

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Thursday, April 6, 1978 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 28
The Real Estate Agents'
Licensing Amendment Act, 1978

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 28, The Real Estate Agents' Licensing Amendment Act, 1978. The purpose of the bill is to provide that the superintendent can appeal decisions of the appeal boards. Also, it will provide that notice of an application to a court to reinstate a licence be given to the superintendent.

[Leave granted; Bill 28 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 3
An Act to Incorporate
Concordia College

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 3, An Act to Incorporate Concordia College. The purpose of the bill is to create as a legally independent entity Concordia College, which is presently owned and operated by the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 3 read a first time]

Bill 220
An Act to Amend The Alberta
Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 220, An Act to Amend The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act. It's similar legislation to that which I introduced last session dealing with giving the Legislative Assembly control over the heritage savings trust fund.

[Leave granted; Bill 220 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the reply to Motion for a Return No. 174.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Legislature Library two copies of a letter from the Grande Prairie Health Unit to the Grande Prairie hospital board, dealing with certain matters at the Grande Prairie hospital. The underlining in these let-

ters has been done by my office, not by the health unit. Both letters are signed.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I assume this is being done under Standing Order 35(3)(b), I guess it is. Are there copies for the hon. Government House Leader?

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. LYSONS: It is my pleasure today to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly 35 grade 8 students from St. Jerome school in Vermilion. They are accompanied by their teacher Miss Landry. I would ask them to stand and be recognized by the House.

MR. TESOLIN: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, members of the Kikino sewing class. Mr. Speaker, among this group is Mrs. Beatrice Ladouceur, their class instructress. They are seated in the public gallery. I would ask them to rise and be welcomed by the House.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 30 grade 9 students from the Edith Rogers school in Mill Woods. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Bill Gordon. They are seated in the members gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Legislature.

MR. ASHTON: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce a group of grade 6 students from Waverley school in my constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher and several parents. They are in the members gallery. I would ask them to stand and be recognized.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Department of
Housing and Public Works

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the Legislature today of the allocation throughout the province of senior citizens' lodges and senior citizens' self-contained housing units approved by the provincial government for the 1978-79 fiscal year.

Both the senior citizens' lodge program and self-contained program are administered through the Alberta Housing Corporation and represent the largest budgetary contribution by program by the corporation. Combined, these two programs will reach over 42 communities in the province, with the majority of the projects going to smaller rural centres. The senior citizens' lodge program includes a capital budget in the 1978-79 year of \$7,068,000 for a total of 228 beds. The self-contained program provides budgeting for 1,548 units and \$58,824,000. This is the third consecutive year in which over 1,500 units have been budgeted for under the self-contained program.

Senior citizens' lodge accommodation provides housing for senior citizens, including such services as meals, linen, laundry, and recreation facilities in a community-like environment. All formal applications

received for new lodges or additions for the 1978-79 fiscal year were approved, as were all applications submitted during the last two years.

The lodge program is a program whereby the physical facility is developed and built by the Alberta Housing Corporation and then turned over for operation to the sponsoring group, usually a foundation consisting of a number of municipalities which are served by the lodge. The capital cost of the project is absorbed by the housing corporation, but in order to assist the foundations in terms of the financial operation of the facility, the Department of Housing and Public Works last year introduced the lodge assistance program. Prior to this program the foundations received no assistance, but as of January 1, 1977, the department has provided a grant to cover one-half of the annual deficit that is above 2 mills on the local municipal tax base.

In the 1977-78 lodge assistance program budget, a total of \$120,000 was allocated to be paid to municipalities which qualified for this assistance. For the 1978-79 budget year, the amount of assistance provided will be approximately \$175,000.

The rents charged in lodge accommodation are programmed to increase by 10 per cent per year for three consecutive years beginning in 1977. After April this year, the maximum rent that will be charged to a person accommodated in a bedroom which has double occupancy will be \$153 per month. The amount charged to a person accommodated in a bedroom which has single occupancy will be \$173.03 per month. These are very reasonable rental charges, considering the market rental for similar accommodation, and involve economic subsidies of between \$200 and \$300 per month.

The senior citizens' self-contained units are designed for senior citizens who prefer apartment-type accommodation. Additional amenities within the complexes often include furnished lounges and recreation facilities which enable seniors to communicate with each other in a friendly and relaxed environment.

These projects are owned by the Alberta Housing Corporation, but the sponsoring group is given responsibility for the operation and management of the project. Generally, most non-profit societies or religious organizations qualify as sponsors.

In addition to the capital cost construction by the Alberta Housing Corporation, all operating deficits in self-contained projects are absorbed on a fifty-fifty basis by the province and the federal government. The rental rates for such accommodation are based on 30 per cent of the gross income of the tenant. Therefore monthly rents can be as low as \$92 per month for a senior citizen who participates in the Alberta assured income plan.

I would like to indicate a third way in which senior citizens' accommodation can be financed: that is, through the core housing incentive program of the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation. The \$11.7 million St. Andrew's senior citizens' project is being financed this way, and will cater to seniors of lower and middle income.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to announce that the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation will be providing \$10 million for the construction of 400 nursing home beds under a new program of capital construction financing beginning this current fiscal year. In

addition, a further \$10 million will be provided for the experimental senior citizens' housing program. With the addition of this program, the total funding for senior citizens' housing construction in 1978-79 year will be approximately \$100 million, which clearly makes Alberta the leader in Canada in servicing this sector of the housing market.

The allocation of senior citizens' lodges and senior citizens' self-contained units throughout the province is shown on an attachment. All members are receiving a copy. But for the record, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate very quickly the centres in which units are going to be built. Senior citizens' lodges or lodge additions will be going into Edmonton, Barrhead, Camrose, Hythe, Two Hills, Pincher Creek, and Basano. Senior citizens' self-contained units will be built in Edmonton, Calgary, Amisk, Beaumont, Bonnyville, Dewberry, Donnelly, Drayton Valley, Entwistle, Fairview, Grande Prairie, Holden, Interlake-Darwell, Plamondon, Ponoka, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, Wainwright, Waskatenau, and Wetaskiwin; also Airdrie, Barons, Beiseker, Blairmore, Cardston, Coleman, Delia, Duchess, Granum, Okotoks, Olds, Raymond, Rockyford, Sundre, and Vulcan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Airport Construction

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Transportation. It flows from discussion in the subcommittee earlier this week and the comments made today by the federal Minister of Transport indicating he's waiting for proposals from the Alberta government with regard to the Edmonton International Airport. Is Alberta now in the process of going to make a presentation to Mr. Lang, in light of his comment yesterday or today that he is waiting for Alberta's proposal for Alberta's involvement in the expansion of the Edmonton International Airport?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, initially perhaps I should say to the hon. Leader of the Opposition that if Mr. Lang would like a proposal on how to run the total federal government, I might give him that as well.

In any case, Mr. Speaker, I met this morning with the air committee of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, and a proposal from the private sector will be put together over the coming few weeks. That proposal will be made to the federal government.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Once again it flows from the discussions we had in the committee the other night that in fact at that time Mr. Lang had indicated he was not interested in propositions from the government of Alberta for improvements at the International Airport. My question to the minister is: what has brought Mr. Lang around to this completely different point of view, other than the fact of the federal election?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I know I spent some time in subcommittee trying to answer questions for the federal Ministry of Transport, but I really believe that question should be directed to Mr. Lang.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, one further question to the Minister of Transportation. In the proposal that's going to go forward from the Edmonton community, is the Alberta government still prepared to help fund construction at the Edmonton International Airport in such a manner that the construction should move ahead quickly?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, in my discussions with the air lines, and indeed with the local business community in Edmonton, they agree with me that the construction of such a building can be done as a commercially viable proposition and as such may not require funding from the Alberta government. But certainly I think the government would look at any reasonable proposition relative to funding, and that has been the information I passed on to the local business community.

Hospital Construction

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It regards the question of the Grande Prairie hospital once again. I was going to ask the question of the Premier, but I see the Premier isn't here.

In light of the lack of success the minister and several others have had in getting the tenders called for the Grande Prairie hospital, I wonder if the minister is prepared to perhaps ask for help from a somewhat higher level; and is the minister prepared to consider moving the tenders along so that on August 1, when the Queen is in Grande Prairie, perhaps the Queen could be involved in the official sod-turning at the Grande Prairie hospital?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, the MLA for Grande Prairie has raised that in a preliminary way with me. While all of us are glad to have the Queen in Alberta during that time, I'm sure the hon. leader would agree that the more important issue is to expedite the final decisions on the actual construction of the Grande Prairie hospital.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then following up to the minister: is it the intention of the government to have the Queen be involved in the official sod-turning when Her Majesty is in Grande Prairie in early August?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I think that question with respect to the Queen's visit would be more appropriately answered by the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. HYNDMAN: My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that the elements of the Queen's visit are being finalized at this moment, largely through suggestions we expect to receive from the Governor General's office and from London through the Governor General's office in Ottawa. We haven't yet received any suggestions as to what they would feel would be appropriate for Her Majesty in the visits to northern Alberta.

Calgary Civic Workers' Strike

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Labour and ask if he can

advise the Assembly whether a memorandum of agreement has been reached on Tuesday of this week between Local 37 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the city of Calgary, as a result of the mediation efforts of Mr. d'Esterre, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the correct description of any document that might have passed between the parties would be "a memorandum of agreement", but it is true that some tentative proposals that were a result of the mediation were considered by both sides. However, at the present time that has not led to a settlement of all the issues.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the House whether it's true that the memorandum of agreement, tentative agreement, or provisional agreement — however one describes it — was in fact signed by the chief commissioner of Calgary and the director of labor relations for the city of Calgary, Mr. Coulter, as well as representatives from Local 37 and the provincial mediators present?

MR. CRAWFORD: I think it would be unusual if the mediators became in any sense a party to a document by signing it, although I'm not absolutely certain that that wouldn't happen. I haven't looked at the memorandums, which are in fact the working papers of the mediators, in any such cases. The result, of course, is of more interest than the working papers. I haven't any idea whether the chief commissioner or anyone else signed a document.

I can add, though, or at least confirm for the hon. member that a document of that type would assuredly be signed on a tentative basis by both sides, presumably through their proper officers. The whole nature of the document is that it's tentative until the parties are able to take it back to their respective bosses: in one case the city administration, and in the other the membership of the union.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the House whether there was any discussion between His Worship Mayor Alger and any senior minister of the Alberta Crown, between the tentative memorandum of agreement signed on Tuesday of this week and the city council meeting yesterday where that agreement was voted down eight to five?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, so far as I know none of my colleagues have been in discussion with either of the parties during that time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly what further steps the department plans in terms of mediation efforts to see if this strike can be settled?

MR. CRAWFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. That might be described as the first important question of the sequence the hon. member has chosen to ask.

It is not an easy matter, of course, in the circumstances of a strike which has been going on now for

more than a month. I recognize that I am being repetitious in part, in the sense of having given answers like this in the House before; but that's appropriate, because the case is really the same. It's this: the parties are from time to time continuing to meet for the laudable purpose of effecting a settlement. Each side has some difficulty in making the final move. Now the mediator's role is to try to assist them in that and assist the two parties in coming to an agreement which is in effect their agreement, not at all a specific recommendation of the mediator.

I think it's important to understand that. I know the hon. member does, but I'm placing that forward for the record in order that there will be no misunderstanding about the role of the mediator. He is not in fact making proposals which themselves are intended to bring about a settlement. He is speaking to the parties, probably in almost every case without the presence of the other party, and helping in that way through the making of suggestions. But the final goal is that the parties themselves negotiate the agreement.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Are any meetings planned or have any been held in the last several days between senior officials of the city of Calgary and any senior minister of the government of Alberta, particularly with respect to a visit to Edmonton by the chief commissioner of the city of Calgary? Are there any plans to meet with the chief commissioner on the part of either the hon. minister or any other senior minister of the cabinet?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I can answer one-third of the question. I have no anticipation of meeting Commissioner Cole myself. Whether he wants to come to Edmonton, which would be certainly his business, is another third of the question that I can't answer. Whether any of my colleagues would have any reason to see him completes the part that I don't know the answer to.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I'd like to ask the minister: in the mediation do the mediators recommend that the settlement of wages be under the 7 per cent guideline suggested by the province?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think once again it's important to clarify in the minds of hon. members the difference between a conciliator's and a mediator's role. A conciliator may make a recommendation or a proposal to the parties and in effect say he believes that is a settlement which the parties should agree to. Then they either accept it or reject it. That stage in this dispute has long since passed.

The mediator is in a totally different position. He's really just there to advise the parties — as I mentioned, usually on a separate basis, one on one, rather than the two parties and the mediator all being present at the same time — in regard to alternatives that might be open to them and ways in which progress toward a settlement might be speeded up in the hands of the two parties themselves.

Now if I knew, it would be quite wrong for me to indicate what the content of any such discussion would be.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health, a supplementary related to the previous question. Have the medical officers of health in Calgary indicated to the minister whether the unburied bodies constitute a hazard to the health of Calgarians?

MISS HUNLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, they have not.

Gasoline Supplies

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. It relates to an announcement that came out of Ottawa on Monday with regard to possible gasoline rationing. I understand the federal government has available a contingency plan they could implement across Canada with regard to gasoline rationing. I'd like to ask whether the government of Alberta was consulted; and, if so, what recommendations did the government have?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the announcement on Monday we are getting in touch with Ottawa to ascertain exactly what the federal government is contemplating, especially as it would affect Alberta. When that information is known I'd be happy to convey it to the House.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. At the present time is the minister, his department, or one of the other departments of government doing background studies and making material available for those recommendations, if any?

MR. HYNDMAN: At the moment, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs is not directly involved in any research for the federal government. With respect to any gasoline rationing, certainly I would think we would take the position, insofar as the resources are under the province of Alberta, that Albertans would be the last to be affected with respect to any sort of rationing proposal. However, it might be that the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources may have further information to convey to the Assembly now or at a later date.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, some years ago, when the energy shortage was more apparent in people's minds, I recall the federal government presented before an energy ministers' meeting certain proposals to provide for an allocation system throughout the country. At the time, they weren't using the word "rationing". I understand the term is now being used: however, I've never heard it seriously discussed at an energy ministers' meeting.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. With those remarks, and for clarification, is the minister indicating that at present the government of Alberta feels there is no need for a policy relative to gasoline rationing?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. With Alberta's abundant energy resources, I do not feel there is need for a rationing policy in Alberta.

Meat Processing Plants

MR. TESOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. With the changing practices and volumes of the abattoir type of business in Alberta, more animals are being brought from local farmers. My question is: will the government be requiring these abattoirs and similar businesses to acquire livestock dealers' licensing and bonding?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the short answer is yes. With the increase in the number of provincially inspected plants across the province, there is a considerable increase in the number of animals purchased by smaller abattoirs. At the present time there are some difficulties with respect to farmers in one particular area not being paid for animals purchased by a smaller abattoir. So we are looking at the possibility of devising regulations whereby these people as well will be required to post performance bonds when purchasing livestock.

MR. TESOLIN: A supplementary, if I may. Will the government aid in some way any farmers who are having difficulty collecting payment for livestock they have sold to such businesses to date?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to take a close look at the particulars of such a problem. If in fact the livestock purchaser was not bonded, it is unlikely there would be any assistance from the provincial government.

DR. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. I understand this operator has already applied for another DREE grant, in which I believe we share with the federal government. Does the provincial government, in particular the Department of Agriculture, have any input to the investigation of these loans?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is referring to the Nutritive Processing Agreement between the government of Alberta and the government of Canada, there is a joint committee of one representative of the government of Alberta and one of the federal government, which passes judgment on and approves or makes offers on any grants less than \$500,000. As I recall, any above that amount are subject to approval by the federal Minister of Regional Economic Expansion and by my office.

I am aware that some time ago an offer was made to the individual involved in not having paid for animals in a certain location. However, my understanding is that that offer of a DREE grant was made some time prior to the fact of non-payment for animals.

What the stage is at the present time in terms of whether the offer will in fact be paid by the joint DREE committee, I simply don't know now. But I'll inquire into the matter, Mr. Speaker, and see if there is any change from what I have said.

MR. APPLEBY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister of Agriculture could inform us what the trend is regarding the numbers of these small abattoirs or processing plants. Has there been

an increase in the last five or six years, and would he have any numbers to indicate how many of them actually are in operation?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to get that and pass it on to the hon. member. I can say that there has been a very substantial increase in the past two or three years of plants coming under provincial meat inspection. The last figures I had were that we had in excess of 60 plants in Alberta that are now being provided with provincial meat inspection, but that may be even higher as of this date.

Gasoline Bulk Sales

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Could the minister indicate what monitoring mechanism the government has to determine whether oil companies are selling bulk gasoline to individuals?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not too sure of the implication of the hon. member's question, whether he's referring to the key-lock systems that are presently operated by bulk dealers, or whether he's referring to something else.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, I was referring to where some of the oil companies are selling or could be selling bulk gasoline to individuals instead of going through the retailer.

MR. HARLE: Well, I think, Mr. Speaker, he's referring to the key-lock system which is presently used by dealers. I think the hon. member will be aware that there is a certain requirement set out in the regulations for having a right to purchase gasoline wholesale. Inquiries are presently being made, and have been for some weeks now, with regard to their operation. Some charges have been laid, and some convictions obtained.

Automobile Insurance

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. It arises from what I believe is some public confusion. Could the minister advise whether the government is going to adopt no-fault automobile insurance?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is alluding to a story which appeared in the *Edmonton Journal* today. As I think all hon. members in this House know, there is no-fault automobile insurance coverage in this province. There has been for six or seven years at least.

I might add that the government did of course ask for the Alberta Automobile Insurance Board to do a study of no-fault automobile insurance. That study was done, and the board reported. The board examined no-fault proposals basically in various parts of the world and felt that the Alberta system was perhaps the best anywhere.

They did, however, recommend some improvements in the benefits that should be provided. Hon. members will recall that last year this Assembly put through amendments to The Alberta Insurance Act,

implementing the improved benefits recommended by the Alberta Automobile Insurance Board.

MR. YOUNG: A supplementary to the same minister, Mr. Speaker. Is the government considering yet another provincial study of no-fault automobile insurance, as has also been suggested?

MR. HARLE: Well, not specifically in that form, of course. As minister I am continually looking at automobile insurance coverage. It's continually under review, but there is no present intention to have another study after one has so recently been completed.

Regional Planning Commission

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. Is the Palliser Regional Planning Commission now well under way?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to be in Hanna yesterday to meet with representatives of the city of Drumheller, the town of Hanna, and other municipalities in the area. In fact I can report to the House that the interim executive is well organized. I look forward both to presenting the finances to this Assembly when the estimates are considered and to presenting an O.C. to my colleagues in cabinet for the formal incorporation.

Airport Construction (continued)

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transportation. Is it considered government policy and normal practice between the provincial governments and the government of Canada whereby the government of Canada expects, requires, or requests provincial government funding for construction, repairs, extensions of service, and renovations at all international airports across Canada?

DR. HORNER: Well, it hasn't been in the past, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ZANDER: Supplementary to the minister. If the federal government is asking for provincial government funding at the international airport, is this going to establish a precedent?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the precedent was perhaps set in the national airports in our agreement with regard to Lethbridge and Grande Prairie. I hope the precedent that will come out of these particular negotiations and discussions is the fact that perhaps private enterprise can erect some of these buildings at our international airports in a commercially viable way, thereby reducing the cost to the taxpayers of Canada.

MR. ZANDER: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If the government of Alberta should enter into an agreement with the federal government, how much money will it cost the people of Alberta to do this work at the international airport? Could the minister give us a ballpark figure?

DR. HORNER: I can't give a ballpark figure, Mr. Speaker. I would caution again as to whether or not the Alberta government as such would be involved. What we're trying to do is act as a catalyst to allow the private sector in the Edmonton area to go ahead with some plans they think are commercially viable.

MR. ZANDER: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister of Transportation expecting a visit from Mr. Lang to negotiate a deal with him before very long?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, we have had a number of meetings with the federal Minister of Transport. Having regard to the number of things in the transportation field that are still in the pot and boiling, I would expect we'll meet on numerous occasions.

DR. BUCK: Jack's coming to see him.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Transportation. Could the minister indicate if the construction of the new Lethbridge airport is on schedule?

DR. HORNER: I would say it's on schedule, Mr. Speaker. The plans and the design have been completed. As the money only becomes available to our department as of April 1, we are in the process of going to tender. I would expect that in the next few days, once the documents are signed in Ottawa.

Currency Management

MR. KING: Before I ask my question, Mr. Speaker, I can't help but remark that Mr. Lang's conversion on this matter in the last few days appears to have been as notable, as Mr. Diefenbaker would say, as that of Saul on the road to Damascus. I'm sure the people of Edmonton appreciate it.

I would like to ask the Provincial Treasurer, Mr. Speaker, if he has received any indication from the federal government that they are considering the imposition of currency export controls for Canada.

MR. LEITCH: No, I haven't, Mr. Speaker.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a supplementary of the Provincial Treasurer. In light of the fact that in Ottawa during the past few days there has been discussion of the possibility of the imposition of currency controls, I wonder if any study is under way in the Treasury on the impact on the Alberta economy of the imposition of currency controls.

MR. LEITCH: Not any formal study, Mr. Speaker. But certainly in the ordinary course of the administration of the department, people would be considering matters such as that.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary. In anticipation that currency controls would work a hardship on the developing economy of this province, I wonder if the Provincial Treasurer would consider, as an alternative to the imposition of currency controls for the country, that we might loan the government of Canada \$1 billion or \$2 billion in stand-by credits, at least until Mr. Chretien has an opportunity to bring down some kind of budget?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I've heard the hon. member's representation.

Annexation Talks — Calgary

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, I was struck by the very receptive mood of the Minister of Municipal Affairs this afternoon in responding to the hon. Member for Drumheller. I thought I could possibly take this opportunity of asking for the fourteenth time in this Assembly whether or not the rumor is true that before the end of this session we'll be hearing from the hon. minister about the government's decision on annexation inasmuch as it relates to land in the city of Calgary.

DR. BUCK: He doesn't move that quickly.

MR. NOTLEY: He's thinking about it.

MR. SPEAKER: Of course the hon. and learned Member for Calgary Buffalo knows that ministers are not, in the course of their duties, assumed to be chasing down rumors. But if he wishes to put the question directly, or let's assume that it has been put directly, it might be answered.

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, on your point, it was only because of the receptive mood of the minister this afternoon that I thought I would dare ask the question.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo has finally learned how to present questions to the House. But I will attempt to respond by indicating that, as the hon. member knows, the city of Calgary has gone through its own application to the Local Authorities Board. I believe that was dated in January. I can advise him that I understand the proceedings of the Local Authorities Board are proceeding very well, and I expect we'll be dealing with that matter very soon.

MR. GHITTER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the hon. minister could advise the House whether his department is monitoring land transactions in the city of Calgary which might indicate that information before the Local Authorities Board was not complete in its context as to land which will be available for future housing within the boundaries of the city of Calgary?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact I do have an update, and we continue to update our information on the supply moving from undeveloped raw land to land which is vacant and ready for sale. I did receive some information recently, good hard data for us to deal with when cabinet does consider it. I guess it's important to note that it depends which group you're talking to as to what the supply is. Yes, we do have our own monitoring system to provide us with our own hard data.

Petroleum Marketing

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. It really flows from recent comments

made by the Canadian Petroleum Association with regard to some 300,000 barrels of daily oil production that's currently shut in in western Canada, having regard for the Syncrude plant coming on stream before long. In view of the energy demand in eastern Canada, and giving consideration to the balance of payments situation the country faces, created at least in part by the importing of foreign oil to Canada, what is the stage of discussions between Alberta and the federal government with regard to more Alberta crude getting into the eastern market that's presently being serviced by offshore crude?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, we've had discussions with the federal government at the officials' level, and officials of the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission with the federal government, about a greater amount of oil going through the Montreal pipeline. It's rated for 500,000 to 600,000 barrels per day and is presently carrying approximately 250,000. However, I guess the discussions are still in the formative stage. We have not really received any strong position yet from the federal government one way or another.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is it the position of the government of Alberta that to fill the Montreal pipeline to capacity, which would take a large portion of the shut-in capacity in western Canada, is a desirable goal as far as the government of Alberta is concerned? Is the government working in that direction?

MR. GETTY: It is to sell more oil to Canadians, Mr. Speaker, subject to good production practices. That may not mean filling the pipeline to complete capacity, but certainly selling more to Canadians.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the same matter, what's the position of the government of Alberta with regard to the excess natural gas now available in the province finding its way further east for use within Canada?

MR. GETTY: We think it's a good idea, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, having regard for the fact that the government thinks it's a good idea, what steps are being taken with the federal government to make that good idea happen?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that Quebec has a market and we have a surplus. We believe that the industry should take advantage of those two facts and put together an economic proposal that would allow the surplus to reach the market.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission working with industry to put that package together?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker, they aren't involved in the actual development of that market. If the hon. Leader of the Opposition has been following it closely, industry is actually competing now to develop that market. There are two proposals before the National Energy Board, so obviously it's being pursued aggressively.

Royal Visit

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. It's a follow-up to a question the Leader of the Opposition posed with respect to Her Majesty the Queen's visit. In view of the fact that a large number of communities in northern Alberta are extremely interested in the Queen's visit to the north — in the case of my own community, a letter has gone via the Lieutenant-Governor's office — my question to the minister is: what role is the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs playing, if any, in recommending to either the Governor General's office or Buckingham Palace a schedule of events for Her Majesty during the stay in Alberta?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, some months ago we as a government made a recommendation through my department and through the office of the Premier that we felt it would be appropriate for Her Majesty to spend some time in northern Alberta prior to her formal opening of the Games, at which time she will be associated with the Games Foundation. It appears the Palace in London and the Governor General's office in Ottawa have acceded to that suggestion. At the moment we're moving into rough details as to the visits, locations, places, and the events she would be involved in during those days.

As yet we don't know exactly how many days there will be for her visit in Alberta prior to the opening of the Games. I would hope that before a week or 10 days we would have more details available publicly as to what is being finalized.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is it the intention of the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs to review the various proposals from the different communities and make recommendations as to the schedule to the Governor General's office in the country or to Buckingham Palace?

MR. HYNDMAN: Well, it's my understanding that a large part of the schedule and the locations which Her Majesty would visit have traditionally been and will be determined by the Palace in the final analysis, insofar as that would be her decision. Our initial submissions were that we felt she should visit one, two, or three appropriate centres in northern Alberta. Beyond that, the question of where she will go and what she will partake in is largely an option of the Palace. However, I'll find out more information for the hon. member and let him know either tomorrow or next week about the situation.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. I appreciate that answer. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether other members of the Royal Family will be in Alberta for the Commonwealth Games, and whether or not any of them would be prepared to take part in various events either before or after the Commonwealth Games? I'm thinking, for example, of Prince Charles' visit last year to the province.

MR. HYNDMAN: At the moment, Mr. Speaker, I don't have any information on that. But I will follow up on

that question as well, to see if I can secure more information for the hon. member and others in the Assembly.

Dollar Value

DR. PAPROSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Minister of Business Development and Tourism regarding the impact of the devaluated Canadian dollar on Alberta. I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House whether he has information to indicate whether Alberta industry has lost or gained financially as a result of the devaluated Canadian dollar?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, I would indicate basically that those industries or companies involved in exporting at all would of course gain because of the devaluated dollar. The tourist industry is one of those really exporting a product. On the other hand, if the company is involved in imports, it would probably be to their detriment. But I would refer the hon. member to the classic and brilliant comments made by the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs on April 3. [interjections]

DR. PAPROSKI: Classic and brilliant comments?

Street Construction

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Transportation and Deputy Premier. With reference to the excellent street program announced the other day, will it be mandatory for the towns and villages to hire consulting engineers?

DR. HORNER: Not necessarily, Mr. Speaker. I would expect the larger ones that do have consultants to continue to use them. On the other hand, I would expect that the smaller areas could take advantage of our regional people in the field.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

123. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
 - (1) (a) the cost of printing the pamphlet entitled Some Facts About University Funding,
 - (b) the number of this pamphlet printed, and
 - (c) the distribution of this pamphlet;
 - (2) further to item 4 of this pamphlet, the amount of public assistance to Alberta students in each of the categories of loans, grants, and remissions for each of the following years: 1971-72, 1972-73, 1973-74, 1974-75, 1975-76, 1976-77, 1977-78, indicating the sources of these funds.

[Motion carried]

head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN
GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

212. Moved by Mr. Notley:

Be it resolved that the Assembly urge the government to repeal The Public Service Employee Relations Act and conduct its labor relations pursuant to The Alberta Labour Act.

And be it further resolved that the Assembly urge the government to drop the concept of an arbitrary wage guideline for government employees in the coming year in favor of a commitment to make the collective bargaining process work.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in introducing the designated motion today, I'd like to ask members to look back to page 61-21 of *Hansard* on October 25, 1972. The hon. Premier was addressing the Assembly, and he made the following observations that I think are as relevant today as they were then:

... wage and price and controls are something nice to grab at — a nice solution to grab at. But the people who really don't benefit from it are the very people you are trying to help, the low income people, for a lot of different reasons. One of them, of course, is that they are less able to [get] involved in the negotiating process of higher wages; secondly because they are so often involved in their acquisition and consumption and the service sector, which is hardest to control, and there are many other reasons.

Mr. Speaker, I think the comments the hon. Premier made in 1972 are just as valid today as they were then, and in my view they are a very good reason why we have to clearly ask ourselves: should we continue to have Bill 41 on the statute books of this province, and is it wise to set out, as we have to date, an arbitrary set of wage guidelines which in my view can only lead to trouble and continuing confrontation as far as public sector negotiations are concerned in the coming year?

Perhaps in assessing this resolution it might be useful to just stop for a moment and look at the current dispute in the city of Calgary between Local 37 of CUPE on one hand and the city on the other. There's no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that Mayor Alger and his colleagues and Ron Brown and his colleagues are the people in the news. But I would submit that the real villain of the piece in this entire episode is the arbitrary wage guidelines set down by the provincial government.

In my judgment it isn't good enough for members of the Assembly to bring in policies and paint a canvas with a broad brush and then not be prepared to take responsibility for the implications of the decisions we make in this House. When you bring in arbitrary guidelines, where the increase in salary and wages allotted is almost certainly going to be below the increase in the cost of living during the current year, one of the implications is that there will be trouble in the bargaining process.

I think we've already seen that that's true, Mr. Speaker. During the course of the answers of the hon. Minister of Labour to questions I raised in the House today — and I'm sorry he's not in his place — he indicated the agreement reached on Tuesday night wasn't really that important; that it was just a memorandum of agreement. I'm familiar with collec-

tive bargaining procedures; so should be most members of this House. But the fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker, was that that was a memorandum of agreement. It was signed by Local 37. It was signed by the chief commissioner of the city of Calgary, Mr. Cole, as well as the gentleman in charge of labor relations with that city. And it was an agreement which was negotiated under the mediation of Mr. Bob d'Esterre, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour. We're not dealing, then, with a group of people unaware of the bargaining process. We are dealing with collective bargaining procedures under the mediation of one of the most qualified men in this province. As a consequence of those discussions on Tuesday night, a tentative agreement had been reached.

There's no doubt either, Mr. Speaker, that had that tentative agreement been placed before the members of Local 37 yesterday, it would have been approved overwhelmingly by the membership of that local. Unfortunately Calgary city council, as is their right — I don't question that right, but I say it's unfortunate — by a vote of eight to five chose to come in with what is just a variation of the provincial guidelines.

Mr. Speaker, I can understand why the city would want to do that. We have slapped these guidelines down as official standards for the provincial public service. We have allocated grants to all local authorities in the province, using the assumption of .6 per cent guidelines. Therefore it is tempting for any city or municipality to say, all right, it's 6 per cent and it can't be any more. We can all climb on our rhetorical soapboxes, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure we'll have a lot of that this afternoon. But in the final analysis you have to make the system work.

And the system had worked in this case, Mr. Speaker. Under the mediation of the Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour, an agreement had been reached on a tentative basis, an agreement that would have been fine as far as the outside workers were concerned: a reduction in the work week from 40 to 38 hours and a 6 per cent increase — but when you consider the reduction in the work week, it would work out to about 7.5 per cent this year and a little over 9 per cent plus a cola clause next year. That was a workable arrangement, but unfortunately the city council chose to turn it down. That occurred because we have these arbitrary guidelines.

I just say to the members of the House that I very much fear what is happening in Calgary today will happen all over Alberta. We're going to have one example of confrontation after another. In my judgment, Mr. Speaker, that simply isn't good enough.

It's fine for the Premier to say to the mayor of Calgary, we're behind you on this 6 per cent question. It's fine to have various members in the House say it has to be 6 per cent to fight inflation, et cetera. But in the final analysis the system has to work. We had an example of that system working, a reasonable arrangement. But because of the guidelines and because funds made available to the municipalities in this province are based on those guidelines, it just wasn't possible for the city to agree to a memorandum of agreement that had been signed by the chief commissioner of the city of Calgary himself, and by the man who was in charge of labor negotiations for the city of Calgary.

Mr. Speaker, during question period the hon. Pro-

vincial Treasurer made it quite clear on a couple of occasions that, in his judgment at least, while wages were running slightly ahead for several years — I'm going to come to that in a moment, because I think there is very reasonable doubt as to how far wages ran ahead of the private sector; several years they did, but taken over the average it isn't true. In any event, the argument the hon. Provincial Treasurer made on April 6 was that since wages ran ahead in good times, it's only reasonable that in bad times they should not, and perhaps even fall behind the cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, I find that unfortunate. Perhaps I reveal a bias here, but it's a bias shared by a large number of people and certainly one shared by the vast majority of trade union people; that is, while no one suggests we want to equalize everything overnight, we must, in my judgment, move towards a more equitable distribution of the nation's wealth. One of the reasons we are not in the serious troubles of the 1930s is that we have a number of income support programs which have made it possible to maintain the purchasing power of people who otherwise would not have been able to continue the purchase of goods and services. That in turn would have slowed down demand, and with the slowdown in demand more unemployment would have been created.

Setting aside that argument for a moment, should working people in Canada and in Alberta accept less than the cost of living? Should we, as a legislature, tolerate a guideline which is going to be less than the cost of living? In fairness to the Provincial Treasurer, I should say that during the course of his remarks on the 6th he attempted to indicate that the estimated rate of inflation during 1978 would be in the neighborhood of 6 or 7 per cent. I find that interesting, Mr. Speaker, because the hon. Provincial Treasurer was saying some of the things Mr. Chretien was saying, although I note Mr. Chretien has changed his mind a little now that the value of the Canadian dollar seems to continue to slump. He is not so sure he is going to keep that inflation rate at 6 or 7 per cent. He's hedging his bets a bit.

Mr. Speaker, rather than getting into a survey of the various economic forecasts — and there are certainly forecasts that suggest there will be a considerably higher rate of increase than 6 or 7 per cent — I thought it would be useful for our debate if we examined, not what the economists were saying, because I know Tories tend to think that economists are sort of radical pinkos, but what some of the very sober, businesslike types who are leading the Conservative Party in Ottawa are saying.

I won't use Mr. Clark as an example, because I realize that to many of the hon. members in the House he's just a socialist at a slow walk. So I won't use him. I'll use someone like Sinclair Stevens. I don't think there can be any question, Mr. Speaker, that Sinclair Stevens is about as Tory blue as they come. I'm very interested in what Mr. Sinclair Stevens said. I have a number of quotes on the rate of inflation, and I think the Tories would be well advised to at least listen carefully to Mr. Stevens.

On November 15, Mr. Stevens is rising under Standing Order 43 to raise a matter of urgent and pressing necessity. He says:

With inflation of over nine per cent this year and

unemployment levels of over eight per cent, giving a combined misery index of more than 17 per cent, confirming that wage and price controls are ... not working but ... adding to our jobless ranks ...

He moved:

That there be an immediate reference to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs with respect to the government's decision to maintain wage and price controls for most of next year with respect to the government's attempt to enforce a six per cent ceiling on wage increases, which appears to be based on its forecast of a six per cent inflation level next year, a forecast not shared by independent economists.

So said Mr. Sinclair Stevens on November 15. Then on December 13, again in the House of Commons, he says:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Faced with the 10.8 per cent annualized inflation which we have had in the past three months ...

Then on January 27, 1978, we had Mr. Jim McGrath, another Conservative member, from Newfoundland, rise in the House of Commons. I think it's fair to say Mr. McGrath is not a red Tory. He may not be a blue Tory, but he's somewhere in between. He's certainly not a red Tory. He says:

I can further support my argument by telling the Minister that inflation is now running at an annual rate of 9.5 per cent, according to the last CPI or, based on the last three months, at a quarterly rate of 11.5 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, the question is: where do the Tories in Alberta get this information that we're going to have an inflation rate of 6 per cent, when their senior spokesmen in the House of Commons are all talking about 9 or 10 per cent or more in 1978?

Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should move from that question for a moment and look at what happened last year. In order to do that, we should take a look at the average settlement in the Alberta public service. If we're going to talk about Bill 41 staying on the statute books, we have to ask ourselves, are people going to be treated fairly?

The average settlement in 1977 was 7.25 per cent. The rate of increase in the consumer price index between January 1977 and January 1978 was 10.1 per cent. So not only is the Provincial Treasurer suggesting that working people take less than the cost of living in the current year, but when you look back on the record of 1977, in fact provincial government employees received less than the cost of living. How else can you interpret an increase in the cost of living at 10.1 per cent on one hand, and an average increase across the board of only 7.25 per cent?

I think it's still worth while to hearken back to Mr. Stevens, because he certainly has done a lot of statistical analysis, and in my view he has raised very eloquently in the House of Commons the impact of wage guidelines of 6 per cent when you have an inflation rate of 8, 9, or 10 per cent. This is what he says on November 15.

Figures released today by Statistics Canada show that inflation in 1977 so far is rising at an annual rate of more than nine per cent.

And then he says:

Since prices are rising so much faster than wages, is the Prime Minister aware that the average Canadian family may [well] lose \$300 in buying power if it is held to a six per cent wage ceiling, and inflation continues?

A \$300 annual loss if they are kept to a 6 per cent wage ceiling.

Mr. Speaker, the 6 to 7 per cent figure is used by this government. When you have federal Tories like Sinclair Stevens outlining what the impact will be, small wonder that it's pretty tough to convince working people; pretty tough to convince Local 37 in Calgary that they should settle for 6 per cent when all they have to do is read *Hansard* and they have the chief financial figure of the Tory party in the House of Commons saying, a \$300 loss if you stay at 6 per cent in your final settlement.

But I don't think we need to just take the words of a Tory politician. We can look at the figures from Statistics Canada, the net income and expenditure accounts for 1977: in the first quarter, a deficit of — and this is in real disposable income per employee — 1.4 per cent; in the second quarter, a deficit of 0.9 per cent; in the third quarter, a deficit of 0.4 per cent. In other words, in each of those three quarters contained in the information from Statistics Canada there was a decline in the real disposable income per employee in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, in my view we have objective evidence from Statistics Canada, we have the arguments from Conservative members in the House of Commons, and we have the common-sense assessment of what has happened in our own province; an average increase of over 10 per cent in the cost of living, and an average increase of only 7.25 per cent in provincial employee increases. And we know perfectly well that last year the working people actually lost ground, that their increases did not match the increase in the cost of living.

So you have a lot of people who are saying, quite frankly, we're not prepared to continue any longer with a program of de facto wage controls. We may have done away officially with wage controls, but we have de facto wage controls here. The province isn't enforcing it itself. It isn't even asking the Anti-Inflation Board to do it. It's making scapegoats of the local governments, the school boards, the hospital boards, the towns and villages. They're the ones who have to be the nasty people. They're the ones who have to say no. They're the ones who are forced to implement a wage-control policy that is inevitably being set once we strike guidelines of 6 or 7 per cent. I think the hon. Member for Little Bow was correct the other day when he cited this in his budget speech.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the problem this government is going to run into with a lot of working people is that they are tired of having one set of rules for them and a totally different set of guidelines for the people who own the means of production and distribution. In Alberta we've always got a "yes, but" attitude: yes, we have to fight inflation, but when it comes to certain people we have to look at things a little differently. In the budget speech I cited the landlords. You know we always hear, yes, rent controls, but if we want to have more housing, more accommodation, but we've got to take off rent controls, and but we cannot have tenant security, as the

hon. Member for Calgary McKnight was saying the other day. So we have all these "yes, buts".

In the House the other day when we raised this question of the wage-control program, we had the hon. Attorney General rising in his place and saying, as far as he's concerned utility rates are totally unrelated to wage rates. You know, "yes, but": yes we should fight inflation, but it shouldn't apply to utility companies. We have a 37 per cent increase in Calgary Power profits in the first nine months of 1977 compared to 1976.

Mr. Speaker, it's this sort of thing that reduces the credibility of Conservative politicians when they say, boys, tighten your belts, settle for 6 per cent, we've got to fight inflation. They turn around to certain other people in society and say, well, of course, we all have to fight inflation but your case is different; you can have a 37 per cent increase in profits, Calgary Power; you can increase your rental rates, whatever the market will bear.

Mr. Speaker, we have the situation of land development. I find this really quite interesting. We have the dream of almost every citizen, the dream of buying his own home. In a time of restraint, if our government was going to try to persuade working men and women in Alberta to take a 6 or 7 per cent wage increase, you'd think they would really zero in on the kind of steps they could take to keep consumer prices down.

What are we doing in the case of utilities? We have a rate structure which is based on equity versus debt financing. We have the power companies shifting over to equity financing. The net result is that power rate increases are going up far in excess of what needs to be the case, if we had cost-conscious investment decisions that were concerned about the consumers' interests in this province.

We have the situation in the development of our homes in Alberta. Not too long ago the Alberta government undertook a housing cost study between Alberta and Montana. It showed that in Edmonton the average house price was \$64,500; the same type of home in Great Falls was \$43,000; in Billings it was \$41,500.

Mr. Speaker, the kind of thing that really gnaws at working people is not the final cost, but some of these things the provincial government clearly has under its jurisdiction that it should be controlling; for example, raw land prices in Calgary, \$4,300; in Great Falls, \$700; in Billings, \$800. The profits developers are making: in Calgary, \$6,800; in Great Falls, \$700; in Billings, \$1,000. These figures are contained in the government's own report. It isn't good enough to say we have to encourage the private sector; they can charge whatever they want; they can have a profit rate here almost tenfold higher in Edmonton than in Great Falls.

Mr. Speaker, if the government wants to remain credible in presenting a wage guideline to the people of this province, we have to look at the other side. We have to look at some of the input costs. It isn't good enough to stand in your place and say, look, we've reduced the gasoline tax, that's all we need to do. That is not as important as bringing down the price of shelter. That is not as important as bringing utility rates within some sort of reason. That is not as important as making sure rents are within reason.

As long as we have double standards, we're going

to have one local union after another, when they get together to decide whether they're going to accept — it could be the city of Calgary's final offer; it could be any village, town, or other city in Alberta; it could be the rural municipalities, where they have unionized members; it could be hospitals; it could be any agency of local government — inevitably, when it comes to the final decision, will we accept or not, they're going to make the final judgment, at least in part, in the context of some of these other things. And when they see a rampant lack of control in some of these sectors, and a continual pleading with them to tighten their belts when others aren't asked to, they're going to say, no way.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of talk in this House that public sector awards have been much greater than private sector awards. That is only true if you pick out the odd year, and look at years on an isolated basis. On the other hand, the other day when he was trying to make the point that we had by far the most money per capita spent on advanced education, the hon. Provincial Treasurer took figures over 10 years. As a matter of fact, it's the first time I saw a member of this government reaching into the past. They've always reached back in the past to blame the former government for something that's going wrong today, but this is the first time they've reached into the past to get figures so they could say they're first today. In any event, they did that. They took the figures over a period of 10 years. Well, Mr. Speaker, if we do that we find that rather than public employees being ahead of private sector employees, in fact there's about a 10.8 per cent deficiency between public and private settlements.

Let's look at some of the figures contained in the annual wage rates survey published by the Alberta Bureau of Statistics. For example, look at a general or intermediate clerk in transport and commerce, that kind of industry, \$1,066; manufacturing, \$989; oil, \$973; public administration is fifth, \$917, or almost \$150 a month less than clerks working in the private sector in transport and commerce. Let's look at an accounting clerk or senior bookkeeper; again this is the 1977 figure from the Alberta Bureau of Statistics. In the oil industry that person would earn \$1,230 a month, but in public administration, eighth down the line, that individual would earn \$1,006 a month, or a difference of \$224 a month. Let's look at a secretary stenographer: in the oil industry, \$903 a month; then you go down to wholesale, \$901; service, \$890; manufacturing, \$887; finance, \$882; you get to public administration, \$881. And so it goes as one looks through the various other examples: draftsmen, stockkeepers, warehousemen. So, Mr. Speaker, it just isn't correct to say public employees are getting more than private employees for doing the same thing, when one can look at the information compiled by this government and find the argument is simply untrue.

Mr. Speaker, the other major part of this resolution is the effort — in my view, an effort that should be supported by members of the House — to repeal Bill 41. Last year we had a lot of debate in question period one day when questions were asked about the efforts on the part of the Alberta Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress to appeal Bill 41 to the ILO, the International Labour Organization, in Geneva. The Premier was technically correct when

he said this Legislature has supremacy in Alberta. No one is questioning the supremacy of the Legislature to enact legislation. What the labor movement is doing is questioning the simple justice of that legislation.

I think it would be interesting for members to be advised that various steps must be taken in order to lodge a complaint with the International Labour Organization. That complaint was lodged last fall, and the first step has been completed; in other words, the ILO has to decide whether or not there is evidence that the complaint violates the conventions of the ILO. Very recently, as a matter of fact by telex dated March 22, 1978, the ILO has confirmed that the complaint from the Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress is what's called receivable; in other words, it will be dealt with by the ILO on the basis that it does appear to violate the second of the ILO's conventions concerning freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively.

There may be some members of this House who will say, so what, we don't care what the International Labour Organization says. We want to shut the rest of the world out. We're like Brazil or Chile, or countries that have a rather frivolous attitude toward the International Labour Organization. But I don't think that would be the attitude of most responsible people, including the bulk of responsible people in the business community. Members of this Assembly should know that the ILO is not an organization of labor unions. It is an organization, set up when the League of Nations was established, that brings together business, government, and labor from around the world. It is an organization which carries the highest respect in the councils of the world.

I'm not in a position, to advise members of the Assembly how the ILO will finally rule on the complaint that has been lodged. I'm simply saying that on the basis of the evidence to date they have at least accepted the complaint and are going to be investigating it. In my view, Mr. Speaker, that should make us pause carefully and ask ourselves whether or not we were hasty in passing legislation which has so concerned others that they have taken this matter to the highest court in the world to settle the question of collective bargaining in labor matters. That's not in a technical or legal sense because, as I mentioned, the Legislature is technically supreme; it is the moral question that we as legislators have to be able to answer.

In concluding, Mr. Speaker, the thrust of this resolution is to say first of all, let free collective bargaining work. You cannot make free collective bargaining work if you impose unofficial wage rates which are below the cost of living. Let us have confidence in the negotiators on the part of the public sector. I know people who've been negotiating for the public sector all over this province, and in my view it's unfair to suggest they are not able to bargain toughly and competently. In my view they can bargain just as toughly and competently as people in the private sector. Mr. Speaker, I think it is necessary to restore Alberta's reputation among labor circles, business circles, and people who are concerned about the ILO, period. I think we should do that by repealing Bill 41.

Secondly, if we are not to have one strike after another, if we are not to see a powder keg of

resentment blown up in our faces, if we are not to see unnecessary confrontation which will mean a loss of public service to the people of the province as a result of one strike after another, it is high time we recognize the error of our ways by bringing in guidelines below the cost of living.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, it might be wise to heed some of the good common sense of Mr. Sinclair Stevens when he warned about these dangers in the House of Commons. What applies in Ottawa clearly applies in Alberta too.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I find somewhat of a challenge before me. The hon. member has spoken for the better part of half an hour, with odd allusions to the motion before him, and has managed to lose most of us in statistics based and selected to serve the particular purpose he had in mind.

Perhaps I should begin by alerting the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview that, by his definition, I'm a pinko. So this afternoon he will be hearing from a pinko. According to what he said within the last 30 minutes, an economist is a pinko, and Conservatives don't listen to them.

MR. NOTLEY: I'll listen to you, Les.

MR. YOUNG: Let's start with some observations from a pinko; let's start with reference by that pinko to the ILO data. Let's just see where Canada stands, and whether we in this Assembly shouldn't be concerned that we have reasonable wage guidelines in this province.

This particular report, Mr. Speaker, is from Canadian [Association for] Business Economics, which is an organization of economists; the hon. member has reflected on economists. That particular organization, quoting from statistics from the international labour office, the ILO, says:

Canada has recently acquired the reputation of having the worst labour conflict record of the Western World with the single exception of Italy.

They go on:

... the record shows that the number of man-days reported as lost in Canada over the periods 1965 to 1969 and 1970 to 1974 ... measured per thousand employees, did indeed exceed that of virtually every country except Italy.

It amounted to 863 days per 1,000, compared with 718 in Australia, and 627 in the United Kingdom. We're worse than the United Kingdom, worse than a whole series of countries we care to name and which are our competitors on international markets. That's according to the International Labour Organization statistics. If we shouldn't be concerned about that and shouldn't be trying to do something about it, then I fear we are not acting in the public interest. So I would suggest to the hon. member that if we're going to quote the ILO, and if we're going to consider the ILO an authority, let's consider everything they say. Let's put it in some context, and let's be honest about the problems this country has. Then let's assess what this government has done in terms of the real problems we face.

Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member is addressing the public, I'd like him to think about some of the recent information which has come to light from studies done by economists. I'd like to draw to his atten-

tion — I believe he received a copy of it — the bulletin of the Economic Council of Canada, dated March 1978. That bulletin refers to a working paper. But through its analysis it shows the impact of public service settlements relative to private sector settlements, wage negotiated settlements — and if the hon. member can't read time series data, it does it graphically, so you'll be able to read lines — and clearly shows that public sector wages have outrun private sector. And it goes on. It makes some pretty sharp comments about the impact of that. It says:

Ordinarily, wage increases in the private sector decelerate during a recession because of poor demand for goods and services. But, since wages in the public sector are not restrained by market conditions and are very sensitive to inflation, they rise more than in the private sector. Because this puts pressure on businesses to meet excessive wage demands, it increases strike activity and unemployment. Consequently, the traditional trade-off relationship between unemployment and inflation breaks down, and both prices and jobless levels rise.

I'd like the hon. member to put, in a fair way, this analysis and some of his statements before those 300 people laid off by Firestone in Calgary and see how many yea votes he'd get. Or perhaps he should take it to Sudbury and lay it on the line there. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that when we look at some of the problems around us, the problems of security of employment which all persons in the private sector face in a way which as far as I know only employees in the public service within Manitoba face — and right now they're facing a little uncertainty — if we leave aside Manitoba over a short-term period, if we set aside that exception, the security of tenure for public service employees is far greater than in the private sector. The concern about their employer going bankrupt is not generally a concern. They have pension plans. They have a number of benefits which employees in the private sector do not have.

Let's come to the point of the wage guidelines we have in Alberta today. Those wage guidelines were brought in for a number of reasons. First of all, we as a government had to have regard to what is fair between the public and private sector in 1978. In 1978 the Anti-Inflation Board guidelines, which apply to the private sector, were not having application to the public sector. Therefore it was pretty obvious that wages in the private sector were going to be controlled through the better part of 1978 regardless of what happened to inflation. That was the situation.

Secondly, having regard to inflation and taking inflation over the longer term, it was anticipated that inflation rates would be somewhere in the vicinity of 6 to 7 per cent. Now our horrendous international situation, our poor economic situation in this country — which I think to a large measure was brought about by undue government intervention, and by some overzealous expectations on the part of people of what the economy could produce, which led to terrible inflation over the last decade — has produced an international competitive situation which is pretty terribly for exports from this country, other than our raw products. It's costing us a loss of jobs in most areas of Canada. We had to look at that and say, all right, maybe in light of those circumstances, situations of unemployment which would normally curtail

inflation, the inflation rate should be between 6 and 7 per cent.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, we looked at the situation in agriculture. The hon. member should take the speech he's just made in the Assembly and make it to some of his farmers in Spirit River-Fairview. A good portion of the farming population would raise some questions about what was said this afternoon, because agriculture has been experiencing a very tough time, as the hon. member well knows. I know he knows, because I've heard him say it in this Assembly. He didn't express any support, concern, or care for farmers or agriculture this afternoon. But when he's on the hustings, I'm sure he'll have to try to make some kind of compromise. We had regard, then, to the plight of agriculture, which has to buy domestically and sell on international markets. That's a real tough squeeze. It's made a little better, I hope, by some of the currency exchange rate adjustments which have just occurred.

So, Mr. Speaker, in terms of trying to balance out what would be fair and equitable treatment for our society in Alberta, we elected to provide some guidelines, some expectation for future wage rates for 1978. This was done in late November 1977, as I remember. It's worth while, Mr. Speaker, to have regard to some of the impact that could have had.

In 1978 we have approximately 205,000 unionized employees in Alberta; that is, employees who belong to unions. They may not be unions recognized by the Alberta Federation of Labour in all cases, but they are unionized. That's out of a total of 730,000-odd employees if we exclude the agricultural sector. So right away, Mr. Speaker, we were thinking about what would be fair to the 733,000 employees in total, of which about 35,000 are employees of the government of Alberta, roughly 14,900 are in the municipal governments of the province, 26,000 are school board employees, and about 14,000 are hospital employees. Adding those up, I think we get about 85,000 employees who were coming out from under guidelines. So that's 85,000 out of 733,000. We were going to have a situation potentially where there were no guidelines for 85,000 and there were for the balance of the employees of this province. Now I ask you, is that fair? In our determination it was not fair.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to reflect for a minute on The Public Service Employee Relations Act, because the hon. member has mentioned it in passing in his expressions this afternoon. The Public Service Employee Relations Act was brought in after a great deal of consideration and discussion. It is clear from the record I referred to, which is documented by statistics from the ILO, that the traditional collective bargaining situation in Canada is not a good one. I don't know how the hon. member can be happy with that situation.

But it's equally clear, Mr. Speaker, that the relationship which pertains between employer and employee, when the employer is private sector, is vastly different from that which pertains between the government of the province and its employees. In the first case, the government stands by as an independent assistant, an intermediary, a third party to assist the two parties to come to an agreement. But when the difference of opinion is between the public sector and the government's own employees, where is the

third party?

Clearly we had to try to arrive at a fair, objective relationship. In searching for that relationship, we have arrived at a special set of conditions which, if agreement cannot be reached, provides for binding arbitration and tries to do that as fairly and objectively as possible. Surely that is a more desirable approach than having a situation in which one party can cry foul; your mediation efforts are your own appointees, and they're biased in favor of the employer. We've tried to come up with the solution which seems to us to be fair, objective, and neutral to both parties.

Mr. Speaker, in talking about some of his statistics and the impact of inflation, I think the hon. member should have regard to a few other illustrations which come to mind. If we allow inflation to run, if we hide our head in the sand and run the other way, as the hon. member seems inclined to do, let's consider this scenario: let's consider the increased cost to any one of us, whether employer or employee, of a \$50,000 mortgage when interest rates rise 1 per cent. That translates into \$500 a year. If we take that mortgage over 25 or 30 years, that translates into another \$12,000 to \$15,000.

Now I ask the hon. member: is it worth 1 per cent more on the wage package of an employee if his mortgage is going to be increased by an amount of that dimension? I think not. I think it's in everybody's interest that we undertake every measure we can think of to try to control inflation, to try to keep in a balanced perspective the various costs that go into the cost of living. The hon. member, it seems, would like to control most everything, but not provide any guidance in terms of wages and salaries in a certain sector of our province. Mr. Speaker, he came on pretty strong as a centralization specialist, as though government boards and agencies have all the answers. But in the one instance he doesn't want any government interference. I invite him again to take that argument to Spirit River-Fairview, sell it to the farmers, and see where he gets. There's no problem because I doubt it'll get to the farmers, if he can avoid it. [interjections]

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make one last comment about some of the debate I heard in the first 10 minutes of the hon. member's arguments this afternoon. I'd like to remind hon. members in the Assembly that, as I recollect, the motion before us was put on the Order Paper by oral notice on Monday, April 3. The decision taken in Calgary was apparently taken yesterday afternoon. I'm not familiar with when it was taken; I accept the hon. member's reference that it was yesterday afternoon. I don't know how that debate could have been anticipated. Maybe the hon. member had some inside information. He appears to be tied in with the particular union involved, because he's very sure the union would have accepted. He's very sure the union would have accepted, as he is sure these guidelines are going to produce trouble, doom, gloom, and crisis all over this province.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder about his pipeline to the particular union and how he knew they would accept in this particular circumstance. I have been at many bargaining tables, and I have, signed hundreds of memorandums of agreement. I am pleased to say I doubt that more than a dozen of them were not accepted. Of that dozen, only about two were rejected on the management side; the others were

rejected by the union. So I don't know how this union can be so different, nor how the hon. member can be so sure of what the outcome would have been.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to close by saying that since very little reference has been made to Bill 41 this afternoon, I'll not expand on some of the good points I think should be said for it. But I would say I think it's a fair bill. It's a bill which provides certainty as to settlement; it's a bill which tries to provide objectivity. It's a bill which assures the public of Alberta uninterrupted service, and surely, in this day and age of frustration with poor service due to interruptions of different types, that's an important consideration. It's a bill which has a provision for the resolution of difficulties of individuals in the public service if they bring them to an impartial panel. I think it's a much better situation for both the employees and the government than the predecessor legislation was.

With respect to the wage guidelines, I think it would be irresponsible for a government in this day and age not to have some indication to those who are participating at the bargaining table to anticipate what could reasonably be expected and what the government sees as fair. The wage guideline is a guideline. It isn't a hard, fast, arbitrary number, and the parties would have to determine themselves whether there should be exceptions to it. But I see that guideline as a necessary part of government in 1978. I see it as a fair decision, and I would hope that hon. members of this Assembly would be aware of the gravity of the situation in our economy and recognize that we're going to have to take some difficult decisions, and perhaps in some quarters some unpopular decisions, but to act like statesmen from time to time and do our best to make sure our economy can become a source of many jobs and for the production of products competitive not only between Alberta and the rest of Canada, but as far as the international market is concerned.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I want to say a word or two on the resolution, because I am concerned about one or two aspects and principles involved in it.

The Public Service Employee Relations Act was debated in this Legislature through each of its readings except the first. The members had an opportunity to get in touch with those they represented to find out what the people wanted. Then the votes were taken and the autonomy and sovereignty of the Legislature showed up. If I recall, the recorded vote was 55 in favor and five opposed. Thus the people of Alberta, through their representatives, said what they wanted in regard to The Public Service Employee Relations Act.

The five members who opposed were the four members of the Social Credit Party and the member of the NDP, who represent that number of people in the province. Whether or not they were representing the thinking of their people in this matter is something they themselves have to decide. But I have no compunction about the way I voted. I supported the bill. The people of my constituency are sick and tired of strikes. They can see no reason at all why negotiations can't be carried on while people remain at work. We're not living in the dark ages with ruthless employers; we're living in an enlightened age.

In many cases today, strikes don't hurt the employer nearly as much they hurt the third, fourth, and fifth

parties, the innocent people. Unions can be large and big and irresponsible too. A typical example was the postal strike where the labor unions refused to even take the vote back to the people. They said, this is what it is. We don't care what the employees think. This is the way it's going to be. Finally they were forced to give some cognizance of what the other people who were employed thought about it.

So it's not only big business that can be ruthless. Big unions can be ruthless too. Many times, in my view, I question whether the unions are acting on behalf of the people they're supposed to represent or acting on behalf of the political parties they'd like to see in power. This part worries me. I want to say that you don't have to be a socialist or a member of the NDP to want fair play for working people. People of the free-enterprise parties are just as concerned about fair play in regard to fair wages and working conditions for our people. The people who represent those people have the right too.

But when there's a sovereignty vote of 55 to five in this Legislature, referring the matter to an international labor office is nauseating to me, completely nauseating. If people like that were in power they would establish an international police force to come in and club the people into thinking the way they think they should think. The free-enterprise system, the Progressive Conservative Party, doesn't believe in telling the people what's good for them. They believe in reflecting the thinking of the people in their legislation, and that's why I supported it. They believe in freedom of thought. We certainly don't have to have international labor offices tell us in this province what we should or should not do. We're well able to represent the thinking of this people in this Legislature without reference to any international labor union.

I recognize your signals and I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The time allotted for the debate on the designated motion has just expired.

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

**Bill 211
An Act to Amend
The Age of Majority Act**

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 211, An Act to Amend the Age of Majority Act. This amendment would raise the legal age for the consumption of alcohol from the present 18 years to 19 years.

Traditionally in Alberta the legal age for drinking alcohol has always been tied to the age of majority. At one time the legal age for drinking alcohol was 21. But in March 1971 this was lowered, along with the age of majority, to 18.

Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues and many members of the general public have real difficulty separating the legal age for the consumption of alcohol from the age of majority, and from the rest of the privileges and responsibilities contained in that act.

They feel the age of majority and the legal age for the use of alcohol should be the same.

But in my opinion they do not necessarily need to be the same. For instance, the legal age for drinking could be set at 16. Conversely, it could be set at 25, although I believe there would be a certain amount of protest in the latter case. However, the point I am making is that the so-called legal drinking age does not have to be identical to the age of majority.

Bill 211 is very similar to one introduced by the hon. Member for Lacombe. I supported that bill in 1976. Although it was discussed and never brought to a vote in the Legislature, it generated a great deal of interest in the general public. As time goes by it seems that people all across Canada are beginning to see the advantages of raising the drinking age. Last year the province of Saskatchewan raised the legal age for the consumption of alcohol to 19, and Ontario is seriously considering it at the present time.

The two main differences between Bill 211 and Bill 223 of October 1976 is that Bill 211 has a clause in it that will not take drinking privileges away from any 18-year-old who has them at the present time. Secondly, the previous bill raised the drinking age to 20, whereas Bill 211 raises it to 19.

To many people this issue is an emotional one, comparable to some degree to the question of capital punishment, which was before the federal government a couple of years ago. Most people are either for it or against it, and they are not interested in any statistics which might cloud their point of view.

I have been asked why I introduced this bill at this time. I have three reasons. The first is that in my assessment, 75 per cent of the people in the Cardston constituency believe this is the right thing to do. My constituency may be unique on this issue, but it may surprise some of my colleagues that there is a ground swell across the province favoring this kind of legislation.

Secondly, I feel we should get in step with our sister provinces; namely, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. British Columbia has never lowered its drinking age to 18. It was changed from 21 to 19, and there has never been any real drive to have it lowered to 18. Saskatchewan lowered the drinking age to 18 and then raised it back to 19 last year. Again, there has been no real protest to the move.

In fact the Social Credit Party lowered the drinking age to 18 in March 1971, and in August of the same year lost their first election since 1935. Therefore, from a political point of view, I do not believe this is controversial legislation.

The third, and to me most important, reason for introducing this bill is a matter of principle. I am in no way discrediting the responsibility or maturity of our 18-year-old citizens, but I am really concerned about the availability of alcohol to the high school students. Mr. Speaker, I'm not suggesting that high school students all drink their lunches at the local bar or that the use of alcohol is widespread at high school functions. But I believe the provincial government should not legally condone the use of alcohol by high school students. Some may say all grade 12 students are not 18, and this is perfectly true. A small percentage of 17-year-olds are in grade 12, also some 19-year-olds. However, I maintain that the great majority of grade 12 students are in the 18-year-old age group. Therefore I suggest that raising the drink-

ing age to 19, although not completely eliminating the legal ability of grade 12 students to use alcohol, will greatly alleviate it. At the present time there is a licensed pizza parlor within a couple of blocks of two high schools in the city of Lethbridge. This may or may not be a coincidence.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe this bill will totally solve the problem of teenage drinking, and I hope the members of the House will not look on passing this bill as a final solution. As history has shown, prohibition has never solved any country's drinking problem. But I sincerely believe the passage of Bill 211 is a step in the right direction.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, the one topic almost every Albertan has a strong opinion on besides the weather and the government is what age young Albertans should begin consuming alcohol. Ask the question, should the drinking age be raised or lowered, and in no uncertain terms you'll almost certainly get a solid expression of opinion from the person you ask. But what is that opinion likely to be? Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you it depends very much on the age of the person you talk to. If that person is, say, 16 or 17, they'll most likely express the opinion that the drinking age should be left at 18. But if that person is age 18 or older, you're more likely to hear that the legal age should be somewhat higher — say, 19 or 20. Why should older Albertans tend to feel this way when there was such an overwhelming support for the lowering of the drinking age back in the '60s in the first place?

It is my conviction and belief that the responsible citizens of this province, having seen the kinds of behavior and the carnage that the lowering of the age has brought, are now questioning the rationality of that decision. Teachers are now experiencing situations where their students are literally drinking their lunches. Drunkenness among young people at school functions such as dances and sports events has now become the norm. Mall and shopping centre managers complain of drunken rowdiness on the premises by high school students, and on goes the list.

But, Mr. Speaker, I don't think ever in the history of this province we've seen the accident rate that's befallen our young people on our highways. Impaired driving is taking quite a toll out there on young lives as well as the lives of their innocent victims. Impaired driving that does not result in an accident but is detected by our police forces leaves a blot of a criminal record on the future of young lives.

As responsible legislators we are committed to the saving and not the wasting of lives. The fascination of a youth with a fast car cannot be removed, but we can make it much more difficult for growing bodies and maturing minds to combine the mischief of alcohol with the operation of a motor vehicle. Distribution and trafficking of drugs, of which alcohol of course is one of the worst, should not be condoned or encouraged by this government. Yet we have done that by lowering the legal drinking age. It is now much easier for the 15-, 16-, and 17-year-old children to get their 18-year-old friends to purchase alcohol for them. It should be the purpose of a responsible government to encourage its citizens to drink less not more.

The old saw about how they will drink anyway so

we might as well make it legal just doesn't wash. All of us here know that when the age was 21, and when you and I were young, Mr. Speaker, sure, some drinking and experimentation was going on with alcohol, but there was never the situation of 17-, 18-, and 19-year-old people constantly sitting in the local taverns almost every day of their lives. It used to be alcoholism was a disease of older people. Now it is fast becoming the disease of children.

Raising the drinking age to 19, Mr. Speaker, is by no means a new issue before this Assembly. And on behalf of a great many of my constituents from the Camrose area, we are appreciative to the hon. Member for Cardston for bringing forth this motion. In debate on a similar motion in 1976, members raised many good points in favor of raising the drinking age. Some I think should deserve repeating.

My good friend the hon. Member for Lacombe presented evidence from studies conducted in Ontario by the Addiction Research Foundation that showed significantly more young drivers have been involved in accidents or killed since the drinking age was lowered in that province. Statistics show that last year the juvenile division of the Edmonton city police force charged 200 juvenile girls up to the age of 18 and boys up to the age of 16 with liquor-related offences. The same age group was charged with 385 traffic offences, many of them of course involving liquor. I ask: what per cent do the 200 juveniles in Edmonton represent of the total intoxicated juveniles not apprehended by the long arm of the law? Is it 20 per cent, 10 per cent, or 1 per cent? And what might be the number throughout Alberta?

I guess, Mr. Speaker, really to get a handle on how serious the situation is, one should discuss with our provincial judges their concerns as to the endless parade of juveniles before the bench charged with liquor infractions. Listen to the social worker despair of dealing with more and more alcoholic juveniles, or to the RCMP, who have informed me: it's not the drug scene; the beer bottle is still the number one killer of our kids.

During the debate on this topic in 1976, Mr. Speaker, the point was raised that regulating drinking behavior in Alberta is a matter of clamping down on the enforcement of existing laws. You bet that's a good point. Many steps to get tough and crack down on the drinking driver have been put in effect since '76, but we still have one long way to go.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the drinking driver endangers his own life, but also yours and mine, and a lot of other Albertans'. And drinking responsibility is not an easy thing to learn. For the most part, our young people at 18 are mature and reasonable adults, but 18 can be a confusing time for many young people. Many young adults leave home at 18, are out working for the first time, begin driving cars, learn to manage their own finances, and begin to accept the responsibility of adulthood. I feel raising the drinking age to 19 would allow these young people some breathing space, give them the opportunity to learn to handle the responsibilities of an adult world, which includes learning to handle liquor one step at a time.

Thank you.

MR. DONNELLY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to enter the debate today. To start with, I think I should explain that I don't intend to give you my words or

thoughts, because I don't think you want to hear from a 45-year-old who enjoys the odd nip from the bottle, but I thought perhaps we should find out what the young Alberta adults think. I have had a number of discussions with them in Calgary, and I bring you their words and thoughts on this problem.

To start with, Mr. Speaker, they just do not feel that moving the age from 18 to 19 would make any major change in arresting the problem that's out there, and that's the alcoholic problem and the drinking of under-age adolescents. These guys and students who partake in this drinking era think they're cool and these cool ones will get it anyway — 'so I'm told. So making that change just would not help. They certainly felt the advantage of moving it to 19 and, as has been said earlier, a lot of the students have graduated by then and are less accepted by these other students perhaps to ask them to buy them a bottle, or whatever they do at the high schools. But really they didn't feel that was the real problem.

One problem expressed to me was that a lot of young city adults like to work, and a lot of them work where alcoholic beverages are being served. If we raise the age of majority to 19 they wouldn't be able to work, because you have to be at least 18 to work where alcoholic beverages are served. That may not be a problem in rural Alberta, but it's one they brought up. They have to earn some money, and a lot of them work at spaghetti houses, or wherever it may be.

Mr. Speaker, I'm never known to speak long, so I'd like to move to what they considered their solutions. You know, it added up to one word: adults.

AN HON. MEMBER: Blame the adults.

MR. DONNELLY: Police were mentioned, lounge owners, teachers, and parents — all adults. These young adults I talked to think the police are doing a terrific job. They have no problem with the police. The police are doing the job. The problem is with lounge owners, especially the small lounges. Small lounges that don't get much of a trade love to see these kids come in and spend their money. They're not doing their job by policing their own lounges. This is what they're telling me. The small lounge owners are letting them come in. The big ones that are busy say, come on kids, out you get. They have a lot of trade. The small lounges are the ones we should go after.

The next is teachers. They just don't feel teachers are exercising their prerogative to get rid of the cool students; don't let them hang around the school; throw them out; get rid of them. The kids don't want them there anyway. The good kids don't want these cool kids hanging around. Some of these teachers even drink with the students. Well, I don't see anything wrong with that. If the student is 18 years old, and as long as it's separated from the school, and they go at it properly, and they're in a lounge having a drink — nothing wrong with that. But they shouldn't be talking to the kids and drinking anywhere near the school or be talking about school. In other words, separate them.

The last is parents. I really think that's the crux of it. The problem out there is not the kids drinking, it's the parents who let their kids drink. That's where the problem is.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's right.

MR. DONNELLY: I don't care what you do with your age of majority, you're going to have it. You know, they're telling me — I have a drink at home and I have four kids at home; they've seen me drink as they were growing up — it's not example they're worried about, it's understanding they want from parents. You know, parents go out and tie one on; fine. Mom and dad do that; no problem. But they have to have some understanding with their parents. That's what they're looking for. At least, in my part of Calgary that's what the young adults told me. I really think they make a bunch of sense, and we as adults should approach this thing with a common-sense attitude. Maybe we should all go home and start talking to our neighbors and say, look, let's start paying some attention to these young adults.

Thank you.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take part in the debate this afternoon. I would like to compliment the hon. Member for Calgary Millican, Mr. Donnelly, because what the hon. gentleman says has a lot of sense to it. Quite often we get carried away on our crusades. We lose sight of what we're really trying to do and what the problem is.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say just briefly that the age of majority came in under the former government, and I see now the present government is trying to hide and say that the former government did it, so you know that's why it's so bad. Well, I'd like to say to this government if they had any guts — if they had the guts and they think it should be changed to 19, they have the power to do it. This hanky-panky about bringing in a backbencher's bill last year and then bringing one in this year — if the government thinks it should be lowered to 19, do it. You are the government, [interjections] Okay, okay. Enough of this hanky-panky. That's all you're doing. You haven't got the guts to go ahead and do it. You're just hiding . . .

MR. GHITTER: On a point of order . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Misleading the people.

DR. BUCK: Are you going to make a speech? You said you were going to make the next one.

MR. GHITTER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I think this reference to hanky-panky is very unparliamentary. I don't know that that's in any dictionary, and I don't understand that terminology. I think it should be deleted from *Hansard*.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, just in case the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. members don't understand it, then it isn't likely to scandalize anyone, [laughter]

AN HON. MEMBER: Maybe it's something we should know.

MR. COOKSON: Further to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I'm having trouble with the word "guts". I'm

not sure just what he means or what he's implying, but perhaps there would be a better word than . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: The stringed tennis racquet, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, intestinal fortitude, which is the same as not having enough guts to do it. [interjections] You know that's an old athletic term, and many of the members who have played sports know what the term means.

But the age of majority, Mr. Speaker, came in as an attempt to have some uniformity across Canada as far as entering into contracts is concerned, and all the things that you can do legally if that's the age of majority. Some of the hon. members of the learned legal profession can enlighten us upon that.

What has happened, Mr. Speaker, at the same time the age of majority — which included the drinking age — was lowered to 18, there seemed to be a sociological phenomenon that collided with that lowered drinking age. The two of them happened to be on a collision course and collided: the lowering of the drinking age and the breakup of the family unit, some of the young people maturing a little earlier, taking responsibility a little earlier. These two paths collided. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure and I'm not convinced that raising the age to 19 is going to make a particle of difference.

I'd like to ask the hon. member who moved the resolution if he knows what the Saskatchewan experience has shown. Has the hon. member evidence that raising the drinking age to 19 has solved their problems? I would say no, it hasn't solved the problems.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to comment on the point I think is most important made by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican, Mr. Donnelly: the responsibility of the family unit; that's where the responsibility lies. I know that the people who run hotel and lounge establishments have a blind eye to some of the young people. The hon. Member for Calgary Millican was talking about our hockey team that wiped out the Fort Saskatchewan Traders — the Calgary team beat our team. Anyway, after that, I happened to be in the vicinity of the hockey team when they won an important game. So they headed down to the local watering hole. I would say that three-quarters of those young men on that hockey team were under the age of 18. There weren't any questions asked of those young people. Not one question. Some of them were 16, and they looked 16.

I would like to relate my experiences. We had a small country hotel. At that time the drinking age was 21. My dad was tougher than toenails. If he didn't think you were 21, you could take him to court but you got bounced out of the place because he said, you're not 21; you're not drinking beer in my hotel. Plain and simple.

I remember I was relieving the bartender at noon one day, and that was when native people didn't have the right and privilege to drink. There was a man in there — I couldn't tell the difference between a full-blooded Indian and people who were maybe partly blooded — and my dad said, what is that native man doing in the bar? At that time, as I say, there was interdiction, and native people couldn't drink. I said, I

don't think the man is an Indian. He said, yes he is. How was I to know? I didn't know. But he knew. That's how tough he was with the enforcement, because he felt if he had the privilege of having a licence he had a responsibility to make sure people who were his clients did it according to the law.

Now I know that I'm going to get the great powers of the Alberta Hotel Association and some people descending upon my curly locks. The problem is basically that some of these operators who are paying a lot of money for their licences are turning their heads the other way and not enforcing it. But at the same time I say that, there is also a responsibility on that young person under the age of 18 who frequents the place. How many of those young people have ever been prosecuted? I don't know any.

At the same time, we as a society pay only lip-service to the fact that we want tougher drinking laws, tougher enforcement against impaired drivers. When the 0.08 thing came in, the federal statute, a constituent of mine said: What are you people trying to do? You're not going to let a man have two drinks. Well, I am sure many of us have seen the experiment where you know how many drinks you have to have to get over 0.08. But you can ask any police officer in this province: he's never picked up a drunk who's ever had more than two drinks.

The old story about the fellow who says, you know, I'm two — four drinks maybe, the hon. member says . . . Most of the time it's: officer, I've only had two drinks. Really we are just paying lip-service to the fact we want tougher laws and tougher enforcement against drinking drivers.

I'd like to relate a story told to me by a man who doesn't drink, a man I respect, the former Premier of this province, the hon. Mr. Strom. He said he went over to Sweden on a holiday, and they were having a big clan reunion. He got there early and, at the gathering of the clan, up pulls this bus, and it's full of relatives. So he said, how come everybody's travelling by bus? They said, we thought there might be a little bit of celebrating here tonight, and in this country we don't drink and drive, because if we do get caught drinking and driving we automatically lose our licence.

If the people of Alberta really want that we can legislate it and have it enforced. But do the people really want that? I say they really don't want that. They just pay lip-service to the fact that it's a problem: isn't it terrible? I remember one article on the drinking driver which said: the only time you're really concerned is if it's one of your family who's killed by the drunken driver. That's the only time you're really concerned.

Mr. Speaker, at the same time that we waffle around let's just go a little further ahead than when the previous government changed the age of majority to 18. Let's get back a little closer to the present, when the former government would not allow the advertising of wine, beer, and liquor on radio and television in this province. I know, year after year the media would come before the cabinet and the members of the Legislature, lobbying and saying we want to be able to do that. I would like to remind some of the members of the government what happened. After a session of this Legislature, I guess by some change of the regulations, suddenly we see the good life, permissive legislation by this government, and

pouring the booze on TV and in the colored ads. Hon. gentlemen and ladies of this Assembly, if there are two products we as a society do not have to push, those are booze and smoking. They do their own selling. And surely it's just about time again, Mr. Speaker . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Back to the Bible Hour.

DR. BUCK: Back to the Bible Hour: the Minister Without Portfolio for Calgary.

AN HON. MEMBER: You didn't say that, did you?

DR. BUCK: You know, it's a strange quirk in our makeup, in our society, that we will allow millions and billions of dollars to be spent on advertising two things that kill as many of us as wars do. So I would like to say to the hon. member who has proposed the bill, because he's on the government side: if he really wants to do something, he is the government. You can raise that age to 19 if you wish to. You can get rid of the liquor, wine, and booze advertising on radio and television and then really do something . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Close the liquor stores.

DR. BUCK: . . . instead of just trying to appease your constituents. I appreciate the hon. member's problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, if this were to go to referendum, which we on this side of the House feel is the way to handle it, I would say that that referendum most likely would raise the drinking age to 19.

AN HON. MEMBER: Sixty-five.

DR. BUCK: But it will not solve the problem. So I would say to the hon. member who has proposed the bill that if he thinks it's going to solve the problem, get it in the next election as a referendum. It'll pass but it won't do anything.

So what are we going to do about it? Okay. We're going to toughen the enforcement at the outlets — too bad the hon. Solicitor General isn't here. That includes the Alberta Liquor Control Board stores, which are just as big if not larger offenders than the retail outlets, because I know the Alberta Liquor Control Board comes down very heavily on hotels and lounges if they sell booze to people who are past their limit as far as being intoxicated is concerned. We take away their licences, we close their doors — but have you ever seen an Alberta Liquor Control Board store locked because they served booze to some guy who had to crawl in on his hands and knees? I have never seen it. So let's clean up our own act first, gentlemen, members of the Assembly.

Secondly, if we want to make it tough, let's line up the police cars outside some of the local watering holes. Let's get at it, if we really believe it. So let's not just pay lip-service.

AN HON. MEMBER: The government can do it.

DR. BUCK: The government can do it if they want to. But it's the responsibility of government, hon. member who has proposed the bill. It's your responsibility. It's all of our responsibilities, but more yours than

ours because you are the government.

The third thing is, let's concentrate more on the educational programs in the schools than we're doing now. One thing on which I can't agree with the hon. Member for Calgary Millican is, don't blame the teachers for everything. We've asked the teachers to do everything now. Let's look at a progressive educational program on the abuses and misuses of alcohol.

The final point: it is really the responsibility of us as parents, as was mentioned by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican. It is our responsibility as parents. That's really where it lies. Let's not blame it on the teachers. Let's not blame it on the age. Let's not blame it on the lounges entirely, or the law officers. Let's lay the blame right where it should be, with us as parents, because if it's ever going to change, that's where it's going to change, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a few observations on Bill 211, sponsored by the Member for Cardston. I'm sympathetic to both the spirit of the bill and his arguments. I know it's an issue that many people in this Assembly are not agreed on. It seems a little ironical that the average age of the members of this House, certainly on the government side, is 48.6, and they're debating issues that are going to affect the lives of people many, many years younger. I suppose that's the nature of democracy. Although they're old enough to vote, they don't seem to find their way into the Assembly as members of the House.

MR. DIACHUK: Where did you get your figures?

MR. GOGO: To the Member for Edmonton Beverly, if anybody reads the *Parliamentary Guide* and does a little division, you'll find those on the government side who are honest enough to disclose their birth dates are in there.

DR. WARRACK: What about the weighted average?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I think the motivation from the Member for Cardston is not as political in nature as the Member for Clover Bar seems to indicate. I'm confident that his motivation, like mine, is directed primarily to the saving of lives. We read the statistics each year and see those fatalities directly connected to alcohol as published just last week. I think the safety figures clearly indicate that a disproportionate number of young people either cause or are the victims in fatalities.

I always find interesting the Member for Clover Bar. He's not able, it seems to me, to debate on whether he should or should not support the bill. He has to stand up in this House and castigate the members of the Alberta Hotel Association who each year spend \$50,000 or \$60,000 in scholarships for young people, who to my knowledge don't actively pursue the dispensing of booze to young people at all. As a matter of fact, I think they discourage it. Yet the Member for Clover Bar seems adamant in his position that it's not the fault of the young people or the parents, but the fault of government on the one hand for the ALCB dispensing the booze to those who can't get off their knees or who are too young, or of the members of the Alberta Hotel Association who seem to make a lot of

money out of selling to young people. I've never ever thought the Member for Clover Bar was misinformed, but I'm beginning to believe otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, I don't for one minute profess to stand here and believe that we as legislators could ever legislate morality. I don't think that's possible. I do think, though, that our responsibility as members of this Legislature is to debate that legislation which only we, the highest court in this province, have power to debate. I for one, as the Member for Lethbridge West, have been asked by various people, by the council of my city representing 50,000 people, and the school boards in my community who also happen to represent a fair number of people, if I would do what I could to see that proper debate was participated in, hopefully with the result of getting drinking out of the school system. That's the school system as applicable to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to look at some figures. We see that only 4,000 of those in our schools are 18 or over. So that's not the problem. I suggest the problem is with the other 85,000 who are between the ages of 15 and 18. As we all know, Mr. Speaker, the 18-year-old, the 17-year-old, and the 16-year-old become members of a peer group, and they try to emulate each other. In the constituency I represent it's a serious problem in the schools.

Hopefully altering the drinking age is not a matter of changing the age of majority or condemning those who are 18; it's a matter of being practical. Those members of this Assembly who reside at the same place I do during the session recognize certain habits develop within that establishment. You may not normally practise those back in your constituency, but because you're here you look at your peer group and fall into certain habits. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it's no different at all in the schools. When we look at the statistics of the Minister of Education, we see only 800 people in our school system are 19.

So I would suggest that although you can't legislate morality with the stroke of a pen, you can be co-operative with those agencies and people in Alberta who look to the government for assistance. Primarily, I think our responsibility is to respond to those people, particularly in elective offices in our school boards, and town and city councils who request us to act.

The Member for Cardston very aptly discussed the history of the drinking age in other jurisdictions. I think we must be practical. I think back to the furor over daylight-saving time. The main objections I heard from people of certain beliefs — if you changed the daylight-saving time it would affect the way their tomatoes grew, and they would have to water their lawns at different hours. I think it's a matter of communication. But when I look at statistics out of my city alone, the annual report of the city of Lethbridge police department, and the number of people involved in alcohol abuse and antisocial behavior, I think the government is responsible in many ways for enacting legislation that assists these people in the communities to do a better job.

The Member for Calgary Millican makes a very strong case that so much of it is parental understanding. I think that's great. I wish the 14,000 single parents in this province would have the understanding of other people. I know they have the understanding of this government, because we've enacted day care legislation.

But it's not as simple as it sounds, Mr. Speaker. I happen to be a father of five, and I've got that problem. I polled my family, and they're split down the middle, mainly because of their age. It's nice to be understanding and say that people should communicate more, and it would resolve the problem. That is like talking about delinquency. It's always the other fellow's kid who gets in trouble. Mr. Speaker, in fairness, the parents who phone and write me — and I'm sure other members in this Assembly get the same type of mail — ask us, will you please do something? The "something" I've opted for is to agree with the Member for Cardston on raising the age to 19, with a deep feeling, Mr. Speaker, that it's abhorrent to me to look at retroactive legislation on the one hand or to take away the rights of anybody on the other.

So I would support the bill. I would hope to see the bill passed in such a manner that it wouldn't be enacted until such time as those who are 18 are 19. I'm not concerned about the political consequences. I don't think that's our primary responsibility. Maybe the Member for Clover Bar has grounds for thinking differently.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by saying that I appreciate the motivation of the Member for Cardston, as I did with the Member for Lacombe a year and a half ago. He really acted as the catalyst for many of us members who had concerns and were recipients of correspondence from constituents. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate I am in support of Bill 211.

Thank you.

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, after listening to the prior members of the House deal with this debate, I thought it might be useful to hear from one of the few non-drinking members of the House [interjections] just so we'd have a proper perspective — and the Member for Calgary Currie I forgot, I'm sorry, [interjections]

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Clover Bar speaks again. In all these years in the House I've never heard the hon. Member for Clover Bar so eloquent in debate as he was this afternoon. Probably the reason is that, for the first time in the many years we have heard the hon. Member for Clover Bar, he was speaking on a topic of which he had some personal experience.

However, I think debates of this nature are useful. I certainly congratulate the Member for Cardston for bringing it forward, as the Member for Lacombe did previously. I think often issues of this nature get blurred, in a sense, from objectivity, merely because so many people have had such bad experiences with alcohol abuse. It is probably a drug that causes more disharmony, and more cost to individuals, to families, and to society. It's very, very difficult for us to deal with it in a very objective sense, because it affects our lives so personally. Some have been hurt so badly by the abuse of alcohol, and we've seen what it has done.

However, when one looks at what the problem is perceived to be, I sometimes think the problem really isn't what we understand it to be. We tend to overreact when we see a problem in society that we can't really cope with or that we're at ends as to how to deal with it. I think sometimes the people whom we represent

overreact in their views on how to stop a problem.

We hear a number of arguments today from the hon. members who support the bill. It seems, and I totally agree, that certain youths have a lack of maturity and don't know how to handle beverage alcohol. I could say the same of many adults that I've experienced, Mr. Speaker. I don't know that the youths of our province are the only ones who fall into that category.

We hear the suggestion that if we raise the age to 19, in some magical way that is going to decrease the availability of beverage alcohol to our young people. Mr. Speaker, you know and all members know that if somebody wants to buy beverage alcohol, be they 13, 16, 18, or 19 years old, it's no farther away than their father's cabinet or their friend down the street who happens to be in the right age category, or the neighborhood pub. That's the closest place they can drink, where they can walk in when they're 15 and 16 years old and get a drink in any event.

Mr. Speaker, probably the reason the difficulty comes to the point it has today with our citizens — the Member for Clover Bar alluded to it, and I think it's really very true — is that what we have in such a rapidly changing society is a strong, changing role of the family. We have many single-parent families. We have our youth being bombarded by stimuli of every kind and facing pressures that the youth of our generation never faced before. They're facing pressures in the schools in order to get better, to get into our universities.

The standards imposed upon them are far and away beyond anything that has been experienced by anyone previously. The amount of information coming to our young people today is far and away beyond anything any of us ever experienced. The pressures upon our young people to succeed in a much more competitive society than we ever experienced is such that many of them are having difficulty in coping with it. And when they are trying to cope with all these problems, they are not getting the leadership they deserve within the family unit, because of the unfortunate deterioration of the family unit as we see it. As a result, some youths, like many adults, look to assistance by dealing in the drug culture, and of course alcoholic beverage is probably the most common and available drug on the market and really the most dangerous to many.

But to think we are going to solve or even reduce the problem by saying, let's bump the age limit up by one year and something is magically going to change, is in my view, Mr. Speaker, not where the answers lie in dealing with how to cope with this changing situation we're experiencing with our young people in society today. To suggest a 19-year-old, 18-year-old, or 20-year-old is better than the other in a drinking sense, can handle it, and won't abuse it is playing with the numbers game, and I would suggest it doesn't apply. And I would suggest studies that have been made in the province would bring us to that very same conclusion. I think we often talk very subjectively, but some factual data is available of studies made by our own Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission, which I think are very useful in trying to conclude: is there really a problem with our young drinkers?

One need go back no further than February of this year. I know hon. members have received a copy of

this report from AADAC which was a study of rural young people in grades 6 through 12. It dealt with a 1976 survey, and updated the survey to this present year. I think it's worth repeating, Mr. Speaker. It says that in 1976 a survey of rural Albertan alcohol/drug users in grades 6 through 12 was carried out in this province. The results indicated that about 70 per cent of the students questioned had consumed alcohol on at least one occasion during the previous six months. Similar surveys in 1971 and '74 showed a higher proportion of drinkers — not what people are suggesting, that kids are drinking more, but actually that there was a higher percentage of teen-age drinking in the surveys in 1971 and 1974 than in 1978. Not by a high majority, but it's not a situation where the kids are running amuck, drinking all over the place, as some would suggest and have expressed here today.

As a result, the survey divided drinkers into five classifications: those in the age group that abstained entirely; light drinkers who consumed alcohol infrequently and in small amounts; binge drinkers who consumed alcohol infrequently, but when they did, they did it good; steady drinkers who consumed alcohol frequently but in small amounts; and then heavy drinkers who consumed alcohol frequently and in relatively large amounts, five or more drinks per drinking occasion. Now the breakdown of these five categories of drinking amongst our young people indicated that two-thirds of rural Alberta teen-agers between the ages of 12 and 18 either do not drink at all or drink small amounts of alcohol infrequently. Now that's two-thirds.

The survey also shows, Mr. Speaker, on the graph presented on the survey of now 4,000 teen-agers, that 30 per cent do not drink at all. And the only area where there could potentially be abuse, in the areas of heavy drinkers amongst our teen-age population, is 15 per cent. So what we're now talking about is changing a law of the province to change the age limit from 18 to 19, which is a questionable act, to deal with a potential 15 per cent of our teen-age population. I mean I can think in a percentage way on surveys of adult population that if you wanted to talk in terms of areas of problem drinking, the percentages would be skyrocketing by comparison to the 15 per cent. You could probably double it — triple it, if you're to believe studies of AADAC as to how many of our adult population have drinking problems.

So what are we going to do? We're going to change the legislation. We're going to tell our young people — who are old enough to marry, who are old enough to enter into contracts, who are old enough to go to war, who are mature people on the verge, who can go to universities, and are educated in a much higher degree than any of us — we're going to tell them, no, you can't drink until you're 19, but you can do all these other things when you're 18. Mr. Speaker, that doesn't wash. That doesn't make sense. It's not logical, and it's not in concert with the facts of surveys that have been conducted in our own province:

The results of this analysis indicate that while drinking of alcohol is generally widespread among Alberta adolescents, the majority appear to be drinking small amounts on relatively infrequent occasions. A relatively small group appear to be drinking fairly large amounts frequently.

The majority of problems resulting from alcohol consumption were reported by this group of heavy drinkers and this group also most frequently reported drinking with their parents.

Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that what we're really talking about is a problem amongst 15 per cent of our population. It may be higher in our urban centres. I don't know whether they drink more in the country than in the cities, because things are so bad in the country, from what I hear around the House. That may well be. Some would argue that people in the cities are much busier and don't have time to drink like those in rural communities. I don't know, but I'll turn my tractor around the other way for the moment.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk in terms of how to deal realistically with the problems. In his eloquent speech the other day, the hon. Member for Clover Bar, the Kojak of the House, proudly said: well, this government doesn't have the guts. If we wanted to we could pass the legislation. But of course, the government is all of us, and all of us obviously have different points of view. Maybe all of us don't quite agree with the very fine approach taken by the hon. Member for Cardston.

But if you want to really analyse where the problems in Alberta occur — from the point of view of the development of our alcohol laws, the archaic nature of our laws, the bad drinking trends, the bad habits, the bad examples by parents and society generally — then I look back to the former government. I say that that government didn't respond to the problems in dealing with updated laws because they were afraid to deal with them in a political sense. Then you misjudged the political environment. You passed a law at that time . . .

DR. BUCK: You haven't either.

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, he's not letting me speak.

DR. BUCK: And you haven't done either.

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, he doesn't even know what I'm going to say, and he's pointing at me.

DR. BUCK: We've been waiting for some action on the Ghitter report.

MR. GHITTER: If for example the previous government had the guts at that time to deal with the hotel lobby and say, we're going to cut down your beer barns, we're not going to let 800 or 900 people sit in a beer barn and drink, and slop, and get drunk — had you had the guts to do that earlier, our young people wouldn't have gone into these taverns and seen people slop beer all over the place and drink to get drunk, because that's what happened. It's the laws and the development of the laws over 35 years in this province that created many of the difficulties we have today. This government has had the guts to start breaking down those beer barns.

DR. BUCK: Oh, Ghitter.

MR. GHITTER: I wish the Solicitor General were here so I could compliment him and his predecessors for doing something about it. That is where the answer

lies, and that has been proven. Because now that this is happening, the vandalism is stopping, the young people are dressing up when they're going into our drinking establishments, they've got personal integrity, they're not causing the problems, they can communicate because the noise isn't so loud that they can't hear anything. As a result, the breaking down of the beer barns is starting to show where the real answers lie in drinking problems.

People are going to drink. But let's start dealing with people on the basis of at least giving them civilized, controlled drinking atmospheres so they can have mutual relationships with people in a discussion way rather than just drinking to get drunk.

So although you may criticize us for not having courage to pass this bill which a few of us don't agree with, I would submit that the real crux of the problem was the outdated archaic laws we had to live with in this province for 35 years. How well I remember, as a young man in Edmonton, when we wanted to take a date to go out and have a beer, having to go out to St. Albert to the Bruin Inn [interjections] because of the laws of the past government.

DR. BUCK: Or Fort Saskatchewan.

MR. GHITTER: So what happened? Everybody had to go out to Fort Saskatchewan, to St. Albert, to Okotoks, get drunk, and then drive back to the cities. Now those are the laws we got from the previous government, Mr. Speaker, but we don't hear about that at all. Not at all. No, it's our fault, Mr. Speaker. We're the ones who are to blame.

Mr. Speaker, I think a few things can be done in a realistic way rather than what I'd suggest as the band-aid approach that I think the raising of the age limit would really be. I quite agree with the enforcement. If the age limit is 18, then damn it, we should make it 18. Quite clearly, I think there's a responsibility on those who are making the buck by selling the product to enforce the law. The number of prosecutions we see in this province for teen-agers who are not drinking is deplorably low.

I recall when we were doing that liquor study, I think out of the prosecutions we found four or five convictions in the whole year in the city of Edmonton. That is ludicrous. If you want to enforce something, you can enforce it. We must do that. That is the job of the people who are making the buck, and that is not being done. Mr. Speaker, I think we have the finest liquor board in this whole country, in the work they are doing and the work they have carried out.

DR. BUCK: And who set that up? Tell us who set it up.

MR. GHITTER: Fine. I give you credit for doing it. Because it was so good, we kept it that way. [interjections] We understood you can't do everything wrong in 35 years, Mr. Speaker, [laughter]

Clearly then I'd suggest that what we need to do is cause more severe enforcement, if it means giving identification to all our young people and saying, you have to have it, and if you don't have it when you walk in you don't get in.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's right.

MR. GHITTER: If they happen to be 21 and they still get kicked out, then let it be. If you find somebody in there, then charge them, and don't drop the charges when the parents come crying down to the police station saying, little Johnny won't do it again. If it's a law, then let's enforce it, and let's at least keep out the 16- and 17-year-olds. I think that is the first thing that should be done.

Secondly, I think we should encourage what the Solicitor General is doing and make smaller, more reasonable, hospitable drinking establishments. You'll find less vandalism, less drunkenness, and less of these bad effects among our young — and not just our young but our adult population where the real abuse lies.

Lastly — and it's been mentioned, but it's important — it's the responsibility of the family, for those children who are lucky enough to be living in a family environment. And it's the responsibility of the schools to teach our young people what the abuse of that drug will do. Many of them just don't understand it. They've never seen it. It's up to us as adults to give them proper examples and proper education in that area.

Mr. Speaker, I think the debate on a topic like this is useful. I agree if we were to have a referendum it would sweep the province, and 75 per cent of the citizens in Alberta — I would imagine, I would bet — would vote in favor of increasing the drinking age. But I think, hopefully, that members of this Legislature — although we're a reflection of our constituents — at the same time have to offer some leadership and deal with the problems at their root cause, not at a superficial cause. My respectful submission, Mr. Speaker, is that this particular bill is not dealing with the problem — which is not a large problem, I might add — at its root cause, but is merely trying to do a kind of political sophism which I don't really think will have any long-range effect.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, before moving the adjournment of the Assembly, I'd remind hon. members that subcommittees A and B will meet this evening. I believe Subcommittee A will continue or complete Energy and Natural Resources and begin the Department of Labour. Subcommittee B will be the Department of the Environment.

So I move the Assembly adjourn until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[At 5:28 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]

