board.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, the matter of costs of interveners before the Public Utilities Board is certainly a matter not only of interest but concern to myself, my colleagues, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

I suppose I could offer this comment to the House. The Public Utilities Board does a rather thorough review of all costs claimed by interveners. From time to time they find that costs are indeed excessive. I don't mean to imply that people are padding their expense accounts and that kind of thing, although that is not unknown. However, we do find circumstances of interveners, feeling that the public generally is going to pick up the cost, going to some rather elaborate lengths to have witnesses and the like brought before the board, spending a great deal of time, perhaps unnecessarily, conducting examination or cross-examination before the board.

So the board has to make some value judgment about the merit and quality, frankly, of the intervention. They don't want simply to be in the position of writing a blank cheque and letting the interveners carry on at will. I think I can safely say that there have been examples before the board, as there are occasionally in courtrooms, of people carrying on *ad nauseam* in Public Utilities Board hearings.

The Public Utilities Board is simply not prepared to stand for that sort of nonsense, if in fact the contribution is not responsible and reasonable. That's a value judgment that any court, or indeed the Public Utilities Board, is able to make about the quality of the contribution of the people before them. Too often interveners, and not so much interveners but parties acting on their behalf, carry on in a way which is simply not justified.

So the message to interveners is: for heaven's sake be conscious of the quality and the merit of your intervention, and ensure that the people representing you are making a very useful presentation to the board and not simply taking up people's time.

Now perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I have spent too long on that aspect of it, but I don't want to leave the House with the impression that a great deal of the intervention before the Public Utilities Board is unnecessary and a waste of time. It's not. But there is an element in each presentation, of course, that is of that nature. The Public Utilities Board has great difficulty in pay-

ing some very, very substantial amounts of costs if the intervener . . .

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. minister, it would appear that we're going on at some length about the question. We have 12 hon. members who have indicated their intention to ask at least one question in the question period. There is really no reason why we shouldn't be able to reach them all in a 45-minute question period and a 75-member House. I would respectfully ask that the questions be shorn of as much preamble as possible, and that the answers, which the hon. ministers are of course free to refuse, be directed specifically to the content of the question.

MR. FOSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'll be very brief. I will discuss the question of the cost of interveners with the chairman, if that is the representation by the Leader of the Opposition.

Bingo Cheating

MR. FOSTER: While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I was asked a question yesterday by the Member for Clover Bar concerning the number of prosecutions of a gaming nature that are under way in the province. There are three. Several other investigations are under way, but they are not yet in the form of charges.

PUB — Interveners (continued)

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, one further supplementary question to the Attorney General on the question of the Public Utilities Board. I raise the question in light of the emergence now upon the scene of a group known as the business interveners society of Alberta. When he is discussing this question of slashing the intervention costs by the Public Utilities Board, would the Attorney General ask specifically with regard to the decision the Public Utilities Board made to Green, Michaels and Associates, where in fact the board recently cut their costs in half?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'll be happy to discuss that matter with the chairman of the board. But a reference to the board "slashing costs" is argumentative, at the very least. I would like to leave the House with the suggestion that the Public Utilities Board is quite a responsible body, and assesses costs. It doesn't simply slash them.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Attorney General. Has the Attorney General had an opportunity to discuss with the chairman of the PUB the decision with respect to the Consumers' Association of Canada case, which I gather is now being appealed to the court?

Further, in the discussion of the business of making money available to interveners, will the Attorney General assure the House, in light of the necessity to obtain technical data to make sensible submissions, that the PUB will continue to recognize the importance of having background data in order to make submissions?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has actually asked two questions. The first one, as I understand it, relates to a decision of the Public Utilities Board which is under appeal. I'm sure the hon. member and the hon. minister are aware that, while that is not necessarily forbidden territory, we must be very circumspect in the way we go about dealing with that topic.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, could I put the second part of the question, with respect to the assurance that in allocating costs to interveners there will be a continued recognition for picking up the costs of technical background material which is necessary if a sensible intervention is to be made?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, again this goes to the process of the board considering the intervention. This board has had a practice of trying to shorten its hearings by having a great deal of the technical material prepared in advance, put in, and distributed to all parties. So that has not changed, and I don't sense that the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview is suggesting it should.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary to the hon. minister. In view of the fact that the case for the vast majority of customers is very similar, has the hon. Attorney General or the board given some thought to setting out some guidelines in which the customers could get one spokesman? Otherwise there'd be a tremendous waste of money and a tremendous repetition in the hearings.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, that certainly has been considered, particularly in cases where there are several municipalities, for example, affected by a particular application. There has been some suggestion that perhaps they could get together and use one council or a group of parties to represent them. In some cases they may all be concerned at some part of the hearing, and only one representative need represent their views for another part of the hearing.

Those kinds of economies are certainly available. The board is conscious of them, and I believe interveners are conscious of them as well. It's sometimes a little difficult to get interveners to acknowledge that their interests are the same as others, however.

Pembina Oil Field — Land Sales

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the second question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. The question flows from action taken by the minister's department recently with regard to withdrawing land that originally had been put up for sale in the West Pembina field. Is the minister now in a position to indicate to the Assembly the reasons for withdrawal of that land from the proposed sale?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Briefly — although I'd be happy to go into more detail at another time — several companies were able to break the rules in order to gain an advantage over others in obtaining seismic information, which would have given them an advantage that others who lived by the rules did not have, and therefore could have had a bidding advantage in the purchase of Crown leases. Therefore the leases were withdrawn from the sale so the

companies who had broken the rules would not have that advantage.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. What steps are being taken, or have already been taken, by the minister's department so in fact that type of thing will not happen again?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, we've told the companies that they are subject to certain penalties in the event of breaking rules, but it's impossible for the government to ensure that this would not happen again.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is it the minister's intention to take any further action other than simply, as he has indicated, to have told the companies they have broken the rules? Is that where the thing is going to stop? I raise the question as the result of companies who have played by the rules. Is there any other disciplinary action the government plans to take, or any tightening up of the rules?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is possible that additional penalties could be levied, and we would assess that. Tightening up the rules might make them — that more of them would be broken. So I'm not sure that would help.

MR. CLARK: Then is the minister giving any consideration to prohibiting some of the companies that, in the government's view, broke the rules from bidding on that land when it does come for sale?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader may not like the answer, so I hope he'll stay around. The answer is no. [interjections]

Food Services Contract

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health. About a year ago in this House we were listening to the hon. Leader of the Opposition state that the contracts the minister was negotiating with Versafood wouldn't work. I wonder if at this time the minister could indeed tell us if they didn't work.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I prefer to tell members of the House that they did work, and we are quite satisfied with the service we are getting and the arrangements that have been made.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is: how much indeed was saved in the contract?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I filed that for the information of the Legislature yesterday. If my memory serves me correctly, it was eight hundred and some thousand dollars, and indirect savings of another three hundred and fifty some thousand. [interjections]

DR. BUCK: What was the department doing before that? [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Would hon. members kindly give the Chair an opportunity to interrupt. [laughter] The hon.

Member for Calgary Buffalo, followed by the hon. Member for Bow Valley.

Gas Blowouts

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy, and if I don't like the answer I'll stay around anyway.

First, I would like to find out when the government anticipates receiving its report from the Energy Resources Conservation Board relative to the blowout of the AMOCO well at Brazeau.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I've discussed it briefly with the chairman of the ERCB, and I'm hopeful that a report would be forthcoming and made public within the next 30 days.

MR. GHITTER: If I may ask the minister a supplementary, Mr. Speaker: what is the policy of the government of Alberta relating to the recovery of royalty interest lost in the case of a blowout caused by the negligence of the operator?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, in past circumstances of blowouts we have not attempted to recover royalty interest that may or may not have been lost.

MR. GHITTER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering if the government would take under advisement their position in this regard in order to ensure that the public treasury will not be the loser if there is negligence on the part of the operators in conducting their operations on well sites.

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be reasonable to review that policy.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of the Environment. Are any charges pending under The Clean Water Act or The Clean Air Act regarding the AMOCO blowout?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, those things are being considered, but naturally we would want to await the report of the inquiry of the ERCB before we'd proceed any further with that.

MR. PLANCHE: One more supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker, if I may. Could the minister advise the House whether or not the government made any contribution to containing the Gamma Resources well that was simultaneously out of control?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker. The ERCB is on the scene and providing advice, but there was no financial contribution to controlling that well.

DR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, for clarification. I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House whether there are any charges made by the government regarding any AMOCO negligence to date?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker. A hearing is being held, and we haven't received a report on it.

Prince Rupert Port

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Deputy Premier in charge of transportation. Has the Alberta government made any commitment with regard to the expansion of the grain port at Prince Rupert?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, we have not made any commitment relative to Prince Rupert, other than that we were interested in trying to ensure the expansion of the facilities there, because they can mean a substantial additional income to the farmers in Alberta.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate whether the government has given any consideration to using money from the heritage savings trust fund to expand the facility at Prince Rupert?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, consideration may be given relative to that matter. I would just advise the Legislature that the discussions are of a very preliminary nature at the moment. No, I can't announce anything definite relative to that matter.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware of any studies being undertaken by any of the three prairie provinces with regard to the expansion of the port at Prince Rupert, or does the provincial government have any studies under way?

DR. HORNER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. friend knows that I don't think there's a port in Canada that's been studied as often or as much as Prince Rupert. I understand The Canadian Wheat Board does have a study now going on relative to the so-called producing areas that might use that. But the fact of the matter is that there is a premium on west coast grain, and to take advantage of that premium we should be moving as rapidly as we can to expand the west coast facilities. It doesn't look like Vancouver's going to improve much, so Rupert is the obvious choice.

MR. MANDEVILLE: One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Was the announcement made Tuesday by the federal government, that \$11.5 million would be spent on the dock, contingent upon Alberta making any contribution to the facility?

DR. HORNER: No, Mr. Speaker. If the hon. member will read the entire release, he will note that that was to refurbish the present facility, and that the federal government also made a simultaneous announcement that they preferred the Riddley Island site in the port of Prince Rupert and would provide, I think, \$16 million to build the causeway and roadways required to get onto Riddley. That's where that particular matter stands at the moment.

Dental Care

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is a perennial to the hon. Minister of Social Services

and Community Health. What progress is being made in establishing a dental care program in Alberta?

MISS HUNLEY: The principal progress that has been made is the assessment that has gone on within the department, and the review of programs that are in effect in other areas. We will be developing some further positions on that for consideration by the government later on.

AN HON. MEMBER: We're going to get Walter back in full-time practice.

Welding Technique

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism in his capacity as chairman of the Alberta Research Council. Could he advise the Assembly where things stand with respect to the marketing of the so-called new welding technique developed by the Alberta Research Council?

MR. DOWLING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can give very brief information. As the hon. member most certainly knows, a number of companies have possible involvement in marketing this product, also potential involvement in financing the research. Negotiations are now under way with a number of companies. Of course the process is not at this moment in a commercialized form. I'm very confident that in time it will become a commercial entity. But the matter is rather confidential, and I would not want to give too much information at this time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister with respect to the options for marketing. Can the minister advise the Assembly what were the positions of the council, the minister, and the government with respect to the proposal of some of the officials of the department, I believe, that the marketing be done through a company in fact controlled by the Research Council, so that the gains or the windfall would come back to the Research Council?

MR. DOWLING: Well, without going into the detail that the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview has, the situation now is that the Alberta public interest is in fact for the first time secure. We have now made application for the patenting of the process, which was not undertaken until very recently, and couldn't be because there was nothing definitive about a process. That has been done. Secondly, in any negotiations that take place, the Alberta public interest will be secured, because we will take a position with regard to participation in the profit in some way.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. Attorney General. Can the Attorney General confirm that a representative of the Attorney General's Department assessed the proposal of some of the officials of the Research Council for a company which would operate under the general aegis of the Research Council, and that in fact that assessment gave the proposal a clean bill of health?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, the department has been looking at some aspects of Research Council activity, and is continuing to do so. So I don't think I'm in a position to say at this point what our recommendations or conclusions may be, if any, or where we're going. I would just as soon leave it at that. When we have finished our work, I would of course then be prepared to report the results.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism, with respect to a memo sent — which I did not receive from Tom Cossitt. The memo relates to the suggestion from the minister that he would like to be kept informed of all telephone calls from MLAs, and all letters.

My question is: did this particular memo have anything whatsoever to do with the welding technique that has been developed by the Alberta Research Council?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, I would assume that if the hon. member had the responsibility for a department, he'd want to know what's going on in every branch of it. That's what I intended to do, and it had no relation to the welding process.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism. I'm certainly pleased to see he's going to be reading memos on the phone calls made by all the MLAs.

My question to the minister is: what specific studies have been undertaken by the Department of Business Development and Tourism with respect to the impact of this welding technique on the Alcan pipeline? Because we are looking at hundreds of million of dollars.

MR. DOWLING: Well, there's pure supposition with regard to the latter figure. I'm not in a position to even judge what kind of money will accrue to the province of Alberta through the Research Council and this welding technique. We have had under review in the department a number of studies and examinations of what the potential is. But it's in department process; it's not farmed out to the private sector at this point.

MR. CLARK: A couple of supplementary questions to the Attorney General. The questions really flow from the Hogan report, which I believe was done by the director of civil law in the Attorney General's Department, concerning the activities of certain members in the Research Council with regard to setting up a corporation that would enable the Research Council to keep control over the development of this new welding process.

My question to the Attorney General is: has the government, or the Attorney General, made any decision to press charges against any officials who are presently engaged, or who have been engaged in the past, by the Alberta Research Council as a result of their activities in setting up this corporation to develop the welding process?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, no charges are laid.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Attorney General. Is the Attorney General in a position to indicate to the House that the director of civil law recommended to the Attorney General that, in fact, the actions taken by those people in the Alberta Research Council were within the bounds of existing legislation in this province, and that the corporation they had proposed to set up — in fact had started setting up when Mr. Peacock was the minister, and had his approval — that in fact that action fell within the jurisdiction and scope of the act setting up the Alberta Research Council?

MR. SPEAKER: As I get the import of the hon. leader's question, if the minister were to answer it would appear necessarily to lead to divulging legal advice given to the minister.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then to rephrase the question to the Attorney General: is it the position of the government of Alberta, of the Attorney General, that the individuals who established, took the initiative following the approval of Mr. Peacock in 1974, if my memory is accurate — that actions they took, in the opinion of the Attorney General, are in keeping with the spirit of the Alberta Research Council?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We're still in the area of opinion. And not only is a legal opinion, under normal circumstances, not to be the subject of an airing in the Assembly, but also a minister's opinion.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then let me rephrase the question to the Attorney General this way: will the Attorney General confirm to the House that the director of civil law for Alberta recommended to the Attorney General that in fact this company be allowed to be established by the Alberta Research Council?

MR. SPEAKER: It would appear, with great respect to the hon. minister, that we have put the other foot into the same puddle.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, regardless of which puddle, the question is basically this: is the Alberta Research Council going to be permitted to go ahead and establish this company or, in fact, is the Minister of Business Development and Tourism going to put both feet in his mouth and stop it?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order.

DR. WARRACK: Temper, temper.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Attorney General. Is the Attorney General in a position to confirm that in fact the report which is being alluded to indicated that not only was there no legal question, but in fact the proposal was a good one?

MR. SPEAKER: Aren't we looking for an opinion here? With great respect to the hon. member, normally we have to deal with facts in the question period.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, with great respect, I think that's what we're trying to get at. We want to get the

confirmation as to whether or not that information was in fact given the Attorney General.

DR. BUCK: He doesn't know.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, let me put this question to the Attorney General. Will the Attorney General table in the House Monday copies of the Hogan report, so that all members of the Assembly have the benefit of that information?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, it took a long time to get to this point. I'm glad the Leader of the Opposition finally found a relevant question.

I assume, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has a copy of the Hogan report, so he knows as well as I do what's in it. If he's got it, I invite him to read it. It is some advice to several people, including myself. I get all sorts of advice from people in the department. In this case, perhaps I've got some advice from my department on the Research Council matter.

I replied earlier this morning to the Member for Spirit River-Fairview that we were looking at some matters relative to the Research Council, and I was not prepared to report on an interim basis . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. It would appear that the hon. minister has dealt with the question as to whether or not he's going to table a report.

MR. CLARK: Will the Attorney General table the report or not — just yes or no?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, my earlier reply was: we are looking into some matters relative to the Research Council, and I am not prepared to deal with conclusions until our review of the matter has been terminated. We are not yet in that position. In the course of that review I am receiving a good deal of information from several sources. Obviously, Mr. Hogan is one of them. It is not the practice of the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We really don't need to go into the practice. The question was concerning the tabling of a report.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then one last question to the Minister of Business Development and Tourism. Can the minister confirm to the Assembly that in fact the minister is now getting his advice not from the Attorney General's Department, but from one Mr. William Dickie, who has been taken on by the Research Council to give the minister advice on this specific question of the welding process?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, that's not correct. We continue to receive advice from the Attorney General's Department on those things the Attorney General and his department are responsible for. There are, however, other matters which we have gone to Mr. Dickie for advice on, and we will continue to receive advice from Mr. Dickie as well, but on other matters.

MR. SPEAKER: The final supplementary on this question.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism. The minister indicated the government was pursuing the option of perhaps working this proposal out with a number of companies. My question is: is the government in any position to advise the Assembly today as to what time line the minister is looking at before making a decision as to whether to farm this out to the private sector, or to pursue the proposal made by certain people within the Research Council that a subcompany be developed to market the patent?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the philosophy of this government, we try to involve the private sector wherever we can, bearing in mind that the Alberta public interest must always be secured. This is the route we are taking, and I'm not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I seem to recall the expression "time line" in the question. [interjections]

MR. DOWLING: Just as soon as possible, because there is a potential for the process.

Travel Alberta Personnel

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism. Could the minister advise what procedure is being used in the selection of people working in the Travel Alberta centres, and whether this method is satisfactory?

MR. DOWLING: On the latter part first, Mr. Speaker, we do believe it's satisfactory. We try to recruit young people from the area where the information centre is located. We've been more than marginally successful; we've been substantially successful. I have received recommendations from various MLAs throughout the province with regard to the establishment.

On the first matter, we do . . . I think perhaps I've answered the question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister answered the part that I hoped he wouldn't answer. But I think the first part was with regard to what the practice was.

MR. BATIUK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Last year the maintenance of a number of provincial campsites was awarded to senior citizens' groups. I think they have done exceptionally well. They have looked after them for a small remuneration. I think they felt very important in their areas.

MR. SPEAKER: Has the hon. member a question?

MR. BATIUK: I would ask the minister whether he would not consider that probably some senior groups would be able to do a good job in manning these centres. From their experience, they would know the area really well. I think maybe they would do just as well as in the campsites.

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, we do that. We employ people about my age — if you consider me one of the senior citizens — and we've found that they are very

effective. I just can't recall where they are located. I know we have a young lady responsible in Banff, and at Canmore, Jasper, a number of them. However, they do require the bright young faces of the young people to stimulate people to travel Alberta.

On the first question, Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member was probably alluding to was: are there any complaints from people working in those information centres? We do have a very few. I can recall one from last year, an unsigned letter purportedly coming from somebody from Ontario. It suggested that the information was provided in a Lloydminster information centre that there was no accommodation between Lloydminster and Edmonton, which is totally incorrect. We . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Could we perhaps send that answer to Ontario.

Coal Policy

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. The coal policy of 1976 states that public hearings must be held regarding new coal fields, but doesn't include any policy allowing compensation for expense to interveners who are directly affected by the development. Is the minister considering amending the coal policy to allow affected landowners some compensation, either by the government or the company applying for the permit?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to review that feature of the policy. It's only been in effect now for slightly over a year. If there appear to be deficiencies in it, we'd be happy to review it. I'll discuss it with the hon. member to see how we might improve it.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. In view of the fact that the Energy Resources Conservation Board report regarding the Keephills power plant development recommended that the government consider providing financial assistance to the private individuals and community organizations that intervened, has the interdepartmental government agency group or the government made a decision on this recommendation?

MR. GETTY: Not yet, Mr. Speaker.

Feed Freight Assistance

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Given the significant federal presence in the province over the last two days, I wonder if the minister would be able to advise whether the federal government has yet concluded an agreement to extend the feed freight assistance program. If so, what is the likely extension?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, yes. I'm advised verbally that we have reached agreement with the government of Canada to extend the feed freight assistance program date to June 1, 1978. I would advise, however, that because of the presence of the federal cabinet in Alberta at the present time, I'm not at liberty to announce that until tomorrow. [laughter]

Rail Line Relocation

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. It concerns railway relocation. Could the minister advise the House whether the feasibility studies of railway relocation in Lethbridge have been completed?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, my recollection is that it has just been completed and is being assessed within my own department, as well as by the city of Lethbridge. I would also advise that the matter has sort of changed because of the change in policy by the federal government.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the federal government had passed legislation which I believe motivated municipalities to apply, and now the funding arrangement has been changed, has the minister made representation to the federal government to have a more equitable financial formula?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, we've made representations relative to this matter of urban relocation of rail lines. Unfortunately we haven't had a very positive response.

MR. GOGO: My final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Provincial Treasurer. Inasmuch as the study may indicate where it's financially possible to be profitable to a municipality, would railway relocation projects qualify under the Alberta division of the heritage savings trust fund?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, it would appear that the hon. member is asking for a legal opinion as to whether something comes within a statute.

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect, has the policy of Alberta with regard to the heritage savings trust fund made it possible for a railway relocation project to qualify under the act?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, that's something that we've not considered, but I'd be perfectly happy to take the representation of the hon. member and give some thought to it.

Snowmobile Legislation

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question of the hon. Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife, or perhaps the Minister of Transportation. In view of the concerns expressed by the snowmobilers' association with regard to the eastern slopes, could the minister respond as to whether any consideration has been given to rewriting or separating The Off-highway Vehicle Act in such a way that we might have two acts dealing with the two different situations?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I would refer the question to my hon. colleague the Minister of Transportation.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, we are giving consideration to a separate act for snowmobilers, and that work is going on now in the department. We'd be pleased

to hear from anyone who would like to make representations relative to that.

MR. COOKSON: Perhaps a supplementary to the Minister of Transportation. Has the minister any knowledge of whether this change in the act might be brought before the Legislature in the fall session?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, at the present stage I would say that the fall session is the earliest possible time that we might be able to do it.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary to the hon. minister and Deputy Premier. When the rough draft of the bill has been prepared, will the provisions be discussed with the snowmobile association?

DR. HORNER: I would think in a general way, yes, Mr. Speaker, having regard of course to the prerogative of the Legislature to see the bill first.

MR. SPEAKER: We're crowding the limit of the question period, but with leave of the Assembly perhaps I might recognize the hon. Member for Little Bow.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Superior Court Jurisdiction

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is very brief, to the hon. Attorney General. It's with regard to an indication in the throne speech that the government will propose the new superior court jurisdiction. I understand that this concept led from two studies, and I'd like to ask the Attorney General if those studies will be released to the Assembly for members' perusal.

MR. FOSTER: I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, which two studies the hon. member may be referring to. I made this proposal a couple of years ago to the mid-winter meeting of the Canadian Bar, then struck a committee representative of several interests, including the legal profession, the Canadian Bar, and the Law Society. That group did some reviews, got some various opinions, and made various comments. So a good deal of material has come together. That may be the study referred to.

We've got documents from other jurisdictions. Frankly, I'm happy to have members of the House have a look at all the documents I have on this subject. No problem.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, for the minister's information, the studies carried out by judges McGillivray and Milvain.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any studies conducted by Chief Justice McGillivray or Chief Justice Milvain on this matter. The proposal is, as you say, for one court of superior jurisdiction, which we've described as the Court of Queen's Bench and which I'm sure will be well and thoroughly discussed in the Assembly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

Moved by Mr. Gogo:

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

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

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

[Adjourned debate March 8: Mr. Batiuk]

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday after the adjournment, several members asked me about the function of the Alberta Grain Commission, and I believe there may be a number of others who are not aware. I would just like to say that in 1972 the former minister of agriculture created or initiated the Alberta Grain Commission. He followed no acts or regulations, and they did not regulate. The sole purpose of this commission was to find ways and means of increasing the net income of the farmer and to make recommendations to the minister.

The only reason I bring up the Alberta Grain Commission is the fact that it was a very close follow-up to the trade mission of the Premier last summer, and since there was such controversy and criticism by both the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Spirit River-Fairview, I thought this should be brought to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I regret that whenever I do stand up some of the members leave instantly. However, I feel very fortunate that I had the opportunity to follow the Member for Spirit River-Fairview. And right after his address, I see in *The Calgary Herald* of March 8:

The government may lose control over education because it is unwilling to test the Alberta Bill of Rights in higher courts, Grant Notley said Tuesday.

Mr. Speaker, when you look in *Hansard* of [November] 15, 1972, in the hon. member's address:

It's to make a plea to the government that we provide the administrative muscle necessary to administer this act . . .

He goes on to say:

. . . when we consider passing this bill today — and I have no doubt that it will be passed unanimously — we must make sure that we provide the administrative muscle so that we can begin to deal effectively with guaranteeing to every Albertan those basic rights which we . . . hold so important.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was just wondering what the hon. member feels. Does he support the Bill of Rights or doesn't he? I must say I hope that the time will come when he and the Leader of the Opposition learns that you can't have it two ways. You can't eat the cake and still have it. And if they want to do so, I wish they'd get together and find some ways and means of recycling that cake.

Mr. Speaker, also in the throne speech debate,

when the amendment was brought in by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview it was referred to as the CCIL problem. He compared what Saskatchewan was doing. Over the last five years I've always noticed that the hon. member would make comparison with Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and British Columbia. After the elections in British Columbia there were no more references to British Columbia. After the elections in Manitoba there were no references to Manitoba. He still makes references to Saskatchewan, and looking at what is happening in the by-elections I think that after the next election in Saskatchewan there will be no place to make reference to.

Regardless, Mr. Speaker, it seems that every place is good except Alberta. Very fortunately, when I was in Ottawa this past December I picked up a magazine at the newsstand, *Canadian Business*. It's a very interesting one.

The 1978 Economic Forecast. Good News: The place to be next year is Alberta. Bad News for almost everywhere else in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that in no way is this a Tory magazine. When you look at the colors where it says, "Good news and bad news", it is in the red and black socialist colors.

Also, I wish sometimes the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview would clarify where he got the information that the Alberta Power increase has come to 74 per cent. I am a consumer of Alberta Power. I have been a member of an REA for 29 years. My power bill has gone up, but not 74 per cent. I was wondering where that came from. When I think back just a year ago when the hon. member referred, in this House, that Calgary Power had made a 44 per cent profit — well, it's good to stand and make those statements when a person isn't prepared, but I went and checked the financial statement. This was not right. It did show a 44 per cent increase, but not a profit. There was a 45 per cent increase in share capital, and that's what raised the amount to 44 per cent.

These are the facts the hon. member seems to be using, and that way you can confuse the members and mislead the public. I'm just wondering when the people of the Spirit River-Fairview constituency are going to realize that when they elect a person to this Legislature they should be electing somebody to represent them, not just to stay here four months of the year and oppose, and oppose, and oppose.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to go on to a little different area that may be more appealing. We all got this Stop Vandalism crime prevention program on our desks. I know that with the buoyancy in this province, the increase in population of 5,000 every month — and I know the majority of this is people coming from other provinces — we find the good people, the professionals, the workers, but we also find the riff. I know in the future the Solicitor General will have to look at a stronger police force. I commend the police force, whether the RCMP, the city police, or the municipal police, but we will need a stronger force.

It just makes me think of an incident that happened last spring. While I'm in Edmonton I always need a little more exercise than I get, because I was always on the farm and I had plenty of it there. So walking 3 to 5 kilometres every day is no problem. While walking last spring, straight north of the Legislature build-

ing and on Jasper Avenue, I was sort of surprised — well, I wasn't really surprised, it was a warm day — there was a group of ladies standing on the corner, and I didn't give it a second thought. I remember for many years it has been mentioned by people that in certain areas of Edmonton there are a few of those homes of ill repute. Well, that's nothing unusual; prostitution is as old as the hills. However, when I was coming up to the corner, and that group of ladies, one of them said, sir, would you like a lady? I was really stunned and appalled — Jasper Avenue, four blocks away from the Legislature building. But I crossed the intersection, Mr. Speaker. There may have been a red light, but I crossed it. I turned around, and there were maybe 12 to 15 lasses: well-dressed, attractive ladies. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure anybody who saw them at first glance would have thought they were lining up for a beauty contest. And here they're peddling their natural resources. [laughter].

Mr. Speaker, knowing the former mayor of Edmonton as I did — he's been out to Vegreville on numerous occasions — I told him about this situation and he didn't know about it. He was quite surprised, but within a few days he had a good portion of the Edmonton police clean out that area. As I say, regardless of what had happened, when the fall elections came up that mayor lost his seat. Mr. Speaker, I must say that during the short time the mayor held his position in Edmonton, even if he did nothing more than clean the prostitutes off Jasper Avenue, I think he did well. But I'm starting to wonder — and I'm sure none of these gals supported the former mayor — if there are that many of them in Edmonton, and if they are that strong to overthrow an election, I wonder what's going to happen when the 1980 elections roll around. Maybe one of those gals will be a candidate for the mayor, and she may even be successful.

AN HON. MEMBER: How about your seat, John?

MR: BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, there are many things in the constituency I would like to talk about which time won't permit. I was very glad the Minister of the Environment stated the other day that the regional water study is going on and should be completed in a short while. I know the towns along the CN track, not only the towns in my constituency but starting right from Lamont; every one is having a water problem. Even though Lamont is not in my constituency it's very close, and a lot of people from Lamont come to me whenever they need anything. Right at Lamont they have a reasonable source of water. The quality is very good, except the quantity. When I say the quality — the mayor of Lamont spoke to me very recently, and he said their problem is the quantity. The quality is great; when that water reaches their reservoir it's pasteurized. I asked him, how was that? He says, it trickles down 40 pastures before it reaches the reservoir. [laughter]

Mr. Speaker, the village of Chipman, whose population has doubled in the last four years, is also in need of water. The town of Mundare to the east — in the last 25 years they have drilled 25 wells, and their biggest concern is water. To go further, Vegreville, the Vermilion River — four years ago there was such a flood that did millions of dollars of damage to the

town of Vegreville and to farmers along that line. This past summer the town of Vegreville had to pump water from sloughs to be able to be provide enough water for its summer need. Now Vegreville's population is expected to double and treble within the next few years, and if we ever get another dry year, or a year with very little snow, I don't know what will happen to that town. I hope, Mr. Minister, that when this study goes through things will go along as fast as possible.

I was very happy to see the Minister of Housing and Public Works, with all the progress he has shown, in Mundare last spring at the official opening of the senior citizens' lodge, a lodge that the community has been requesting for almost 20 years. The Premier was there. The town has a population of 650, yet 1,000 came out to the official opening. That is definitely a sign of what the people are requesting, and I think the Minister of Housing and Public Works is going a far way to help.

I must say that I was very glad with some of the additional support for agricultural societies. I know many of them in the province are having their financial difficulties. But looking at this pamphlet, Stop Vandalism — I know particularly in my home town of Mundare, which is also having its financial difficulties, there hasn't been one vandalism in the last year, I think just because of the agricultural society. They have an arena, and through the winter there are two or three functions there every week and about 300 to 500 people attending every time. This has gone a very long way, and I am glad the minister has taken this attitude.

Our roads have been improved to a great extent, particularly the secondary roads. I was glad the minister had made an announcement that it's going ahead. We need a lot more of them. With the amount of traffic — the heavy trucks, the abandonment of railway lines — I think we will have to take a strong look at our roads, particularly the secondary roads.

I am glad the Minister of Culture, with all his ambitions, is going a long way. He's had thousands of programs over the last five or six years, and they are well accepted. They are small programs, but with his little programs, his little assistances, he is encouraging the communities to go on their own. I think that's a very important area.

I would like also to mention day care. That was one of my projects I was hoping would go ahead. When the hon. minister made her statement the other day I thought, there's one area I was hoping would materialize. This has been requested by my constituency, particularly in Vegreville, [by] people who want to get on their own and get involved. I am glad this is going ahead.

The natural gas program is well accepted. When this came into being in '73 it was hoped that all rural Alberta, 80,000 people, would be able to get this service within 10 years. After three and a half years, 65 per cent have been served with natural gas.

Even though there are some who would not like to see the cost of natural gas what it is, I must say that the demand for more services is always there, so it shows that people are anxious to get the services. I particularly know that it is costly, but I've experienced coal and propane, and I can say that the present cost of natural gas is only half what I paid for propane

three to four years ago. True enough, the cost of installation is approximately \$2,000, which is quite a bit. But I feel the saving I will have on natural gas in the next 10 years will pay for the line, and the pipes are going to be there. The cost of other fuels, of propane, is going to go up. Even if it doesn't go up at the manufacturer's list, the cost of transportation is continuously going up. This is where I feel that natural gas is going to be the cheapest and cleanest fuel by far.

I was speaking just recently to one farmer in Saskatchewan. He still couldn't believe that there are over 40,000 farmers in Alberta with natural gas. He still goes — the old style with horses and wagon — to get trees from the bush, to haul coal. He just couldn't see that this will come into being.

Mr. Speaker, my time has gone far beyond, but. In concluding, I would like to say that I am indeed very proud . . .

MR. TRYNCHY: You've still got lots of time.

MR. BATIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the clock has been stopped I'll continue.

I am indeed proud to be in the caucus. True enough, the Premier has a caucus of 69, and maybe sometimes it is difficult to control them. Why I am proud to be part of this caucus is that in the past seven years not one member had to be unseated because of a conflict or some other misconduct. This is not found with too many political parties in other provinces, or even with the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the members who took time off and listened to me.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to take part in this throne speech debate, to thank His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor for his very fine remarks of March 2, to say to the mover of the Speech from the Throne, the Member for Lethbridge West, and the seconder from Calgary Glenmore, how much I'm sure we all appreciated their remarks in opening this debate.

I want to say as well, Mr. Speaker, directly to you, that as a member of this Assembly I appreciate very much the respect and dignity which you continue to bring to this Legislature.

I want to make some comments with respect to agriculture this morning, but before I do, to say that the constituents of Smoky River have other concerns as well that I would want to raise throughout the course of this Legislature. However, Mr. Speaker, my constituents are largely involved in agricultural industry directly, and those who are not — many of them, at least — are indirectly dependent upon our agricultural industry. So I believe the remarks I have to make will pertain a great deal to the Smoky River constituency as well as to many others throughout Alberta.

Before I get into the substance of the recommendations, the approaches, the kind of things we're doing as a government in Alberta with respect to our rural communities and the agricultural industry, I would like to make a few brief remarks with regard to speeches made in the House earlier this week — on Monday last by the Leader of the Opposition, and on Wednesday by the Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, there have been some excellent speeches in this House during the course of the last several days. However, there were two exceptions where information was provided, suggestions were made that, in my opinion, were entirely misleading.

I want to deal first with the remarks made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition last Monday with respect to the number of farm families and the number of farmers in Alberta. The hon. Leader of the Opposition recited figures quoting three farmers a day leaving the land in Alberta. Mr. Speaker, at the very least, his remarks in that context were a grade 1 exercise in reading statistics, and absolutely ridiculous.

The facts of the matter are that the number of farmers in Alberta increased from 53,205 when this government was elected in 1971, to 57,310 in 1976. During that period of time, there has been an increase in the number of farmers in Alberta of 7.7 per cent — the first time that this trend has changed since the mid-1940s.

I think it's pretty significant to be able to see, as a result of programs like the Agricultural Development Corporation, the new vitality in our rural communities throughout Alberta. Because of many of the programs — like rural natural gas, underground telephones, and so on — we have 4,100 new farmers in Alberta today, 4,100 more than we had in 1971. Perhaps more important than that, Mr. Speaker, is that 44 per cent of those farmers are less than 45 years old, dramatically different from the case some six years ago. Our figures, which are accurate, indicate that we've more than doubled the number of farmers under 35 years of age in this province since 1971. Mr. Speaker, the record should be set straight with regard to the misleading comments of the hon. Leader of the Opposition on Monday last.

Secondly, I want to deal with some comments made on Wednesday of this week by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview; some comments which may have resulted [from] a little more research than was done by the Leader of the Opposition, but nevertheless in my view provided quite a distortion with regard to input costs in agriculture between the province of Alberta and Saskatchewan. I believe the hon. member knew what kind of statistics he was using, but they were certainly misleading in determining the facts.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about farm input costs, about taxes — personal income taxes, sales taxes, that kind of thing; review farm fuel prices. Alberta has an 8 cents a gallon transportation allowance on farm fuels, making our farm fuels from 10 to 15 per cent lower than farm fuels in Saskatchewan. Personal income tax in Alberta is 38.5 per cent of the federal tax, while in Saskatchewan it's 53 per cent. This province doesn't have any sales tax. Our property taxes — as a result of the property tax reduction plan brought in a number of years ago — are on average 15 per cent lower than they are in Saskatchewan.

Let's talk briefly about a number of programs we have in this province. Just to mention a few: the agriculture society's capital grant program, to which the hon. Member for Vegreville referred; the agriculture service board program; rural gas co-ops; the weather modification program; our international marketing branch, and our assistance there; our agricul-

ture research capabilities; our agriculture credit; our educational home study courses; our seed-cleaning plants; our grazing reserves; our predator-loss program; our rural telephone program, started by the previous government — and I give them a great deal of credit in that area. Those programs, Mr. Speaker, are almost totally non-existent in the province of Saskatchewan.

For example, in Alberta we have 208 agriculture societies, more than 100 formed in the last five years. There are 64 in Saskatchewan. In Alberta we have capital grants for recreation facilities for those agriculture societies in the amount of \$75,000, and more for the larger ones; in Saskatchewan, not one penny. In Alberta we have 64 agriculture service boards operating in every municipality, improvement district, or special area of this province. Four million dollars a year goes into assisting them in funding programs for farmers. In Saskatchewan nothing of the sort exists.

Rural gas co-ops: 175,000 people in the last five years have seen service of rural natural gas into their homes. In Saskatchewan they pay 45 cents a gallon for propane instead of \$1.45 per MCF for natural gas.

Weather modification: \$800,000 a year goes into the weather modification program in this province for the prevention of hail; nothing whatsoever in the province of Saskatchewan.

Talk about agriculture research: the federal government does research across this country. But what kind of input from the provincial level did we have next door? None whatsoever, Mr. Speaker, not \$10 million from the heritage savings trust fund like we have in the province of Alberta. Talk about agriculture credit: \$300 million of agriculture credit — by way of loans and guarantees for operating capital, purchase of livestock and farm machinery, and for refinancing — has been provided to Alberta farmers in the last few years by the Agricultural Development Corporation. There isn't anything of that nature in Saskatchewan. And that's why my advice is that the average interest cost to Saskatchewan farmers for loans is considerably higher than it is in Alberta.

We go from there to home study courses. Members are aware of our home study courses on rape-seed production, hog production, and a variety of other things — weed control last winter. Mr. Speaker, this year in January we have 3,200 people enrolled in home study courses across this province, at very, very little cost to them — beneficial educational tools that are needed in our industry.

In Alberta we have 75 municipal seed-cleaning plants — supported in large measure in their construction by grants from this government — scattered throughout some 65 municipal jurisdictions. Well, in Saskatchewan there are four. You may have to drive another 300 or 400 miles to get your grain to a seed-cleaning plant, but they do have four. Grazing reserves, predator-loss programs simply don't exist in terms of provincial development.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's time to put an end to this nonsense that farm input costs in Saskatchewan — by some magic statistics the hon. member for Spirit River-Fairview brings about — are lower than they are in Alberta. They certainly aren't. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, one has to consider some other factors that occur after you've put that net income into your pocket. One of the things that happens is that in a province where you don't have a telephone

that you can get on and ring your elevator agent, you may have to drive 20 miles to find out if there's any room in the elevator today.

Things like recreation are spread out and farther apart, and you don't have the kind of assistance — to agricultural societies and through the major facilities program — that we've got in this province.

Mr. Speaker, there's no question that on a commodity-by-commodity basis — in terms of the inputs we buy, in terms of credit and taxes, and a host of other areas — farmers in this province have today, and will continue to have, the lowest input costs of any farmers in Canada. I wouldn't mind debating that issue, not only in this Legislature but in Smoky River, Olds-Didbury, Spirit River-Fairview, or anywhere else in this province for that matter.

Mr. Speaker, I said earlier I wanted to talk about an outline and a strategy for a Canadian food and agricultural policy. Before giving you some of my views in that regard, I want to make a comment or two about the approach being taken at the federal level.

A year ago we had the tabling of a white paper in Ottawa on food strategy. Later we had ministerial meetings of ministers of consumer affairs and agriculture — provincially and federally — followed by meetings referred to as sectoral meetings, on the agricultural industry, which ended finally in Ottawa last month with the first ministers' conference. The entire approach being taken by the government of Canada is to hand one minister, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the responsibility for developing a food policy, and the Minister of Agriculture the responsibility for developing an agricultural policy. Very briefly, I suggest it simply won't work.

In a nation such as ours, or any other country for that matter, you cannot develop a national food policy in isolation from an agricultural policy. Vice versa, you can't develop an adequate national food policy or strategy without looking at a national agricultural policy. I've said before in other forms, Mr. Speaker, that what we need to do in Canada is to get everyone together: the consumers, the farmers, and most of all the federal ministers involved, and sit down and work together to develop a national agriculture and food strategy, because they are very close, very related subjects.

Mr. Speaker, I think national agriculture and food strategy has to begin with the very resources we have to produce food. Move from there — from those resources of water and land — to our rural communities, to the kind of information we provide to our farmers; to research in the agricultural industry; to the production tools that farmers need and the input costs; to marketing — grain marketing in particular, but livestock marketing as well; to the matters of trade, tariff, and transportation; and finally into the processing end, to consider what kind of strategy we need in this country to ensure there is adequate processing of the products we are able to produce; to go from there to the entire food wholesaling and retailing chain to ensure that when that end-product gets to the consumer and is made available to him, it meets the health and fitness needs of Canadians, and that our consumers are provided with that kind of information; as well, in that entire agricultural and food strategy to consider what is reasonable as a percentage of our average income, in terms of cost of

food.

Let's discuss these matters briefly, Mr. Speaker. But before I do, I would like to explain why, in my view, that whole area of marketing, of improving a return for the market price our farmers receive for the product they produce, is so much more important than talking about a 4 cent, 8 cent, or 2 cent subsidy on gasoline, or a little reduction in property taxes. Those matters are important, yes, but the real key to solving the income problems of farmers in Alberta and the rest of Canada doesn't lie with subsidies; it lies with improving that market return.

The farmers I've talked to, Mr. Speaker, from one end of this province to the other, from other parts of Canada as well, are not interested in a government that does nothing but increase a subsidy here, a subsidy there. They're more interested in governments that try as best they can, in working with farm groups and other governments and other countries, to create a climate where the market place will bring the return that so many of us who are involved in the agricultural industry need and deserve.

Let's think about a \$2 billion agricultural industry in Alberta; \$2 billion of production in 1977. Mr. Speaker, if we were able, through the effective and tough negotiations we've been carrying out — pretty successfully, I think, the last two or three years — to increase the price of farm products by 10 per cent, the price of feed barley from \$1.50 to \$1.65 a bushel, the price of fat cattle from 45 to 49.5 cents — if we were able to do that, we would increase the gross production by \$200 million a year. But more important than that, we would increase the net income from \$600 million to \$800 million a year, or some 33 per cent. That \$200 million — just so members will understand that you can't do everything with subsidies — would pay the entire fuel bill for farmers in this province for one year. It would pay all the land taxes, and all the electricity and telephone bills for every farm in Alberta.

So that, Mr. Speaker, is the significance of the kind of work we're doing in trade and tariff matters, trying to tear down some of those barriers that exist to improve our market return, trying to get a transportation system in this country that will work for us.

I want to go back to those long- and short-term objectives I talked about that should form the basis of a national food and agricultural strategy and policy. I talked about water and land. Mr. Speaker, wherever you go in this world you see different priorities placed on different things. But whether you're in China, Israel, or Canada, I think we need to recognize in 1978 that our most important single resource is water, not land. I've seen places — many of you have — where we can grow good crops on sand with the right varieties and proper fertilizer, if we have the right kind of water supply. But I haven't seen anywhere in this world where we can grow a good crop on black soil, no matter how deep, if you don't have any water.

I think our Minister of the Environment and others need to be commended for the effective work that's been done in developing a policy for the eastern slopes, in proceeding to get ourselves into a position where we are managing the greatest single resource this province has. Surely, Mr. Speaker, the Social Credit dream of some 15 or 20 years ago is coming into reality today, because this government has had

the courage and foresight to increase our oil royalties, and to build a heritage trust fund with which we can work. Surely, having accomplished that, one should not be subject to the kind of criticism with respect to such an important area as water resource management. They're tough decisions, but the future of this province depends on people making tough decisions about water management, and more will be made throughout the course of this year with respect to the Oldman River system. In short, water is too important to be used as a tool for short-term political gain.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go from there and talk briefly about trade and tariff matters. We've been involved for some years in discussing bilateral trade with the United States and other countries, the multilateral trade discussions going on presently in Geneva. The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview suggested he wasn't sure whether we were talking bilateral or multilateral, or were involved just with the U.S., whether we were sitting down and talking with people who are involved in the Geneva negotiations. Perhaps the reason for some of his confusion is that we're doing both; we're doing it at the same time.

In December 1976, the hon. Premier forwarded to the Prime Minister of Canada this document on agriculture in the multilateral trade negotiations, a brief submitted on behalf of the four western governments, written, I might add, by the province of Alberta. You know, I think we've been effective there in drawing to the attention of the government of Canada, for the first time, the concerns of the agricultural industry in Alberta.

I want to tell you a little story, Mr. Speaker, about what happened when we first started looking in the government files and records as to what kind of representations were made by this government in the Dillon round of discussions in 1957-58, and in the Kennedy round of GATT negotiations in 1967. We looked high and low in the department I have responsibilities for. We looked elsewhere, and quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, we could find nothing. No representations were made, so far as I was able to determine, on behalf of the farmers of this province at that time, with regard to international trade and tariff matters. Well, all I can suggest, Mr. Speaker, is that the Leader of the Opposition must have been out in the barley field in 1967.

Surely it's incumbent upon those of us who have responsibilities in this government to ensure that when matters of importance are being discussed, such as grain marketing and bilateral/multilateral negotiations in trade and tariff, we're not out in the barley fields. I've been there. We should be in Moscow, Geneva, Washington, Ottawa, Winnipeg, or wherever the action is with respect to the decisions that are being made on agriculture tariff and trade matters. Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that this government intends to be there, intends to be involved in discussions that are really meaningful for the future of the agricultural industry and the farmers of this province.

I move briefly from there to the area of transportation. There's been a lot of discussion, and I know the hon. Minister of Transportation will have more to say during this session on the Hall commission report and the progress we're making there. I only want to raise briefly the matter of transportation with respect to Prince Rupert. There were questions earlier this

morning about the value of that port to western Canadian grain farmers. Surely, Mr. Speaker, the initiative taken by our Minister of Transportation and by our Premier in pushing for a good year-round modern facility that can take ocean vessels of the size that are coming in today in Prince Rupert is the initiative we should be taking to solve the problem, to a great degree, on the rail line, the Fraser Canyon; to solve the problem of the congestion that presently exists in the port of Vancouver; to provide us with an opportunity to put in supplies, on the west coast of Canada, of grain that's 500 miles closer to our major markets of Japan and the Pacific Rim.

Our figures are that at the very least we can expect western Canadian farmers in The Canadian Wheat Board area to save \$25 million a year, or to earn extra income of \$25 million a year, if we can get 10 million to 12 million bushels of modern terminal storage in the port of Prince Rupert. Surely, Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of initiative that a government should take with respect to improving farm incomes in this province.

The only concrete thing I've seen, reading *Hansard* of March 6 and the remarks of the hon. Leader of the Opposition — he talked about royalty, about doing away with royalty on farm fuels. You know, Mr. Speaker, that amounts to about a 12 cent a gallon transportation allowance. That's another \$12 million a year, but surely something more needs to be done than just offer that kind of suggestion. How about some support for the building of a modern terminal? How about some support for the investment by this government of the heritage savings and trust fund, and developing a modern terminal in Prince Rupert?

Mr. Speaker, there are many other areas of concern in the agricultural industry that I think members of this Assembly are aware of: livestock marketing, hog marketing. I can say that in the area of beef cattle I think our extensive representations — together with the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the Alberta Cattle Commission, The Western Stock Growers, Unifarm, and others — to the federal government resulted in some placing of a lid on any expansion of the exports or imports of offshore beef into Canada. Our cow numbers in the United States and Canada would indicate that the increases of the last three months in beef prices are stable, and that we are slowly but steadily climbing out of that non-profit position we've been in in the beef industry for the last three or four years.

The outlook in the grains industry has indeed improved considerably over the last three months, but we still face some difficult times. I've appreciated and listened closely to many of the comments that have been made, and will continue to do so with new initiatives that we might take in the agricultural industry.

Mr. Speaker, my objective, in terms of farmers of this province, is to leave no stone unturned — whether it's within the constitutional jurisdiction of the province of Alberta or not, whether it may interfere or upset some who feel they're the only ones who should be talking about trade and tariff agreements in Geneva. My objective is to leave no stone unturned in our search to try to improve our markets and our net farm income. Mr. Speaker, I know that's the objective of this Executive Council; it's the objective of our government caucus. In conclusion, I can

only say I hope it will become the objective of every member of this Legislative Assembly.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make a few remarks on this debate. First of all, I would like to say to the Member for Lethbridge West what a tremendous job he did on moving the motion — and also the Member for Calgary Glenmore. They were two of the better speeches I've heard in the House.

I also really appreciate the fact that there are so many hon. members here who relate their speeches to agriculture. I was really pleased with the comments of the Member for Edmonton Jasper Place on agriculture. It's a great step forward, because I think many times a lot of consumers don't appreciate that we have cheap food in this province and in this nation. It's great that we get members and people who are involved in the cities commenting on our agricultural situation. I would like to say to the hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place, who is not in his place, that I really don't think he understood agriculture as well as some of our farm members, because he indicated that it would be no use for politicians to go into the barley fields. However, sometimes fertilizer does help when you get into the barley fields.

Mr. Speaker, I think we've taken a great step forward this morning. The old saying is: the west owns the cow, central Alberta milks the cow, and the eastern part of Canada drinks the milk. The step forward is that we're starting to milk the cow in the west. I hope we can pass the middleman, and we don't have to stop . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Not so sure about the milker.

MR. MANDEVILLE: No, we're not so sure about the milker, but if we can pass the middleman — maybe we could send this milk back east with Trudeau and save the freight on it, and then we could pass the middleman — this too would be a step forward as far as agriculture is concerned.

I think agriculture is going to face a dilemma in the future, possibly in the area of our cereal grain producers. As I've said before in this House, it seems we can't have all segments of agriculture good at the same time. If our beef industry is good, the cereal grains are depressed. I think that's what we're facing at the present time. I think our beef situation is starting to come out of the dilemma, as the minister has indicated, and our cereal grain producers are going to face problems.

The reason I say this, Mr. Speaker, is that our input is high. I'm not going to say it's high in relation to the other provinces, because I don't think that is so. I think we have a high input in agricultural production in all of Canada, not just in the province of Alberta. But our young farmers are going out today and buying this land, and they're not buying it at productive values — they're buying it at market value. And market value is much higher on agricultural land today than our productive value is.

As our input is high, our fertilizers are high, our fields are high, our cost of machinery is especially high. The interest rates are going to be really hard for our farmers to pay as far as land purchases are concerned; also interest rates in line with buying farm machinery.

Right now we're guaranteed \$3 a bushel on our

wheat. However, we've got to be able to sell all our wheat at \$3 a bushel before we can take advantage of \$3 a bushel wheat. I think it takes closer to \$4 a bushel to grow wheat if you're going to take all these costs I mentioned into consideration.

If we're faced with this situation, I agree with the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview that as far as our cereal grain producers are concerned — especially our young farmers, who've got heavy debt loads — we'll be facing times they faced in the 1930s.

I think the cattle situation is brighter. The picture looks bright now, and I think the minister put his finger on what we need. We need national policies as far as all our agricultural industries are concerned. We can't say one province is going to do this for the cow-calf operator and the next province is going to do something else, because it just doesn't work. It counteracts all the provinces and all the programs we have. We've certainly got to have a national program as far as our agricultural produce is concerned.

I certainly hope we don't have to face situations such as we saw happen in the United States several months ago where they had a boycott or a strike, whatever you want to call it. I think this type of thing is what really hurts trade between the United States and Canada, and this we don't need. We've got quotas set up as far as Canada is concerned and the United States are concerned. I certainly don't like to see our ranchers and farmers out boycotting, and trying to prevent free trade between the United States and Canada, because this is one area where I think we need better relationship with the United States; that is, as far as free trade and equal tariffs are concerned.

It gives me some concern — and thank goodness it's over today as far as the movement in Saskatchewan and Manitoba is concerned, holding cattle out of the stockyards. This again could cause problems in the cattle industry. We're seeing daylight now, and we don't want to see any obstruction put in the way of coming out of this situation. Cattle markets have been depressed since 1973. If we're going to see some daylight and have some buoyant or better times in the agricultural industry, we certainly don't need this type of thing to interfere with our cattle markets. After all, what's creating our good prices in the cattle industry today? It's really the supply. Our supplies are down.

As for assistance, I agree with the minister that subsidies aren't going to solve the problems we have as far as beef is concerned or for any of our agricultural industry. The few dollars we're going to get for the cow-calf operator — a token payment, \$10 a head — are insignificant in helping the cattle industry. The thing that's going to help our cattle industry is the deficiency we have in beef. And we certainly have a deficiency, especially in western Canada, as far as slaughter beef is concerned at this present day. What's been happening over the past few years is that our ranchers, with the price of yearlings and calves, haven't been able to keep replacement cattle. The ranchers haven't kept up their herds with young breeding stock as they have on the past. And I don't think we've had many replacements in the North American continent in the last three years.

Therefore I think our breeding stock is certainly at a low ebb, not only in Canada but on the North American continent, as a result of not having replacements,

also of a high cow slaughter all over the continent.

There were ranchers from my particular area who toured the United States. When they came back, they said they went through feedlots with 125,000 to 140,000 cattle in each feedlot. When they toured the lots, they saw that most of the cattle in the feedlots were around the 800-pound figure. They asked the feedlot operators, where are your heavy cattle? How come there are not more heavy cattle in the feedlots? They indicated that in the shortage of killing beef they had backed up to 800 pounds in the feedlots. This is certainly an indication that there is a shortage of beef. Our tonnage is way down as a result of slaughtering our low weights of beef, especially in the United States.

We were talking to some of the packers in Canada, and they've indicated to us that they're starting to use front quarters of beef for manufactured beef. This is an indication that our cow slaughter is coming to an end, that we just don't have any cows to slaughter.

I do appreciate some of the help we've had from the province. I think the \$10 million in the heritage fund certainly is a step in the right direction as far as helping agriculture. But what we have got to do is press for free trade and equal tariffs. I appreciate the minister saying we've got to have a national policy in all areas of agriculture, because I think this is very important for the agricultural economy in the province of Alberta and in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, one area that I think doesn't get enough attention is our water resource development in the province. I have to agree that water is a very important resource, as the minister has just indicated. It's more important than land. However, it's not important unless we harness it. We have to harness this very important resource. I think we in this province put too much emphasis on oil and gas. I would like more emphasis on the development and management of our water resources.

I would have to say that water enters every facet of our lives in Alberta and Canada, whether it's domestic, industrial, recreation, generating of power, or food production. So I would like to see us put more emphasis on the development of this very important resource and not so much on our heavy crude oil, our oil sands development. I think we can leave this to the major oil companies. They're doing a good job in this area. We should leave it to them to develop this resource and put more emphasis on the development of our water.

I think what we've got to do, so we don't run into situations we have had in the past, is establish priorities on all the river basins in this province, and then determine where we should develop our water resource.

AN HON. MEMBER: Site 6.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Should it be Site 6? Should it be the Eyremore dam? Should it be Site 11? Or should it be Three Rivers? First of all, we have to determine what river we should be developing, where we're going to get the biggest return to this province or to this nation from developing our water.

As far as Site 6 is concerned, I say that we have to develop water. I'm not saying Site 6 is the right place to develop it, but if we had to put priorities on the development of our water, we wouldn't run into these

problems. The people I talked to opposed Site 6. I talked to many people. I don't want to bring our water resources into the political arena, because I don't think it should be there. It's too important to be brought into the political arena. However, we have to determine where we should be developing our water.

I think the Bow River basin down in my own constituency is a very important area as far as developing water and putting in a dam is concerned. At the present time we're talking about rehabilitating the Bassano Dam, which is going to cost upwards of \$17 million to \$20 million. If we're going to do that, we should be spending this money on on-stream storage, whether it be the Eyremore dam, or a dam at Cheadle or Crowfoot Creek. I think we should be taking a good look at putting a dam on the Bow River, because there is potential there for putting 200,000 or more acres of land under irrigation to produce food.

This dam down there could be multipurpose. We could use it for recreation. We could use it for a bridge to link the east-west highways. We could use it for irrigation. I think it would be an important area to put a dam.

I also think we need some development on the Oldman River. If we had priorities set, we would know. We wouldn't have to sit in the Legislature to try to determine if Site 6 is the right place, or Site 11, or Three Rivers, and so on. If we had these priorities set out, and a water policy, we'd know exactly where we're going as far as the government is concerned.

As for paying for the development of our water resource, I think it should be broken down. I think the federal government should be paying a portion, because they are definitely getting benefits. I think the local areas should be paying a portion of it, because they're getting benefits. I think the province should be paying a portion of it. We should be determining what portion each of these levels of government should be paying.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to [make] a few comments on another topic, the high cost of housing. The cost is going up from time to time. The continuing problem, as I see it, is the affordability of housing. It's getting out of reach of so many of our people on low or middle incomes. There is just no way, with the price of housing, where their payments are from \$500 to \$800 a month, that they can qualify for mortgages. I see so many people who apply for mortgages; they can't qualify. The reason they can't qualify is that their salaries aren't high enough to meet the mortgage payments. Fewer and fewer of our people can afford to buy homes in this province today. Not only in this province but all over this nation housing is getting to be a very serious situation; that is, the affordability. There are too many people who can't afford houses. In the cities of Calgary and Edmonton, 50 per cent of our people can't afford to buy houses and have to rent.

I don't know what the answer is, but I do know that many of our people can't afford these 25-year mortgages. The economy is not going to stay buoyant for 25 years. If some people are now on incomes that qualify for mortgages, what's going to happen when our economy depresses? They've still got those large payments to make, and it could be very serious.

I think some of the problem is with the regulations we have as far as land development is concerned; the regulations we have at the municipal level and also at

the provincial level, but certainly increasing the price of land especially when it gets annexed into the cities. You can go down across the line and they can buy land in some centres 100 per cent cheaper than we can purchase this land in Alberta in some of the major cities and even in the smaller centres.

As far as the cost is concerned, I think we can charge it to many areas: the land developers, the regulations, the real estate firms, the contractors. However, I do say that the contractors have had a real problem with salaries. They have to pay such high salaries for the simple reason that the oil companies go out and pay terrific salaries to some of our laborers, and the contractors have to do this. They have to charge more for building a house as a result of having to pay high wages which are created by the oil industry skyrocketing wages in some of our areas.

Servicing costs are also a factor that's really escalating the price of our land and our housing. I think our government could help here. I know we've discussed in the Legislature, and the minister has discussed, giving assistance to municipalities for servicing land and servicing lots. I think this would be a step in the right direction.

I have to commend the minister on some of the areas of housing. He works hard and does a tremendous job. One of the new announcements he's made, where the treasury branches are going to handle some of our housing loans — for example, the direct loans — is, I think, a great step in the right direction. I would like to see this expanded.

Possibly we could use this same as far as credit unions are concerned, use credit unions to service some of our smaller loans. Even if we did this in the line of our Alberta development corporation loans — have the treasury branches or credit unions handle some of our smaller loans in that area. Also I think some of our small business loans could be handled through these treasury branches and credit unions, as far as the Alberta Opportunity Company is concerned.

I want to say to the minister that I'm really pleased he's decided to put 27 senior citizen suites in the town of Brooks. They're much appreciated. However, we need another 27 suites down there, and I'm sure he's going to hear from Brooks and area to get some more suites. The ones we have are spoken for already. The minister has also indicated that they're looking at putting a senior citizens' lodge in Bassano. I very much appreciate that, because it certainly is needed in that particular town.

While commending the minister for the work he does there, I had an ordeal myself out of his office that did disappoint me. The minister surely must put in long hours if some of the areas he's concerned with have to go over his desk before they can go out. One of the particular situations I got involved in — and I've got to apologize to one of the civil servants, because I realize he couldn't help what he did. I hung the phone up on him. I have to get back to him; I was in a tirade when I did this.

Mr. Speaker, what happened was, on a Friday an accountant was in Brooks for capital gains purposes. He wanted a comparative price of a piece of property that the Alberta government had bought several years ago, in '73, and then resold. It's public knowledge in the Land Titles Office. It could have been got from the Land Titles Office. However, you have to go to

the Land Titles Office and get a search on the property. But you can do that. Anyone can do it, which we had to do in the end. We went to Land Titles and got both the titles and the prices on them.

But I'd phoned up and got hold of the deputy minister and indicated we wanted this information. It was important; the accountant was having a hearing on capital gains and wanted it for a comparative price. The deputy minister said, no problem, I'll get the information for you. Later on that afternoon, about 4 o'clock, just before the Land Titles Office closed, I phoned to see where the information was. Yes, the information is here. The secretary is upstairs and we'll get it out to you. It was very important that we have this information for this accountant. A little later they phoned back. We can't let this information out. We can't get in touch with the minister, and everything has to go over the minister's desk.

AN HON. MEMBER: Open government.

AN HON. MEMBER: Distrust.

MR. MANDEVILLE: I appreciate the fact. I'm not the type of member of the Legislature who is going to get any information that shouldn't be in the hands of everyone. There's no way that I would want any information. But it was public information, and I thought I should have it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Unbelievable.

MR. MANDEVILLE: As I said, I got hold of another deputy minister, and there's where I've got to make the apology. I appreciate the fact that these are the orders his people have, and it has to be this way. Then I phoned the Premier's office and talked to the executive assistant. I'll have the information right away, he said. It's public knowledge; I'll get it right out to you. However, we didn't get the knowledge. He couldn't find the information, because it was too late.

I can tell you, there was one irate accountant in Brooks when I told him the story of how I tried to get the information and couldn't.

DR. BUCK: That's open government.

MR. CLARK: That's open government.

MR. R. SPEAKER: That's distrust.

MR. MANDEVILLE: However, Mr. Speaker, as I said, I have to apologize. In my little tirade I hung up on one of the civil servants, which I certainly shouldn't have done, and I apologize for doing it.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Not to the minister.

MR. MANDEVILLE: In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on the high utility costs in this province. It's a complaint I have certainly heard many times this winter, and I'm sure many of the rural MLAs have heard the same complaint. We've had open winters; the winters have been warm. This year we've had a cold winter, and many of our home-owners have certainly been complaining about the high cost and the high billings

they've been getting for natural gas. It's not that gas has escalated in price that much; it's that we've finally realized, as a result of the cold weather, that it's been going up consistently.

I think one of the answers could be — we've had two suggestions, one from the Leader of the Opposition and one from the leader of the New Democratic Party, so I have to come in. I think we should possibly have a three-price system for our natural gas: one for all the residents of this province, one for Canada, and an international price. I think this would probably be one of the methods of handling our high price of gas in this province.

Another area I've had many complaints on is the subsidy on propane. We have subsidy on natural gas, and a lot of our propane users feel we should have the same recognition as far as propane is concerned, especially in rural Alberta where quite a bit of propane is used in areas where they don't have the rural gas co-ops. I would like the Minister of Utilities and Telephones to take a good look at this subsidy for propane users in the rural part of the province.

Mr. Speaker, with those few comments, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak in this throne debate.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to participate in this throne speech debate, as other members have. I'd like to congratulate the Member for Lethbridge West and the Member for Calgary Glenmore for the important part they've taken in this debate. I feel this is a very good throne speech. It continues the tradition this government has had in the last several years.

We in Alberta are very honored to have the Queen visit our province this summer. The Cardston constituency had the honor of entertaining the Prince of Wales last year. He impressed us all with his charm and knowledge. To have our reigning monarch visit the province in this succeeding year is a very great honor indeed.

It continues to amaze me that the opposition will not recognize that this government is responsive to the people of Alberta. [interjections] I'd like to give a few examples of the fact that this government does listen to the people, in my constituency at least.

We had a cabinet tour in southwest Alberta last year, and 34 written briefs were presented to this tour. Each brief has been answered by at least one and sometimes two and three departments. My people in the Cardston constituency really do feel that the government listens to what they have to say.

There is another example. Ever since I was elected as a member, and long before — in fact, as soon as the government got rid of departmental examinations — there has been a real interest in our constituency in having departmental examinations returned. We're seeing them being returned, and to me this is another example of government listening to the people.

I think every MLA in this Legislature has had it said to him a time or two that young offenders in this province should be given useful work to do. Again, the Solicitor General is expanding his program of summer work camps. To me, at least, and to the people in my constituency, this is another example of the response the government gives to their desires.

Now I suppose there are many different ways of

defining "open and responsive". For example, if every time a special interest group says "jump" and you ask "how high", some people may decide that this is the way you respond. If every time there is a march on the Legislature and you're leading the parade, some people may think this is the way you respond to people. And if every time there is a demonstration on the steps of this Legislature, you're standing out there saying, "right on", well I guess this is how some people feel you should respond to the people. I'm very glad that that isn't the definition our government uses to respond to the people of Alberta.

DR. BUCK: Put the farmers out to the dogs.

MR. THOMPSON: I honestly think that since I've been in this Legislature one of the best programs we've had is the senior citizen home improvement program. I feel it's a forerunner to the home care program being initiated now, and it's been very well received by the senior citizens of the Cardston constituency.

But there is another side to this. Since this program was initiated, we have had over \$365,000 pumped into the Cardston constituency. This has gone to many different people. It's gone to plumbers, carpenters, and painters, and it's made a real impact on the small business area in our constituency. This is one program, from my point of view at least, that everyone really benefits from, both the people it was initiated for and the people who implemented the program.

I'm very pleased to hear that the government is going ahead with the Red Deer River dam and will continue to work for the dam on the Oldman River too. The people of the Cardston constituency are very water conscious. Really, water is the lifeblood of an irrigation farmer. Water conservation is something you don't argue down south. From a political point of view it really gives me a lot of pleasure to see the Leader of the Opposition berating the government for water conservation in whatever form it is put forward.

DR. BUCK: You're distorting the truth, John. You're distorting the facts. [interjections]

MR. THOMPSON: I was going to comment on the agricultural policy of the province, but the hon. Member for Smoky River scratched about three pages here for me, so I'll go on to something else.

I'd like to commend the government on the success of the drilling incentive program. I became an MLA in 1975, and that was about the time this program was initiated. My first experience in this House, during question period, was to hear the opposition in outrage over the subsidies the government was giving to the drilling companies of Alberta. But, if you recall, at that time our drilling rigs were heading south in a steady stream. Within a year this trend was reversed. I'd like to give you some figures on this. The previous high of wells drilled in a single year was around 4,000. By 1976 we saw the benefits of this program. Wells drilled in 1976 rose to over 5,000, an increase of 25 to 30 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, we're also seeing the results of this program in a different way. Our natural gas reserves are increasing at a rate faster than we are consuming them. There's a strong indication that we've had a major oil discovery, which we have not had for 10 or

11 years. Around 82 deep well rigs are working in Canada. At the present time we have about 60 of them working in Alberta. Another interesting fact is that about 50 locations are ready to be spotted in.

So to me at least it goes to show that this drilling incentive program, put in place in 1974-75, was a real benefit to the oil industry and to Alberta. We've invested approximately \$150 million in it, and we are really seeing the returns coming back on this.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a little about the heritage savings trust fund, because everyone else does. We've all heard of the uproar in Ontario caused by the layoffs in Sudbury by INCO. I really can't think of a better example of what this government here is telling the people could happen in Alberta. I know this was a very sudden happening; it happened practically overnight. And we will have the advantage of seeing ahead when our natural resources are leaving. But I'm still sure the province of Ontario would really enjoy having something like the heritage savings trust fund to fall back on. Really this could happen to any province, and it shows foresight that Alberta has gone the route it has.

I'd like to talk about another program that hasn't been mentioned yet in the throne speech. Over 18,000 people in 36 different trades, attending seven institutions, are enrolled in the apprenticeship program. Most of the people getting these certificates are going to stay in Alberta. I really don't believe anything could attract industry to our province better than a large, stable, technically trained labor force. I'd like to give you some figures to show the increase in this in the last 10 years.

We'll take electricians, for instance. In 1967, 1,000 electricians were entered in this program, and in 1977 there were 3,000. Carpenters: in 1967, 350; in 1977 there were 2,300. Welders: 825; in 1977 there were 1,760. Plumbers: 670, and in 1977 there were 1,700. Heavy-duty mechanics: 475, and in 1977 there were 1,500.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I feel that our province is listening to people, helping people, and seeing that the economic climate of our province is such that private enterprise will expand as never before.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for your attention.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, it's certainly my pleasure to speak again on the throne speech debate. This happens to be my tenth session, and I must say I have enjoyed participating in a throne speech debate on every occasion I have had.

Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to mention the fact that you gave me an opportunity to visit nine schools in my constituency, by the fact that you printed the scroll in connection with the recognition of the Queen's 25th anniversary. This gave me the opportunity to visit nine schools in my constituency. In every case they had assembled the kids between kindergarten and grade 6, I believe it was, in an auditorium. It gave me a great opportunity to converse with the students. I might say that I received a very enlightening education in the two afternoons I spent visiting the nine schools.

For example, every one of the nine schools was flying a Canadian flag. Only one of the nine schools had an Alberta flag anywhere to be seen. Six had a Union Jack flying in the auditorium.

It was very interesting. In all cases I asked a whole

lot of questions. I asked them who the Governor General of Canada was. Rather interestingly, it appeared that only one student in all nine schools knew who the Governor General of Canada was. Quite a few knew who the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta was. But only one student appeared to know who the Governor General was, which really amazed me.

I repeatedly asked the question: why do we have a Queen? As a matter of fact, I found myself asking the question of teachers. I found it very difficult to get an appropriate answer, but I got some very interesting answers from some of the children. They said: she protects us; she guards us; she owns our country; she is a nice lady; she rules us; and she reigns over us. I got a great variety of answers from the children in this regard.

Now, rather interestingly, most of them knew who the Prime Minister was, because in the hallway of every school I went to was a great big picture of the Prime Minister. It was interesting to note that there was no picture of the Premier in all these schools.

DR. BUCK: Horst, where are you?

MR. YURKO: But without exception, I think, they knew who the Premier was in all the schools, and quite a few kids would put their hands up when I asked who the Premier was. It was interesting that they didn't know who the leader of government was in Alberta, but they knew who the Premier was. [interjections]

Now let me say this to you: none, none of them knew who the Leader of the Opposition was. [interjections] No school knew that there was a leader of the NDP. In fact, most of them didn't know there was an NDP. [interjections] But they all knew who I was, Mr. Speaker. [laughter]

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend this type of experience to every MLA sitting in this House. It's a very rewarding experience. Since my visits I have received a large number of letters from school kids and, indeed, from teachers. It is a way of communicating that more of us should undertake more frequently.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I wish to go on record as publicly supporting the Attorney General's increasing toughness in dealing with the gambling explosion, or the explosive gambling trends in the province. It has been my observation that two forms of gambling are being practised in the province. One might be called recreational gambling, which involves bingo and raffles held by community leagues, clubs, and so forth. The other I call hard-core gambling, intent on amassing large amounts of money very quickly, such as through the process of casino gambling, pool tickets, and similar forms. Mr. Speaker, I think we all recognize the insidious evil of this type of gambling, this hard-core gambling, which spreads, and can spread like a plague. I want again to go on record publicly in fully supporting the Attorney General in his attempt to cope with the spread of this type of gambling.

Mr. Speaker, the third point I wish to dwell on briefly is in connection with the international situation rather than the national or provincial one. I want to speak very briefly on this matter, in that one of the highlights of my 1977 year was the fact that I was

invited to spend some nine days in the country of Romania at the official invitation of the Romanian government, to visit, amongst other things, cultural and urban development in the general development of that nation on the occasion of its hundredth anniversary. The highlight of my trip was a 35-minute conversation with the president of the country, President Ceausescu, in which I felt rather unrestrained in discussing three areas. One was peaceful co-existence, the second was trade for our mutual benefit, and the third was cultural and scientific exchange and interchange.

As to all people, particularly all members of government who travel, the importance of peaceful co-existence in the world became very apparent to me. One doesn't have to travel too much to recognize that some parts of the world are in a precarious position. Redistribution of wealth and the growth of wealth are vital, and most nations are scrambling desperately these days either to increase their rate of growth or indeed to redistribute growth. Most nations find themselves in a constricting position rather than in an increasingly expansive position, and this is tending to create economic and social instability rather than stability throughout most of the world.

But above all, what came to me so forcefully was the fact that we in Alberta were indeed fortunate. I had never been so pleased to give silent respect to my grandparents, who left that part of the world to come to Canada and give their offspring and their children's children an opportunity few people have in the world today. I came back thinking very strongly that if there were to be a paradise on earth anywhere, indeed we in Alberta have perhaps come as close to it as anybody anywhere. But even in a man-made paradise with plenty for everybody, of course there is inequity — lots of it — some of it poverty, and social instability. Indeed during the last seven years almost, we as a government have tried to deal very effectively, and accelerate our efforts, in some of these areas.

Housing happens to be my area of endeavor, and I have been very pleased with some of the things we've done. But I always recognize, and freely admit, we can't possibly do enough when there has been serious and total neglect of the housing problems of our native and Metis people for the last 50 or 75 years.

The throne speech dwells in the areas of social responsibility and social inadequacy, and deals with home care, day care, housing, opportunity for work, for play, for human development like education, for cultural development and expression. How can anybody draw together a finer throne speech, dealing with the problems of our society in this tremendously wealthy paradise that we have. How could anybody draw together a more significant throne speech than the one presented in this House a little over a week ago?

Mr. Speaker, I would say that it is a throne speech that is the envy of every person in Canada, of every government in Canada. In fact, most governments in this nation would wish to be in the same position with respect to the management of our resources and the provision of good government in their province as we are in the province of Alberta.

Last year I travelled extensively in the province, officially opening public works and housing projects throughout much of the province. It was quite an

experience. MLAs participated with me, and there was no attempt to differentiate whether an MLA was in the opposition; if he was a Social Credit, Conservative, or NDP MLA. In all cases where I participated, the MLA was freely invited, given a preferential seat on the podium and, in fact, given the opportunity to say what he wished. Because whoever he was, he represented the people there at that moment.

I must say that some of the experiences I received in these openings were remarkable, and some of them I shall never forget. Indeed, it was government, parliament, or Legislature, if you wish, coming to the people. The people responded, in most instances with appreciation and thanks — not so much to the elected representatives, but to the fact that in this province we had such an endowed situation that we could all enjoy some of the fruits God had given all of us. They also recognized the partnership that was increasingly developing between government and the people. In many cases the people were taking initiatives; in others the government was taking initiatives; and in some cases, the MLAs.

I might give you an example. On a tour of government I was particularly pleased when Mr. Thompson, in his constituency, brought forth the need for a change in policy to permit libraries in provincial buildings, to make our provincial buildings a place where families could come, indeed a place for all the people rather than just some of the people. MLAs from both sides of the House made many suggestions in regard to the improvement of services to the people in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk very briefly about the operation and performance of the people's government. The word that I have heard repeatedly in the last several years is the word "bureaucracy", and it's a favorite excuse for everybody — almost everybody. If something is wrong, blame it on the bureaucracy. If something isn't done right, blame it on the bureaucracy. But bureaucracy can only function if it has leadership. And it needs strong and daily leadership, because bureaucracy is people; people who want to do the job, people who would give anything to be able to do a job if they only received some guidance and direction at the appropriate time.

Now, I don't doubt bureaucracies can get so big the elected representatives simply can't lead that type of bureaucracy, as is the case in this nation on the national level. Indeed the bureaucracy on the national level has gone completely beyond the possible control of the elected representatives at the national level. But it is not so here. This government is in control of its bureaucracy, if that's the word you want to use.

In fact, bureaucracy, or the civil service, can be made to be very responsive. Indeed it wants to be responsive in every possible way. But it has to be given leadership. It has to be led by people who can lead, not by people who make excuses. This I can say without equivocation, because I have had the opportunity in the last couple of years to work with some of the most dedicated civil servants we have in government. Some of the best professionals I know of are working in government, and some have been working with me.

I want particularly to cite the professionals, the dedicated civil servants we have in Public Works. Indeed, some of us have been so pleased with the

performance of Public Works in the last several years — the Premier took occasion at Christmas to visit the people of the Public Works Department. My understanding was that this was the first time a premier or leader of government had ever visited a department of public works. All those people assembled to greet the Premier were particularly pleased that he took the time to visit them and tell them what a fine job they were doing.

All through that throne speech, Mr. Speaker, are references, not directly but indirectly, to Public Works. Those people provide space, build the institutions, design and develop them. They come out and we run them. No one ever considers the amount of effort and pain that went into evolving a concept, designing and building it, then bringing it on stream for the use of the people.

Mr. Speaker, in Public Works about 359 people are administering approximately \$150 million worth of projects, considering the heritage savings trust fund. As the Provincial Treasurer has indicated, this will increase. I'm not going to indicate how much, because he will certainly put forth that increase in the budget when he presents it.

In the Alberta Housing Corporation, 225 people are administering a budget of something like \$200 million annually, with over \$350 million of projects currently in process. The Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation has a budget of over \$300 million, to be administered by about 110 people.

No company can compare with these figures and numbers of people in terms of management. So they can't possibly do it by themselves. All they are, are leaders. They use the private sector extensively. We work with architects, engineers, construction companies, plumbers, and electricians throughout our whole society. They have to be responsive to these people and work with them, and they do. They do, in fact, in my estimation, create the miracle that silently happens in this province every year, when all these projects come on stream without too much difficulty. That takes real leadership and potential within the bureaucracy, if that's the way you want to put it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak a little bit today not on housing, because I hope to do that after the budget debate, but about the realty division in Public Works. We tend to overlook the responsibilities in this area, and I want to bring some of their responsibilities to your attention.

First of all, with respect to the realty division, over the years this division has undertaken increasing responsibilities in the areas of leased accommodation, interior design, land acquisition, telecommunications, and parking, along with the necessary planning aspects to fulfil such a mandate.

I want to refer to the area of land purchase for a minute. Few things are more sensitive than land transactions that involve the government. Indeed, from the moment it's heard that the government may be interested in some particular piece of land, all sorts of activity starts to take place, and prices skyrocket. So if there is an area that I'm sensitive to, in terms of management within the department and the two corporations I happen to be responsible for, it is this area.

Indeed, MLAs on all sides of the House have repeatedly approached me with questions on land transactions. I have refused, in most instances, to

give information. I have an understanding from the people I am responsible for — at their request, mind you, almost at their insistence — that any correspondence, any discussion with respect to land transactions between MLAs, come through my office. It's for their own well-being that they insist that this type of correspondence, this type of questioning, be handled through my office. Because they can be, indeed often are, subjected to abuse, not by intent but by error.

Mr. Speaker, if the MLAs find it difficult to deal with my office on land transactions or land pricing, well, it's just too bad. That's the way it's going to be, because it's a very, very sensitive area. If somebody in the department goes beyond that mutual understanding between the minister and the department, well, he will find himself in difficulty quickly enough in this very sensitive area of land transactions.

Mr. Speaker, the growth of the leasing division of the department is noteworthy, not in terms of numbers but in terms of responsibility. In 1972, government occupied 672,422 square feet of space in Edmonton and Calgary. Today the total is 2,912,929 square feet. At the same time, it should be pointed out that government-owned space in Edmonton and Calgary is presently just under 2 million square feet. Furthermore, it should be noted that no major Crown-owned office buildings have been added to the inventory — no major — for the past 12 years in Calgary, and the past 17 years in Edmonton. We therefore have an imbalance of government-leased and government-owned office space. This needs some correction, and we will be examining this very carefully in the year to come.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure we are all aware that office rental rates have been increasing rather dramatically, and will probably continue to do so. During 1977, gross rental rates around government centre averaged \$9 to \$10 per square foot per year. In downtown Edmonton, they averaged \$11 to \$12 per square foot per year, while the rate in Calgary was between \$11.75 and \$12.75. We anticipate that during the year 1979-80 the rate will be between \$10.50 and \$11.70 in the government centre area, \$12.90 to \$14 in downtown Edmonton, and something like \$13.75 to \$15 per square foot per year in Calgary.

It is also interesting to note, from past experience, that the demand by government for space increases by approximately 200,000 square feet per year in Edmonton and about 15,000 square feet per year in Calgary. But as you know, because of the restraint program and the restraint in hiring, this has been decreasing and will continue to decrease.

Mr. Speaker, land values throughout the province have increased at varying rates over the past four years, and as much as 500 per cent or even more. On a province-wide basis, land prices for our various government buildings have increased by an average of 100 per cent. So we have to review very carefully the need for land requirements for office space. In this regard the parking policy is under review at this time.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the involvement of the realty division already noted, there have been other developments which we feel are significant. We have developed policy manuals for administration of the

division and have just completed a space policy manual for all government offices. During the next year we will have completed a telecommunications policy manual and a government furniture policy manual, and we hope to finalize a parking policy manual.

Energy conservation is important to all of us, and I would like to note that in the future, tenders for leased space will reflect energy conservation measures.

Mr. Speaker, have I any more time?

MR. SPEAKER: Another four minutes.

MR. YURKO: As I indicated, tenders for leased space will reflect energy conservation measures. As part of our specifications, we are requiring a maximum energy consumption of something like 22 kilowatt hours per square foot per year. This may mean a relaxation in the narrow temperature limits we presently require; in other words, we allow the temperatures to go down considerably during the off-peak hours. For example, air conditioning may be reduced over the weekends; lights will have to be turned off at night; and light intensity in non-working areas, such as hallways, will be less than in working areas. At this time we feel that these corrective measures can be accomplished without disrupting the proper working climate.

Mr. Speaker, last year Alberta Public Works completed a total of just over 1 million square feet of building space. It was added to the government inventory, but not in large areas, mostly institutional projects. Construction was started on an additional one thousand six hundred thousand square feet of space which will be substantially completed in the coming year. Of course there will be additional projects in the coming year, primarily in provincial government buildings, free-standing courts throughout the province, in connection with the Kirby report; postsecondary educational facilities; environmental protection centre, for example, in Vegreville; and correctional service facilities.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I want to pay tribute, as I did throughout my speech, to those professionals who perform rather silently and without great fanfare in the area of public works, who get the job done without burdening very many people but, indeed, make it possible for all of us to behave and act like politicians. All of us appreciate the opening of buildings, particularly when they're very well attended. And all of us appreciate the opportunity to say a few words when we open these buildings.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your time.

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

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 1 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 5, the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]

