

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTATitle: **Wednesday, March 22, 1978 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 6****The Alberta Property Tax Reduction
Amendment Act, 1978**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Amendment Act, 1978. The purpose of this bill is to reflect the important changes announced by the Treasurer to the senior citizen home-owners' assistance program. I'm sure all hon. members will be much in favor of this important change.

[Leave granted; Bill 6 read a first time]

Bill 24**The Municipal Taxation
Amendment Act, 1978**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, The Municipal Taxation Amendment Act, 1978. The purpose of this act is to respond to requests of municipalities across the province to increase the operations of the assessment and taxation process in this province, and it can be seen as a reaction to their requests.

[Leave granted; Bill 24 read a first time]

Bill 26**The Attorney General Statutes
Amendment Act, 1978**

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1978. This bill will amend several acts of this Legislature.

First of all, The Juvenile Court Act is being amended to improve the capacity of the chief judge of the provincial court to assign judges in rural areas.

Secondly, The Land Titles Act is being amended to allow the setting of assurance fund fees by regulation in the same manner as fees for other services that are performed under the act. A second change to The Land Titles Act will allow for the gradual implementation of the use of the metric system in the measurements in land titles offices.

The next act being amended, Mr. Speaker, is The Meat Inspection Act, and this is in fact to proclaim that this act will come into force January 31, 1973. The proclamation was never issued. This was an error, and we are correcting it in this legislation.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, The Mechanical Recording of

Evidence Act and The Provincial Court Act are being amended to enable the implementation and use of sound recording equipment in all provincial courts.

[Leave granted; Bill 26 read a first time]

Bill 226**An Act to Amend****The Alberta Energy Company Act**

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 226, An Act to Amend The Alberta Energy Company Act. It would make the Alberta Energy Company accountable to the Assembly.

[Leave granted; Bill 226 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the responses to motions for returns nos. 127 and 171.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's a special pleasure for me to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly, from Parkview school in the Edmonton Glenora constituency, the senior grade 6 class in the elementary school, some two and a half dozen students. They're in the public gallery accompanied by their teacher Mr. Larbalestier. I'd ask that they and their teacher stand at this time and be welcomed by the Alberta Legislative Assembly.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, 15 students from Red Deer College are in the members gallery visiting us this afternoon. I take pleasure in introducing them to you, Mr. Speaker, and to members of the Assembly. They are accompanied on this occasion by their instructor Mr. Ed Kamps. I would ask them to rise and be recognized by the House.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Legislature, 33 grade 9 students from Ryley school. They are seated in the public gallery, accompanied by their teacher Mr. Voegtlin, and parent supervisors Mrs. Voegtlin, Mrs. Reist, and Mrs. Helge-land. I would ask that they rise and receive the recognition of the Assembly.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure this afternoon to introduce His Worship Mr. Dave Mitchell, mayor of the town of Vulcan. I would ask Mr. Mitchell to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Department of Municipal Affairs**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to provide details to the remarks made by the Provincial Treasurer in his speech to the Assembly last Friday evening. In that address, the Provincial Treasurer

outlined increases in the benefits under the Alberta property tax reduction program which are provided in the 1978 budget and which will be effective retroactively to January 1, 1978.

It is a major priority of this provincial government to encourage senior citizens to remain in their own accommodation. To achieve this goal, the Alberta property tax reduction program was implemented in conjunction with the removal of the education foundation levy on all residential property and farmland. This important program was initiated in 1973, Mr. Speaker, and has benefited thousands of Alberta senior citizens through the minimum benefit provisions or the senior citizen renters' assistance.

The levels of assistance under the 1973 program were adequate to ensure that home-owners remained in their own residences by removing from this class of property the total provincial education tax. However, with increased utility costs, increased assessments, higher mill rates, and the escalation of other basic living costs which are affecting all Canadians, the level of support of this program appeared inadequate by 1978 standards, and the assistance has therefore been increased dramatically.

I believe it is important to note that the property to receive the greatest benefit under the expanded program will be the smaller, older urban home. This type of property has experienced increased property tax which in many cases has outstripped the income increase of those on fixed incomes.

The municipalities will continue to administer the minimum benefits portion of the program, while the Department of Municipal Affairs will deal directly with applications received for senior citizen renters' assistance. As the Provincial Treasurer announced, the three elements of the program have been enhanced financially as follows.

(1) The minimum education tax refund for senior citizen owner-occupied homes is increased from \$200 to \$400, and is extended to all senior citizens regardless of their income levels. Given that the province pays the total school foundation on all Alberta residences, those properties owned and occupied by all senior citizens where the school foundation tax is less than \$400 will now receive a grant up to the \$400 minimum or up to the total taxes paid on the property, whichever is the lesser amount. Formerly, senior citizens in receipt of the guaranteed income supplement to the old age pension received a \$200 grant minimum, and all other home-owners a \$100 grant minimum. It is estimated that approximately 65,000 residences in Alberta are owned and occupied by senior citizens.

(2) The renter assistance grant to all senior citizens living in rental accommodation is increased from \$150 to \$250 per year. In keeping with this government's concern about all Albertans living on fixed incomes, senior citizens who do not own their own property will also benefit from this program enrichment. It is noteworthy, Mr. Speaker, that residential rental accommodation in Alberta does not pay the school foundation tax. This second element of the program ensures that senior citizens residing in rented accommodation are assured of receiving similar assistance to protect against cost increases. Since 1973 approximately 140,000 senior citizens have benefited under this program.

(3) The minimum home-owner tax refund was \$100

in 1977 and will increase to \$200 in 1978. This element of the program has been separated from the senior citizen home-owner refund and will be increased by 100 per cent in 1978. The residences receiving the primary benefits under this third category will again be the smaller, older home where the property tax reduction paid by the province is less than \$200.

Mr. Speaker, in his statement to the Assembly Monday the Minister of Agriculture noted the considerable savings in property taxes which Alberta farmers enjoy. The Alberta property tax reduction program has played a major role in ensuring that Alberta farmers continue to enjoy the lowest farm input costs of any farmers in Canada. About \$60 million in school foundation taxes has been paid on residential farmland since this class of property became eligible for the program in 1974.

Mr. Speaker, since the program began in 1973 the total amount of assistance, including the property tax reduction on all residential properties, the minimum home-owner benefit, and the senior citizen renters' assistance, has been in excess of \$500 million. The extended benefits announced by the Provincial Treasurer are expected to bring additionally over \$100 million to Albertans in 1978.

Albertans in an average home pay the lowest property tax in Canada. Our province continues to be a leader in the benefits available to property owners, and we offer a program of property tax reduction of the magnitude which makes it one of the finest in all of Canada.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a correction in *Hansard*. On Friday, March 17, in my response to the Speech from the Throne, I inadvertently referred to Treaty 11 rather than Treaty 4.*

The statement, which appears on page 262 of *Alberta Hansard*, states:

... as the entire province of Alberta has been covered, primarily by treaties 6, 7, and 8, and to a much lesser extent by treaties 10 and 11, there are no aboriginal rights.

Mr. Speaker, that sentence should read:

... as the entire province of Alberta has been covered, primarily by treaties 6, 7, and 8, and to a much lesser extent by treaties 10 and 4, there are no aboriginal rights.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Juvenile Detention Centres

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. It deals with Bill 37 of the last session, The Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1977, and that portion of the legislation that deals with closed confinement units. It's my understanding that over 100 beds have now been provided for closed confinement units. Are these beds additional to the previously existing facilities, or were they simply taken away from the existing facilities, which I believe were used for detention of young juveniles before they went to court?

*See page 262, left column, paragraph 9

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, the beds that have been provided are part of the pool of resources available to the department. Some of them were deemed suitable for facilities under the terms of Bill 37, have been judged such accordingly, and are used that way. The total pool available has not been increased except through the use of foster and group homes.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has this transfer of facilities left a shortage of beds for pre-court juvenile detention?

MISS HUNLEY: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. But I would prefer to check that and respond later to the hon. member.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to follow up to the hon. minister, and perhaps the minister could check on this point too. Is the minister in a position to confirm to the Assembly whether the department or the government is using hotel and motel rooms to hold pre-court detention juveniles, again as a result of the shortage incurred?

MISS HUNLEY: I'd be pleased to check that for the hon. member. None of it has come to my attention.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, following along on the same item, I would like to ask the minister what treatment is being offered to help those youngsters in the closed confinement units, in terms of counselling and psychiatric services?

MISS HUNLEY: It varies, Mr. Speaker, according to the facility and, of course, according to the assessment made of those offenders when they are assigned to a facility. The hon. member may not be aware of the fact that we do have some contract spaces. Those contract spaces draw on some of their own staff and on outside consultants. The spaces that we have operate in a similar way. We have closed spaces, for example, at the Youth Development Centre. And we do have resource people on staff. But when necessary we also draw on outside resources in the private field or other services — for example, in the mental health delivery system — if we feel that's required.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. In effecting the provisions of Bill 35, is it the policy of the government to use closed confinement units as a means to hold juvenile offenders or as a means to provide psychiatric help to emotionally disturbed young people? In other words, are these closed confined units being used, on one hand, to help and hold youngsters with serious emotional problems, and at the same time, to hold other young people who are delinquents being held for court appearances?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, often it's almost impossible to tell whether the child who is in our care is mentally ill, emotionally disturbed, or is there specifically as a juvenile delinquent as determined by the courts. Indeed, sometimes juvenile delinquents are perhaps sorely in need of assistance in the mental health area as well.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further question to the minister. In the course of the phasing in or implementation of this program, why on some occasions have young people in need of psychiatric and emotional care who are being held in these units been in the same unit with hard-core juvenile offenders?

MISS HUNLEY: The hon. Leader of the Opposition is making some allegations which I am not convinced are based on fact, but I'd be prepared to inquire of my officials as to the comments he has made and, if they're accurate, determine the reason this has occurred.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might ask one supplementary question of the minister. Has any representation been made to the minister's office with regard to young people with emotional problems who are in the confined units and having direct association with hard-core juvenile delinquents? Has any representation been made on that question to the minister herself?

MISS HUNLEY: I have not had interviews with anyone relating to that specific area, though I do have a great deal of correspondence, some of which alludes to that area. But as in all these areas with troubled youngsters, Mr. Speaker, it's sometimes very difficult to determine the exact reason that youngster is in trouble with the law or why that youngster has come into the care of the department. We do have a great deal of correspondence relating to that, to which we try to respond as effectively as possible.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just one further question to the minister.

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

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, the question to the minister is: is the department having difficulty with having enough facilities to hold, on one hand, young people who are waiting to go to court to face charges, and at the same time young people who have been placed in the confinement centres as a result of an order by a judge or by the director of child welfare? My concern is that there should be separation in all cases, as I see it. Why is this problem developing? Is it a matter of shortage of beds or space?

MR. SPEAKER: With respect, the hon. leader seems to repeating a question he asked a moment ago and which the hon. minister agreed to inquire about.

Firestone Plant Closure

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'll direct the second question then — I see the Minister of Business Development and Tourism isn't here — to the Minister Without Portfolio responsible for Calgary Affairs. It deals with the closure of the Firestone plant in Calgary. In light of the comments in the House yesterday by his colleague that the plant was really closed down for technical, transportation, and economic reasons, my question to the minister is: what would it cost to convert the plant to radial-ply tire production; and, in

fact, has the government done a study to see if that is an available alternative?

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I don't have the answer to that question, but I'll be happy to refer it to my colleague when the House re-assembles next week. If he has the answer I'm sure he'll be happy to give it to you.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, an additional question to the minister. Is the hon. minister in charge of Calgary affairs aware of any representation coming from employees at the Firestone plant who are now seriously looking at the possibility of working out some kind of arrangement where the employees themselves may buy the plant from Firestone?

MR. McCRAE: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister: is the government prepared to consider such a proposal now being put together by the employees?

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, first of all could I say it's a speculative, hypothetical question. I'd also point out to the member it's a private sector operation. If there is a representation to the government, as an open government certainly we'd have to review it. But it is a matter at this time of private sector competition, jobs, management, the whole thing. It is a speculative question at this time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister Without Portfolio in charge of Calgary. During the discussions that took place between the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism and the officials of Firestone, can the minister advise the Assembly whether he is aware of any discussion around the question of Firestone writing banks and mortgage companies, as early or as late as three weeks ago, indicating that the job tenure of their employees was in fact secure? Was there any discussion of that between the government officials and the Firestone officials?

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, could I simply reply that I was not at the private meeting between the Minister of Business Development and Tourism and the representatives of Firestone. It was a private meeting, and I'm not aware of what the discussion covered. It may or may not have alluded to that point.

But whatever, Mr. Speaker, I will refer the question to the minister responsible. If he has the information and it is not of a private nature, I'm sure he will be happy to respond to the question next week.

DR. BUCK: You're minister of Calgary affairs and you weren't there?

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister in charge of Calgary. Can the minister advise the Assembly whether it is true that Firestone has denied UIC officials the opportunity of setting up . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order, order.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, the question to the hon. minister is: is he in a position to advise whether Firestone has refused to allow UIC officials an opportunity to provide services for those people being laid off at the plant site, as is normally the case when plants are closed down?

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I don't have any information on that matter. But if the hon. member does, I'd certainly be pleased to hear his representations on the subject later.

MR. CLARK: I'd like to ask one further question of the minister. Is the minister aware of any studies that have been done by the province of Alberta dealing with the market this plant was serving, and did the minister or any of his colleagues look seriously at the possibility of the product from this plant being exported to the Pacific northwest?

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, if I could repeat myself, I will refer that question to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism. If he does have the information, when we reassemble next week I am sure he will be glad to extend it to you. [interjections]

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the official opposition is selling itself into a market that no longer exists, has the minister considered taking it over and operating it as a Crown corporation for the advantage of all Albertans?

DR. BUCK: The same as the many other ones they take over. [interjections]

Tax Discounters

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Has the minister had an opportunity to review the study undertaken by his department on tax discounters that indicated that discounters were taking up to 612 per cent of the refunds?

MR. HARLE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I did table the study in this House. Obviously I've seen it.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, could the minister indicate what action his department will take as a result of the study, which indicated that discounters were paying back an average of \$198.44 to their customers where they were entitled returns averaging \$413.46, less than 50 per cent of the actual refund?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I think the House is well aware that the position taken by the government was set out in the legislation introduced, whereby we placed tax discounters under The Credit and Loan Agreements Act. That was implemented during the past year. The licensing of tax discounters was carried out. Certain disclosures are required of tax discounters to their clientele. Certain information is to be brought to the attention of their clients. It is our belief that the clientele can then make a decision one way or another whether to have their T4 slips discounted or wait for the Department of National Revenue to assess their returns and make the refund.

I might say that there was a discussion of this subject at the federal/provincial conference of consumer ministers last week in Victoria. I think it would be fair to say that all consumer ministers urged the federal minister to convey to his counterpart in National Revenue that they make every effort to speed up the refunding of overpayments of tax.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Did the minister consider, or has he given any assistance to the new consultants set up in Calgary by the students of the university, called Community Income Tax Services?

MR. HARLE: Yes, we have.

MR. MANDEVILLE: One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In light of these figures that are fairly high, would the minister consider making Bill 233, which I introduced the other day, a government bill?

MR. HARLE: Well, I'm looking forward to the debate on that. I think it's fair to say that we have some serious constitutional problems. I think anyone who has looked at the various attempts across Canada to put in place that type of legislation has found some very serious constitutional problems. After all, it is dealing with something over which the federal government has absolute control.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, they took my advice on the gasoline tax; they might as well make this a government motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Has he met lately with the Students' Union legal aid group from the U of A in relation to financial aid for the job they're doing in helping Edmontonians and Albertans from tax discounters?

MR. HARLE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thought I had indicated that we had lent some support to the two groups, one in Calgary and one in Edmonton, which are trying to offer an alternative service.

MR. STROMBERG: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I was more interested in what type of aid you had lent. Was it financial? If it was, how much?

MR. HARLE: I don't recall the specifics of the amount, but it was financial help to both groups, in Edmonton and in Calgary.

Coal Industry — Grande Cache

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and ask if he can advise the Assembly where things stand on the current contract negotiations between McIntyre Porcupine on one hand and the Japanese interests on the other. I gather the contract ends on March 31, and there is widespread concern in Grande Cache

that the coal supply will be cut drastically, from 1.5 million tons to perhaps as low as 600,000 tons, with massive layoffs in the community as a consequence. My question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister: is he in a position to advise the House where things stand on the negotiations?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, a great deal of speculative information was attempted in the question. But I could respond this way. Throughout the world today, although Albertans have been buffered from it a great deal, there is in fact a general business slowdown. As a result there is considerable decrease in demand for steel. Therefore Japanese purchasers are in a buyers' market in terms of purchasing metallurgical coal. As such, they are hard to bargain with, and those who are selling to them must negotiate as hard and as tough as they possibly can in order to obtain markets for their metallurgical coal. That is the case with McIntyre. As I understand it, their officials are in Japan right now negotiating, I understand with some success, for a new contract which we believe will allow the mine to continue, perhaps at a slightly changed volume, nevertheless to continue on a successful basis.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Given the suggestions by some McIntyre officials that one alternative would be markets in the east, has any special assistance been given either by the Department of Energy and Natural Resources or the Department of Business Development and Tourism to explore the possibility of expanding markets in the east and to use the Panama Canal in order to supply eastern markets, which I gather is one of the options McIntyre has assessed?

MR. GETTY: I understand, Mr. Speaker, that they are having some success in finding access to eastern markets on their own. There is a transportation problem, understood by most Albertans. However, I believe the future for the company will be in the markets they presently serve.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly where things stand on the application, I gather, from McIntyre to expand their mine operations, given the uncertainty of their market projections at this stage of the game?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, McIntyre wishes to expand their current operations and we will assist them in doing so.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly what the current situation is with respect to the new Alberta Housing subdivision where I gather there are 120 homes but to date only 10 prospective buyers?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I believe the project the member is referring to is a land development program by the Alberta Housing Corporation. It's one of many we have throughout the province; in fact, well over two dozen. I would therefore have to take the ques-

tion under advisement, get details on the matter, and report accordingly.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Is the Premier in a position to advise the House today what the government proposes to do with respect to those aspects of the Crump report in 1973, I believe, dealing with alternative development in the Grande Cache area?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to review the document. A number of ministers are involved in it — I know the Deputy Premier and Minister of Transportation, of course, has been involved in that document — so I'd take notice of the question and respond in due course.

Alcan Pipeline

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, and it's with regard to the northern pipeline agreement. I wonder if the Premier could advise the Assembly what part Alberta's playing in negotiating the agreement, and at what stage the agreement is at the present time.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will have to clarify his question somewhat in terms of what agreement he's referring to. There are a multitude of agreements, a multitude of treaties, and a fair amount of legislation.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, as clarification for the Premier: when the pipeline is to cross Alberta there are certain qualifications which must be met with regard to taxation, compensation for farm persons, private property, that type of thing. That part of the agreement is where I would like to raise my questions.

MR. LOUGHEED: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it was answered in the House during the fall session. Of course this province has had considerable experience with pipeline projects in the normal course of our economic activity, whether it is a provincial or an interprovincial activity. With regard to the specific question asked by the hon. member, I'd refer it to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, we are now assessing the advisability of possibly entering into an agreement with the federal government with respect to the aspects of the pipeline as it crosses Alberta. Members will recall that an agreement was entered into with the federal government when the federal anti-inflation legislation was passed. Members will also note that the federal legislation provides for and enables the federal government, the federal minister, to enter into an agreement with a province. So we are now assessing that and may do so in the weeks ahead.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Would one of the items under consideration be compensation for farmers when the pipeline crosses their land? At present it's sort of a one-shot payment. Are other forms of compensation being considered?

MR. HYNDMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, insofar as the pipeline is of course a federal undertaking, from a purely constitutional point of view the federal Railway Act is the act which would apply with respect to moneys which would go to landowners on the route of the pipeline. However, we have indicated to the federal government that we think the legislation this province has, The Surface Rights Act and other legislation, together with the very positive activities which have been carried on by the Farmers' Advocate — that it would probably be useful for the federal government through its new agency to look at Alberta legislation, and where possible follow the approaches we have devised in this province, which in our view have provided for a very satisfactory approach for farmers whose lands pipelines would cross.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. I understand that for lands crossed in the Yukon there will be an annual rental payment of something like \$8,000 per acre. I wonder if the minister in his presentation and considerations would consider an annual rental rate being available to Alberta farmers who will be affected. Along the total route there will be some 800 to 900 farmers. In his presentation, would the minister consider that for the farmers of Alberta?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, the situation in the Yukon is totally different, historically and legally in respect to claims, from the situation in the province of Alberta. So I would think that in the province of Alberta, where we've had 50,000 miles of oil and gas pipelines since the early '40s, generally speaking the approaches which have been used and followed with respect to the rights of landowners on oil and gas pipelines will be the principles followed with respect to this pipeline.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Would the minister consider an annual rental rate being available to farmers? At present it isn't that way on pipeline rights of way.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't follow the hon. gentleman's approach, insofar as the legal positions of the Yukon Territory and the province of Alberta are completely different. If the hon. gentleman is aware of the provisions of Section 91(10) and the Railway Act of Canada, I think he will realize the position is entirely different, and he will realize the singular disadvantages which might accrue.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't arguing the Yukon legislation or their precedents, since I used it as an example only. But in the Senate committee hearings that took place earlier this week, one of the points made was that farmers affected by the passage of the pipeline through Alberta would not be able to receive annual compensation through rental rates, only a one-shot payment. The Senate committee, in its feelings, indicated that when Alberta negotiates its part of the agreement consideration should be made to put in some type of annual rental agreement for the farmers of Alberta. I'm raising the matter in the House and saying to the minister: with that information, will the minister consider it in his part of the negotiations?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the record will show that the submissions and approaches taken by this government have been among the best in Canada in terms of providing the best deal possible for farmers in the province. We'll continue to do that. With respect to this pipeline or any other situation, we'll continue to ensure the best deal possible is available for Alberta farmers.

DR. BUCK: Nice speech, but it doesn't answer the question.

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes or no.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I don't think the minister really understands rural surface leasing or pipelining. I think somebody else should look at it.

MR. NOTLEY: Can we have the Member for Drayton Valley answer that?

Fort McMurray Housing Authority

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Housing responsible for the Alberta Housing Corporation. My question deals with the recent dismissal of the volunteer Fort McMurray Housing Authority, which was responsible for overlooking the low-cost housing units in the lower townsite and Beacon Hill. Can the hon. minister indicate why there was no prior consultation with the housing authority, members, or tenants of Willow Square before dismissal of the housing authority on March 1 of this year?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, there's constant dialogue between the whole 36 housing authorities in the province and the Alberta Housing Corporation people who are responsible for property administration. But I think the member is suggesting that there was no consultation between the chairman of the board of directors of the Fort McMurray Housing Authority and me in the period he has indicated. The Fort McMurray Housing Authority at this point consisted of only two people, below that required to constitute a quorum. I would have thought that the chairman of the housing authority would have taken it upon himself to contact me at the earliest opportunity in that regard. He didn't, but indeed the Alberta Housing Corporation did contact me to indicate the nature of the problem, and as a result placed upon me the requirement to act almost immediately, which I did.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the hon. minister indicate what reasons were given for the dismissal of the volunteer authority?

MR. YURKO: Several reasons, Mr. Speaker: amongst the most important, the fact that the auditor indicated some irregularities in the handling of the funds and in the management and administration of the properties.

Telephone Services

MR. APPLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address my question to the Minister of Utilities and Telephones. Is any consideration being given by Al-

berta Government Telephones to increasing the 30-mile maximum perimeter of the zones for extended area service toll-free dialing?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, the considerations at the present time involve those communities that are still within the 30-mile boundary parameter that have not yet had the opportunity to connect to their adjacent communities for one reason or another. A number of communities were polled about five years ago on the desirability of being hooked up one to another. At that time, a number of those communities indicated they did not feel they would want to do that and pay the higher flat rate as a result, but they now wish to be reconsidered. A number of those reconsiderations are presently under way. That's the status of the matter within that 30-mile boundary.

MR. APPLEBY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister could indicate how long or how soon it will be before this first phase might be completed to include these ones that weren't in the original plan.

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, we are hopeful that during the course of 1978 we'll be able to make considerable progress on that matter, and certainly in terms of the possibility of some degree of expansion of the geographic size. Once the present undertakings are complete, I would certainly be prepared to evaluate those representations.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary to the minister. Would the minister consider a toll-free charge to all Albertans to get to a RITE number? In some cases now, some people can phone a RITE number and other people can't. Can we have a toll-free call to all RITE number locations?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, the RITE system is handled by my colleague the Minister of Government Services, and he might wish to make some comments in response to the Member for Whitecourt.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member repeat the question, please?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, the question is: would the minister consider in his department a toll-free charge to a RITE number throughout the province for all citizens?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, the entire RITE system and the toll-free access to it by a certain number of citizens and not others is presently under consideration. I will be able to discuss with the member the different discussions which are being held.

MR. TRYNCHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will these discussions be held shortly?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, as soon as we have all the information necessary to know what the different costs would be, either to extend the RITE system as it is at present or to restrict it as required.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones. Is it techni-

cally possible for a community that is 35 miles away from a major centre to connect with a community that is 29 miles away through that centre that is 29 miles away?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, I regret I'm not sure I understand the question. Perhaps I'd ask the hon. member to repeat it.

MR. TAYLOR: Perhaps I could enlarge, Mr. Speaker. There's a community that is now connected, toll-free, with a major centre. There's another community that's only 35 miles away, and it doesn't qualify today. The people are wondering if it's technically possible to connect with the community that is only 29 or 30 miles away and thence to the major centre?

DR. WARRACK: Oh, I see. The answer is no, Mr. Speaker. The system does not permit one exchange to dial a third exchange through the second exchange. [laughter]

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.
...

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary by the hon. Member for Clover Bar, and I guess the hon. Member for Banff is holding some telephone calls, too, to wait for another answer.

DR. BUCK: I would like to ask a question of the hon. Minister of Government Services. Can the minister indicate if the RITE system is working as it is perceived to, or is the minister considering getting rid of that program?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, of course as far as the private citizen of Alberta is concerned the RITE system is working extremely well. However, as may be known among members, a number of professional people — lawyers, doctors, even school boards and so on — would like to access the RITE system as well. These items are presently under consideration.

MR. KIDD: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'm a little disturbed, knowing the real scientific capacity of the Minister of Utilities and Telephones, saying that things aren't technically possible. Most things are technically possible. I think it's a matter of money, is it not?

DR. WARRACK: I don't whether the hon. member is 'kidding' or not, but certainly he's right, Mr. Speaker. [laughter]

Gambling Permits

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Attorney General. Casinos in Alberta have been most welcome by non-profit organizations to raise funds, and it was based on getting a date on first-come service. Now I know it has caused the Attorney General some problems, and it has been changed by throwing all the names in a hat. They have to pull a full-house ticket to beat the house. I wonder if the minister can inform the Assembly if this system is being revised.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, at one time we selected names or applicants for dates for casinos and the like on a first-come, first-served basis. I think as I reported to this House some time ago, that led to line-ups in front of the Madison Building and elsewhere at 6 o'clock in the morning, so people could get in to be first to get their licence. That kind of disorder was clearly undesirable, so we went back to pulling things from the hat, as it were. I am now receiving complaints from several organizations — no doubt hon. members are — to the effect that a certain organization may have applied several times and has not yet been successful. Another organization may have applied only twice for specific dates and perhaps was successful on both occasions.

I want to assure all members of the House that that is purely and simply the luck of the draw, nothing more. We are not participating in the selection process. However, the criticism may be valid in that we both license the organization, determine which is eligible rather, and participate in the selection process.

One of the proposals I am considering and will be making to my colleagues is that we put in place a system of advisory committees, one for the north and one for the south, whose responsibility would be to establish criteria for the selection of these organizations and in fact to conduct the selection process, then recommend to the department or to the gaming control section which organization is the successful applicant. This would successfully remove that decision process from the hands of the department.

However, Mr. Speaker, I think I should underline and make it clear that, pursuant to the Criminal Code, the selection must be done by those officials who are authorized to do so. This would not include advisory committees. What I'm saying is that we would ask the advisory committee to make a recommendation, and we would be prepared to take that recommendation in most cases.

MR. PURDY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General. I wonder if the Attorney General could inform this Assembly if the people who are making these draws in his department hold a lottery licence to make the draws.

MR. APPLEBY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General. When it comes to a decision on issuing permits for lotteries, bingos, and such, I wonder if the Attorney General's Department is considering reviewing the definition of charitable organizations, or perhaps replacing this with a more acceptable term.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, the definition of a religious and charitable organization, or the reference to it, is to be found in the Criminal Code. Lawyers will argue over the strict interpretation of what that means. It's defined elsewhere in federal legislation. As I so often want to say, we have been reasonably flexible in the interpretation in the past — obviously not flexible enough for some. It's a matter of constant review.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary to the hon. minister. What is the rationale behind having only one of these events every two days in our major cities, when there's such a great demand?

MR. SPEAKER: I would have to leave it to the hon. minister to assess whether that question might be answered briefly. We're running out of time, and a number of members have not yet asked their first questions.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. Clearly, if we wanted to we could allow a dozen casinos to run every night of the week in any community in the province. I have taken the view that it is undesirable to have that level of gaming activity in the province. My recommendation has been that we limit casino activity to one in any one community at any one time, and secondly that we limit the duration of any one applicant to a two-day period, excepting exhibition associations. It's a matter of policy.

Alberta Energy Company

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. For clarification, will the president of the Alberta Energy Company be voting the government shares at the annual meeting next month?

DR. BUCK: That question's been asked; is the answer the same?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, he will. We have given the proxy for the government shares to the president of Alberta Energy. The only part of the act that I would draw members' attention to is that when the government appoints three directors, it does so in lieu of voting its shares for the other directors. Therefore in that regard the proxy doesn't operate.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier. Will any members of Executive Council be attending that meeting on April 14 in Lethbridge?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I would presume not. If hon. members who are shareholders can organize their schedules to be in attendance, I'm sure they would be welcome there as shareholders. We take the view, as the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources has already mentioned in this House, that we have full confidence in the excellent board of directors who are operating that entity.

MR. GOGO: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I think the price of Alberta Energy shares reflects the wisdom of Albertans in their investment decisions. The history of Alberta Gas Trunk Line, with control leaving Alberta, was a . . .

DR. BUCK: What's the question?

MR. GOGO: . . . subject relating to the share distribution. Could the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources indicate the approximate percentage of shares of Alberta Energy that are owned outside Alberta?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I believe it's slightly under 6 per cent. One of the gratifying results of the share sale within the province is that Albertans have held on to the shares, which have appreciated, I might say, some 60 per cent.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to indicate what percentage of Albertans own shares in the Alberta Energy Company?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, of course all Albertans own 50 per cent of the shares through their government. All others had an opportunity to purchase shares when the original prospectus was issued.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my apologies to the minister; I didn't make my question very clear. Outside of the \$75 million that we as taxpayers all own, of the additional amount to make up the 100 per cent, what percentage of the entire Alberta population owns the remaining shares? What percentage of the Alberta population?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the hon. member to put that on the Order Paper. My arithmetic isn't that quick.

Property Taxes

DR. WEBBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. It relates to the ministerial announcement today, which by the way will be of special benefit to my constituents in Calgary Bow, where there are many smaller, older homes. The minister noted that rising utility costs, increased assessments, and higher mill rates have affected the living costs of senior citizens. Could the minister indicate whether the benefits announced today will offset these increased living costs?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, in designing the program and making a presentation to my colleagues in government and caucus, I did make the point that it was my feeling this increase in the program would in fact not only relieve the property tax increases being experienced by residents across Alberta, but to some extent would adjust for the escalation in costs of utilities and other costs of living in your own home. So, in fact, I believe to a great extent this program will adequately meet that need and, specifically, will meet the increased taxation being borne by residents for supplementary school taxation.

DR. WEBBER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will there be any changes in the procedures whereby senior citizens can receive the benefits of these programs?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the process of administration went through a period of taking the bugs out when the program was introduced, and we will not change in any way the way it is administered now. For your information, Mr. Speaker, I might note that the program is administered by the municipalities, which are advanced funds to pay out the property tax reduction amounts and the minimum benefits, and as well are paid a fee for administering this portion of the fund. Forms for the senior citizens' rental assistance program, which is administered by the department, are available at most government agencies and can be readily available to any senior citizen.

MR. SPEAKER: We have run out of time. I've already recognized the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway. If the House agrees, perhaps we might have another short question and a short answer.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: A short question, a short answer.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I have a question and two or three supplementaries, which I'd rather reserve if I don't have the time to ask them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Farm Fuel Costs

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, could I respond to a question asked by the hon. Member for Drumheller on March 20? The member asked if the Department of Agriculture had made, or is making, a study of the relative costs of a farmer who uses gasoline for his farm operations and a farmer who uses propane.

The short answer is yes, a study was made in 1966. It was updated yesterday by the department at my request, and the answer is, assuming a 100 horsepower tractor and average fuel consumption: gasoline costs, \$4.10 per hour; diesel, \$2.50 per hour; and propane, \$2.97 per hour; concluding one to believe that there are very substantial benefits to using diesel.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition raised a point of order concerning a letter which had been read by the hon. Deputy Premier. I'm prepared to deal with that point, but I think as a courtesy to the hon. Deputy Premier I should put it off until he's next in the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

11. Moved by Mr. Hyndman:

Be it resolved that the Assembly do stand adjourned from Wednesday, March 22, at 5:30 p.m. until Wednesday, March 29, at 2:30 p.m., Standing Order 3(1) notwithstanding.

[Motion carried]

12. Moved by Mr. Hyndman:

Be it resolved that the report of the chairman of the special committee containing lists of members to compose the following select standing committees be now received and concurred in:

- (a) Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders, and Printing
- (b) Public Accounts
- (c) Private Bills
- (d) Law and Regulations
- (e) Public Affairs

- (f) The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act
- (g) Auditor General

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make a comment on (f) of this motion, The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act. I would like to bring to the government's attention the matter that there is a possibility — and I realize, of course, the possibility would be slight — that the chairman of this committee should be a member of the official opposition, or a member of the opposition, period. The reason I say that is that it would tend to give that committee at least a token degree of the appearance of impartiality. [interjections] Mr. Speaker, I say this sincerely, and I say that it should be given due consideration, because when we set up committees such as this, a committee of this Legislature should be in all intents and purposes impartial.

Mr. Speaker, that way the government could not be accused of it being a government committee. It would be a committee of the Legislature headed by an opposition member. Historically the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee is a member from the opposition party. In this case, the hon. Member for Drumheller, Mr. Taylor, is the head of the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure this government talks about being open and accessible and the action should be in the Legislature. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see them put their money where their mouths are . . .

MR. NOTLEY: Put their mouths where the money is.

DR. BUCK: . . . and make the chairman of this committee a member of the opposition.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, speaking briefly to that amendment, I wonder if the Member for Clover Bar would give the House an undertaking that any minority reports that come out will contain things that were discussed during the course of the heritage fund discussions before we proceed with the vote.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, also speaking on the comment of the Member for Clover Bar, I'm amazed at his suggestion. I recall very vividly that when The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act was debated the hon. members opposite didn't even want to serve on the committee. [interjections]

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to get involved in this debate, but the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway might well look back on the record, when we debated the heritage fund in 1976. As I recollect, an amendment was even proposed from this side of the House at that time, that the chairman of the committee be from the opposition.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that a very simple proposition is being advanced: that if the impartiality of the committee is to be not only above reproach but seen to be above reproach, all the arguments in favor of an opposition chairman of Public Accounts, in my view, apply just as strongly when one looks at the heritage trust fund committee. As a matter of fact, one might suggest even stronger from a public relations point of view, because due to the fact that the bulk of this money is invested by the cabinet without

prior approval in the Legislature, it would probably be much more in the public interest if the watchdog committee, which was given so much ballyhoo in 1976 by the hon. members opposite when the Premier proposed some of the modifications in the initial bill that was drafted — members will recall it was submitted in the fall of 1975, and certain changes were made when the legislation was approved in 1976. Much discussion centred around the so-called watchdog committee.

Mr. Speaker, I would think that the hon. members opposite, as well as the hon. members on the left, the geographical left of the Legislature, would be enthusiastic about the prospect of one of the opposition members acting as chairman of this committee. It would strengthen the committee's prestige and credibility in the province. So I think the suggestion made by the hon. Member for Clover Bar is a worth-while one. It's in keeping with the debate that occurred in 1976. That being the case, Mr. Speaker, I heartily recommend it to the members of the Assembly.

MR. KIDD: Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that any time I've wished really active participation in the committee to avail myself of the opportunity of having some input, I was not the chairman. If we look at a good chairman, a good chairman is not the person who gets involved. He is Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker is a good chairman. If he were to have his own wishes and listen to all the words he hears in this Legislature, how he would wish to be down there and participating. So you know, it's just sheer nonsense. The hon. member from . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Spirit River.

MR. KIDD: Spirit River. That's right. The hon. member from Spirit River. I always forget because, you know, he doesn't bring forth very much that you can really remember.

What he says is so right. He says, we want prestige; we want to have our name in the paper; we want to say that we're the chairman of a committee. But if you really want to get down to the gut things about a committee, you're not the chairman. You are a member and have your say.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's a hard act to follow.

MR. APPLEBY: Yes, it's a hard act to follow. I agree with you.

But I am intrigued, Mr. Speaker, by the comment of the Member for Clover Bar, when he gives us one good reason that we're in the position of putting the money where the mouth is. In view of the size of the heritage fund, I wonder if he feels that a member of the opposition would be better qualified to supply the right type of mouth.

[Motion carried]

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS** (Second Reading)

Bill 3 The Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1978

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 3, The Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1978. The principle of this bill is to provide for interim supply, and that is approximately one-third of the amounts appearing in the Estimates which have been tabled in the House, save for those instances where we anticipate spending during the first few weeks of the upcoming fiscal period more than one-third of the votes appearing in the Estimates. An additional percentage is then specifically provided for in the bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 3 read a second time]

Bill 23 The Fuel Oil Administration Act

MR. SPEAKER: I have some problem with proceeding to second reading of this bill at this time, in view of Standing Order No. 62 which prohibits us from doing that unless the bill is printed. I am not aware that it is. I don't believe I have a printed copy.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would urge on members of the Assembly and on Your Honour that the bill in its present form, which is a computerized xeroxed form, is in fact printed, and that that rule which appeared in *Beauchesne*, I believe, many decades ago referred to occasions on which a bill was simply handwritten — which did occur in the early days of this Assembly — or perhaps typewritten in a questionable form.

So I would submit that I know of a number of occasions since 1967 when bills have in fact gone through third reading and Royal Assent, I believe, in a xeroxed form; therefore I submit that Bill 23 is within the rules, and is "printed" within the rules of our Assembly in *Beauchesne*.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. We certainly have received the bill in adequate time, have had it available to us, and would like to proceed at this time.

MR. TAYLOR: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker. Throughout the years the Legislature has accepted a typewritten copy or a photocopy of a bill such as this as a printed bill.

MR. SPEAKER: Of course we have the additional situation that there's printing and there's printing, and the question is whether the printing referred to in Standing Order 62 is intended to refer to the bill in its final form. As far as the administration of the Assembly is concerned, it sometimes can pose difficulties when the printed version comes in to replace the, shall I say, other printed version.

Under the circumstances it would appear to be the consensus of the Assembly that we continue to treat

bills reproduced in the form in which we now have Bill 23 as a printed bill; therefore, so be it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 23, The Fuel Oil Administration Act. I spoke on the principles incorporated in this bill at some length and with some enthusiasm on Friday last, and I think that enables me to confine my remarks to very few this afternoon.

The bill proposes legislation which would implement the removal of the tax on gasoline and diesel fuel that I referred to in the budget speech, and also provides legislation under which the farm fuel transportation allowance would be administered.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe the bill contains any change in fundamental principles that have been operating with respect to the fuel oil tax and, of course, will continue to operate with respect to fuel oil used by locomotives within Alberta or fuel oil used in airplanes. Nor do I think there is any fundamental change of principle with respect to the way in which we have been dealing with the farm fuel transportation allowance.

The last item I would call the members' attention to is that I anticipate the bill will go to the committee stage a week from today when we reconvene. I anticipate at that time there will be a number of amendments. I do not think there will be amendments dealing with the principles in the bill, but rather there will be merely technical amendments ensuring the administration functions as it's intended to function.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make just two comments on the bill. I'm certainly supporting the bill. The first comment really has to do with all bills. I'd like to commend whoever is responsible for putting "Committee of the Whole" on the bills. For 37 years I've been writing "Committee of the Whole" between second reading and third reading, and I'm sure glad that ordeal has now stopped. I think this is very necessary. Most of us like to keep tab on when it goes through the Committee of the Whole, and this will enable us to do so more expeditiously.

The other point I'd like to bring to the attention of the hon. Provincial Treasurer is the proportion of fuel tax that is levied against propane. A number of farmers in my area use propane in their tractors. Of course the cost of tractors was a factor when they bought them, but when you talk about producing the most per horsepower the winner goes to the diesel. The purchase price is a factor. But the point the farmers who use propane make, and a great number use it in irrigation — as a matter of fact, I don't think they have much choice there — is that a proportion of the 27 cents now or the 38 cents, and the possible 5 cent increase which may occur after April 1, is tax. The farmers in my area particularly are not arguing that it all be taken off. They do argue that they are producing for the agricultural world too; that they work just as hard with propane as their fellow farmers working with gasoline or diesel. Many of them went to propane to assist the economy of the province several years ago when there was no use for propane. I tell them that is not the argument that has to be considered today. They made that decision and they recognize that.

I think they have a point in that a percentage of the bill they pay for propane is a tax for producing foods in this province. I would like to recommend to the Provincial Treasurer that consideration be given that a percentage similar to the tax that has been removed from the gasoline used for farm production be removed from propane also.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. government members would be disappointed if I didn't get up and make a comment or two. I'm sure the hon. Member for Lacombe would be even more disappointed if I didn't.

But I promised the hon. Member for Lacombe that I will not read his last year's speech back to him, where he said: where would we find the \$91 million if we took this tax off? I mean, think of all the services that are going to be removed and all the poor people starving to death in the streets in Alberta if we take off the \$91 million — what would we do for revenue? But I won't make that speech, hon. Member for Lacombe.

AN HON. MEMBER: You already did.

DR. BUCK: I would just like to say that I compliment the government on taking the good constructive advice I have tried to give the government the last four years, and have the gasoline tax removed. I do compliment the government sincerely on that.

I would like to say to the hon. members and especially to the hon. Provincial Treasurer that I was not able to listen to his brilliant speech last Friday evening because I was in Peace River speaking to the Alberta tourist association. At that time I guess my extrasensory perception was telling me that something could happen. At that meeting, Mr. Speaker, I said that there may be a little contest coming up in a year or possibly this fall, so I want you people in Peace River to remember that I told you right here that the 10 cents will be removed from the gasoline tax either in the near future or possibly a year from now. I'm pleased to see that the hon. Provincial Treasurer took that fine advice.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are one or two things that do concern me still. At this convention in Peace River a gentleman from Rainbow Lake, or up in the northern part of the province, made a point that did disturb me. The point he made was that we possibly have to look at trying to provide some type of transportation equalization, because the price of his gasoline was, I believe, \$1.085 and \$1.045 for first and second grade. It seems rather peculiar, Mr. Speaker, that the price of booze at High Level is almost identical to the price of booze in the city of Edmonton. Where are our priorities? We're trying to settle these frontier areas; we're trying to encourage people to go to the northern part of the province. Mr. Treasurer, let's put our collective minds to trying to see if we can equalize the price of gasoline in some of these areas where it is much more difficult to make a living and to bring the fuels in. I'm sure the Provincial Treasurer, with the fertile mind he has, can possibly try to do something about levelling the cost of fuel, not only for our personal automobiles but for the machines of production, to try to equalize these costs.

The second point I'd like to make, Mr. Speaker, is that the government give consideration to looking at

the problem the hon. Member for Drumheller mentioned about propane. I'm sure members of the Assembly have had many representations made to them about the problem that is occurring with the price of propane users in the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the government and have the Provincial Treasurer look at these two areas of concern. Plus, I would like to say to the government that even though we have taken the 10 cents provincial tax from our gasoline, let's see if we can do something about keeping that 10 cents off the price to the consumer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker . . . [interjections] I don't know what the Member for Clover Bar is alluding to. I'm pretty sure I would have supported at any time removal of fuel tax, because whether it is a direct benefit to the farmers at the time or whether we take the revenue and turn it back in terms of benefit, it amounts basically to the same thing — providing it gets to the people who really need it.

DR. BUCK: I'll let you read your speech.

MR. COOKSON: Aside from that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a word or two to the Provincial Treasurer with regard to propane. I have had a number of submissions and expressions of concern, and I think probably I have unofficially spoken to government about that.

In our particular area we have two fairly large distributors of propane. They have made submissions to me, and certainly I haven't the repercussions from last Friday's budget yet, but I know they're coming. I've been forewarned: that here we have now reduced the sales tax on these other fuels; in addition, we've increased the distribution allowance for farm fuels, but we still haven't looked carefully at propane. I suppose one would only be fair if one were to say it is rather discriminatory to select two fuels and ignore another which is used substantially. Our members who represent the city ridings probably wouldn't understand the use of propane, but it is still used to some large degree on the farms, particularly in outlying areas difficult to serve with other fuels.

Without taking too much time in the Assembly, I would like to make a submission to the Provincial Treasurer on behalf of propane users: to have another look, and hopefully make an adjustment to them.

The Minister of Agriculture alluded to costs of operation in terms of horsepower in use of these various fuels. If I understand him correctly, he suggested that diesel fuel was still the most economical — and these figures are up to date — followed by propane and, lastly, gasoline. Now I'm not sure, Mr. Minister, if we were to provide the distribution allowance for propane that we are now providing for diesel fuel, whether those figures possibly would change the picture. Because it involves the use of natural gas in homes and because of our very commendable project in distributing natural gas to rural users, I understand that we have had to hesitate, if I may use the term, with regard to the use of propane in order to make natural gas co-ops viable operations and so on. I think our people understand this. For once having sorted out this problem, and in view of the considera-

ble surpluses of propane in the province, I think we should re-assess the position of propane users.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make comments in two areas. First, with regard to propane as such, I think the hon. members for Lacombe and Drumheller have covered the topic. But I'd like to clarify one concern that exists in rural areas: the rural gas co-ops. The feeling of the gas co-ops is that if we put propane into a price area that's equitable or competitive with natural gas, the rural gas co-ops will not be able to expand or take in the other 10 to 30 per cent of the remaining customers to be hooked up. That's likely true, and I believe they have a case. But when we examine providing the transportation allowance for propane, there is still not a price equity between propane and natural gas. Natural gas still will remain somewhat cheaper to the consumer.

So I feel the question is something different than just bringing equity in price with natural gas. It's a matter of giving equity treatment to the various kinds of fuels, such as diesel fuel or other fuels that are transported. Propane should receive that kind of equitable treatment and the benefits of the farm fuel distribution allowance. I feel confident that we can do that without hurting rural gas co-ops at the present time.

The second area I'd like the minister to comment on: I've had representation — within the last two hours in fact — from some private aircraft operators. The point they make to me is that we're spending millions of dollars, during the present year and in the last couple of years, in the area of new airport facilities across the province. If we look at our estimates we recognize that the budget has increased some 49 per cent from \$3 million to over \$5 million for expenditure in the current fiscal year. They're saying, if we use that type of transportation, shouldn't we have equal treatment with regard to taxation on our gasoline? They use it for travel, business purposes, or whatever. I wonder if the minister, in drafting this legislation, thought in terms of distinguishing small private aircraft from large commercial aircraft. I feel the legislation applies to the larger commercial one, but may not apply to the private one. I'm not sure, and I'd like clarification in that area.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, just a very brief comment. I'm surprised, and I heard this very briefly from the hon. Member for Clover Bar when he made a comment to do something directly to oil marketers to make the distribution more equitable across the province. I suppose the next thing we'll hear from the hon. member opposite is that — and I hope the minister takes this into consideration in his deliberation — apart from direct interference that he might be suggesting here, maybe we should be interfering with people who are retailing dresses, suits, foods, and so forth. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Treasurer not directly interfere in this way but take this into consideration to discuss with the oil marketing agencies, and to increase the assurance that marketing across the province will be more equitable, or as equitable as possible, but not directly interfere in the free enterprise system.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to the members who contributed in the debate on second reading of this bill, and say that the matter of propane pricing has been under consideration from time to time by a number of my colleagues as well as by me. I'm sure that consideration or review will continue to go on and we will keep in mind the remarks made by members on that point.

The matter of the difference of gasoline prices in, say, the larger and smaller centres in Alberta has also been under our consideration from time to time. During those deliberations we will keep in mind the remarks that have been made.

On the matter of whether the tax on airplane fuel is applicable to fuel used in private aircraft as well as commercial aircraft, the answer is yes. It applies to all types of aircraft. And while I'd be prepared to consider the representation made by the hon. Member for Little Bow, it's not something that I would contemplate considering and changing in this bill. It's a matter we can keep under consideration and review for some time in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I think that responds to the points raised by the hon. members during the debate on second reading, and I urge members to support second reading of the bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 23 read a second time]

Bill 19

The University of Alberta Hospital Amendment Act, 1978

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 19, The University of Alberta Hospital Amendment Act, 1978, be read a second time.

[Motion carried; Bill 19 read a second time]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move you do now leave the Chair and the Assembly resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider bills 3 and 19.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS (Committee of the Whole)

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of the Whole Assembly will now come to order.

Bill 3 The Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1978

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to any sections of this bill?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 3, The Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1978, be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 19 The University of Alberta Hospital Amendment Act, 1978

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to any sections of this bill?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 19 be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

DR. MCCRIMMON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration bills 3 and 19, begs to report same, and asks leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the report and the request for leave to sit again, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS (reversion)

9. Moved by Mr. Leitch:
Be it resolved that this Assembly approve in general the fiscal policies of the government.

[Adjourned debate March 20: Mr. Bradley]

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in this debate this afternoon. I'd like to congratulate the hon. Provincial Treasurer on the very fine budget presentation last Friday evening. I believe it's one that we as citizens of Alberta can certainly be proud of, particularly for the responsible way it outlines the fiscal management in this province.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition, in his remarks the other day, mentioned there was ample opportunity for government members to participate in the throne speech in a backslapping way. It's very difficult for me to restrain myself today in terms of what could be referred to as the litany, and I think I have to go through it in terms of the benefits we as Albertans receive: no sales tax in this province, compared to other provinces with a 5 per cent minimum sales tax — Newfoundland raising its sales tax from 10 per cent to 11 per cent on goods and services . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Send them another \$100 million, Fred.

MR. BRADLEY: . . . the announcement and the bill today with regard to the elimination of fuel tax. We will have no fuel tax in this province when this bill is passed — British Columbia, on one side, 17 cents a gallon; and Saskatchewan, on the other side, 19 cents a gallon. It's difficult to participate in the budget debate and not do a little bit of reading the litany: the lowest municipal property taxes in Canada, the lowest personal income tax, the highest level of services, the highest level of expenditure on a per capita basis, and utility costs lower than in any other province in Canada.

I really think, Mr. Speaker, that we as Albertans are very fortunate and very blessed that we live in this province and enjoy the benefits we do. But in describing the budget we are discussing today, I think we have to describe it as a "quality of life" budget. It's a budget that enhances the quality of life of all Albertans.

I'd like to go over some of the number of new programs, initiatives, and services we are able to provide to our citizens. In the area of home care — a very needed program that we are embarking on, cautiously — we certainly are going to provide a very needed service to a number of Albertans and allow them to remain in their homes through illness periods. The day care program is another area which will improve the quality of life of our citizens. I think that is certainly a very needed program. It's not only going to improve the level of care to a number of children in our province, but it's going to provide the opportunity for single parents to engage in the employment opportunities available in this province and perhaps to some degree reduce the level of social assistance we are paying to single-parent families because they're able to go out and search for employment and gain jobs, knowing their children will be taken care of.

The area of senior citizens' programs: the senior citizens in our province gain more benefits and enjoy a higher quality of life than senior citizens in perhaps any other province in this country. The senior citizen home improvement program: a \$1,000 grant to help senior citizens improve their homes so they can maintain them and continue to live in them. The Alberta assured income plan guarantees our senior citizens the highest income of any senior citizens in this country.

The property tax reduction plan. The announcements made today by the Minister of Municipal Affairs provide a high level of reduction of taxes to our senior citizens, a reduction of school taxes. This should buffer them from increased utility costs which, as the hon. members of the opposition know, we are experiencing not only in this province but throughout the world. As I stated earlier, Albertans certainly are not paying the high utility costs that are rampant in other areas of the world. Again, a senior citizens program which this government initiated: no health premiums are paid by our senior citizens, and they enjoy a very nice package of extended benefits in the health area. Finally, the shelter program of the Alberta Housing Corporation not only provides lodges but also self-contained senior citizens' housing.

Our senior citizens benefit from a quality of life

which no other senior citizen in this country can enjoy. The Alberta Housing Corporation and the programs the Minister of Housing and Public Works has initiated over the past few years — it's significant the number of new housing starts and support this government has given to the start of housing in this province, providing affordable housing for a number of Albertans.

The area of hospital construction. The announcement in the budget of a significant program for rural hospital construction. We are going to be providing an incredible number of hospital beds on a replacement basis throughout the province in the next few years, and doing that at a time when we already have the highest per capita number of beds of any province in Canada. I think that's significant in terms of the quality of life which we as Albertans enjoy.

DR. PAPROSKI: That's performance.

MR. BRADLEY: That's right. As the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway says, that certainly is performance.

At this time we also have reduced or eliminated health care premiums to a number of lower income Albertans. That has to be significant in terms of increasing the discretionary income they have. It also reflects on the high quality of life we have.

Another measure we have undertaken is the increase of the farm fuel allowance from 8 cents to 12 cents a gallon. In these days when our farmers are facing higher input costs, this should significantly reduce their costs and, I understand, provide them with approximately \$164 more income which they should be able to spend — an increase in the discretionary income they have.

This really is a "quality of life" budget, an enhancement of the quality of life of all Albertans. It is difficult not to elaborate on the significant new programs that we as Albertans are benefiting from. It's difficult not to rise in this House and comment on those areas.

Having said that it's a "quality of life" budget, I would like to comment on a few areas and perhaps suggest we should focus our attention on further improvements in the quality of life of citizens in our province.

In the area of the mentally handicapped: I have had the opportunity to visit the Mountain View vocational school in Coleman, which is in the constituency I represent. I really have been impressed with the progress the trainees there have made in their feeling of self-worth. They really feel that they are playing a useful role in society. They have a workshop in which they can do carpentry work. They build outdoor camp tables, and I think they have a contract with one of the coal companies to supply pallets for them. The trainees really feel they are making a worth-while contribution to society.

A number of those trainees have advanced from that atmosphere which has been created in that workshop to jobs in the private sector. Some of them have been able to overcome some of their handicaps and take jobs in the cable plant in the area or with some of the coal companies. They really are enjoying and benefiting as members of a productive work force, which they wouldn't be able to do if they hadn't had this workshop program at the Mountain View

vocational school. I think we should be lending more support to these facilities which upgrade our mentally handicapped and bring them to a point where they feel they are making a just contribution to society.

I'd like to comment on another area. I guess it's best to head it under the category, the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission. I think a number of Albertans are really concerned over particularly the increased level of consumption of alcohol in the province and the abuses which result from that increased consumption. I'm sure all members are aware of the high social costs resulting from alcoholism in this province in terms of the extra social assistance which must be paid out to families of people with that disease and the increased hospital costs and medical care costs which result from alcoholism.

I would like to suggest that we should be embarking on some very positive programs with positive emphasis in the area of alcohol abuse education. We've had some very successful programs developed by the federal Department of National Health and Welfare with regard to anti-smoking advertisements which have been broadcast across the nation. I would like to suggest that perhaps we should take a leadership role in our discussions with other provinces to develop, not an anti-drinking advertising campaign, but perhaps an advertising campaign which will emphasize the problems we have with alcohol abuse — the problems which occur in the family, the social costs — and try to promote a better understanding of those problems, suggesting our approach to the problem should be one of moderation and that there are certainly evils in alcohol abuse. If we develop these positive educational programs — an advertising program similar to that anti-smoking campaign, but perhaps emphasizing moderation in consumption of alcohol — we could be doing a very positive thing, particularly in a province like Alberta in which we enjoy such high revenues from the sale of liquor. This would be a follow-up to our very positive Check Stop program, which I think has made a number of Albertans aware of the problems we have in terms of the high costs to human lives by drinking drivers.

I'd like to suggest again that perhaps Alberta should take a leadership role in discussions with the federal government with regard to the advertising of liquor on our TV stations. I think there certainly is a role for us to play there. These days all we seem to get is a continual battering of advertisements attempting to induce people to consume more alcohol. We don't require that inducement by way of the electronic media. We could certainly do away with that.

Those are some suggestions I have in that area. In terms of the increased abuse of alcohol, we should enter upon some positive educational programs, perhaps some drinking-in-moderation advertising, and the elimination of liquor consumption advertising on our TV and airwaves.

Another area I would like to comment on in terms of enhancing the quality of life of citizens in our province is the role of the volunteer. I think we've all recognized there has been an encroachment on that very valuable role of volunteer. Perhaps because of the economic well-being we enjoy in this province, people seem to feel they have to be paid to do things which they used to do on a volunteer basis.

I had a discussion with a library trustee in my constituency the other day. She was discussing this very point. A number of people have phoned her up and said, are jobs available in the library? Is there something I can do there? The library trustee responded, yes, certainly, all sorts of work can be done. Then the comment was, how much will you pay — what's the rate of pay for that? These traditionally have been volunteer areas where a number of housewives or other people could get involved in the community and provide a needed service. I think the volunteer bureau the province has developed is well needed in terms of providing volunteer organizations with the support they need, placing emphasis on supporting the role of the volunteer in the community, and making sure we don't erode any more that very valuable role volunteers play. I was very pleased to see a definite emphasis on the role of the volunteer and ensuring there is that volunteer component in the home care program.

Another area I'd like to discuss briefly is with regard to our historic resources in this province. With the economic activity that's here and the years that pass by, I think we're on the threshold of change in this province. So with a number of our historic resources — particularly buildings, settlement sites, those areas which are almost at the point of no return in terms of whether we are able to preserve them or whether they deteriorate, erode, and disappear — I'd like to see a very concerted effort and emphasis in that area; that the historic resource inventory which I understand is going on in this province today be speeded up so that we can identify on a province-wide basis those historic sites or resources we should preserve. We should undertake some stabilization so they don't deteriorate any further, and identify those which should be preserved and restored immediately.

In that same area of historic resources, it may be valuable for us to set up historic districts throughout the province, zone the province into regions or areas — I can't suggest a number; maybe 15 or 20 — and set up local advisory councils in each district, either to manage or identify the different historic resources and 'prioritize' them in terms of what those local people feel the priorities should be for preservation or stabilization of those historic resources. Perhaps give them an ability to manage those resources, and perhaps there'll have to be some funding for those historic regions councils in order to give them that ability.

One final area I'd like to discuss in terms of enhancing the quality of life in this province is with regard to the eastern slopes of our province, particularly southern Alberta where, as all members from southern Alberta realize, there is certainly a shortage of natural lakes. I'd like to see us increase the water-based recreational opportunities in the eastern slopes. The present bodies of water there, enjoyed by southern Albertans and all Albertans, either in provincial parks or other places throughout the eastern slopes, have basically been made by man. There are man-made dams. I can think of Beauvais Lake, a provincial park in my constituency, which was a slough until the province, or I believe it was probably a group of private people, came along and built a dam and built up that body of water behind it. It was the same with Beaver Mines Lake in the Crow Forest. Chain Lakes a little farther north, and Allison Lake

west of Coleman, are again man-made reservoirs.

These are the basic water-based recreational opportunities that exist there today, and they only exist because man made those dams and backed up those streams. There's a significant lack of lakes of any nature in that area. Well, we have more people out there. I was at Beaver Mines Lake on the May 24 opening last year, and the place was so crowded that when I got into the camping area I turned around and drove back out because there were wall-to-wall fishermen, and there must have been 150 boats out in that less than a square mile lake. It was just incredible. And this pressure is from all over southern Alberta. So I'd like to see us undertake development of more small man-made reservoirs in the eastern slopes to provide that water-based recreational opportunity, which again will enhance the quality of life of the citizens of our province.

Finally, I'd like to comment on the magnitude of the fiscal responsibilities in this province. Alvin Toffler wrote a book called *Future Shock* in which he basically defined future shock as being when technological change occurs at a rate far outpaced by society's ability to keep up with it. That has a significant effect on society throughout the world. I can see examples of future shock in the province of Alberta, given the pace of development here. Culture shock is also defined as being the sort of after-effect on society, that certainly humans just aren't able to keep up with that rate of change.

I discussed the magnitude of our budget, and I'd like to discuss the question of fiscal shock. A number of provinces in this country are suffering from fiscal shock, defined as the costs of services which are not met by society's ability to raise revenues to cover them. When the Leader of the Opposition talks about cutbacks, a number of provinces have had to cut back on services, on hospitals — really significant cutbacks. As Albertans, I guess we benefit from a different type of fiscal shock, and we're very fortunate. Here the revenues accumulated to this province far exceed reasonable and adequate levels of goods and services, and we are very fortunate for that.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview won the tie.

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the opportunity to participate in the budget debate this afternoon.

First of all, I'd like to summarize several commitments in the budget as they relate to the constituency I represent in this House. I'm pleased to see that in the capital works budget this year money will be made available for Fairview College, particularly with respect to a new dormitory and expansion of that facility.

One area I would like to have seen touched upon in the budget that wasn't — and this is just re-affirming a matter I raised during the fall session of the House — is with respect to the problems of farmers, not only in the Peace River country but in northwestern Alberta generally, who weren't able to get their crops in last spring. Unifarm and the National Farmers Union have made a joint representation to the Minister of Agriculture requesting assistance for those farmers who had uninsurable land. Members will know that the former crop insurance regulations applied to

summer fallow but not to stubble, so it wasn't possible for any farmer in northwestern Alberta to obtain insurance in spring 1977 for a large part of the crops they planned to seed.

With rainfall varying all the way from 8 inches in May and early June to 13 and 14 inches in some areas, a number of northern Alberta farmers are in a very tight situation. Not only is there the concern of depressed markets, the increasing costs that have been the subject of a good deal of debate currently in the House, but when you aren't able to get your crop in in the first place or a large part of your crop is unseeded, that just exacerbates the problem.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of positive features of the budget. For example, I welcome the home adaptation program for the handicapped. It seems to me that's a useful innovation. I'm pleased to see the commitment for home care and, although I have some qualms about the method of establishing the day care program in Alberta, nevertheless the added dollars in day care will be of assistance to large numbers of working Albertans.

While I think the public works program in the budget represents a stopgap measure, because we do have a period where there will be a slowdown between major projects in the province, nevertheless it is probably necessary. It makes a great deal more sense to me, Mr. Speaker, that we have people employed working on needed public projects — whether it be projects like the Grande Prairie hospital, and I'd like to see the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care get off the ground this year, or some of the other projects announced by the government this week — rather than have people collect unemployment insurance or welfare. So that's one feature of the budget I intend to support when it comes to a vote and we get into the estimates.

However, I wouldn't want to spend too much time complimenting the government, because with 69 members in the Tory caucus there's no major problem or shortage of people — 68 members, Mr. Speaker — to do that.

Clearly, the budget presented to the Legislature is a pretty skilful effort to cover the various political bases and the touchy areas from a political point of view. I wouldn't say it could be categorized in the best tradition of Mackenzie King — it's not quite that good — but I think it might be comparable to a Jimmy Gardiner budget: promising, fairly skilful, but not really a masterpiece.

Mr. Speaker, contained in the budget are some matters I want to refer to briefly before getting into the thrust of my remarks this afternoon. An increase of \$164 in the farm fuel allowance for the average farmer; but I would just point out that, unfortunately, on July 1 there will be an increase of \$1 a barrel for the farmers in this province. So the price advantage they have now will be taken away by the time the price of diesel and farm fuel increases after the July 1 boost in the price of oil. Then when we get the boost of oil that takes place on January 1, farmers will actually be behind the eight ball. In other words, they will be worse off than they are at this stage of the game.

Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the reference to this \$164 average figure. One member indicated, what about Saskatchewan? Members will be interested to know that in Saskatchewan the electri-

cal rates will not increase this year, but I was sorry to say that no commitment was placed in the budget about utility rates in the province of Alberta. And as hon. members will know, utility rates have increased very substantially.

For example, I have here the case of a relatively small farm, three-quarters of a section — although they are in the dairy business, which would mean their consumption of power would be probably slightly larger than the average farm. Nevertheless in 1976 their total power bill was \$572; in 1977, \$860. So there has been an increase of just a shade under \$300, about \$290. Mr. Speaker, while this particular farmer and his wife will see some benefit from the fuel oil increase, the fact of the matter is that the utility rates have gone up almost twice as much as the benefit they will be receiving under the increase in the farm fuel allowance. Unfortunately, utility rates will increase further during the coming year. All of us know that with the projections of the utility companies and the applications either made or about to be made, we can look forward to higher utility costs in 1978 and 1979.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the utility question, we have the dreary story of our housing costs, which are clearly the highest in the country. A few days ago I was in Fort McMurray, and I find it really incredible that you can start with raw Crown land that doesn't cost a cent, and by the time Alberta Housing or the Syncrude development firm gets through, the cost of that lot is \$37,000. An official of the city of Edmonton indicates that within a year or two the cost of a lot in this city could be \$50,000. You know, it's fine to slap ourselves on the backs and say what a great job we're doing, but the fact of the matter is that we now have the highest housing costs in Canada. Looking at a place like Fort McMurray, I wouldn't hesitate to say that in that particular community we probably have the highest housing costs in North America.

We have the situation faced by our school boards: with a 6.5 per cent increase in grants, most school boards are going to be in trouble. While members in this House can argue that more money doesn't mean cutbacks, the fact of the matter is that if more money doesn't equal the rate of inflation, the school boards are forced to do one of two things: they can increase supplementary requisition, and that can be challenged by the ratepayers; or they can cut back staff, and the quality of education is jeopardized.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know too many rural divisions, as I travel around this province and meet with superintendents of schools, secretary-treasurers, and trustees, who are not quite emphatic in telling me: yes, we might be able to balance the budget this year, but we are balancing the budget because we've been able to cut off three, five, six, or 10 teachers. That sort of thing eventually catches up with the quality of education. In my view, any way you want to slice it that represents a cutback in service even though there may be an increase in the funds available. The same general argument can be applied to the advanced education institutions in the province.

I'd just like to touch on several other areas briefly. One is the rather remarkable statements in the House by the hon. Provincial Treasurer, who indicates that, as far as the government is concerned, it would appear workers should receive salary increases under the cost of living. The argument is that when the

economy was doing well, they got slightly more than the cost of living; now that there are economic difficulties, they should get under the cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, that's the sort of thing that can only lead to a form of industrial chaos, because public sector awards — no one is saying they should be higher — but over a period of time they at least have to match. There were several years when public sector awards were higher, but if you take the last 10 years you will find that public sector awards have either been comparable to or slightly below awards in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, I find it strange that when this matter was raised in the House yesterday we had the government saying quite emphatically, take less than the cost of living. But when it came to discussing utilities, all of a sudden we had a different story, a "yes but" story: yes, we should do our bit to fight inflation, but. And the "but" is that rate increases this year will be higher than the cost of living.

The same with the situation faced by landlords when we raised questions on rent decontrol: are we going to keep the rents within the 6 per cent? Again we get the "yes but", which too often means that we have double standards in this province: one set of standards for those who are working for a living and trying to take home a pay cheque, and another set for those people who are fortunate enough to own either apartments or industry.

I just say quite frankly to the government, Mr. Speaker, that that kind of policy is fraught with danger for them politically; but more important than that, it is fraught with a good deal of potential trouble for the province of Alberta. It will lead inevitably to one strike after another, and if not strikes, then slowdowns, work-to-rule campaigns, and a form of industrial chaos in the public sector which needn't occur if we simply recognize that those people who work for a living have a right at least to keep pace with the cost of living in a province with almost \$7 billion of accumulated reserves.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move from the discussion of some of those issues and deal with the larger question I'd like to develop this afternoon. In 1971 when this government was elected, I think one of the campaign promises represented the views of the vast majority of Albertans and reflected the attitude of all the major political parties. It was a commitment to try to diversify the economy of Alberta. I know of no Albertans who quarrel with that objective. That is an objective which we may differ over the methods of achieving, but there is solid support.

Mr. Speaker, I think the time has come to examine the report card of the government of Alberta on just how well it has handled that major assignment of diversifying the economy of this province. When the record of this government is analysed by historians in the future, they'll not be looking at some of the clever little moves we've made in the months leading up to the next provincial election. They will evaluate the competence of this administration on how well we have met the challenge of moving from an economy based largely on a non-renewable resource industry, depleting resources; and how we can move from reliance on that sort of base to an economy based on renewable resources, manufacturing, and diversifying the industrial base of the province.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it's worth examining some of

the comments made by the hon. Premier as he assessed the challenges for Alberta. For example, on September 6, 1974, approximately four years ago, the Premier is quoted as saying to the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, "We have perhaps another decade left to diversify our economy to become less dependent ...". Just before the last provincial election was called three years ago he said in this House, "It will take us at least a decade to go from a province dependent upon primary resources to a more diversified province." He goes on to say, "... but to know that that has to be done if the decade of the '70s, in being in the Alberta Legislature, will have any meaning." Then in 1976 the Premier's still saying, "But how long can it last? In my view, not very long; perhaps a decade at the most ...".

So, Mr. Speaker, for the last four years we've been talking about the decade that is so indispensable if we are to move from an economy based on non-renewable resources to a more diversified industrial base. That being the case, let's examine just how well the government has done.

Perhaps it would be useful, first of all, to look at the revenues of the province of Alberta. How well have we done in diversifying the revenue base of the province? Are we less dependent on the oil industry today, from a taxation viewpoint, than we were in years past? We all know that is not true. In 1971-72 only 21 per cent of the revenue of the province came from the oil and gas industry. This year the estimates indicate 59.86 per cent, just a shade under 60 per cent. When you consider the increase that is projected in the price of oil and natural gas as a result of the pricing agreements, that revenue will probably rise to 65.9 per cent. In other words, Mr. Speaker, in 1971-72 a little over one-fifth of our revenue came from the non-renewable resource sector. This year it could reach almost two-thirds of our revenue.

Some hon. members will say, fair enough. That's because we have higher royalties, and you were among the members who argued for higher royalties, so that really doesn't mean anything. I think it's an important vantage point to begin, but we have to consider a lot more things.

For example, Mr. Speaker, let's look at the whole question of net value added, the commodity production in this province. Where do things stand on that? If you look at mining, oil, and gas, in 1971 the total percentage of the value added in the province was 38.5 per cent. But in 1976 that had risen to 52.7 per cent. We don't have the most recent statistics, but with the price of oil and natural gas going up and the price of farm products going down, it's almost certain the value added portion of our economy will be significantly above 52.7 per cent. In the meantime agriculture has slipped from 14.7 to 11.3, and I remind you that we're looking at 1976, a relatively good year in rural Alberta. Manufacturing has slipped from 19.7 per cent to 13.9 per cent in the first five years of Tory rule.

Mr. Speaker, maybe hon. members will say: that's an unfair set of statistics to bring in because it takes time to get these programs under way; it takes time to begin the development of a diversified economy, so why don't we look at the net capital stock, the kind of capital investment; that would be a more reasonable way of assessing the government's performance.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at the net capital stock,

1970 to 1975, you will see that capital stock in the oil and non-renewable resource industry has more than doubled. It's gone from 21 per cent to nearly 25 per cent of the total capital stock. By contrast, the capital stock in the agricultural industry has decreased from 11.3 to 10.3 per cent. In manufacturing there has been approximately a steady pace. We have not moved ahead or behind in that area as far as the net capital stock is concerned.

But perhaps a better way of examining this, Mr. Speaker, is to look at the proposed industrial projects. What kinds of projects are in store for Alberta? Again, when we look at the survey from the Business Development and Tourism list of industrial projects as of January 1, 1977 — and these are projects both under construction and proposed — what do we see? First of all we see that of the projects under construction, an amazing 78 per cent are directly related to the petroleum and petrochemical industry. In other words, we're locking ourselves into the non-renewable resource sector. Utilities, the second largest, 17.7 per cent; mining, 3.13 per cent; manufacturing, less than 1 per cent, 0.6 per cent; forestry, 0.48 per cent; agricultural processing, 0.62 per cent. Even if we look at the proposed projects — and again this is coming from the government's own statistics — we find as of January 1: petroleum and petrochemical, 71.97 per cent; utilities, 21.27 per cent; and agricultural processing, 0.14 per cent, just a shade over one-tenth of 1 per cent. As a matter of fact, despite all the talk we have heard from the members in this House about the emphasis on agricultural processing, in this last category as of January 1, 1977, there were only eight proposed projects with a total of 141 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I think what I have shown indicates, to me at least, that instead of moving boldly forward to diversify the economy of this province, we in fact have slipped back to greater and greater reliance on non-renewable resources: first of all in terms of the revenue of the province, secondly in terms of the development in the last six or seven years, thirdly in terms of the net capital stock, and fourthly in terms of the projects now under way or being planned. We are inevitably locking ourselves into an economy based on non-renewable resource development.

Mr. Speaker, in my judgment there is a disquieting lack of direction about this budget. For example, in the House yesterday we had the rather casual answers of the Minister of Business Development and Tourism about Firestone closing in Calgary — 390 jobs wiped out. There we have a situation where the employees tell me that 1,550 tires a day out of a capacity of 3,200 could be radial tires. We have the admission of the company's president that the plant in Calgary is obsolescent. Why is it obsolescent? One of the jobs of the managers of capital must be to keep their capital efficient, modern, and abreast of market demands. Why all of a sudden, at this stage of the game, do we find ourselves in a position where we have to close down the plant?

We find also that just three weeks ago a young couple took their savings and went to a mortgage company. They had to have a reference from their company in order to get the mortgage. Is your job secure or not? And the Firestone people said, no problems at all. Now this young couple find themselves among the unemployed. Mr. Speaker, I say to

the members of the House that this is not, in my judgment at least, an example of good corporate citizenship.

We have the problems in Grande Cache: the market for coal, 1.5 million tons a year to the Japanese. Everybody in this House knows we now have a buyers' market in the international coal industry. The Japanese are tough negotiators, and the rumors in Grande Cache — and I think they're founded on information leaked by the company — indicate that at best we might get 1 million tons a year, perhaps as low as 600,000 tons. The impact that's going to have on the community of Grande Cache could be 250 or 450 people laid off out of a total work force of 750 people, Mr. Speaker.

What I'm saying is that it's fine for members in the House to come here, pat themselves on the back, and pound their desks about the great job this government is doing, but some disquieting problems are arising, Mr. Speaker, that in my view have not been dealt with.

In my remaining minutes I'd like to offer some specific suggestions to the members of this House. Before doing that, I was amazed also at one other area, this whole pipeline question. How much of the pipe are we going to be able to manufacture in Canada? The Minister of Business Development and Tourism says it's going to be as high as 90 per cent. How does he reach that conclusion? He read press releases from the company in the paper. What kind of department is that, Mr. Speaker? We should be on top of these things. Not only is the whole question of the size of pipe directly related to the jobs, but we have a financial commitment through Steel Alberta in one of the major pipeline firms in western Canada. Clearly we should be on top of this issue, and insisting that there be a Canadian preference clause so that at least the pipe produced for the Canadian section of the pipeline is produced in Canada.

I want to suggest to the members of the House in my closing remarks that it seems to me what the Lougheed government should do before they hastily chase after the voters of this province in a few months is lay the cards on the table on just how they are going to reach the goals the Premier has set out. Five or six years ago I remember the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands using the example of the clipper ships of Nova Scotia — it was a very good example, as a matter of fact — that we have to diversify the economy or we'll be in the same position Nova Scotia was in once steam replaced sail and the clipper ships were put out of business.

That was six years ago, Mr. Speaker. Then we had the Premier saying, we've got a decade in which to act. That was four years ago. Well, Mr. Speaker, in the time that has lapsed we see that the government, instead of making progress on shifting the emphasis, has allowed the economy to fall even more clearly under the control of international companies first of all, but secondly, companies that are primarily interested in non-renewable resource development.

I say to the members of this Assembly: what the government should do before the next election is table in the House a white paper on industrial strategy. What are the goals of this government? How can we reach the objective of diversification? What are the guidelines for agricultural processing? What is the forestry policy going to be? The forestry hearings

held by the new ECA reveal one thing: that we have a shambles of a forestry policy in this province. We've got a good forest service, but in terms of an economic policy for forest development, with almost 150,000 miles of forest in this province, we really have no coherent policy at all.

These things, Mr. Speaker, have to be linked to the way in which the government uses the Alberta heritage trust fund. That fund — I think the hon. Member for Calgary McCall was correct the other day when he talked about its importance — gives us an opportunity to begin planning for the future, to make the transition. But it isn't good enough just to say we've got the funds, we've got the money; then the record shows that we aren't moving toward the transition. The government must be challenged and tested on the record. In my view, from all the available evidence, the record at this stage is that we have not made any significant long-term progress.

We need a white paper on industrial strategy. We need a heritage trust fund which is based on the proposition of open discussion in the Legislature. I note that the government of Saskatchewan is bringing in a heritage trust fund bill, and the money will be allocated by the Legislature. [interjection] I say what I said before, despite the interjection from one of the hon. members over there, that we should have prior debate in the Legislature on the allocation of investment funds from the Alberta heritage trust fund.

But along with the mechanism of the trust fund there has to be some context of long-term planning. We can't get into everything in this province. There are certain things where we have a competitive advantage; there are certain other things where, because of the problems of geography, it wouldn't make sense to produce at all. Where do we begin to chart a course for the future? Today, Mr. Speaker, all the people of Alberta have is the knowledge that we have this vast amount of money in accumulated revenue. I notice in the quarterly report of the heritage trust fund that more than 50 per cent of the money is in marketable securities, just held in that way rather than being used to shift the balance.

I say to the members of the House that instead of collectively slapping ourselves on the backs because we've been able to pull out of the political goody-bag a few things that will make it easier to sell Conservative memberships in the next few weeks, the real test is whether we have a coherent, long-term policy to meet the objectives the Premier himself has set out. Judging by the record, I say we have not made much progress. Much still needs to be done.

MR. HANSEN: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to take part in the budget debate this afternoon. Before I start on the budget and on my constituency, I would like to say we went to Cold Lake today and made the announcement that an agreement between the federal government and the provincial government is completed, and we will have facilities at the air base in Cold Lake for commercial planes and all flights that are air traffic controlled. We also announced that the other one for the small planes would be built east of Cold Lake this summer.

Mr. Speaker, my constituency is made up of agriculture and the oil industry now. It is changing quite fast with the industry that is moving in with the oil companies.

First, I would like to say a few words on the agricultural aspects in my area. One of the speakers before me today from Pincher Creek gave a lot of different talk on the cuts in taxes and one thing or another, so some of those I won't mention. But I will go into farming to a certain extent.

I think taking the tax off gas and putting another 4 cents on the farm gas delivery program will help the farmers in my area cut their costs. I also think this government is headed the right way looking for markets and assisting in the farm produce markets, which will cost the government \$7,590,403 this year in the budget. It doesn't matter how much the farmers grow. If they have no decent market to sell it, there's no money in it. After all, farm produce is on a market-demand basis. Rural development: they've set aside \$21,235,130 in the budget, which I believe is well worth while for the farm areas. This year the farm gas rebate will cost \$27 million, which also is a big help to all the farmers in the area.

Speaking after quite a few have spoken in the House already on farming and different things, there is a lot of repetition which I don't want to make today. But I would also like to put on record that the natural gas rebate will cost the province \$110 million this year, which helps all the citizens of Alberta. The opposition talked of gloom and doom, but I think there is a lot in this budget for hospitals, schools, and all the other things that get their share. The rebate in taxes alone is over \$23 million, which is a big saving to the people of Alberta.

I'd like to mention one other area in farming that's going to help a lot in my area and all over Alberta. This is the REAs: \$1 million is set aside for reconstruction of REAs. This will do a lot of good for the farm areas. I believe this is one thing that will help keep rural electricity in good shape, and their lines up in the local farm areas. Power costs have risen to about three times what they were a few years ago.

I am at a loss, though, Mr. Speaker, to realize . . . The secretary of the REA in the Bonnyville district — I was on that board for over eight years before I came to the House — phoned me the other day and told me that the estimated cost of a tap, that's one pole and a transformer, is coming in at \$1,800. I cannot realize how this could cost that much. You have a pole worth roughly \$75 to \$100, a transformer that's worth between \$3 and \$4; the rest is all labor. I think a digger and two men can set one of those poles in about two to three hours at the longest. It is hard for me to realize this cost could be there.

Also, on the same lines that we as farmers in that area built 20 years ago, the average cost was \$1,100. Today, the estimates are coming in — one he mentioned that day is for half a mile of poles, and one pole over with a transformer on it, \$4,300. I think some of these things have to be looked at. I cannot see how the cost can be there unless a lot of money is wasted. I would say to the minister in that department that he should be checking these high costs of building lines.

Now I'd like to go into the Imperial Oil proposal of a \$4 billion plant in my area. First I would like to say some of the good things that it's going to do for the area. There will be jobs, growth, building. It will make a more stable area, with growth in some of the small centres. But I would say to each and every minister in this House that their departments will be

involved in this project sooner or later.

The social services in that area will have to have more facilities. They will have to be brought up to a different standard before too long. If the Imperial proposal goes ahead, and the expected growth of people in that area within the next two years, there will be a surge of people. There will be housing, schools, hospitals.

We have been planning for the hospital at Cold Lake for two years now. I fully understand that planning for a hospital or a school in that area is very hard at this time. The reason is that we don't know how many beds we will need three years down the road. But I think as soon as we are sure [of] the Imperial Oil proposal to build this plant, I would ask the ministers involved to be ready, and do away with a lot of the red tape that goes into government to provide these services. We will need new hospitals in Cold Lake and Bonnyville to take care of the people who will be in the area.

At the same time, our schools are running practically full. If you get a surge of 10,000 to 12,000 people within a year or a year and a half, we will need different school facilities. We will also need more recreation facilities.

On the recreation side, at the lakes in my area it is hard even now to get a parking place on a weekend in the summertime. So I believe the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife will have to be on the ball to supply these things as they're needed.

Moving into the Cold Lake and Grand Centre areas, the senior citizens' home is completed and running very smoothly. I think all the people in that area will thank the government for putting it there. It is a real asset. If we have a new hospital to go with it, that area of social services will be fairly well handled.

I see in the budget that we have money for the courthouse start this year, and I'm very glad of that. About three years ago I was in Grand Centre with the Attorney General when he promised a courthouse would be built. It has taken a couple of years longer than I expected, but at least there's some money in the budget to get started now, so I'm quite happy with that.

I was going to speak on airports. We have a new airport in Bonnyville, and if a new airport is built this summer for the Cold Lake area, and a provincial airport connected with the Medley air base, we should have good facilities in that area. With the co-operation we've had from the department of highways, the federal government, and the base itself, I think they all have to be commended for making this kind of deal and using facilities in that area. This airport that was announced today will be run from the same tower as the air base itself. They will have full control of the air, which will make it safer than building one 3 miles away. I am quite happy with that.

I would like to bring to the attention of the minister of highways that last year we oiled 28X late in the fall. The oil did not take to the gravel, and that has to be looked after first thing this spring. On Highway No. 55, which used to be 662, I hear the contracts will be let fairly soon for another 12 miles of upgrading. I'm pleased to say the retopping has already been let. I would also urge the minister to let the contract on 881 as soon as possible.

Another road that has to be upgraded this year on

account of the Imperial Oil project is the Ardmore road north. We are having a bit of difficulty at the time with this road, with the MD of Bonnyville not getting the rights of way in place. I was talking to the reeve today; they are having a meeting tomorrow, and I hope this will be settled.

Also in that area, I would like to bring to the attention of the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife that the stocking of lakes, both for commercial fishing and for sportsmen, is very necessary at this time, with the amount of pressure from the outside traveller and from the area as a whole. So I hope the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife will take this into consideration.

The park in Cold Lake came along very well last year, and I see there is a considerable amount of money in the budget this year. I think all the people in that area would thank him for that. But I would just like to remind him that it isn't going to solve the problems.

If you look at the oil industry in that area, I see it as just the tip of the iceberg, if you want to put it in those words. We have another 10 or 12 companies working there. Imperial Oil is the biggest. We also have some others that are coming on stream and are on stream, producing oil at this time. I think by the time Imperial Oil has its plant built, you will be looking at another plant in that area. This is why it is so important to get things that we need in that constituency in place.

I would also like to mention to the highways minister that a by-pass or a truck route, whichever you want to call it, is necessary in Bonnyville. I would urge him that we do that this summer. The amount of truck traffic on Main Street in Bonnyville, as many as 40 tankers hauling oil making two trips a day down Main Street — it's for safety that we have to do this in the near future, before we have a disaster and somebody is killed on Main Street. So I would urge the minister to give consideration to that this summer.

The provincial building in Bonnyville is some 60 per cent complete at this time, and it will be a great asset to that area. But I also understand that, with the industry and things that are happening in that area, all the offices will be full when the doors open.

The self-contained units built in Bonnyville last winter were filled immediately, and the senior citizens — I think I should say thank you to the Minister of Housing and Public Works for supplying them. All I've had is compliments in that area. The self-contained units in both Glendon and Bonnyville are much better liked than the senior citizens' homes. I understand, though, that the senior citizens' homes have to be there for the people who cannot look after themselves. But I still feel that the self-contained units are a worth-while project.

I had expected to talk more on things to do with tax deductions, but anybody who follows *Hansard* will be able to pick up most of these things without my repeating them. So I'm not going to pick out different things on different taxes in the budget, and take up time in the House.

I was surprised, though, on the opening day of this session, when the opposition took up 20 minutes of the question period the first day of the fall sitting to

harass the government on not meeting with the advisory committee that was set up in our area. The advisory committee was set up in the area as a go-between for Imperial Oil, the local governments, and the provincial government, as a flow of information to the local areas. They had had two meetings at the time this House was called to order this fall. The first was completely taken up by organization. By the second meeting they hadn't really had their feet on the ground yet, but the opposition figured the government should be there meeting with them.

I think it is a worth-while advisory committee. I have stressed to the community, and I will say in the House, that with a project and as much development as is going on in the area, we as a government and the community as a whole have to have a united area without people pulling in every direction. I think co-operation from the local areas and from government working with them is the key to projects we have going, to make it worth while, viable, and what the community can stand.

I do not know whether the opposition always says thumbs down on any project, but I feel the people in that area want this project to go ahead. Also, with the people we have in Environment and all the other positions up there — Municipal Affairs and all the other ministers have different people in the area looking into different things — I think that when this project goes ahead it will be well looked after for pollution control. It seems to be one thing people are worried about. I think the controls — and the company knows from the McMurray situation that they have to follow the rules and regulations of the game. I think everything will fall into place as long as the oil companies, the government, and the people looking after the different departments are all on their toes.

So I feel it is a well worth-while project for my area, whether the opposition members feel otherwise or not. I've never heard from the opposition that we've done anything good in my area. I listen to the radio programs and one thing and another. It's doom and gloom. The member from Fort Saskatchewan is shaking his head, but it is right.

It is my belief that according to the opposition, this government could not do anything right. But I feel very strongly if this project — it is a proposal at the time to government — goes ahead, it will go ahead in a way that the people in my constituency will benefit.

Thank you.

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, in view of the time, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:25 p.m., pursuant to Government Motion 11, the House adjourned to Wednesday, March 29, at 2:30 p.m.]