

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**Title: Monday, March 13, 1978 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**Commonwealth Day Message
from
Her Majesty**

MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to bring to hon. members a message from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, which was given to me this morning by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in connection with Commonwealth Day:

During all our visits to many parts of the Commonwealth in the course of my very happy Jubilee Year I was greatly impressed and deeply moved by the liveliness and the spontaneous enthusiasm of the young people who greeted us.

The Commonwealth takes its young people seriously — and rightly so — because they make up about half its population of nearly 900 million. I am glad that the Heads of Government, who gathered in London [last] June, have decided to continue the Commonwealth Youth programme which encourages the participation by young people in all aspects of the development of their societies.

Those who contributed so generously to the Jubilee Appeal also had in mind the young people of the Commonwealth. The establishment of the Silver Jubilee Trust, under the chairmanship of The Prince of Wales, will benefit the young people of all Commonwealth countries. It will help them to carry out community projects in other countries and to broaden their understanding of their fellow-citizens of the Commonwealth and their ways of life.

On this Commonwealth Day — the second to be observed simultaneously in all member-countries — and in a year when our young athletes will later be gathering at the Games at Edmonton in Canada, it is natural that my thoughts should be with the millions of young people in the Commonwealth. I wish them courage, happiness and fulfilment as they meet the challenge of fashioning a better society for themselves and for future generations.

Thus ends the message.

head: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to give oral notice at this time of a government motion to be moved this Wednesday, March 15, by the hon. Dr. Hohol. The text of the motion is as follows:

Resolved that government policies and support regarding quality improvement at Alberta universities be confirmed.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order regarding the business of the House last Thursday afternoon and this coming Thursday afternoon, I'd like to propose that this Thursday, March 16, the House continue the debate on Motion No. 207 by the Leader of the Opposition regarding the Red Deer River Dam.

I adjourned the debate at the end of the allotted hour last Thursday. I'd certainly like to take part in that debate. The Leader of the Opposition indicated he was eager that the debate on that motion continue until it was resolved. We're prepared this Thursday to continue until the vote.

I make this proposal now, Mr. Speaker, because members will want time to continue preparation for the Red Deer River Dam debate on Thursday. Also, temporary Standing Order No. 8 normally prohibits the designation of a motion by the opposition twice, which is in effect what I am suggesting. I'd like the unanimous consent of the House to so do.

MR. SPEAKER: Has the hon. Deputy Premier the consent requested?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 210
An Act to Amend
The Fire Prevention Act**

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 210, An Act to Amend The Fire Prevention Act. I brought this bill before the Legislature last year. It will give the fire commissioner's office in Edmonton permission to get a complete inventory of all fire-fighting equipment and apparatus that we have in the province. It will also make available moneys, through either grants or loans, to municipalities that are lacking in fire-fighting equipment at this present time.

[Leave granted; Bill 210 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I have the honor, pursuant to and in accordance with statutory requirements, to table the fourth annual report of the Alberta Educational Communications Corporation, or ACCESS, and the seventy-second annual report of the Department of Education.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, last week on the occasion of Education Week I had the pleasure of being invited to address the students of Hairy Hill School. Hairy Hill School is the smallest school in my constituency, with an enrolment of just over 100 from grade 1 to grade 9. The small size of the school has . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I apologize for interrupting the hon. member. Is he about to table something?

MR. BATIUK: Yes, I am, Mr. Speaker.

The theme of the program was "Improvements and Changes in Education", and was enhanced by the displays of changing life styles. I was particularly intrigued by a unique project of the students there. They ground wheat into flour and baked their own bread. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, they served their freshly baked produce with farm-style butter, no coloring added, made in the school in a hand-operated churn.

The achievements of this school are no surprise to me, Mr. Speaker, especially when we realize that the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works was born and raised in the Hairy Hill area. No doubt his brilliance and ingenuity are the result of the excellent instruction he received in the school.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a loaf of bread that was prepared and baked on Friday, March 10, by the students of the Hairy Hill School.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a slice for each member?

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. JAMISON: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, approximately 40 grade 9 students from V.J. Maloney Junior High in the city of St. Albert. These students are studying government and law, and are here today to watch the Legislature in action. They are accompanied by their principal Mr. John Kaminski and their bus driver Mr. Chabot. I would ask that they stand and receive the applause of the Assembly.

Thank you.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and to the members of this House, some 46 grade 9 students from the Evansview school at Evansburg, Alberta. They are accompanied by their teachers David Allison, Don Barry, and Keith Froland; also their bus driver John Lawer.

Mr. Speaker, in the few minutes I had with them today in the Carillon Room, I might point out to you that the students are pretty well educated and very concerned about Canadian unity. So I'd like to congratulate them on their knowledge, their respect, and their very good wisdom as far as Alberta politics are concerned. I'd ask them to rise now and receive the welcome of the House.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

Department of Social Services and Community Health

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce, in response to expressed public need, that commencing July 1, 1978, the government will place in effect regulations governing day care operations in Alberta. Accompanying these regulations will be a new method of subsidizing low-income families.

To briefly relate the events that have led to this development in day care, I would remind the House that considerable and often polarized debate has taken place on the need for and quality of day care

within the province. This discussion, particularly in the last five years, has taken the form of position papers, workshops, research, reviews of other day care systems, and conferences at the provincial and regional levels. It became apparent in the deliberations that reasonable, upgraded standards were required.

Accepting the need for improved standards, in July 1976 my department considered the differing points of view and produced a proposal for day care standards and licensing, to stimulate public discussion and encourage feedback. Over 200 responses were received, representing considerable divergence of opinion.

Because of this variance in how Albertans viewed day care, but also acknowledging the need for a rationalized plan for improvement, I appointed a task force on day care in January 1977. The mandate of the task force was to examine the proposal and the responses to it, and make recommendations for action which, hopefully, would be acceptable to all parties concerned. This representative, independent task force, chaired by Dr. Myer Horowitz, academic vice-president of the University of Alberta, completed its study in May 1977. Their unanimous report made recommendations on standards that should apply to all day care programs, and ways in which subsidies could be channelled through municipalities to low-income families requiring day care.

Having now had the opportunity to analyse the task force findings and blend them with economic and administrative realities, the government is in a position to take two significant steps: to implement regulations and propose a revised method of subsidizing low-income families.

The new regulations are designed to:

- (1) ensure that the quality of physical and emotional care for children will meet certain standards in all forms of licensed day care;
- (2) guarantee a reasonable balance between highly developmental programs and those in which children are left largely to their own devices;
- (3) allow flexibility for program variance to be determined by operators and parents;
- (4) provide existing day care centres with both the time and assistance required to meet the new regulations without imposing upon them undue hardships;
- (5) and not cause an escalation of rates, so that those parents presently able to afford the full cost of day care service may continue to do so.

Main features of the regulations are as follows:

- (1) any day care setting for four or more children will require licensing;
- (2) a child care setting with less than four children will require licensing if any of the children are receiving government subsidy;
- (3) the various physical requirements of day care centres will be tightened and made more specific;
- (4) staff-to-child ratios are clearly prescribed and related to the age of children being served and programs being offered;
- (5) a provincial registry for child care staff will be established, and day care programs will be required to have specified number of registered staff in place over a reasonable phase-in period. Persons may become registered

through either one of two routes: through a recognized educational background plus satisfactory experience or, (b) by demonstrating their ability over a period of time in the day care field;

- (6) if changes in existing day care programs are necessary, lead times of up to five years will be granted to allow for required adjustments;
- (7) the new social care facilities licensing act will permit tighter enforcement of the day care regulations and greater emphasis will be placed on monitoring all day care operations.

The new system of subsidizing low-income families using day care is designed to accomplish several goals:

- (1) to enable single parents on public assistance to seek employment;
- (2) to provide freedom of choice to day care users of all income levels;
- (3) to provide equitable treatment for families across the province;
- (4) to make certain that the free market system will determine the cost of day care;
- (5) to ensure that only the needy receive subsidy;
- (6) to provide cost control in terms both of unit (per space) costs and total government expenditures;
- (7) to ensure that any adverse effects to the existing PSS system are minimized.

I would like to emphasize that this new system of subsidizing low-income families using day care depends upon the initiative of local governments.

To accomplish the above, the province will set the stage for a five-year phase-in plan based on:

- (1) subsidizing low-income families who have children in a licensed day care program — the current practice is to provide subsidy to certain day care centres;
- (2) applying a common fee schedule for all types of day care across the province, to assist both low-income families and single parents who are attempting to be self-supporting;
- (3) municipalities playing a major role in implementing and monitoring the day care program on a cost-shared basis, which is the same as the existing system;
- (4) a maximum autonomy being granted to municipalities in establishing appropriate administrative structures to oversee program delivery;
- (5) allowing existing day care centres adequate time to adjust to the new system.

Using the above-mentioned program guidelines to meet the stated objectives, the new system will: one enable subsidized families to use any licensed day care facility; and two, permit municipalities who do not currently participate in the preventive social service program to receive provincial cost sharing for day care.

Our government is convinced that day care programs will benefit Albertans both socially and economically. Consequently \$6 million will be requested for the expansion of services and family subsidization in the coming year.

In summary, the new regulations, which I feel will guarantee an adequate quality of program to all children in day care, will be applied and enforced over a five-year phase-in period commencing July 1, 1978. Concurrent changes in the method of subsidization

will enable low-income families to purchase day care from the licensed centre of their choice. The subsidy will be administered by the municipality and paid to the centre on behalf of the parent. The uniform sliding fee schedule will ensure that only those in need receive assistance and that incentives exist for single parents to enter and remain in the labour force. To achieve this particular objective, it is our intention to implement a policy which will actively encourage the utilization of day care facilities by single-parent families.

In conclusion, I would like to say that day care must be a joint provincial/municipal venture. The success in developing its potential and achieving its objective is predicated on the belief that a co-operative and sharing relationship must exist between the province, local government, and day care centres working on behalf of people in need of service.

I also have three copies to file of the new regulations to which I referred in my ministerial statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [applause]

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in responding I commend the hon. minister for the announcement the minister has made today. I think some of us would feel the announcement may have been long in coming. But I would say to the minister, Mr. Speaker, that on the surface it appears to be a positive step forward as far as day care is concerned in the province of Alberta.

If I understood the minister's announcement accurately, the minister indicated to the Assembly that really the financial support from the province would follow the child to the day care centre chosen by the parents, as long as the day care centre is licensed or approved. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, I say to the minister that that is, in my judgment, a very positive step forward.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I would say to the government that it would be my hope, in keeping with the minister's comments that day care is a joint provincial/municipal venture, that in fact the government would be open and very receptive to reaction to these proposed regulations. So it may well be that the regulations — and we haven't had opportunity to see them yet, but I would urge the minister to be very flexible with regard to the implementation of these regulations in various communities across the province. So often we get tied up in regulations to the point where they can cause some very serious hardships, both for the day care operators and for parents, especially single-parent families who would want to make use of what appears to be, from the announcement of the minister, a positive step forward.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Hospital Privileges

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my first question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care on this, a day of some rather interesting announcements here in the Assembly: the government now being prepared to continue with the debate on the Red Deer Dam, the long-awaited day care assistance . . . [interjections] It's been a long weekend, fellows.

Now that the government has finally made an

announcement with regard to day care, I'd like to raise a matter with the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care where I would hope the government would show the same kind of flexibility. My question to the minister really is a result of a comment he made in Calgary, I believe on Friday last, with regard to Dr. George Abouna, when the minister was quoted as saying that there was no further recourse as far as the provincial government is concerned.

My question to the minister is really twofold. Did the minister in fact indicate that? Secondly, was the minister speaking on his behalf as Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, or in fact was the minister announcing that the cabinet nor the government would be prepared to look at the Dr. Abouna situation in light of the court decisions that have recently been rendered?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what article the hon. leader is referring to, but the hon. leader is referring to a matter which is a dispute between the medical staff of the Foothills Hospital and Dr. Abouna. While in Calgary I indicated that Dr. Abouna has sought his recourse through the courts, and the appeal court of Alberta has made a decision on the matter. That matter is properly and legally dealt with by the courts. As the member of government responsible, in my view it would not be in the interest of citizens of the province for non-medical people such as ourselves in the Legislature to interfere in a matter of medical privileges which, on the one hand, is between the medical staff of a hospital and Dr. Abouna and, on the other hand, has been dealt with by the Supreme Court of the province of Alberta.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Perhaps I could repeat the question to the minister this way. Mr. Minister, in the announcement you made in Calgary, when you indicated that you as minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. leader please revert to the ordinary parliamentary practice.

MR. CLARK: Yes I will, Mr. Speaker. To rephrase my question to the minister: in light of the minister's comment in Calgary on Friday that the minister would not interfere in the case of Dr. Abouna, is this a decision the government has made following the most recent Supreme Court decision here in Alberta?

MR. MINIELY: Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly I was commenting on the Supreme Court of Alberta decision. My comments in Calgary were made in light of the decision of the Supreme Court of Alberta, yes.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, is the minister indicating it was a decision of the minister and his department or a decision of the government that in fact the government would not become involved in this matter at this time?

MR. MINIELY: Well, certainly, Mr. Speaker, if I as Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care am recommending this, it is a government decision at this stage.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in the course of the minister's comments in Calgary, he also suggested that Dr. Abouna still has recourse to the Supreme Court of Canada. In light of the financial and personal hardships created for Dr. Abouna in this situation, my question to the minister is: is the province in any way going to assist Dr. Abouna in getting his case before the Supreme Court of Canada?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I've tried to indicate in my earlier answer that the matter of justice is surely a matter for the courts. Dr. Abouna has sought recourse to the courts. But I would refer any further comment on that to my colleague the Attorney General.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I think it may be a little dangerous for the House to embark on a debate about the rights of a party before the court to take the next step, in fact, and commence an appeal. If the Leader of the Opposition is purporting to represent Dr. Abouna in this Assembly, I think there may be another way of dealing with it.

I understand that Dr. Abouna is considering — in fact may have made — a decision to seek leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. That is a matter, Mr. Speaker, between Dr. Abouna and his counsel. I don't think this House should embark upon a debate as to the merits of an appeal.

I think it's clear that the court of appeal of Alberta awarded Dr. Abouna damages for a procedural error made by the hospital board on the recommendation of the medical advisory committee, and that damages were awarded in an amount different from the trial division. I don't want to debate the decision, nor indeed do I intend to, nor should any member of this House. But the court of appeal decision does stand: that certain rights of Dr. Abouna were infringed upon, on the advice of the medical advisory committee, and that the board did not deal with it procedurally in a certain way.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think the House should get itself into a debate on whether that decision was fair, reasonable, just, or otherwise, or whether we should then consider assisting or not assisting Dr. Abouna in whatever appeal rights, if any, he may have. I think that is a matter to be left with counsel for Dr. Abouna and Dr. Abouna, and not to be discussed by this Assembly.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a further question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It also flows from the comments the minister made in Calgary on Friday last, where the minister indicated that he was now . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I regret interrupting the hon. leader, but it would appear that this series of questions is unduly replete with preambles and preliminaries. I wonder if the hon. leader could come directly to the question.

MR. CLARK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, certainly. Now that the minister has indicated he is prepared to set up some sort of mechanism to have stricter control over provincial hospital boards and that he is reconsidering the idea of a hospital ombudsman, my question very directly to the minister is: at what stage is the

minister's consideration of the establishment of a hospital ombudsman? Might we expect legislation at this session or at the fall session?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I first want to make it clear in response that while the medical staff dispute of the Foothills Hospital with Dr. Abouna is one that has received a great deal of publicity, the matter of the policy implications I was referring to in Calgary, and which I would state in this House, is that many such cases are going on throughout the province in our 150-odd hospitals — many of which, of course, have received far less publicity, than others have — that it was my view from travelling throughout the province that when we put all this together, we should assess the fundamental question of citizen or patient access or control over hospital boards. What the best solution to that may be — there are a variety of three or four alternatives that should be examined to increase the citizens' view that they have greater control or access to what's going on internal to their hospital.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, quite specifically to the minister: is the minister at this time considering bringing in legislation at either the spring or the fall session of this year which would in one form or another encompass the concept of an ombudsman as far as hospitals are concerned?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, on that specific I'm not prepared to give any specific time frame.

MR. CLARK: But, Mr. Speaker, the matter is under consideration by the minister.

MR. MINIELY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I indicated that along with other alternatives under consideration.

MR. KUSHNER: A supplementary question to the minister. I wonder if the minister is in a position at all — I know it's a serious situation, and I know that financially Dr. Abouna is broke. Rather than getting into technicalities, I wonder if anything can be done so one of the best surgeons in the world can get back to the job of practising in a hospital — if he can get his hospital privileges. That's the key, and I don't think he'd proceed if he could get that.

MR. NOTLEY: Attaboy, John.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, in my earlier answer, and I would repeat again, a matter of dispute between medical staff and an individual doctor in the Foothills Hospital — or for that matter any hospital in Alberta — with respect to medical privileges is one which I think any non-medical person would have great difficulty in judging. So I would caution any member of this House from making a judgment on a matter such as that. The matter of any individual medical professional's livelihood, is one which I think properly and appropriately should be dealt with by the courts. Dr. Abouna has sought recourse through the courts. The Alberta appeal court division has ruled on the matter, and at this stage, in my view, that's the way it's properly handled.

MR. KUSHNER: A supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister in a position to inform this Assembly in any way if Dr. Abouna in fact has made an application to receive hospital privileges in the city of Calgary?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I'm unaware whether Dr. Abouna has taken any such action, but I am advised that he is free to do so.

DR. PAPROSKI: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House whether the specialty service provided by this doctor in this hospital in that city is in fact now being provided by other specialists.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is yes.

DR. WALKER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is the minister seriously considering reducing the autonomy of hospitals in this province by interfering in any way with this or any other similar cases throughout the province?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I think I've said in answer today, and at other times in the House, that the local boards in Alberta need to be strengthened. But I also indicated, in answer to an earlier question today, that perhaps a greater degree of direct election is something we should assess.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a further supplementary question of the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It flows from the question asked by the Member for Calgary Mountain View. Is the minister prepared to check with the three major hospital boards in Calgary — I'm thinking of the Foothills, the General, and the Holy Cross, and also the Rockyview — to see if Dr. Abouna has attempted to get hospital privileges, and would the minister report to the House on whether he's been successful in getting privileges?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition seems to miss the main import of my earlier answers, which [is] that the minute I as the Minister of Hospitals become involved in such a thing, then I as a non-medical person am in fact interfering in the procedure of granting medical privileges in hospitals in this province, which at this stage I'm not prepared to do.

MR. CLARK: Well, Mr. Speaker, the buck-passing has to stop in this Assembly and no place else.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct one last supplementary question to the Premier. Has the Premier indicated that he feels Dr. Abouna has been the recipient of harsh treatment in Calgary and that the Premier, once the matter is finished in the courts, will in fact take some action as president of the Executive Council? [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The last part of the question is of course hypothetical, and the first part clearly asks for an expression of opinion as to whether something might be fair or not fair. That could lead to endless debate in the Assembly.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then I'll put the question to the hon. the Premier this way: is the government in the position now of developing a game plan, for lack of another term, that once the Dr. Abouna affair has been finalized, if it goes to the Supreme Court or if there's no appeal — will the Premier himself become involved to see that this kind of thing doesn't happen again, from the standpoint of what's happened to Dr. Abouna as an individual; secondly, from Alberta's ability to attract international research medical practitioners in an area in which we've already committed large sums of money through the heritage savings trust fund?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I think the rather inappropriate second part of that question should probably be answered, and should be I'm sure easily answered, by the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. With respect to the first part of the question, it is a matter that I have assessed and has been discussed. But we're of the conclusion that, as the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has I think pretty clearly put to this House today, we're not in a position as government, nor do I think the Legislative Assembly nor non-medical people, to make judgments as to who should receive or what the terms should be of medical privileges within our hospitals.

We have an outstanding medical profession in this province. There's no question in my mind that those decisions should be made in the hospitals by the medical profession. It's our view, therefore — and I think the question raised with me by the Leader of the Opposition has really been answered by the very first answer by the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to supplement the last part in the hon. leader's comments, which appeared to infer some damage to our capacity for medical scientific research in the province.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons called my office some time ago, as corollary to this matter, to indicate to me that they wanted me to know the applications from medical scientists and researchers to come into our province to take advantage of the expanded medical research capacity we're developing had never been higher, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Although I don't wish to prolong the questions on the unfortunate doctor, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Labour. To the minister's knowledge, have any rights been violated under The Individual's Rights Protection Act with this particular case?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. member, that is a legal opinion which perhaps he might seek elsewhere.

Natural Gas/Agricultural Exports

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. It's the result of an announcement made last Friday about the signing of a contract increasing the flow of natural gas from Alberta to the United

States. Does this event herald the first phase of a so-called gas swap with the U.S.?

MR. GETTY: I don't know, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, it's a very forthright answer.

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Does the minister know whether the Alberta government is going to attempt to convince the government of Canada that in fact this increased export of natural gas outside the country should be permitted?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the way it would work, I understand, is the company which has entered into contracts to sell additional natural gas in the United States will now apply to the Energy Resources Conservation Board. The board will either find the gas surplus to Alberta's needs or not. If they find it surplus to Alberta's needs, they will make a recommendation to the Executive Council. I would assume it will stop there, unless the Executive Council feels it's in the public interest of the people of Alberta to allow the natural gas removal permits to be approved. However, it's the policy of the government that that would only happen, with additional natural gas to the United States, when we get fair treatment for our agricultural producers.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. In light of last Friday's signing of the agreement between the two companies, what steps is the government taking to step up its discussion, both with United States and Canadian authorities, in pursuit of the trade concessions that have been mentioned previously in the House by the Premier and today by the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I understand the hon. member's question. As I understand it, he's opposed our efforts to find these additional markets, so perhaps he could tell me what he means by "stepping up discussions".

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, then, to the Premier. The question really revolves about what the government's approach is going to be: whether there will be stepped-up discussions with the federal and U.S. authorities on the question of the concessions. Further, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier, what will the nature of the concessions be? Is it the government's intention to eliminate entirely the barriers in the case of agricultural products, or to improve access to American markets?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I am still having difficulty with the hon. member's questions, now because he has used the word "concessions". I would have thought that somebody who professes interest in Alberta agriculture would have thought that what is being proposed is merely fair and equitable treatment for Canadian producers relative to their American counterparts.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Premier likes a debate. The question to the hon. Premier is simply

this: is it the position of the Alberta government that access to American markets should be as a consequence of the elimination of all barriers, tariff and non-tariff, with respect to agricultural products and rapeseed in the American market? Is that the position of the government vis-a-vis any further consideration of a gas swap?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I would have thought the hon. member would have had some appreciation of the complexities of the matter rather than make a suggestion, implied in his question, that it's a matter of elimination of barriers. I would think that what we're attempting to do here in Alberta is recognizing that as a province in Canada, perhaps within the limitations as a province, all we can do is strive wherever possible to rely upon the leverage we have with our depleting resources of natural gas and crude oil to effect some improvement in an agricultural position and some improvement in markets.

Unlike others, I'm not of the view that simply carving up the existing pie in a different way is the answer to agriculture. I think the answer is an aggressive position, which we have shown, to attempt to improve access to markets. We recognize that being a country representing only 10 per cent of the North American beef or livestock trade, the degree of that leverage is not great. But it is significant enough to try to work with, and I think the people of Alberta want us to.

Mr. Speaker, if there is any interest by the United States in this matter, I would hope that we're able to be as flexible as we can to try to see what improvements can be made for our agriculture producers, which I think would then be reflected in higher prices and more stable markets.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. Premier. In view of the importance of this matter, is the Premier able to specify clearly to the Legislature the targets with respect to the lowering of tariff and the non-tariff barriers that will form the basis of this government's policy before any consideration is given to additional export of natural gas?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, we're definitely not prepared to do this. We will be prepared to be as flexible as we can, with an objective of improved access, which is something the hon. member apparently isn't interested in.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier.

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

MR. NOTLEY: [Not recorded] . . . is getting very touchy on this question indeed.

Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier: is it still the official position of the Alberta government that there must be significant lowering of those tariff and non-tariff barriers before this government will consider any approval of additional exports of natural gas to the United States in order to facilitate the so-called gas swap?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, we're interested in improved access. We'll get it any way we can in terms of negotiating our leverage, and go through this province and attempt to get across the message to the people that we're interested in improving access to markets, even if the hon. member isn't.

DR. BUCK: Let's hope he has more luck than with the freight rates, Mr. Speaker. [interjections]

Hockey Helmets

MR. JAMISON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife. We'll switch from a heavy subject of tariffs, hospitals, and so forth, to amateur sports. The Alberta Amateur Hockey Association has a rule stating the mandatory use of protective headgear for referees and linesmen officiating amateur hockey games in the province. The Alberta Junior A hockey league allows its officials the option of wearing protective headgear. Because of this the league has [been] banned from sending its champion to the Centennial Cup championship, significant of supremacy in junior hockey in Alberta.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister, does the minister intend to use his offices to intervene in this dispute?

MR. ADAIR: No, Mr. Speaker. But I should qualify that by pointing out that the Alberta junior hockey league, as the operative league in that particular case, has the option of appealing through the Alberta Amateur Hockey Association to the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association. I might point out also that it's the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association that provided that particular ruling relative to helmets for the provincial bodies to enforce. At this particular point in time it's a league matter, and I would hope it would remain there.

MR. DONNELLY: Supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding that referees in the Saskatchewan junior A league do not wear helmets, yet their league will be participating in the Centennial Cup. Would the minister find out why Saskatchewan teams can participate but the young men of Alberta cannot?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I'll attempt to find out if that's the case in Saskatchewan, and what judgment by the Saskatchewan Amateur Hockey Association was behind it.

Alcan Pipeline

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism. It flows from a question he answered last week with respect to the pipe on the Alcan pipeline. At that time the minister indicated he'd seen reports that up to 90 per cent of the total value of the pipe would be supplied by Canadian steel companies. What evaluation has the Department of Business Development and Tourism made of the report of the American interdepartmental committee on the pipeline, which has indicated that rather than 90 per cent of the steel being manufactured in

Canada, it estimates that about 30 per cent in fact will be manufactured in the United States?

My question very specifically to the minister, Mr. Speaker, is: what evaluation has been made by the department of that very important report?

MR. DOWLING: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the difference of opinion is based on difference in pipe size. As I said in my earlier response, we do have a committee formed, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and under that committee are officials of various departments of government involved. I would perhaps refer that question to him.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, could I then refer the question to whoever it was that the minister referred it to?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. member is aware of the fact that the conditions with respect to Canadian content are set forth in Schedule 3 of the federal pipeline bill, which is now under the consideration of the House of Commons. The federal government has made certain statements with respect to what it believes will be the probable Canadian content. As well, I gather that Mr. Blair made appearances and submissions before the House of Commons committee last week. So, bearing in mind that the matter is a federal pipeline under federal legislation going through the House of Commons, I think that's where the matter now stands, for the benefit of the hon. gentleman today.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, supplementary question to either the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism or the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. In light of the fact that 20 per cent of IPSCO is held by Steel Alberta, and in turn 50 per cent of that comes from the Alberta Energy Company, so that the government and people of Alberta indirectly have a major interest in the determination of this matter, my question to either of the hon. gentlemen is: has any assessment been made by Alberta officials of both the DREE report, which suggests that about one-third of the pipe could come from outside this country, as well as the Bank of America report which, subsequent to the size of the pipeline being determined, is still suggesting that 30 per cent could come from that country?

MR. DOWLING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for summarizing the reports as he sees them.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question, then. The question is whether or not the government of Alberta is staying on top of these reports. Specifically to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism: has the minister had an opportunity, in view of our investment in IPSCO, to review the implications of these reports?

Mr. DOWLING: Well, Mr. Speaker, with a competent staff of 190-some people in the Department of Business Development and Tourism, each one working very hard, there's no question that the reports the hon. member refers to have been reviewed.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. The question relates not to the competent staff in the department, but whether or not the minister responsible has in fact reviewed those reports and has reported to the cabinet.

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, I have my time adequately filled by reviewing summaries of various reports that come to our attention, because of my responsibility. I'm not certain that's one that I've reviewed. But we are on top of the pipeline issue. We're very interested in it proceeding. We are aware of our responsibility as a provincial government. We most certainly are aware that the establishment or the moving towards this pipeline coming to fruition is a federal responsibility, and we will have input where we can.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary question on the question of the pipeline to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. It flows from statements made on January 11 before the U.S. Senate by Mr. John McMillan, chairman of Northwest Alaskan Pipeline Co., concerning possible investment from the Alberta heritage trust fund, not in equity form, I take it, but in debenture form. My question to the minister or ministers: has there been any preliminary discussion between officials of the Alcan pipeline consortium and the government of Alberta?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there was one occasion when there was a very informal discussion about that subject, but no requests have been made, as far as I know.

Housing Programs

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works is with regard to the minister's announcement that treasury branches are going to be acting as agents for SHOP and direct loans for housing. Could the minister indicate to the Assembly what the function of the treasury branches will be in administering these programs?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, the function of the treasury branches will be limited to receiving an application and checking it in connection with the details of the program itself, then referring the application to the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation. The fee paid for this service by the treasury branches will be \$50 per application.

I might indicate, Mr. Speaker, that we have considered also using the credit unions in this capacity, but have not made a decision in that regard, having reserved it for some future date depending on how well the treasury branches work in this regard.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation made any assessment or undertaken any studies to determine whether this announcement will speed up the processing of applications for loans in these programs?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, obviously the reason for extending the loan program through the treasury

branches is to increase the availability of the programs to the populace throughout Alberta. An amazing number of loans are being made from the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation portfolio to the smaller centres in the province, and indeed this would tend to facilitate the servicing of smaller centres by the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation.

MR. MANDEVILLE: One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate when the treasury branches will commence involvement in these programs?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I know they're working out the details with the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation at this time, but I can't give any definitive date when each particular treasury branch will open its doors with respect to carrying on this function. I think it will be very shortly, and some already have, I believe.

Weather Modification

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. In the weather modification program this summer, will both ground generators and aircraft be used?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, no, not likely.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary. In view of the fact that ground generators provide a fairly even distribution of silver iodide, and aircraft deliver huge amounts of silver iodide but with a very uneven distribution, will emphasis be placed on more ground generators?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, there's no question that the subject would be appropriate for a very good debate in the Legislature. I would have to say that the school of thought the hon. member expresses is not shared by everyone involved in weather modification.

University Financing

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. Last week in the Assembly the minister indicated he would be meeting with the chairman of the board of governors of the University of Alberta. I was wondering if that meeting has taken place, and what decisions were made?

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, several meetings have been held with different constituent groups in the university community. I think it's reasonable to restrict my comments to those and then participate very fully in introduction of the motion to debate on Wednesday.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister was very specific: has the minister met with the chairman of the board of governors of the University of Alberta, as he indicated he was going to?

DR. HOHOL: Yes, I said, I believe on Monday a week today, that I would be, and sometime during the subsequent time I indicated to the House that I had

met with the chairman of the board of governors of the University of Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate any of the content of that discussion, and was there discussion with regard to the cause of the visit of the students on Wednesday?

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, the content of the discussions included all those matters we discussed on Monday on the floor of the House, and such others, including things that might relate to events outside the House.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, final supplementary to the minister. Is it the intention of the minister to meet with the students on Wednesday on the steps of the Legislature?

AN HON. MEMBER: That's hypothetical.

MR. R. SPEAKER: No it isn't. Is he or isn't he?

AN HON. MEMBER: They might not come.

MR. NOTLEY: They only like talking in here.

Hospital Construction

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, as a result of his answer to the question by the hon. Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff, in view of the government's change or no change towards regional hospitals, and his indicating there had been no change, and saying that there would be no jeopardizing any of the smaller hospital communities in the area.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is: due to the fact that the proposed expansion to the Medicine Hat Hospital is mostly in support services of various kinds, would it be reasonable to expect that the planning and the continuation from the planning now into the drawings and such could be removed quite soon from the holding pattern and continue?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, Medicine Hat General Hospital, as well as other hospitals in Alberta, will certainly return to normal planning immediately upon expiration of the holding pattern on March 31.

Highway Littering

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Transportation. First of all, I would like to compliment the minister. That doesn't happen very often. But I would like to ask the hon. minister if he will continue the excellent program he initiated last year, where the 4-H clubs in the province were involved in cleaning up our highways. Can the minister indicate if that program will go on again this year?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the program will continue, I hope, on an annual basis, and this year will be co-ordinated with the pitch-in campaign of my colleague the Minister of the Environment in the urban centres.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of the fact that our highways are severely littered, it appears, can the minister indicate how effective the program is of fining people \$100 for littering the highways?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, we're a delivery department, not a prosecution one. That question should be directed to the Solicitor General.

DR. BUCK: Can the hon. Solicitor General indicate if there are many convictions under the section of the act that fines people for littering our highways?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I haven't got the facts at my fingertips. I'll find out for the hon. member and give him a report directly.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Transportation. In light of the fact that much of the littering takes place because in many instances trucks do not have tarps, especially trucks carrying garbage, can the minister indicate if a look is being taken at enforcing the tarping of trucks?

DR. HORNER: The short answer, Mr. Speaker, is yes, we are looking at that question. In all these matters we're trying to work with industry and not just make regulations that will reflect regulations for their sake and not for the sake of getting something done.

Day Care Program

DR. PAPROSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health regarding the expanded day care program announced today, which of course Edmonton Kingsway applauds very heartily. I wonder if the minister would clarify whether the subsidized day care users under this program would be able to use private day care centres in addition to the subsidized day care centres, which was not the case up to the present time.

MISS HUNLEY: As I understand the question, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is asking for an interpretation of the new policy. The new policy is that the subsidy will follow the child. Certainly we would anticipate that that would therefore go to the private day care centres and enable a full use to be made of them.

DR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would clarify that the subsidy will be available for those on social assistance, but also those in the lower income group who are not on social assistance at the present time. In other words, it will be a sliding scale involving those too.

MISS HUNLEY: Well, yes of course. It's intended to assist the low-income earners as well. There will be a sliding scale based on the total income of the family, whether a single person is bringing in a salary or whether there are two people. All of that will be taken into consideration when the amount of subsidy, if any, is decided upon.

DR. PAPROSKI: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing that 40 per cent of day care users are in fact subsidized now, I wonder if the minister would indicate whether she has information to indicate what increase of number or percentage of individuals will be caught under this program for the lower income group?

MISS HUNLEY: We don't have that exactly, Mr. Speaker. About 9,000 children are presently in private day care centres. I believe there are about 3,500 spaces in PSS centres across the province. If 40 per cent of the 9,000 who are in private day care centres are eligible for subsidy because of the low income of the parents, that would give some indication of those who are eligible for subsidy immediately, as soon as the program is operating. However, we have no way of knowing what others there may be whose parents wish to start working, and we hope this will make it possible for them. So we did take into consideration that we can allow an amount of growth. We did that during our studies of the budget proposal so we would have some idea of the impact of this on provincial spending over the coming years.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise on a point of order. It refers to the notice of motion the hon. Deputy Premier introduced, which I support, incidentally.

Mr. Speaker, the point of order is to refer hon. members to the business of Thursday next, when we break at 4:30 to discuss private members' bills, unless we obtain unanimous consent. Now the first private member's bill on Thursday is one that I'm introducing, which I would very much like to see debated. However, because of the concern expressed that there be adequate opportunity for all members to debate the motion that will be referred on Thursday, I would be quite prepared to offer that we hold that over so that hon. members would be able to have the opportunity to spend all Thursday afternoon debating the issue.

There is a precedent for this, Mr. Speaker. The precedent I would cite is December 1975, when an opposition designated motion was carried on not only for the period of the one hour but into the time that private members' bills were to take.

So I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it might be worth while to decide that today, so members who wish to participate in the debate will have an opportunity and not feel constrained by just the hour's time available on Thursday.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, that would be agreeable to the government. To summarize, therefore, we would proceed this Thursday with the continuation of the hon. opposition leader's motion on the Red Deer Dam, No. 207 I believe, for either the balance of Thursday afternoon or however long it takes to come to a vote, on the understanding that the private member's public bill proposed by the Member for Spirit River-Fairview, No. 208, would proceed and stay on the Order Paper as the first bill for Thursday,

March 30, the next Thursday on which bills are reached.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there then unanimous consent for the proposal by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview that if the debate on the motion referred to by the hon. Deputy Premier continues beyond the normally allotted time, the debate on private members' public bills will be deferred accordingly?

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly the hon. Member for Drumheller wishes to deal with this point. I'm sorry I didn't . . .

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to withhold unanimous consent, but I do think a motion like that affects everyone who has a bill on the Order Paper, not just the one who has No. 1. No. 1 is going to be discussed, but some others down the line may never come up for discussion. So when we're considering this type of thing in the future, I think we should consider all those who have bills. When a member is willing to do this, possibly it would be appropriate that he's also willing for his bill to go to the bottom of the list so it won't affect others.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the further discussion of this point by the hon. Member for Drumheller, does the Assembly wish to agree to the proposal made by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: So ordered.

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 10: Mr. Trynchy]

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the ones before me said, it's a pleasure to speak on this resolution on the throne speech. When we say that, I sometimes wonder if we really mean it. I notice again, as usual, that the press gallery leaves. So the message we're going to give is usually to ourselves.

DR. BUCK: The Whitecourt paper will pick it up, Peter. They like you.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, before I get into the subject I want to speak on, I'd like to dwell on the obligation of the press. It seems that as soon as question period is over, we have no more press.

What we say in this House is said to each other, and it's never printed. So if they feel it's time to go at 2:30, why don't we?

DR. BUCK: Most of you do.

MR. TRYNCHY: You know, the only time we see people walking out is when there are a bunch of spoiled kids, and they're on the opposition side; they all take off if things don't go their way.

DR. BUCK: We needed a *Whitecourt Star*.

AN HON. MEMBER: Got you, Walter.

MR. TRYNCHY: We've had some pretty good speeches in this House. As a matter of fact, the speeches by the Member for Lethbridge West and the seconder from Calgary Glenmore were probably two of the most outstanding speeches I've heard. And as I pick up the paper I subscribe to — and it's published here in Edmonton, I won't say which one it is — what do we see?

AN HON. MEMBER: You've got a choice?

MR. TRYNCHY: What do we read? Nothing. Last Monday, when the Leader of the Opposition rose to speak, he made a statement and it was in the *Journal*: three farmers a day leave the farm. Last Friday the minister made a speech in the House, and I thought it was a pretty fair speech. He said that from 1971 to 1976 there have been some 4,100 new farmers in Alberta. So what the Leader of the Opposition quoted, saying that three farmers leave every day, could be right. But we have to remember that four people every day move back on the farm. That's why we have an increase. Yet when I looked last Saturday at the same paper I subscribe to, there wasn't one word. Not one word.

I wonder if the press is interested in the facts, or they want to print one side, or no sides. I challenge the press to do their job. So far they're not doing the job I think they should.

DR. BUCK: The Whitecourt paper took up your challenge, Peter.

MR. TRYNCHY: Do you want to speak now, sir, or do you want to wait till it's your turn?

DR. BUCK: I read it.

MR. TRYNCHY: Do you want to speak?

AN HON. MEMBER: He never speaks anyway.

DR. BUCK: All governments that are going to get kicked out get bitter about the press, Peter.

MR. TRYNCHY: You know, that's quite a statement for the hon. Member for Clover Bar to make. I'm amazed at his intelligence.

AN HON. MEMBER: His what?

DR. BUCK: Read the Whitecourt paper.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I really feel, and it disturbs me, that the press would not follow up the speeches in this session no matter where they come from, who says them, or at what time of day. We as members have an obligation to be here. I guess I've sat in this House since I've been elected, probably surpassed as to attendance only by yourself, worshipful sir. Yet, speech after speech after speech — not one line in the paper I subscribe to. I think it's appalling that we should have that type of performance.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move on to the consumers of Alberta, who number about 1.8 million. How do we get that message to them? Certainly we can't get it through the press, because they're not reporting. So how do we do it? I guess there's no way we can. I'm going to talk to the House today, because I'm sure the Member for Calgary Buffalo, and a few others who are urban members responsible to a number of great consumers, will take this message home.

ANHON. MEMBER: Hopefully.

MR. TRYNCHY: And hopefully the Member for Clover Bar.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak on agriculture, by far the number one industry in Alberta. When you look at some 58,000 farmers you could say this: only in Alberta can so few produce so much for so many for so little. I think the message I want to relate to consumers is that they have to be aware of what agriculture means to them.

We've talked about agriculture in a sense and what it means to the young farmer. Of course it's tough. In my constituency it's probably as tough for the young farmer as anywhere else. But we don't seem to get the message to the consumer that they have a responsibility.

Some weeks ago I spoke at a meeting, and I spoke again at another meeting. I tried to relate the facts of agriculture to the consumer. After each meeting I was amazed at the number of consumers who weren't aware about agriculture, who would come forward and say, you know, we've never heard this before; if that's a fact, how come we don't hear it? That's the thing I'm getting at, Mr. Speaker. Why can't we get that message to them? Are we at fault? Am I at fault standing here in the House speaking about agriculture and consumers? Who is at fault? I think we can do a better job if in the future we have improvement in the type of press reporting, TV commercials, and everything else.

It's so easy for a consumer to drive by a farm and see the buildings, new machinery, and all kinds of things, not realizing that, in fact, most of that is mortgaged, and that there is no end for the young farmer. Besides, an input a farmer must make, that the consumer is not aware of, is in the form of power. On a farm you must provide at least \$2,500 to get power installed, \$1,700 to \$2,000 to get natural gas into the house, \$2,000 to \$4,000 for water and sewer. You don't have this in the urban centres. Sure the urban centres have to pay a price for the lot; that's logical. But the farmer has to buy that quarter of land. If he buys a quarter of land — and it's anywhere from \$30,000 to \$70,000 — he has an equivalent expense of two or three lots, and that quarter of land will never make a viable operation. So

besides buying a parcel for his house he has these other things.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to go back to about 1948. As a young farmer, I remember we used to take a load of grain to the elevator, and our initial payment on #3 Garnet wheat was \$1.50 a bushel. Our barley was \$1.23 a bushel. At that time the biggest tractor on the market was around \$4,000. The largest combine was anywhere from \$3,800 to \$4,200. Since then, what have we got? Barley has gone up to \$1.53, wheat is about \$3.05, but that combine is worth about \$60,000, and a tractor \$45,000 to \$50,000.

So when we ask young farmers to continue, you can see their plight. That's the kind of message the urban dweller, the consumer, is not aware of and probably doesn't appreciate. Certainly that's not the only thing. Fuel costs have gone up, but of course they've gone up for everybody.

To have a young farmer start in farming he has to provide some funds, but he must borrow a bigger percentage. Over the last few years the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation has had some \$300 million in funding for young farmers. The farm credit board, which is federal of course, has some \$2.3 billion.

What these people need, and what the consumer needs, is to have these young farmers remain on the farms. They must have some longer term financing, and possibly lower interest. To start a farm and make it viable a young farmer needs approximately three quarters of land; he needs a full line of machinery, or close to it. The very minimum he needs to start up with is \$150,000, and it can go as high as \$300,000 or \$400,000. If one should stop and think for a moment, [with] the interest rate of 10 per cent there is just no way he can make the payments, let alone pay the interest by being on the farm alone. That's why we have so many young farmers seeking employment at gas plants, lumber mills, and what have you, to supplement their incomes.

Mr. Speaker, the average age of farmers has come down to about 50 years. But that's not good enough. We have to get it down to 35 years if possible. But we can't get young people interested in farming, and the reasons I outlined are probably the basic points.

The consumer is not aware that when this farmer is in a bind and has to leave, somebody takes over. Who takes over? The corporations. It won't be too long at the rate we're going — and I can see it coming; it might not be for 10 or 20 years — that corporations such as Safeway will be full tilt into farming operations. They'll be able to produce what they want, they'll be able to sell what they want, and they'll be able to get the price they want. This is not happening now.

Mr. Speaker, something that's disturbing, as we talk about agriculture, is our imports of beef into Canada and, of course, into Alberta. We're told now that we have to import 4 to 6 per cent of our beef to meet our needs. Some 16 per cent of that arrives in Alberta. I say to you that if we had a government interested in agriculture, especially in western Canada, we wouldn't have to import any beef, because at a moment's notice the farmers in western Canada can raise that beef in a few hours.

It's interesting to note where our imports come from. We get 8.8 per cent from the United States; 44.22 per cent from Australia; 39.4 per cent from

New Zealand; others, 7.94. Mr. Speaker, I say to you, to our consumers, to our farmers — and I might even say this to our federal government — what does Alberta owe Australia or New Zealand? What do they buy from Alberta? Practically nothing. All we're doing is selling the agricultural products to Australia and New Zealand for industrial jobs in Ontario. That must improve, or our young agricultural people will not be with us.

We produce 40 per cent of Canadian beef right here in Alberta. Eighty-five per cent of what we produce has to leave this province. And where does it go? We could produce 50 per cent of the beef. We wouldn't have to have any imports. But that's not the system. We used to produce enough pork to export about 40 per cent of what we produced. Today we're importers of pork for the simple reason that the pork producer cannot stay in business. He got out, so we have to have American pork brought in to supplement our own.

Last year, for example, we exported 97 million pounds of beef. We imported 224 million pounds of beef. We were in a trade deficit of 127 million pounds. In pork we exported 85 million pounds; we imported 197 million pounds. Our trade deficit was 112 million pounds.

We must have, and must push for, programs with some support. We have to have support programs to come close to cost of production. There is just no way these people in Alberta can produce beef that's costing them 60 cents to produce and sell it on the market at 45 cents. We talk about farmers being the most efficient people in business and, by God, I'd like to say so right now, they are. There is nobody in Alberta or Canada who produces as a farmer who does otherwise. They don't punch a time clock; they don't have a coffee break. They work from when they start until the job is done. It doesn't matter whether it's from 5 in the morning till midnight. The only thing that stops them in the fall when they harvest is when the crop gets too tough; or in the spring when they're seeding, it gets too dark or too wet. That's the kind of people we have out there. We as consumers across Canada do not appreciate it, and we're going to lose them.

Mr. Speaker, I introduced a bill some time ago, a beef labelling act, that might make the consumers of Alberta aware that this meat was produced in Alberta. I'm going to introduce it again, because I've done some surveys since then. I've talked to a number of consumers. Ninety-nine out of 100 I've talked to would buy Alberta beef, but 100 out of 100 want it labelled. They wanted to know if it was Alberta beef or imported. Surely we owe them that.

What about the 16 per cent that comes into Alberta from other countries, the beef we import? It's sold across the counter. I've walked into the Safeway, or any store you want to go to — it doesn't tell you where it comes from. You look at it. If it looks good, you buy it. If you eat it and it doesn't taste so good, tough luck. Why can't it be labelled "Grown in Alberta"? If it's not grown in Alberta have it "Imported". Then the consumer of Alberta at least would know: I am going to buy Alberta products so I can support the Alberta farmer.

Mr. Speaker, I guess my message today is about agriculture, but I want to make this point to the consumer, because he's the one who can help. We

only have 58,000 farmers; we have 1.8 million people, and they're the ones who are going to decide whether the Alberta farmer stays here or has to leave.

We talk about what we can do to help the farmer. The Leader of the Opposition stood in his place and said we must get involved in promoting agriculture. Well, I agree with him. I think there isn't a member in the House who doesn't agree with him.

But then he goes on to say we shouldn't get involved in GATT, we shouldn't get involved in grain sales, we shouldn't get involved in federal matters. He says the Premier's place is in the province, that the Premier went to the wrong place at the wrong time. Mr. Speaker, I don't know where he gets his message. He goes on to say that if the government is going to do anything for the farmer, it should get out of the board rooms and into the barley fields.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if that hon. gentleman would come to my area and stand in the barley field, where the barley bins are full, the cattle pens are full, the hog barns are full, other grain bins are full and no markets, you know what they'd use on him? It's a three-pronged instrument the field pitcher used in the threshing days. That's what they'd use on him, and they'd tell him to get out of the board room and find some markets. So I really don't understand what he's getting at.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP, or its member, says we shouldn't be involved with the Wheat Board. He says the Wheat Board has done a tremendous job. Well, I'm not so sure. I've been in the grain business for some 20 years. In the 1950s and '60s, when we raised malting barley across Alberta, there were no markets. The Wheat Board wasn't doing its job. Yet private enterprise, the grain company I worked for, went out and secured its own markets. And by securing these markets we were tops in Alberta, and pretty soon we got the Wheat Board off its butt.

So, what does it say to us? It says we must get out there. Whether it's the government or free enterprise, we must promote these sales. I could go on and say more about that.

Mr. Speaker, we must become involved in GATT. We must improve our access to all products to the United States, Japan. We must eliminate tariffs on our beef cuts going across the border to the south. We should eliminate some of the quotas on beef. We must remove the tariffs on rapeseed oil, oil meal going to the U.S.

You know the Prime Minister was in Edmonton the other day, and he said, maybe you should take over the country, if you're so smart. I don't know who he was directing that to, but if he was directing it to this Legislature I say to you, let's take up the challenge. We couldn't do any worse than he's done.

Mr. Speaker, we've talked about freight rates, and I know we haven't accomplished too much.

How much time have I, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The question rather is: how far is the hon. member over time?

AN HON. MEMBER: Keep on, Peter, keep on.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I have possibly half an hour left. I'm sure I can't go on that long. I'd like to close in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree that we might call it another five minutes?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you.

DR. BUCK: In spite of the fact it's a little boring, I certainly would [inaudible].

AN HON. MEMBER: Thank you, Walter.

MR. TRYNCHY: I'm glad the hon. member knows this is an important speech.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're taking up Walter's time.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, we have to do a number of things, and we have to do them as a provincial government, even if we tramp on the toes of the federal government. If they're not interested in doing it, we have to do it.

Our research program: of course there's no use mentioning that. It has to be a help to us. Something I'd like to see us do, and probably continue, is to have grass seed assistance for the small farmers and some soil testing done at less cost.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to close now in saying this, and I'd like to leave this message with the consumer of Alberta, because I guess that's as far as we have jurisdiction: we need the consumer, we need him badly. That 14 per cent of his take-home salary he pays to keep his home, compared to 30 per cent a few years ago — he or she shouldn't have to complain, but they do. We have to educate them that if we don't have an improved agricultural system in Alberta, we're not going to have that 14 per cent. We're going to be paying whatever the market bears, and that will be done through corporations.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I think we as government have to provide the initiative. We must provide the funding. We must provide the economic climate. Of course above all we must provide a stable economy. If we as government do that, I'm sure the people of Alberta will take care of the rest.

Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I want to deal today with a number of constituency matters. I also may run out of time and have to carry them on into the budget debate.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne, and to commend the government on the Speech from the Throne itself and all those who have taken part in the debate.

I would like to say an extra big and loud amen to what we just heard from the hon. member Mr. Trynchy. It would be a wonderful thing if the points he raised in agriculture could be sounded across this nation, because that message should be in the hearts and minds of all consumers.

I'd like to deal with three items in the Speech from the Throne. First of all, with a special vote of thank you to the government and to the ministers, the announcement that the provincial park on the Midland Coal property donated by Sid McMullen is going to be advanced and proceeded with. This is going to

be one of the unique provincial parks of western Canada, maybe of all Canada. I would like to commend the minister and the government for giving it some priority this year.

I'd like to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs for the consideration he has given to the need for a regional planning commission in the vicinity of Drumheller. The Calgary Regional Planning Commission is too far away and has had too much to do. I think this is recognition of representations made to the government by the people of that area.

I'd also like to thank the government and the minister for advancing the Red Deer River Dam. I believe the people of the province generally are in favor of the Red Deer River Dam. I didn't get a chance to finish everything I wanted to say the other day, so I think I should conclude that particular item with one or two statements. If there wasn't so much misrepresentation by some political leaders, particularly the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the NDP, there wouldn't be nearly the havoc about the Red Deer River Dam that is presently about. Not only half-truths . . . And I might also include in that the former member of the authority, Mr. Kinisky, who tells only part of the story. I heard him on CTV some time ago, and I was disgusted with him and CTV, because they told only part of the story, not the whole story, for the nation to hear.

I'm going to use just one illustration, because I don't want to spend too much more time on it. The Leader of the Opposition went to the Drumheller area. Let me read what he told the people. I heard him say this over CJDV radio, and it was repeated in the *Big Country News*, December 21, 1977. This is part of the story, then I'll read what he said:

A Red Deer Dam could cost residents of the Drumheller Valley millions of dollars. Social Credit leader Bob Clark brought this possibility to light during a Drumheller visit, Friday.

Then this is what he said:

"I initially had the feeling the funding would come from the department of the environment but following the fall session we got the feeling the government is looking to the citizens of the valley to pay the large portion of the costs. That would be unrealistic. The majority of the funding should come from the heritage savings trust fund."

Mr. Speaker, why is the Leader of the Opposition trying to befuddle the people living along the Red Deer River in regard to the government program? The Minister of the Environment made it very clear that the costs of the diking and the dam were coming from general revenue; not from the heritage savings trust fund, but from general revenue.

Why does the Leader of the Opposition propagate that kind of — well, I won't use the word — among the people? It disturbed them, and many came and said, who is telling the truth? Now if he's trying to disturb the people and make them angry against the government, I suppose that's his responsibility. But as the Leader of the Opposition in this province, surely he has a responsibility to tell the truth too. And the truth is not contained in that statement.

I also want to say a word or two about agriculture, Mr. Speaker. Agriculture is one of the prime concerns of the people I represent. I want to commend the Premier of this province and the government for

insisting on advantages for agriculture before we let our gas go to another country. Too long we've simply looked at the dollars coming in, and someday we're going to have nothing to trade. I think the citizens of this province should be delighted with the fact that we have a Premier and a government who aren't going to sell our gas for a few paltry dollars today, when we may not have anything at all to trade tomorrow. Let's get some advantages for agriculture while we have the gas. If we don't do it then, we never will.

I was not surprised with the Hon. Otto Lang getting angry with the Premier because he made statements about the Wheat Board after his return from the European and Asian countries. But I was surprised at the Wheat Board finding fault. In my view the statements were an attempt to help the Wheat Board get markets, and to help the grain farmers of this province and western Canada. They should have been appreciative of them. I would think that if I had been the minister in charge of the Wheat Board in Ottawa, I would have been delighted to send a letter of appreciation, because a premier of a province was interested enough to try to help the farmers of this country.

But we've got too much trade going on; too many giving away. We've seen that going on in GATT for many years. When we look today at the situation between Canada and the United States, my sympathies are with our farmers. If our consumers don't learn pretty soon — if we don't give a proper price to our family farms today, they will be paying very, very high prices to the corporation farms tomorrow. I don't think there's any doubt about that whatsoever. Canada has about a \$10 billion industry, and about \$4.5 billion of that is export-oriented. The United States has a \$100 billion agricultural industry, but about 50 per cent of that is export-oriented.

Our farmers have to get a fair return; they can't continue producing below a price. When we make sure everyone else in the country who sets his own prices gets the price that gives him a return on his investment, we should be making sure it is also done for the farmers. I point my finger at the Canadian government, which, as the last speaker mentioned, has traded away many privileges in this country and has got nothing for agriculture. In our gambling techniques we talk about, it's my turn. It's agriculture's turn now to get some of these benefits, and I want to encourage the government to stick to its guns in making sure we get an agricultural benefit before we give away or sell our natural gas — something that other people want.

I now want to deal for a moment with The Surface Rights Act. The Surface Rights Act, introduced by this government in 1972, was long overdue. It provided for renegotiation on any lease agreement made after '72. When retroactivity was discussed at that time, the government advised that it did not wish to nullify existing leases. And there is some merit to that line of thinking. Instead, the government asked oil companies to voluntarily upgrade compensation on renewal of surface leases. Since that time many, many oil companies — probably a majority — have done that very thing. Now most renewals contain the renegotiation lease for every five years. That is good; that's a big advance. A lot of oil companies at least have given a reasonable increase based on the prices

of today.

Now 20 and 30 years ago when farmers were required to provide oil companies with rights on their surface land in order to get the minerals, there was little protection, and it was easier to get a better agreement from the oil companies than through the board of that day. So most farmers did enter into private agreements with the oil companies. And not being lawyers, everything wasn't exactly up to date. There was no renegotiation agreement. Most of them provided for 30-year renewal after the 25 years were up. Now at least some oil companies are not playing the game with the farmers. To mention one, a few days ago CDC Oil and Gas Ltd. offered a farmer in my area a 10 per cent increase on a lease that was signed in 1958. When the farmer and the MLA pointed out that this would not even pay the increase in taxes for that period, CDC sent him a letter that contained this type of thing:

Our company, in keeping with other operators in the area, is attempting to voluntarily improve rental payments to our lessors with respect to all surface rights that were granted prior to January 1, 1972. We have conducted surveys of the price per acre being paid by other companies throughout the province and feel that our offer is in line with other surface lease rental [agreements].

This is the part of the letter I would point out:

Under the terms of the leases granted to our company, we are not obligated to make any increase in rental payments nor is there any current government legislation that would require us to do so.

Our offer was not ever intended to be negotiable and we would assume from your letter that you do not wish to accept an increase in surface rentals.

Now this is arrogance, Mr. Speaker, on the part of an oil company. If that attitude prevails among many oil companies, I think there will be a responsibility on the part of the government to bring in legislation. Most of the oil companies don't want legislation; they've acted in good faith with the suggestion by the government to voluntarily upgrade. But after 30 years to offer a 10 per cent increase when other companies have offered 20 and 30 per cent increases, in view of the price that they themselves are getting, I think CDC is putting itself in a very awkward position with other companies.

I want to keep rushing on and to deal with another very important item that concerns the people of the Strathmore area and the county of Wheatland. That is a nursing home and/or an auxiliary hospital, probably located at Strathmore. I say "probably" because that is the most logical place and that's where the people generally want it.

A former Minister of Health, the hon. Dr. Ross, promised the people of Strathmore an active bed hospital, and then that promise was not carried out the following year. The year after that, the government changed and different priorities took place.

The people there have a lodge, Wheatland Lodge, which contains 53 people, and I think 51 are in the lodge right now. Most of them are residents of Strathmore, but some have come in from other areas because they've relatives in Strathmore. When you go to the lodge, all these people are fearful of the day they have to move to an auxiliary hospital or nursing

home. They want a nursing home in their area. When cabinet was there some years ago, I think the hon. Deputy Premier made a statement that he was delighted these people were interested enough to come out early in the morning; they were so interested in getting a nursing home.

I want to urge the government to carefully consider the fact that the county of Wheatland has no hospital, no nursing home, no auxiliary hospital, and no active bed hospital. The fact that there is one at Bassano, one in Drumheller, and some in Calgary, in all areas, I don't think is sufficient reason to say that large area should not have at least a nursing home or an auxiliary hospital.

The population of Strathmore is growing — it's now over 1,500 people — and the areas around it are growing. In fairness to the hospitals in Calgary where most of these people go, I think decentralization, which is in line with government policy, and the construction of a nursing home in the Strathmore area would not only serve a wonderful purpose, but would be an excellent economic factor for that area as well. The town of Strathmore has provided land free if the nursing home can be constructed.

I now come, Mr. Speaker, to the shelter program of natural gas. The government is again to be commended for the shelter program. This has been a tremendous help and has been dealt with by a number of other members. Because of the increase in natural gas as we approach world price because of factors beyond the control of people in this province, the shelter program was devised. But also because the natural gas price is gradually increasing — or, many people think, increasing too fast — there is a tendency for prices for other fuels, such as propane and coal, to increase also. So now a lot of people are concerned about the price of propane. One couple sent me a letter saying that their price for propane in one month was over \$90. That's a pretty heavy item for senior citizens who are on pension and living on a fixed income.

This spring the propane price will be deregulated, and I'm hoping there will be sufficient competition that propane will find its proper place in the market place. The minister has said it isn't precluded that if the price should rise unduly, the minister and the Board of Public Utilities can still step in and control that.

I would like to see the government consider a shelter program for propane and even for coal, where these prices are keeping pace with the natural gas or rising because of that increase in natural gas.

There is another item that I think merits extra consideration. Many farmers are using propane in their tractors and irrigation equipment, and this has nothing comparable to the rebate given if they use gasoline. I think the fact that they went to propane is commendable. But I think we'd be surprised at how many people in this province are using propane in their tractors and irrigation equipment. This is to produce agricultural products, and I would like to see the government seriously consider a rebate program comparable to that given for gas in the production on farms that use propane.

Now I'd like to deal for a moment or so, Mr. Speaker, with the matter of snowmobiling. Again, this is a matter the people of my constituency are very concerned with, and I want to mention a few

points. I was very happy to attend the meeting the other night, and I was delighted with the attitude of the associate minister when he was speaking about the eastern slopes, and the attitude of both ministers of the government to reviewing these items that are of concern.

I think that we sometimes forget that a very large number of people in this province depend on snowmobiling for their winter recreation. They can't go to Florida, they can't go to Hawaii, but they can buy a snowmobile, and they and their families go out and enjoy the winter. I've often said that the snowmobile has brought new meaning to winter for the farmers and the wage-earning people of the province. There are fears among many snowmobilers today. Some may be unduly generated, but there are things worrying them very, very greatly.

One was that The Off-highway Vehicle Act dealt with snowmobiles. Generally speaking, The Off-highway Vehicle Act deals with summer vehicles. There's really little place in that act for winter vehicles. I was happy to hear the minister say the other night that the government was seriously considering bringing in a snowmobile act. I think if the government does that, many of the worries and the concerns of those who find their winter fun in snowmobiling will be alleviated or will disappear.

That is an important item, and I want to commend the government for listening to the snowmobilers and for listening to the need for that particular item. Setting out on a snowmobile in a winter setting on many feet of snow, not doing damage to the environment, not generally doing damage to anything — and now operated by a very responsible organization in this province, which I think is going to be very happy with the decision of the government to bring in a snowmobile act. I commend the government for that.

I would like to commend the association too for their very excellent attitude. The damage that I think has been done to the snowmobiling industry has been by individuals who have refused to belong to clubs. The clubs insist on their buying a license and living up to a code of ethics, and I think this is good. You'll never see a member of a snowmobile club running down a coyote or chasing animals with a snowmobile. And the more that come into our clubs, the better it's going to be in the province.

There are really three items necessary for snowmobiling. One is large amounts of snow. The more snow the better. The snowmobile can go into areas in our highlands, in Kananaskis and the eastern slopes, where practically no one else can go. I've never been that far on a snowmobile, but they tell me the scenery is majestic and magnificent, and someday I hope to see it from a snowmobile.

The second item is that a large area and distance are required. A snowmobile covers a lot of area. I believe the other night someone said that at one time he had taken three or four days to go from the Highwood House down into the Crowsnest Pass area, whereas in a snowmobile they do it in a matter of hours.

Then a staging area is required. I think it's necessary that it be separate from that of skiers and others who operate other types of winter sports.

But one item that I think is very, very paramount, is the item contained in The Provincial Parks Act, an item I think all members of the Legislature have to

take responsibility for; that is, snowmobiling is banned holus-bolus from all provincial parks. I really don't think that makes sense. There are many provincial parks where it just would be ridiculous to permit snowmobiles in, but there are others where the snowmobiles would do no damage whatsoever and others that are not used by anyone else during the winter time. It would be a wonderful place for them to operate. In other provincial parks passage through is a very, very important item.

I frankly can't follow the thinking in refusing to let snowmobiles operate from Highwood House to Banff National Park, to Banff. Many of my constituents have told me that was their winter vacation. They'd go to Highwood House, which, incidentally, is operated by a man raised in Drumheller, a very excellent citizen — he and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Utley, are operators. They go there, they'd leave their trailers and go back every weekend, and then maybe 40 or 50 or 60 snowmobiles would head off on a trip to Banff National Park. They'd stop for lunch part way. This now is forbidden because of the wholesale banning in The Provincial Parks Act.

I would suggest it would be sensible to permit passage where no damage is done to the environment or to anyone else. I believe snowmobilers are very reasonable people, and you can carry their judgment if what you are doing is reasonable and sensible. But the snowmobilers are not prepared to accept a holus-bolus ban saying, you can't use your snowmobile under any circumstances in a provincial park. Sometimes it's a sensible place to use a snowmobile. I would like to see the hon. minister take a look at that particular item.

If it does no damage to anybody else, if it interferes with nobody else's fun, if there's deep snow, as there is largely between Highwood House and Banff National Park, it's encouraging these people to go on that two- or three-day trip. They spend a couple of days in Banff and then back on their snowmobiles, and it's adding to the buoyancy of the economy. I think it could be looked at very, very properly and that change made — not made completely, but permitted where the minister can see no damage is done through the use of snowmobiles in that particular area. And that, Mr. Speaker, will carry the judgment of our snowmobilers who are very concerned today.

I'd also like to say a word or two in connection with motorcycles. Many people get their fun through motorcycles. This properly is under The Off-highway Vehicle Act. I think that's where it should be, and I may disagree with many motorcyclists in that respect. But I do think the eastern slopes are large enough to have a proper place provided for motorcycles. I believe the hon. Associate Minister responsible for Public Lands is looking at that particular item. I would urge him, in conjunction with the motorcyclists themselves, to set aside a place where they can enjoy the great outdoors.

Motorcyclists are not generally the black-jacketed hoods or thugs we once found in the United States. Many of our motorcyclists are university graduates; many are holding responsible positions in our municipalities, towns and cities; and they like the thrill of riding a motorcycle. I don't think we want to deny them that, as long as they don't interfere with anybody else's responsibilities.

I want to mention just one other point, and I see my

time is almost up. I would like to say a few words about highways, something that is very dear to my heart. I'd like to commend the minister and the department for the excellent surface coat that was placed on the Highway No. 56 from Morrin corner north toward Rumsey last summer. That was an excellent job. I don't know who the contractor was, or the engineer, but that was an excellent job, and the minister and the department are to be commended.

I'd also like to thank them for the work that was done on the Dalum-Hussar road. The road is now rebuilt right from the Hussar corner to north of Dalum. We now need the completion of that from where the construction ended, down the hill, to join up with Highway No. 10 near Rosedale, and then we'll have a first-class district highway, a market road, from that area right down to the Hussar country. Then only the miles between the Hussar corner and the Trans-Canada Highway will be left, when another link will be virtually completed to serve the people not only of that general area but of all parts of Alberta who want to travel in that particular area. The people are of course very interested in getting the blacktopping on it done too. But I went over that road the other day, and I was very happy with the way the oil is holding up. The oil surface is doing an excellent job, and while it's not blacktop, it is doing a job of preserving and conserving gravel, which is very, very important in that area because gravel is very hard to come by.

The only other point in the throne speech I want to mention today is the matter of coal. We heard much on the TV and radio the last few days about the coal strike in the United States, and we've also heard how people in Ontario, Ontario Hydro and others, are very concerned about the fact that soon their coal is going to get down to a point where if that coal strike doesn't end it's going to be affecting industry in Canada. That's a position the Canadian government has placed Canadians in, and again I say that's the responsibility of the Canadian government. For years the Alberta government and the Alberta Legislature have urged the Canadian government to establish a national policy for coal. They've urged the Canadian government at least to keep a semblance of our coal-mining industry viable so when the need came it could go to work.

But what has happened? We've brought in coal from the United States, and our own miners have gone on welfare. Our mines have closed right and left in this part of the country and in Nova Scotia. Today we're dependent on the Americans for coal. And if the coal shortage gets severe in the United States and they don't have enough energy themselves, the first thing that will happen will be to cut the exports from the U.S.A. into Canada. It's time we're developing our coal industry in this province, where we have a viable industry, so we can bring it into large production at the earliest possible time.

In closing, I want to commend the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources for insisting that Ontario take our good coals along with some of our medium coals, our hard bituminous along with some of our lignites. In my view, if the Canadian government would listen to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources in this province, we could have a viable coal industry in this country and take a lot of

people off the unemployment and welfare lists. Canada needs a national coal policy.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to enter this debate for a few moments before we adjourn at 4:45 for the purpose of discussing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

May I add my compliments to those of my predecessors in this debate to the Lieutenant-Governor for his excellent representation of Her Majesty the Queen in this province. It is appropriate that today, Commonwealth Day, we had a message from Her Majesty, and also appropriate, Mr. Speaker, that today we've received on our desks, personally signed by you, copies of our message last fall to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee.

If I may just comment briefly on that, I can't tell you how much I enjoyed the opportunity of visiting the schools in my constituency to deliver personally these messages from our Assembly to the primary school students in grades 1 to 6. I learned a lot about our school system during that process, and I hope as well that the students learned somewhat more about our parliamentary procedures and how our Legislature functions in this province. So thank you, Mr. Speaker, for having made those available to all members of the Assembly and certainly to me.

May I also add my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne this year. Both my colleagues from Lethbridge West and Calgary Glenmore did themselves, and all of us as members of this Assembly, proud in their participation in the debate.

If I may speak briefly about my constituency of Medicine Hat-Redcliff, I'm sure all members of the Assembly will wish to join me in adding their congratulations to the Ed Lukowich rink for having brought the Brier to Medicine Hat and Alberta. We wish them well as they go on to represent Canada in the world playdowns.

It's been quite a significant late winter/early spring session for athletics in Medicine Hat; as I just mentioned, the success of the Brier, and also the Alberta Winter Games, to which I had the opportunity to allude the other day, perhaps at more length than I should have. But at any rate, it was a great success. I wish to thank the hon. Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife for his participation during almost the entire Games. Both he and I had some difficulty in accommodating the openings of the Legislature and the Games, but we managed to do it and certainly enjoyed both.

But as I mentioned the other day in the introduction of one of the directors, I want to say that the importance of the Winter Games was the volunteer aspect. The volunteers from my constituency participated in putting on the Games, and of course the volunteer efforts of the athletes, all of whom were amateurs participating for the enjoyment of sport and to demonstrate the concern they have, shared by the government, for the physical well-being of the people of Alberta. So once again I wish to thank the hon. minister for his department's interest in this program of Alberta Games.

I want to comment, if I may, on one item of real interest to the town of Redcliff which appears on page 12 of the Speech from the Throne. That's with regard to the question of the Department of Transpor-

tation and the expanded street assistance program which will be implemented to upgrade the standards for towns and villages. The town of Redcliff is adjacent to Medicine Hat, has approximately 3,000 people, but contains within its boundaries several large industries. The town fathers have told me on many occasions that the necessity of upgrading the streets within the town to accommodate large vehicular traffic and to permit the town to continue to service these industries is causing a financial difficulty. I certainly welcome this program and thank the Minister of Transportation for having moved in that direction.

One matter which of course has been of concern to me over the years — and I wish to compliment the Minister of Social Services and Community Health for two items within the speech which have been expanded upon in ministerial statements in recent days — relates to the question of the concept of the family. What we are attempting to do by both the home care and day care measures is strengthen the concept of the family as one of the very real cornerstones of our whole society.

During the discussions of home care which we will have, I'm sure, not only in the throne speech debate but in the budget debate, I think it is important to emphasize once again the role of the voluntary organizations. In the Medicine Hat experience, which with regard to home care has been in effect for several years in fact, there has been a very healthy participation — and I suggest it is worthy of imitation — not only by government agencies but by voluntary agencies such as the Family Service and the Victorian Order of Nurses, which is promoted by a voluntary organization and funded in large measure by voluntary contributions through the United Way.

Those are just a couple of the agencies which have been participating in the past several years. I hope indeed that the role of the volunteer will not diminish. It is certainly clear from the minister's statement in announcing the home care program that that will not happen. However, I do hope we will be constantly alert to prevent a centralizing and solidifying effort on the part of government to try to make sure everything is done exactly the same way in, say, Medicine Hat as it is in Lesser Slave Lake. I'm sure that is not the intention. I know it is not the intention of the present minister to have that happen. Nevertheless we as legislators must be constantly on guard to see that it does not happen. Mr. Speaker, I intend to do what I can to see that that does not occur.

The other aspect which will also help to strengthen the family is the day care concept announced today. I'm sure this will be welcome throughout Alberta and particularly in my constituency. Mr. Speaker, there are no private day cares in my constituency. It has always been a function of the municipal government, through preventive social services, and has been functioning very satisfactorily. Nevertheless I'm sure the statement today will be welcomed. As I say, this strengthens the role of the family. We are aware that under today's circumstances it is often necessary for both husband and wife to go to work, and that the children must be looked after and well cared for while they are working. In the case of single-parent families it is also extremely important to ensure adequate care for the children.

Mr. Speaker, what particularly impressed me in the announcement by the minister today was the concept

that single parents should be encouraged to enter the field of work, that they should not be encouraged to rely on our social services entirely but should be encouraged to work. I think that strengthens the role of the family, be it a one-parent or two-parent family. So I applaud these two social thrusts to strengthen the role of the family in our society.

If I may return to home care for a moment: of course it is one of the real strengths of our society that the home is the centre of our activities. I've had many experiences in discussing with my constituents examples of efforts by family members to maintain in the home people who have experienced illness. But they find it exceedingly difficult to do so without expertise from medical or paramedical services. So that is a welcome step.

Mr. Speaker, turning to efforts by the Attorney General to deal with the question of gaming, I wish to say that I rather endorse the views of the hon. Member for Calgary Bow, Dr. Webber, with regard to a reasonable approach to the question of gaming regulations. Certainly if there is evidence of breach of the law, I believe those who are guilty of such breaches should be prosecuted. But when it comes to voluntary agencies and organizations in our society working toward the betterment of the community, I think we must be very careful that we do not interfere with what have become established practices. Therefore I hope that in the next few weeks we can come forward with reasonable and workable gaming controls.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to address some additional remarks with respect to the question of the proposed amalgamation of the supreme and district courts, but as the hour is fast approaching [4:45] I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The House recessed at 4:42 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to continue with a few remarks with respect to the announcement in the speech of a proposal for a new court of superior jurisdiction, to amalgamate the district court of Alberta and the trial division of the Supreme Court of Alberta. I wish to point out that I think it is a matter that should attract the attention of every member of this Assembly because, while it is fundamental to most of us, the court system of our province is as fundamental to the well-being of our citizens as is the legislative process.

The court system really serves the people of Alberta and not just the judges and lawyers of the province. Although it may surprise some of my colleagues and members of the Assembly, lawyers are really servants of the people. [laughter]

AN HON. MEMBER: Those who can afford them.

MR. HORSMAN: Now that I have the attention of the members of the Assembly I wish to emphasize that

point: lawyers, judges, and the court system are really in existence to serve in the administration of justice.

One of the primary and most important policies of this present government has been decentralization as opposed to centralization, not only of government services but, in addition, in an effort to encourage other aspects and other segments of our economy to locate elsewhere than in the two major metropolitan areas. I think before we embark upon anything which deals with the administration of justice, we must guard very seriously against any move which would tend to centralize the administration of justice in the two major metropolitan areas.

So I'm urging the Attorney General, when he proceeds with the drafting of this legislation that was announced in the Speech from the Throne, to keep in mind very clearly that any effort to centralize the administration of justice would be in complete opposition to the whole thrust and policy of this government, which has been, since 1971, to decentralize and provide thorough and consistent approach to all centres in the province.

Secondly, I would ask the Attorney General, when drafting this legislation, to avoid confusion between the questions of jurisdiction and the functions of the court. I wish to remind members of the Assembly of the very basic function of the district court. That function is to provide judicial services particularly to the smaller communities throughout the province. Historically speaking, the district court was organized so the districts of the province, which have been established as judicial districts, would have district court facilities, district court judges, district court clerks, and systems of justice closer to the people than the Supreme Court of Alberta, that is, the trial division. With no disrespect to the Supreme Court, it is quite true that the district courts of this province have been closer to the people and therefore more accessible in terms of providing justice and the administration of justice.

Fourthly, I would ask that the Attorney General carefully consider the problems associated with the problem of administration of a larger court. In Canada we have seen only one or two examples of amalgamation of this nature, one of which is in the province of Quebec. It is my understanding that there, the administration of the larger court has indeed proved to be a matter of serious concern.

Fifthly, I would ask that the question of residency of judges of any new system or court be carefully considered, because certainly in southern Alberta, in the districts of Macleod, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat, the fact that judges have been resident in Lethbridge has proven to be a great benefit to the consistent and accessible administration of justice at the district court level. I would suggest that rather than any further efforts to centralize, as has happened in northern Alberta, we should be looking at applying the southern experience to the northern and central experience to provide resident judges outside the major metropolitan areas.

I would also suggest that it is important that such judges be required to travel on circuits and to see other parts of Alberta, but that by and large their duties should be carried out in the areas in which they reside.

I think, too, in this area we must carefully assess who wants amalgamation and proceed very carefully

indeed, and perhaps follow the example of the Kirby Board of Review. Without any doubt, Mr. Speaker, as far as the administration of justice is concerned one of the most progressive steps taken by any government of Alberta has been the establishment of the Kirby Board of Review. The fact that the government is proceeding now to implement those recommendations, I think, is an example of progressive government for the people of Alberta when it comes to the administration of justice.

On that subject, Mr. Speaker, I would say in conclusion that before any material changes in the administration of justice are proceeded with in this province, we should be ensured that there will be enthusiastic participation by all major components, including the judiciary, lawyers — if you can get them to agree — and the public.

Those are the thoughts I wish to express on that matter of very great concern. I look forward to participation in discussion on the legislation when we have an opportunity of reviewing that.

In conclusion, I wish to make a few remarks with respect to the question of water resources. I know we will have an opportunity of debating this matter further in the Assembly this coming Thursday. I certainly appreciate the measure taken today by the hon. Deputy Premier to have this matter brought before the Assembly again this week.

I will look forward indeed to participation on this important subject by the hon. Member for Little Bow. I would like to hear his views on this subject, in light of the remarks made by the Social Credit candidate for Innisfail in southern Alberta with respect to the Oldman River planning studies now under way. I would like to hear the hon. Member for Little Bow bring his views with respect to the Oldman River into the same focus as the Social Credit candidate for Innisfail. If he can do that, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest he would be either myopic or cross-eyed, because the two views are diametrically opposed. But I look forward to that participation.

DR. BUCK: He has the freedom to say it, at least, Horsman. Nobody pulls his puppet strings.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I look forward as well, sometime or other, to a meaningful participation in the debate by the hon. Member for Clover Bar. [interjections] I've been waiting for three and a half years, but maybe it will come in either the throne speech debate or on the subject of water resource management in this province.

AN HON. MEMBER: Don't hold your breath.

DR. BUCK: Nobody is pulling my puppet strings.

MR. HORSMAN: I won't hold my breath, because I would probably turn blue and expire. And since we will have some additional opportunities for by-elections in the near future, I don't want to add one in Medicine Hat-Redcliff, which the government would undoubtedly win in view of the completely contradictory attitude taken toward water resource management by the opposition parties: socialist credit party and the socialist party.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly enjoyed the participation of the hon. Member for Innisfail in the debate the other

day. He coined a phrase which I intend to remember, because with the arm-in-arm collaboration between the socialist credit party and the socialist party, I think the credibility of both is lost forever to the people of Alberta.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. KIDD: Mr. Speaker, it's my great pleasure to participate in the throne speech this evening. It's also my pleasure to congratulate the mover and seconder of the throne speech. I think it was a real display of in-depth knowledge by both, and a real example for the rest of the MLAs in this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, in general tone and in a very positive way, the Speech from the Throne was a balanced statement of intent by a stable and responsible government, which recognizes that government only creates a climate for vigorous people to achieve their objectives, but also recognizes its responsibility to those less advantaged, for whatever reason.

Mr. Speaker, many important aspects of the Speech from the Throne have been carefully described by a number of previous speakers. These include a most important contribution by the Member for Edmonton Highlands and others, who highlighted the real value of the new home care program to our senior citizens, and the real value of the day care centre program to a cross section of our citizens. We all appreciated being informed on March 8 of the details of the home care program by the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health, Miss Hunley.

In this regard, Mr. Speaker, I believe the emphasis on health care is proper. While I recognize and am sympathetic to the needs of our senior citizens for snow shovelling and so on, at least in my constituency — and maybe it's only in rural Alberta that this happens — good neighbors are happy to shovel the snow for senior citizens. I have some senior citizens, and I can think of one who is a real right-winger. She wouldn't let anybody pay for having her snow shovelled. You know, in that same town of Canmore we have an Active 20-30 Club, and a Lions Club, and so many other volunteer operations. Those people get out and work for the community. They're volunteers. As I say, snow shovelling is not something that needs real expertise — even I can do it — while health care requires a great deal of expertise. That's where our emphasis should go. Again I am very pleased that that's where it is going.

Mr. Speaker, the expanding economy of our province is related very much to the health of the oil industry. Everyone in Alberta is affected by its health: the drawers of water, the hewers of wood, and yea, Mr. Speaker, the pullers of teeth, and the growers of strawberries. I'm sorry the growers of strawberries aren't well represented here tonight.

You know, Mr. Speaker, in 1975 when I was first elected, the oil industry was uneasy, to say the least. What's happened now? The hon. Member for Cardston, on my right, spoke very clearly when he described what has happened in the oil industry, based on the incentives program in both exploration drilling and seismic work. I don't want to repeat; I'm sure most of them heard what he had to say. I just want to say that he stated \$150 million has gone into that program, and in 1977 alone \$580 million was collected in land sales. That exploration incentive program was sensitive to the needs of industry and

was intelligently applied: look at the dividends, look at the discoveries.

Although this program provided the required thrust, it would be wrong to imply that it alone did the job. An essential ingredient in supplying the initiative to make the dramatic discoveries of oil and gas which have been made included the very tough, the very difficult and courageous efforts of this government, particularly the leader of this government, to get world prices for our products. Let's face that. Should those enterprising citizens of Alberta, whether in the beef, the lumber, or the oil business, not get fair world prices for their products? If it's agreed, and surely it will be, that we get fair world price for our oil, how much cheaper should the produce to our Alberta citizens be than to other Canadians? That's a tough question.

But with regard to this vital commodity I suggest that we, either in Canada or in North America, cannot act as an island. We must maintain a certain price balance with the rest of Canadians. That's the price balance, the price our citizens pay for the product.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if everyone here realizes that when a price for oil is set, and as the price for oil goes up, that is the price. You cannot turn the clock back. When I talked about land sales, the price that was bid for those land sales was based on the existing price for oil, presently \$10.75. If it goes up higher, the price will be based on that. When old wells are stimulated, and when once-marginal production is brought into production, it's based on the world price for oil and the price you can get for that product. So you don't turn back the clock on the price for oil.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure we're all delighted with the new oil discoveries in this province. Hopefully the discoveries are large and will continue. However, we shouldn't be lulled into a sense of false security concerning oil supply for Canada. Net imports during 1977 were about 400,000 barrels per day, at a cost of over \$1.5 billion, making a difficult balance of payments situation.

By 1985, assuming only a 2 per cent growth rate, and that's not very high, the decline in old conventional reserves — and I highlight that word "old" — could reduce production from those old reserves in the order of 800,000 barrels per day. If we assume about 300,000 barrels per day of tar sands oil — that is, we bring another plant in addition to GCOS and Syncrude on stream — and we also assume about 200,000 barrels per day from other Canadian sources, or a total of about 1.3 billion barrels per day by 1985, our shortfall could approach about 1 million barrels of oil per day. Depending on price . . . I think you all know the price for oil right now imported into Montreal: \$15.50 a barrel. That's what it's coming in at now. But by 1985, our deficits, based on these figures, could be between \$6 billion and \$10 billion. And in stating these figures I'm not unmindful of our present somewhat restrictive productive capacity.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is apparent that we need to discover several billion barrels of oil, several billion, to maintain our self-sufficiency. We need to continue our vigorous efforts to increase recovery of our heavy oils and develop methods for exploiting our deep tar sands oil. As well as increasing our efficiency in recovering oil from the tar sands, we can strip-mine.

Mr. Speaker, I believe some very important projects

have been started with regard to our deep recovery of oil from the deep tar sands. These include, just for fun, a cross section geographically and a cross section of methods: at Peace River we're using steam in our research process; at Athabasca we're using combustion; at Cold Lake we're using a combination of steam and combustion. So we've made a real start in recovering oil from our deep tar sands, a start in many areas in things that can recover our oil more cheaply from the strip-mined oil.

I think there's a misconception. I've heard it, and it goes something like this: we have the oil, we have the tar sands; it doesn't matter how much it costs to get it out. That's completely wrong. One of the most important aspects of this research is to find the energy balance, because when you put more energy in than you get out, you're dead. If you take these projects — maybe it's even the strip mine project, maybe you get to it when you get over 150 feet of overburden — if the iron and steel and all the energy that go in are more than you get out, and generally that relates to price, you've got a dead duck. When we talk about research in the deep tar sands oil, that is one of the most important aspects we are out to discover, whether we have an energy balance that will work.

Well, Mr. Speaker, maybe I have talked enough about oil. Let me talk about my constituency. You know, since 1975 the changes in my constituency have been absolutely dramatic. I can say without any question that in the last three years more has happened in towns like Airdrie, Canmore, Cochrane, Banff even, than happened in the 20 or 25 years before.

Airdrie 1975: 1,500 people. It's going to grow to 10,000 or more. Those are the facts. This growth was a real example of co-operation between this government and the mayor and council of Airdrie. They changed, but they were always good. This included building a water line from the Bow River in Airdrie, providing proper sewage facilities, front-ending the financing — this is the first, too. Boy, every MLA on the government or the opposition side had better listen to this one, because it was a first: front-ending the financing for an industrial park in Airdrie. That's going to make Airdrie a town that won't be just a bedroom community for Calgary people. It's going to be a vital community.

You know, we've had a few other good things happen in Airdrie that just showed that this government . . . When I listen to that baloney about this government not caring about people — we care where it counts. It counts when you make towns grow, you make them vital, and you provide jobs for people. I can tell you a lot more about Airdrie. Just come down and see it sometime.

DR. BUCK: That's one of Horner's old speeches.

MR. KIDD: You know, if you got away from Fort Saskatchewan once in a while and got out in the south part of the country, not in the north part where you want to go today. Come on down south and look.

Cochrane: the change has been astounding. Large housing developments, large Canron cement plant — real vitality in that town. I talked about the 20-30 Club, about the Lions Club — people who want to do things for themselves.

Canmore: boy, there's a dandy. We have some people, sort of transient citizens, who live in a place called Harvie Heights there, and we like to see them once in a while.

We built a sewage plant in Canmore. I think I should say a few words about the Department of the Environment in Canmore. When I was elected, one of the problems was flood control in Canmore. Okay, what happened? The most efficient job — I'm just reflecting what the citizens of Canmore tell me, not just saying what I think — ever done was on flood control for Canmore: the planning, engineering, and carrying out of that program. Boy, did those people who work for the Department of the Environment really make those contractors stick to the dollar; they sure did. We're now in phase three. Go up and take a look at it. The people are happy. That's where it counts. What do the people think? They think it's great.

The Department of the Environment built a sewage plant up there. What size did they build it? They built it for the future; they built it to handle 30,000 people. One of the most modern and up-to-date sewage plants in North America, right there in Canmore. I think the opposition should go up and maybe get even more familiar than they are now with sewage.

Mr. Speaker, in a more serious tone, I believe it would be fair for me at this time to comment on the coal mining situation in Canada, which is still the major basic industry. A continuing supply of coal to keep the mine in operation has presented considerable difficulties. At this time, unusually, I would like to commend the diligent efforts which have been made by Dillingham Corporation to keep the mine operating under these very difficult conditions. In my view that corporation justly deserves to be commended. It has demonstrated that it is a good corporate citizen. It is my intention to put forth my best efforts to assist them in any way I can to develop a new mine in that area.

Mr. Speaker, in further consideration of the beautiful Canmore area, it seems to me that a highly technical industry could be established in the area, with people of the required technical competence attracted to live and work in those beautiful surroundings.

Mr. Speaker, Banff continues to prosper and expand, largely through the prosperity of Albertans. I estimate that more than 50 per cent of the tourists who go to Banff are Albertans, and that's a low figure. Because of the general prosperity in this province, they're spending their money. And the out-of-province tourists who come to Banff really appreciate the fact that there's no sales tax.

MR. R. SPEAKER: When did that start?

MR. KIDD: Mr. Speaker, great numbers of people from the city of Calgary continue to relocate on small landholdings around the city in my constituency. They appreciate the simpler life in the country. So the constituency continues to grow at a rapid rate.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents do have some concerns, just a few. For instance, far too many of the young ranchers owe the banks far too much money, a situation that's well recognized by the good Minister of Agriculture. We all surely enjoyed his tremendous speech last Friday morning.

Because of the low cattle prices that have existed — we are coming out of it now. I listened to the party whip speak today. I think some of our ranchers can make a few bucks at a lower price than you quoted, but we're coming up. The anomaly that has existed around Calgary, where land prices are high and income low, has led to a break-up of some ranches, sales of a quarter section and smaller blocks. This really dismays me and many people. I am confident that the price for cattle will continue to increase, and that such land sales will diminish. You know, I think ranchers will continue to ranch if they are getting a good income, even if they are located on very high-priced land.

Mr. Speaker, those located on small holdings in my constituency believe that a change in property tax assessment is overdue. I support this view. I do not claim there is a unique solution, but I continue to favor the taxation of all rural residences, plus a few surrounding areas, at some uniform percentage of market value, with the remaining land at lower agricultural value. We need a simplified uniform system. I do not rule out the either/or method. I do not rule out any other method that is simple, uniform, and just. I will continue to urge this government to move on this matter. Property taxes should provide funds for roads and schools, and should not be used for other purposes such as restricting subdivision.

Mr. Speaker, there is a certain unease in my constituency with regard to the RDA, particularly the disposition of land in the transportation corridor. I look forward to an early decision and solution concerning the annexation of further lands, around Calgary, and the consequent resolution and disposition of lands in the transportation corridor.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Transportation, who is in his place, would feel really hurt if I did not mention the Exshaw-Canmore road. After all, I brought the matter up in 1975, 1976, 1977. Surely this is the year when we look forward with confidence to substantial improvements to that dangerous, narrow, winding, heavily travelled road. I certainly appreciate the briefs that some of my constituents have put in with regard to that road.

Similarly I look forward to the rebuilding of the Richmond Road to Bragg Creek. Bragg Creek is another of the growing communities there. The travel on that road is excessive. I certainly will look forward, and I know that my constituents are looking forward with eager anticipation to the rebuilding of that road. I await budget night with real anticipation in this regard, and surely funds will be provided to build a provincial building in Canmore, with library space, and a courthouse in Banff.

Mr. Speaker, I had better back off a little. I would, however, like to commend all hon. ministers of the Crown for the efforts they have made on my behalf and on behalf of my constituents.

I particularly appreciate the establishment of Kananaskis Park and Kananaskis Country, Mr. Speaker. I believe it's a real legacy for all our children. I am confident that reasonable adjustments will be made for those who feel they are too restricted in this new venture, such as developing a separate act for snowmobilers, referred to in some detail this afternoon by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding, I know that the great problems in our nation concern us all. As individuals

and responsible Canadians, we must act and react toward irresponsible statements made by some radical groups who would fire the flames of disunity in this great country. We must also be sensitive to the plight of one million Canadians who are unemployed. As good Canadians and good Albertans, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is our duty to welcome those who come to this province, bringing their talents and ready to make a permanent home here in this vibrant province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, in taking my turn at speaking on the throne speech, I'm left in the awkward position of having most of the good things already said. I've learned in my short term in office that writing speeches is not a good occupation. Most of them end up in the trash can, because either it's been said or you don't get the opportunity to present them.

I have to take this opportunity to express, in my way, my appreciation for this opportunity to represent the people of Wainwright, and to try to cover some of the things I feel haven't quite been covered. If I'm repetitious, you'll excuse me.

I have to commend the mover and seconder of our throne speech, the hon. gentlemen from Lethbridge West and from Calgary Glenmore, who in my estimation did a well-researched and well-presented presentation of moving and seconding the Speech from the Throne.

I've listened to and enjoyed many well-thought-out presentations since then. But, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture took most of my notes and destroyed them with his speech on Friday. Consequently, I can only congratulate him on his well-researched and well-presented expression of agriculture in Alberta today. Certainly it's a pity that the media and many opposition members didn't take the opportunity of listening to that presentation because, in my estimation, it well expressed the road that agriculture in Alberta is taking at this present time.

Being from a rural constituency, I think I have to be prejudiced on the role agriculture plays in our society. I think I would be remiss if I didn't spend most of my time talking about it. But I have to think, Mr. Speaker, that balanced growth in rural Alberta is becoming a reality. I find there's hardly a community in Alberta today that hasn't been touched to some extent by the fact that our non-renewable resources are coming on stream in one form or another.

I know, particularly in my area, I can see a definite improvement in the whole economy of the district. Certainly our towns are improving with the additional money that's been poured into those communities by well-drilling and pipelines. The whole economy is in a much better state than it was a few years ago.

I think there is no doubt that our towns in rural Alberta that are on a strictly agricultural economy have suffered in the last few years. Our highway systems, our whole way of life has been such that much of the money has been siphoned off to larger centres. But with the return of more dollars and people to the rural areas, I can see all our small towns beginning to show the results. Housing, new business developments, new enterprises are starting up. I am quite convinced that our whole province is showing the direct results of industry that is getting the limelight today, our non-renewable resources gas

and oil.

I find that in my area we are blessed with both gas and oil. But from Cold Lake to Medicine Hat, the eastern portion of this province was underpopulated. The resources there were not being exploited until lately. Consequently they were depending almost entirely on an agricultural economy. This is changing. There is a vitality going into all those towns out there. You can see it every time you drive down the streets. New businesses are opening up. There is a marked improvement in the quality of businesses. They are capturing a lot of those dollars. The trade is staying in those towns. Merchants can afford to be competitive with their brothers in the larger centres because when their volume goes up, they can afford to put in the stock, to be competitive in their prices. Consequently, we find people shopping in the towns of Wainwright and Provost in my constituency, who were normally driving to larger centres a few years ago. I think this is a very healthy thing.

There is no doubt about it. As we have an increase in population — it's modest, but it's sufficient to keep our schools alive. With declining enrolment, there was a definite problem trying to give the quality of education we all expect and want. When you have a declining enrolment in those rural areas, it becomes very difficult to provide this. With the increase in population this ceases to be a problem.

Mr. Speaker, when I get back to my favorite topic of agriculture, I am concerned that our younger farmers, while I think they're the most dynamic people we have . . . Agriculture in western Canada — I don't think any province can take credit for it — has certainly produced more per man than anywhere in the world. I think agriculture is something that western Canada can definitely be proud of. There is only one problem. The capitalization these younger farmers are forced to get involved in if they carry on their pursuits is going to be a real problem as we go down the road. Our prices are tied to the international market, and certainly these farmers cannot expect to market their produce at anything more than international values. But while we are competing with a very vibrant industry in this province, the costs of services to the agricultural community are just as high as they are to the oil industry, because they are travelling hand in hand. While we are trying to produce and market our agricultural produce on the world market, we're probably in the most expensive place in the world to produce it.

On top of that, Mr. Speaker, in the last 10 years land values in this province have escalated to the point that they are beyond their ability to pay. Land cannot produce, in my estimation, to the value that it is trading for today. Unfortunately we have some of our best prospects of farmers — because of the young ones being saddled with that mortgage debt. I think if we want to be honest about it, Mr. Speaker, the agricultural economy in western Canada today is carrying a bigger mortgage load than it can bear. I don't think anybody can take blame for this. It's been a case of circumstances.

Agricultural land has become a commodity which people feel has a security about it that dollars do not have. Consequently we have investments going into agricultural land by people who do not expect to make it pay. But our young farmers who are going to farm this land and buy it at these prices have to be

competitive in order to get a foothold and get established. I think this is a serious problem that we will face down the road. I have no solutions, but I certainly am aware of the fact that it is there.

I would like to change my subject now, Mr. Speaker, and try to take a little broader look at our province. One of the things that comes home to me — not because I'm from an area where it is a factor, but it's very evident as you travel around this province — is that water management is a very vital part of our resources. I see the Oldman River project — being slightly involved with the committee that had the opportunity to see what irrigation can do and what is necessary to keep it vibrant in the future — and it means more water. There's no doubt about it. Other countries have taken full advantage of their water and are using it to the full extent.

We are very fortunate in this country. We haven't begun to tap the water resources available to us. But certainly if we're going to continue to grow and develop, we're going to have to look at this one commodity that's probably one of our most valuable resources today. I think we have to recognize that water management to the full extent will probably pay us greater dividends for dollars invested than any of our resources.

We have the Oldman River project. We currently have the Red Deer Dam that has a significant impact on a large proportion of our province. There's much controversy. I think it is human that there will be controversy when we are changing a specific area for the development of a dam. I don't want to dwell on the controversy, because it's touching the lives of certain people. They're upset, and I guess their reaction is human. But the silent majority of the people who are going to get the greatest benefit from a dam on this particular river are not expressing themselves. This is almost human nature, too, because if things are going your way you don't make much noise about it. It's when somebody starts to rock the boat in your own little corner that people become upset.

Another project that has been going on and that I think has great significance to our province is our parks and our eastern slopes. Personally, I think we're doing well, but we could do better. Our eastern slopes policy has given us a broad concept of how we can manage much of the undeveloped land in that area at that point in time.

But we have to remember that as our province's population is growing, our demands for recreation are growing even more. When you have an affluent society, recreation becomes very important. We have been fortunate in having some of the best recreation land available anywhere in the world during our summer months. As winter resorts they are also very competitive in appealing to people. I think we have to recognize the fact that we have to develop our parklands and designate our parks ahead of the population growth. Certainly if the land is destroyed with some other use, it is very hard to return it to its park value.

I think we have to recognize, Mr. Speaker, that provincial parks are a good, sound concept. But we have to create a situation where private enterprise can produce a lot of the accommodation that people in this country are looking for and expect. Particularly in the summer months, this country has become overrun with one form or another of trailers, campers,

tents — you name it. I think it's almost beyond reason to expect that we can develop provincial parks to accommodate all these people.

But there is a problem. As long as we give away provincial accommodation, there is no incentive for private people to develop park facilities, because there has to be a monetary return. Personally, I think the day of giving away all the accommodation we are providing is going to have to stop. We have to recognize that unless we want to provide it all, we're going to have to put a price tag on it, so private enterprise can start producing some of the necessary park camping facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to talk a little bit now about our senior citizens. I think we're all very pleased with the announcement in the last few days of the home care that is going to be available to our senior citizens. There's no doubt that we all envision our reclining years in as independent a situation as possible. I don't think anything is quite as important to a senior citizen as spending as many days as he can in his own accommodation. If we're able to keep those people in their own homes with a minimum amount of medical supervision through a home care program — the dollars and cents we are investing there, compared to the satisfaction to the people who are able to stay out of institutions and take advantage of a minimum amount of medical supervision, balanced with living in their own accommodation — I don't think from the senior citizen's point of view, any price tag can be put on this.

I think we've done well and can do better in our sheltered workshop program. I think it is beginning to blossom across the province. We recognize that many of our less fortunate people who are handicapped in one form or another can have an opportunity to be useful to the best of their ability in their own localities — a worth-while effort. A way of life is only as good as your opportunity to participate. Institutionalized people do not have the same opportunity, incentive, or feeling of satisfaction as if they can do something for themselves. I think we have to recognize this, and I think we do. I think any efforts we put forward in this regard are going to be well repaid, if by nothing more than the satisfaction of knowing we are giving those people an opportunity to express themselves in some small way to the best of their ability.

I think we recognize that volunteers in our society are probably the best way of approaching many situations we do not want to completely control, but feel if we can support our volunteer organizations with programs where they have a chance to participate there's a satisfaction for the people who are willing to get out and give their time to society and do it willingly. If there is a monetary problem, I think if we can solve that for these people we are in a small way trying to promote what a lot of people have done in the past and give them the opportunity to continue.

Day care is a very vital part of our society as it has emerged today. I think back to my rural background. The wives were very equal partners in the farms I knew, a very vital part of the whole agricultural community. But as urbanization takes place, women of this country do not have an equal opportunity to participate, because if they are going to be wives and mothers they are almost precluded from continuing in an occupation.

In this day and age we have reached the point where for young couples who want the good things in life and want to develop their own homes, it has almost become a necessity that they both bring home a pay cheque for some years. I believe our day care program is one opportunity we have of keeping these young women in the work force, giving them the opportunity to develop and finish their homes and spend a longer period of time in a meaningful occupation. It is very important that young families get established and get a home. I think basically this is what day care will be able to offer these people.

I think we in Alberta have to be proud of what we have been able to accomplish in training our young people, in both NAIT and SAIT, and our community regional colleges. We have had an explosion of need for tradespeople, and I think our programs have done well and are going to continue to do well in providing us with the hundreds of different trades required in a society such as ours that is growing by leaps and bounds. Rather than having to import these people, we are doing a very good job of training them. This program is going to continue to be an asset, because for every dollar we spend in retraining our young people and qualifying them for the jobs we are producing, there's no doubt in my mind that, as time goes on, this is paid back many times over for the money invested.

I think, Mr. Speaker, I've covered most of the things I've planned to in my remarks tonight. I hope my contribution has expressed the way I feel our Speech from the Throne affected me. I've heard criticisms that there was nothing new, nothing was being offered to the people. I feel we're only committing ourselves to a continuation of the best government we know how.

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair]

MR. TESOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and privileged to participate in the throne speech debate on behalf of the citizens of the Lac La Biche-McMurray constituency.

Mr. Speaker, 200 years ago Peter Pond travelled through northeastern Alberta and marvelled at its vast expanse. The region's spruce forests spanning the horizon, innumerable rock-bound lakes, and cascading rivers have intimidated many would-be adventurers. But others felt security rather than trepidation in the challenge of the wilderness. Northern Albertans have retained this sense of individual courage and responsibility in facing the challenges of the future.

Mr. Speaker, confronting northerners since before the time of Confederation is the challenge of maintaining an expanding economic security for geographically isolated communities. Regional economic disparities are a common occurrence in the north. Resources are distributed unevenly, and many northern communities must face the challenge of survival and growth by developing the only resource available to them: land.

Northern communities whose economic base rests on the extraction of non-renewable resources reap benefits but are also plagued with problems. The development of non-renewable resources is dependent upon consumer demand, which changes with time. Changes in demand for the non-renewable

resources of the north occur in a cyclical pattern. Cyclical fluctuations in the economic base of northern communities make long-term economic planning arduous, as regional resource extraction economies rarely sustain continuous growth.

The north has an abundance of virgin land. The carefully planned development of these lands — for agriculture, tourism, energy, or building materials — could provide the communities of the north with a stable economic base from which to spearhead growth. Northern communities and this government recognize the vital importance of land to the north's survival. Government policies and farmer investments in agriculture reflect this awareness.

Mr. Speaker, land developed for agriculture has maintained a steady growth in the past few decades. However, expansion of the agricultural land base in northeastern Alberta will eventually decrease as a finite amount of land capable of supporting crops is developed. In the short term, our agricultural policies must continue to stress production. To protect the long-term future of the north, the government and residents of the north must take policy initiatives which emphasize commodity development and marketing.

Mr. Speaker, agricultural produce purchased by the consumer in Lac La Biche, Fort McMurray, or points further north is usually processed in Edmonton or other large urban centres. The processed commodity is then returned to the northern market. The costs of northern transportation are high. When added to the price of a locally produced commodity which has been processed elsewhere, the price is inflated considerably. The high cost of northern transportation could be minimized if northern agricultural processing facilities served northern markets. Local markets are expanding rapidly, and will expand further as petroleum resources are developed. Incentives are needed to establish processing facilities for beef, poultry, and dairy products, where these facilities can be competitive in northern markets.

Mr. Speaker, private entrepreneurs should be encouraged to develop regional commodities. A market for unique regional commodities exists in Alberta. Packaged fish products bearing an Alberta produce label could be shipped from northeastern region of Alberta to major metropolitan centres at less cost to the consumer than maritime produce.

Programs that reduce farm input costs have been successful in Alberta. Through these programs, Alberta producers have the potential to gain a competitive advantage in national and international markets. Due to high transportation costs, input costs are consistently higher in northern Alberta than elsewhere. Consideration should and must be given to structuring programs to reduce farm input costs on the basis of regional need. This would allow products from distant production areas to reach the urban consumer at competitive prices.

Aggressive bargaining for favorable national and international trade and tariff policies is vital to the maintenance of a viable agricultural industry in Alberta. The leadership of the Premier in this regard at the recent first ministers' conference is most encouraging to the western Canadian farming community.

Thousands of square kilometres of virgin recreation land in northeastern Alberta have yet to be developed. Development of this recreation resource would

benefit many small northern communities by expanding their economic base and providing a potentially stable and increased source of revenue.

Sound planning of non-renewable resource extraction to minimize the impact on land with high recreational and tourist potential is also a necessity. Recreation development should be planned to incorporate opportunities for a diversity of recreational activities. The preservation of wild and scenic rivers and the establishment of campgrounds with satellite recreation sites, natural areas, game reserves, fly-in camps, and other concepts must all receive careful consideration. The participation of local residents in the planning and governing process is also essential to ensure developments in Alberta are compatible with community goals.

The government is making important strides in developing the infrastructure required to support the agricultural and recreational development of northeastern Alberta. Alberta's secondary road program and the provision of access routes to major resource projects must be continued and expanded.

The rebuilding of rural electrical systems in northern Alberta, and the proposed extension of communication services to developing areas are important programs which support future development of recreation and human resources. Mr. Speaker, imagine the delight of more than 240 families living in Janvier, Chard, Conklin, Anzac, and Fort MacKay at using a telephone in their own homes for the first time.

Mr. Speaker, we can develop our human, recreational, and agricultural resources most effectively by exercising integrated management options. In the planning stage, land for development is classified according to its suitability for specific kinds of development. Using the integrated management plan, when an area is to be developed, priority is given to developing the land for the purpose the land is most suited to. Use of this option guarantees that its secondary and less-desirable development will not be allowed to impinge upon land earmarked for a high-priority use. This differs from the current multiple-use concept which permits maximum utilization of all resources while attempting to ameliorate conflicts.

By using integrated management options, construction of access roads to recreational areas, campground development, non-renewable resource extraction, and fish and wildlife management would be co-ordinated to maximize the potential benefits of recreational opportunity. Unique natural, cultural, historical, and scenic areas need to be identified and incorporated into these developments.

But in all developments, Mr. Speaker, let us not forget our environment. One has only to skidoo across the northern part of my constituency to be amazed by the beauty and greatness of the north. This greatness, Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford nor allow to be destroyed.

To secure a stable economic base for all communities in northeastern Alberta is a challenge northerners and government must meet. Agriculture and recreation, potential cornerstones of a new northern economy, must be developed to secure the space. Agriculture is the economic foundation for much of the area in the Lac La Biche-McMurray constituency. Production, marketing, and commodity development within the region can and must be expanded. The region's abundant recreation resources are presently

underdeveloped and underutilized. The development of our recreational potential is a challenge we must meet by initiating the development planning process as soon as possible. The opportunities for the development of northeastern Alberta are limitless. The north has much to offer all Albertans. We must act to seize the challenge of the north before time spent waiting becomes time lost.

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Speech from the Throne on behalf of the constituents of Calgary McCall.

May I first thank His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor for an outstanding speech and convey to him how much we appreciate the manner in which he represents the Crown in this province. I would also congratulate the Member for Lethbridge West for proposing the reply, and the Member for Calgary Glenmore for seconding the reply.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, we perceive from the speech that things are going very well in Alberta. We are doubtless living in the most affluent area in the western world and probably in the most affluent period in our total history.

It was of great assistance to me to have the cabinet tour visit my constituency last year. I would say the tour was an outstanding success. The people in my constituency were gratified that the members of the tour, particularly the cabinet ministers, [were] so accessible and so responsive.

Our government is once again demonstrating responsible stewardship in setting expenditure restraints. It would be extremely easy and very popular to attempt to buy support with the funds from the heritage savings trust fund. As I've stated in the constituency on a number of occasions, I totally support both the principle and the application of this fund.

In my constituency we also welcome the proposed programs for senior citizens, the handicapped, and the low-income earners. All these are most welcome. It is only right in an affluent area such as Alberta that we strive to improve both the quality of life and the economic circumstances of the less fortunate in our society. Many of my constituents are looking forward to the home care program announced last week by the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. However, I hope the program will be extended and modified to provide home chore assistance for senior citizens who do not necessarily require home health service, as this is the area where I have received most calls from the constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I would also express my personal thanks to you for providing me with the opportunity and the challenge to visit all the elementary schools in my constituency. I must confess that I approached this task with a degree of trepidation as there are 28 elementary schools in the constituency. However, I approached it with the usual Vigor and was able to complete the 28 assemblies. I must say it was a most rewarding experience. I made friends. I made contacts with the various school staffs and the principals. I'm sure these relationships will be to our mutual benefit.

However, I'm somewhat disappointed, Mr. Speaker, to see that the issue of national unity has lost a great deal of interest among the people of this province. I view this development as perilous. National unity is

not a political flag-waving exercise; it amounts to economic survival. We must do all in our power to preserve the unity of this country.

In speaking of Alberta's own economy, things have never looked better. We are living in an economic paradise. The percentage of the population in the work force is the largest in our country, and at the same time we have the lowest unemployment rates. Our oil and gas exploration is at record levels. We have the lowest tax rates. The natural gas protection shelters Albertans from 75 per cent of the increases in gas rates. However, when I say things have never been better, things could become precarious because I do perceive that we rely much too heavily on the sale of raw petroleum resources. Economic diversification must remain one of our prime objectives.

I would like to comment briefly, Mr. Speaker, on the Canadian economy. When we speak of the Canadian economy, we have an entirely different situation: inflation, unemployment, and a rapidly falling dollar. In fact, one of our principal financial papers recently pointed out that all the historic indicators of deep recession — I understand we don't use the term "depression" any more — are here. Savings have increased dramatically during the last 12 months, savings of 11.2 per cent of after-tax income on the part of Canadians. In addition, we have major investments in areas other than Canada, principally the United States, both of which indicate a lack of confidence in investment in this country.

The second indicator: business investments are down substantially in the last half of 1975. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, this is principally from the lack of an incentive program on the part of the federal government. The investment dealers of Canada have made some pretty significant suggestions to the federal government to introduce incentives for investment in this country and, to date, they've all been ignored.

The third indicator: capital spending intentions are down significantly, and there was also a cutting back on inventories, in the last half of '77. The only bright spot in the whole Canadian economy is exports, caused temporarily by the falling dollar. However, auto exports are down over a hundred million because of a slipping U.S. demand, and this almost balances all the benefits we've had.

The indicators have been here for some time, and the doom-and-gloom boys have been saying things are not in good condition. But if anybody has any doubts about the economic condition of this country, just take a look at what other countries think of our prospects in the falling dollar. And if you think it's bad enough comparing it with the American dollar, the first time you get the opportunity, look at how we stack up against world currencies. It's frightening, absolutely frightening.

When I speak of unemployment, the unemployment rates seem to be going up dramatically. I don't know how in the world the federal government comes out with these statistics, but they don't seem to be in keeping with the facts. International Nickel closed down — almost 2,500 persons. Noranda Mines, Granduc Duke Mines, MacMillan Bloedel. There is one reason for each of these. We can no longer compete in world markets. In fact, the most significant one in this list is the MacMillan Bloedel plywood plant. Two weeks ago they closed down the plant and

laid off 700 men, because we can no longer sell plywood to our domestic market. At the same time the Japanese are buying B.C. logs, making them into plywood, and selling it back to us at a profit.

Mr. Speaker, as I said a few moments ago, we hear that things are great in Alberta; it can't happen here. Two weeks ago in my constituency Firestone had a major layoff. I understand the employees have proposed a three-day week in order to keep on all the staff. I would highly commend such a move. Two years ago the Motorola plants in Arizona had a similar problem. They proposed laying off 10 per cent of the staff. The union came back to management and said, reduce our salaries by 10 per cent, keep us all on, and we'll raise productivity. They raised productivity, lowered the prices, and gained back their contracts.

I don't know whether I'm telling a story that shouldn't be released at the present time, but the second industry in my constituency that is going to have a major layoff quite shortly is Northern Telecom, a very vibrant industry. But once again, they can't compete. Last year when they lost a contract, they submitted the same set of specs to their American counterpart, and the American counterpart came in more than 10 per cent lower than the Canadian price.

Manufacturing in Canada today amounts to only 18.4 per cent of the total work force as opposed to 24.4 per cent in 1966, a 25 per cent reduction. Two decades ago Canada was second only to the United States in the value of goods manufactured per capita. By the end of 1974 we were overtaken by Sweden, France, Japan, Finland, and Australia. Quickly closing in on us today are the smaller industrial countries of Norway, Belgium, Denmark, Austria, and Italy. We just can't compete. Mr. Speaker, we are even losing our own domestic markets, as indicated by the balance of trade payments.

According to the economists there are apparently three basic reasons for our inability to compete industrially in our own domestic markets and in the international markets today. Number one is low productivity; two, high wages; and three, a decline in our investment in innovation, and research and development.

I would also like to add a fourth, Mr. Speaker, and that is labor relations. The International Labour Organization announced just before Christmas that in 1976 Canada lost more time because of strikes than any other of the 54 countries in its study. Strikes and lockouts cost Canada 2.27 lost working days per worker in the country compared to Italy at 2.12, which previously had the reputation of having the most lost days in the world.

Canadians in manufacturing are the second highest paid in the world, surpassed only by the Swedes — and we know their economic record. High wages themselves are not bad if they are accompanied by high productivity. Parity with the United States in wages occurred in 1974. However, we still have not obtained parity with the United States in productivity. The key to productivity today is quite apparently efficiency in plants and efficiency of the equipment operating in those plants.

If you will permit me, Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from a speech made recently in Calgary by Walter F. Light, President of Northern Telecom:

Productivity improvement in today's world is a

combination of innovation, management skill and money, used as a total corporate strategy dedicated to producing a superior product at a competitive price.

The key item is the competitive price.

Please don't mistake me, Mr. Speaker. When I say our productivity is low, I'm not necessarily criticizing the Canadian worker. I think the Canadian worker is just as ambitious and productive as his American counterpart. However, one of our keys is this failure to invest in research and development in this country. According to the statistics produced by the body I referred to a moment ago, we spend less on research and development in this country than any other of the 54 in the study. Either we get our manufacturing house in order or we face the loss of our own markets [and] a shrinking share of international markets, accompanied by a further devalued dollar, increased inflation, more imports, and a continued lowering of our standard of living.

Mr. Speaker, I realize the problems I have outlined this evening are within the control and jurisdiction of the federal government. However, in his remarks in this city a week ago, the Prime Minister suggested the rest of Canada is looking to Alberta for economic leadership. We have in the province all the essential ingredients to provide that leadership: capital, energy, management, innovation, and an ambitious work force. However, I have merely pointed out the problems, quoted statistics to indicate to you just how precarious and serious the Canadian economy is at this very moment.

But I consider it a rather valueless exercise for any of us to sit around and accuse one another — labor, government, management — of being the culprits in this dilemma. At our peril, let us sit down and pull together to try to solve this problem of economic decline in this country which I consider to be, along with national unity, the two most important problems facing this country and this generation.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, I think I'm going to suffer from overexposure because, according to the scorekeeper on the other side, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, I normally speak on an average of three times a year. I was goaded into getting on my feet by the Member from Spirit River-Fairview last week. I did intend to talk on this occasion on the Speech from the Throne. In a weak moment I volunteered to speak next Wednesday. So I'm going to have to cut back.

I had my own copy of the Speech from the Throne with a few notes. I took it home to think about it and went to sleep. So, Mr. Speaker, I borrowed this copy that has no notes in it.

DR. BUCK: That's how it impressed me too, Henry.

AN HON. MEMBER: He's honest.

MR. KROEGER: So I will work from that.

One note horrifies me slightly, Mr. Speaker. I borrowed this from one of the members of our own caucus, and I can't understand whether it's an abbreviation or a comment. Beside one of the minister's departments are the three letters "SAP", which sounds like sap. I can't understand that, and I'm

going to ask the member what he meant making those kinds of notations, because I'm going to have to go past it.

I counted, Mr. Speaker — and before I go into the count, I just want to say that I sent a note to the mover of the adoption of this speech. I didn't send a note to the seconder because he knows he's good. I appreciate, sir, your co-operation with me any time I do decide to do this kind of thing.

Now I am going to go into this count and the headings. I counted 23 — sort of indicates 23 cabinet positions. One is missing, and that has to be the Premier. I hope we're not trying to say he doesn't have a part in this. I will ask him about that. The 23 headings do break roughly into departments.

I don't want to be too serious about this, because every weekend I have to be serious about trying to run a business. I have all these horrendous statistics and percentages to contend with, so I don't want to go that route. People ahead of me have done a marvellous job. I enjoyed the last speaker very much. He has obviously done the research. So I intend to go another route, and I don't intend to be very long. I find this a very wide-awake document. To the Member for Clover Bar, suggesting he could sleep with it, that isn't exactly what I meant. I'm going to touch on various parts of this.

The first clear department is Hospitals and Medical Care. I can be slightly curious about that one, because along with six other people I spent almost four months touring the nursing home system in the province. In doing that, any value in the report that I developed would be secondary to the value I got from doing the exercise.

It leads me into the Department of Social Services and Community Health where we have the home care program. I now appreciate what is being done, without trying to be overly complimentary to you about this. I really do appreciate what home care can do, because I think the nursing home thing is very necessary, but not necessarily ideal. I can remember my dad, at 81, coming to work with his cane, slipping on the ice, and wearing an old parka. I used to think, wouldn't it be great if he could get into a nursing home where he could relax and everything would be done for him. I know now that he was much better off fighting the cold and the ice. So I think the home care program is excellent.

I'm not going to dwell on the hospital thing, particularly. I think what is indicated is that a marvellous job is going to be done. We will get rural construction back on stream, and I'm looking forward to it.

Social Services and Community Health is the next one I see here, and that one worries me. I said I didn't want to be overly complimentary. One of the concerns the minister seems to have is helping the handicapped. I wonder where she was with her program, her assistance, her guidance, or her advice, when the decision was [made] that about 3,000 of these handicapped people are going to arrive Wednesday afternoon to meet with us and to show us they aren't being properly looked after. Madam Minister, I think you had an oversight there. I think that is something that has to be dealt with, and it falls in your particular area, not the minister of manpower and advanced education. We'll talk about that on Wednesday afternoon, but I'm sorry you overlooked that.

The Minister of Education: you know everything in here converts into people. It's not numbers; it's not comment in the written part of this; it converts into people. The Minister of Education horrifies me. He has so much talent, if you've ever heard him sing, if you've listened to him play. I've heard him speak, and he overpowers me in every way. He makes the job look pretty easy. So with that I'll leave him alone.

Advanced Education and Manpower: I went past that a bit and transferred the portfolio. Because of the comments I made before, I won't say too much more. Seriously though, I think the apprenticeship thing and the practical training factors mentioned are very commendable.

We have Culture. I guess that one lends itself to all sorts of interpretation. The value we get out of that is directly related to your capacity to enjoy the things the minister is doing.

Environment: that's when I first heard about the hon. minister from Gold Bar. I used to hear about environment. Anyone who hasn't thought about environment hates it, you know. I even disliked the minister. I used to hear from him. I wasn't here then: I was at home. I was hauling things to the garbage dump and setting fire to them. The smoke was going up, then I'd hear that the town of Wainwright was being sued. I thought, boy, don't we have anything better to do than go around prosecuting people for getting rid of waste?

But now we have a new minister, and he hasn't been satisfied to leave things alone. He's gotten into water ponding and things like that. I'm looking forward to the debate that's coming on it. I know that down in our country, Mr. Speaker, water is a very critical thing. We have all sorts of water holes and little dams, and we do just everything we can to store water. So I think that's going to be a very interesting conversation.

We have Agriculture, and I live with that one every day. I appreciate the grasp our Minister of Agriculture has of the department. I don't always agree with him; that would be pretty boring.

DR. BUCK: Tell us about CCIL.

MR. KROEGER: Yes, I was going to make a comment about CCIL. But one day the minister made the mistake of telling me he had a CCIL tractor, and that shortens my wheelbase. I can't really get into that.

We have Public Lands: I sit right beside Public Lands. I want to warn the minister that those leases we have out in that special area are a pretty dicey thing to fool around with. We had a former government minister who didn't even say he was going to do anything about those leases. He just said very casually one day, maybe we should talk about doing something about those leases. And at the next election — he didn't even know what was happening — a Liberal was sitting in this House, coming from that riding. So I'm warning you, sir, you're on dangerous ground if you want to play around with leases.

DR. BUCK: If a Liberal wins, that's really bad.

MR. KROEGER: Energy and Natural Resources: I wonder about this one. I can recall seeing the minister being, I think, overextended when he was on the sporting fields. I have never seen him overextended

in here. I don't know whether that's because he's overqualified for the job, or whether the opposition doesn't press him. I really can't find out. Those lengthy answers like "Yes, Mr. Speaker" and "No, Mr. Speaker" seem to be about the extent of it. We'll have to talk about that.

The housing thing: I'm glad the minister has been transferred to housing; he has done a marvellous job. He's caught up in many areas. I think he has even passed himself in the senior citizens' accommodation. I have been out in the constituency with him. I was really impressed, Mr. Minister, with the way you gave me credit for the kind of thing that was going on there. I didn't have that much to do with it.

We have Transportation. Probably the Department of Transportation will be the most visible in the next year or so, because everybody wants roads and highways. We're all going to be leaning on our Minister of Transportation next year, because we want what is going on to be very visible. Now I'll leave Mr. Minister alone on that one.

We have the Minister of Labour. I thought I really knew something about this one, and I gave the minister my views on the labor scene one time in Medicine Hat. He didn't seem to be overly impressed, and I think the reason was that he wasn't really listening. He didn't think I knew anything about it, so I'm going to have to try it again. However, I did suggest to him at one time that he should try 25 words or less; I would understand it better.

We have the Attorney General's Department, and I think I should combine that with the Solicitor General. I have one serious concern there. I am concerned with what is happening in law enforcement. I think our police do a pretty commendable job, but I think we do have some people in the system who tend to short-circuit them. We have people hauled into court for misdemeanors and being turned loose too easily. You're going to hear more about that, Mr. Solicitor General. I have invited the mayor of a town to write you and send me a copy, and we'll talk about that one.

Native Affairs: the minister isn't here. Last summer he invited me on a little tour of the isolated communities up north. When I do have an invitation, and go out on one of these things everything is laid right out. You go in there in the government plane; the flags are waving; and people are happy to see this. So now I am invited to go to the north country. The executive assistant is there, and two or three more people. We land on this nice airstrip and there isn't a darn soul there. Nobody. That was a lesson. That was different. Nobody was interested in the fact we were there, the fact money is coming out of here, going into those areas. It was a bit of an experience for the minister too. I am sure he would have liked to have seen at least a half-ton truck to take us downtown. We did eventually flag somebody down, but I won't dwell on that. I'm sorry the minister isn't here. I would like to have said a couple of more things to him.

Recreation, Parks and Wildlife: probably the most fun department, not because it says recreation. I recall several experiences I've had at the level of community development and community work. By looking at it very carefully we discovered — I've said this before, but it will bear saying again to remind the minister so he doesn't get too easygoing — that the

average person's day normally divides into three parts: eight hours of work, eight hours of sleep, and eight hours of play. People will steal some of their eight-hour working time to play, and they'll steal some of their eight-hour sleeping time to play. They don't very often do any of the others. So you have a very important department that takes [interjection]. Well, you work seven hours, but everybody else has to work a little longer. So I think this is a very important department. Even though it doesn't seem as earth-shaking as some of the others, it actually takes more of people's time than any of the others.

We have Municipal Affairs. Now we are getting into the kind of people who can call themselves economists. I asked the minister to tell me what an economist is. He gave me a paper he presented, and I read it. I'm still not totally sure, Mr. Minister, what all those marvellous things mean. I'm an admirer of the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He seems to have an excellent grasp of the department. I think it was evidenced in the activity in The Planning Act debate.

Business Development and Tourism . . . How's my time, Mr. Speaker?

DR. BUCK: You're filibustering well, Henry.

MR. KROEGER: We can shorten this up any time. As I told you, I wasn't going to be overly serious about this. I'm just enjoying myself.

Business Development: you know, I was invited to chair a Small Centres Growth Committee. Ever after, I've been told by members in this House there's no problem, all the small centres are growing and everything's going fine. So I've really had very little to do. I'm only pleased the Premier hasn't asked me to define what it is I'm not doing. The business community seems to be working pretty well, Mr. Speaker.

The Consumer and Corporate Affairs Department leaves me a little cold. The minister is here, and he is an old acquaintance and friend of mine. I have difficulty understanding it, but I think he's on the right track on the consumer education thing — and let them look out for themselves.

Utilities and Telephones: I think we get lots of conversation about that, certainly out in the country. The rural gas thing keeps us on the edges of our chairs, when we have time to sit down at all. A very commendable thing is being attempted.

I've had my notice. It's the wrong colored paper, Mr. Speaker; it's usually pink.

We will skip the next one. One that really intrigues me is Treasury. It must be a deceiving department. It

seems to me the Provincial Treasurer sits in majestic isolation and nobody ever wants to see him, no one ever asks anything of him. Maybe his cabinet colleagues do, but I have yet to hear of anyone who ever asked to go to see the Provincial Treasurer. I think it was demonstrated that this must be so when the last Provincial Treasurer was appointed Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. I sat in that first caucus after this happened, and I couldn't believe my ears when I heard that new Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, formerly Treasurer, say: hey guys, come and see me; my door's always open. I sent him a note and said, do you know what you're saying? You've all tried the door since. You know things have changed. Some day I would really like to go to the Provincial Treasurer's office — I don't even know where it is. So if he would let me, I would come and see him.

DR. BUCK: The students are coming Wednesday.

MR. KROEGER: They won't be coming to see him.

Finally, Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs: I had some experience with the minister. You know, he was invited — or maybe he invited himself, I'm not sure — to my nominating convention. I had heard about this powerful, clear-minded, and articulate minister. So he's coming to my nominating convention. I, a green guy out in the country, don't know what's going on, but I'm going to have all this help. He's just going to set this group on fire. You know, we had a 450-people hall with over 700 people in it, and they needed some firing up. So he got up and said, "It's nice to be here; just carry on with the meeting" and sat down. But it must work, because relations between governments in Canada seem to be going marvellously well.

With that, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, I've sat here tonight and listened to a few speeches. I've listened to certain members of the opposition talking. I was hoping maybe the Member for Clover Bar would get up; he seemed to have a great deal to say throughout the night. But in view of the late hour, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 9:48 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Tuesday at 2:30 p.m.]