

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Thursday, May 4, 1978 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 20**The Matrimonial Property Act**

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 20, The Matrimonial Property Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill essentially combines bills 102 and 103 introduced last fall, and provides for a system of what I would describe as reasonable and equitable sharing between spouses upon marriage breakdown. It provides for the equal division of property, of assets acquired after marriage, providing the judge or the parties involved in the case of a consent find it fair and equitable. It does provide for judicial discretion with respect to that. It does not deal with maintenance or family support obligations. That will be dealt with in a subsequent bill, but I wouldn't think this year.

[Leave granted; Bill 20 read a first time]

Bill 40**The Ombudsman Amendment Act, 1978**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 40, The Ombudsman Amendment Act, 1978.

The purpose of this bill is to reinforce the independence of the office of Ombudsman by shifting control of that office from the cabinet to the Legislature. The bill also clarifies the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman, in line with the select committee recommendation of last May. The bill does not extend the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman over cities or municipalities at this time. Other amendments deal with the matter of access to closed files belonging to the Ombudsman, and the question of discretion of a minister to refer a matter to the Ombudsman. It also updates salary provisions with respect to that office.

[Leave granted; Bill 40 read a first time]

Bill 41**The Alberta Hospitals Amendment Act, 1978**

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 41, The Alberta Hospitals Amendment Act, 1978.

Mr. Speaker, the principles in this bill provide for an independent outside review of decisions internally made in hospitals in Alberta affecting the hospital privileges of individual physicians. This bill will not apply to the original or first-time granting of hospital

privileges. This bill will make it possible for such an independent review to be made as to ensure that the principles of natural justice have in fact been applied in individual cases. It is important that this fair application be evident in each case to doctors, patients, hospital board members, and the public generally. A further appeal to the courts will be allowed on matters of law.

[Leave granted; Bill 41 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the reply to Motion for a Return No. 122.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, for the information of members, I wish to file four copies of a letter of April 10, 1978, from the Prime Minister to the Premier. Copies of this letter, which relates to a follow-up with respect to the February conference in Ottawa, were tabled in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister, I understand, a few hours ago.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure today in introducing to you and to the members of the Assembly two young ladies: Lillian Gregory of Edmonton, who is the vice-president of the Canadian Council of Women, and Olga Cylurik of Edmonton, who is the president of the Alberta provincial Council of Women. They are in the members gallery. I'd like them to rise and receive the welcome.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in introducing to you today a group of 64 students in both galleries. They're from the Georges Vanier junior high school on Calgary's North Hill, a school named after a famous French-Canadian soldier and Governor General of Canada. It's appropriate that they should have with them 25 exchange students from Trois Pistoles in the province of Quebec. In their honor I'm going to say a few words in French.

Alors, en français. Mes confreres, aujourd'hui je veux vous presenter 25 etudiants, c'est a dire 25 eleves, garcons et filles, de la belle province. Ils sont de la ville de Trois Pistoles. Auparavant, quelques jeunes de l'ecole Georges Vanier ont visite leur province et maintenant ces eleves sont en pareille bien-venu chez nous.

AN HON. MEMBER: *Tres bien.*

MR. NOTLEY: That's Calgary French, all right.

MR. FARRAN: With them are principal John Dyer, teachers Dan Moulton and Mary Spratt of Georges Vanier, and Laurent Berube and Theophile Jean from Trois Pistoles.

Mr. Speaker, I ask them now, Canadians all, to rise and receive the welcome of the House. *Levez-vous. mes enfants.*

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, as usual, the Solicitor General is a very hard act to follow. No doubt about

that.

However, I do have great pleasure this afternoon in introducing to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the other members of the Assembly, the second group of students from the Boyle school in the Athabasca constituency to visit this Assembly this year, 36 of them. They are accompanied by their teacher Peter Avasthi, his wife Subhadra, one teacher aide Jim Martens and Jim's wife Donna, and their driver Alec Hermata. They're seated in the members gallery. I'd ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Legislature, Dr. Paul Adams, the president of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta division. Dr. Adams is in the members gallery. He and I and the members of the Mental Health Association would urge all members, and through the members all Albertans, to be aware that this is Mental Health Week — it started on May 1 — and to say to you: mental health, keep it in mind. Could I ask Dr. Adams to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Gas Blowout

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the first question of either the Minister of the Environment or the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. My question relates to the Amoco well blowout last December. In light of the fact that the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Environment has stated that a report now being prepared on the blowout will show that environmental damage has been minimal, but the Department of Energy and Natural Resources concludes it's still too early for an accurate assessment of the blowout's environmental impact, can either minister indicate which information we are supposed to consider an accurate assessment of the situation?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I have not yet had an opportunity to see a report resulting from the inquiry. I'm not sure if my colleague the Minister of the Environment has.

MR. RUSSELL: No, I haven't seen it, Mr. Speaker, but it was fairly easy for Environment personnel to give that assessment prior to the report's being published. Environment people were on site doing air monitoring and giving whatever assistance they could during the period the well was out of control, and of course went back immediately afterwards to look for damage to vegetation and land, and carried out water testing. Based on those field tests, the department people were able to make that assessment prior to the report's being received.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary. In the assessment of the environmental impact of the blowout, can the Minister of the Environment indicate what co-ordination and communication there was between the Department of Energy and Natural Resources and the Department of the Environment?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, the minute there's a blowout, pipeline spill, or any accident involving an escape of materials within the petroleum industry, or in fact other such spills on rail lines, et cetera, it's automatic that the department is immediately notified, a crew goes out, and there are standard procedures that are followed.

DR. BUCK: A further supplementary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Can the minister indicate what additional steps he or members of his department have taken to prevent further blowouts of gas wells?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I anticipate that the results of the hearing the ERCB has held — and I've pointed out I haven't seen the report — if it has recommendations, we'll certainly take a serious look at them.

DR. BUCK: A further supplementary question to the Minister of the Environment. Can the minister indicate if the cost to the province of the clean-up of the wild well has been fairly extensive?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information.

Child Abuse

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the second question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health, and has to do with child abuse. Could the minister outline the guidelines for social workers in the apprehension of children in cases of alleged abuse and neglect?

MISS HUNLEY: I don't know that I can be specific and go through them line by line, Mr. Speaker. The policy we follow is that if there is a question of abuse, we believe the child should be apprehended and then the courts deal with it as they see fit when the case is brought before them. I might say that in the majority of cases the court has upheld the work of the social worker.

Often it's a judgment call as to whether or not there is child abuse or child neglect, and the onus is on the social worker to make a decision, often a difficult one. Quite often it must be made on the spot, because we must keep in mind that protection of the child must come first. It's always a matter of a judgment call.

The actual procedure that must be followed is, I think, a matter of detail that should be put on the Order Paper.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate what provisions for appeal are available to parents if they feel the apprehension of their child by the department has not been justified?

MR. SPEAKER: If, as I suspect, the hon. member is asking about something which is provided in a statute or regulations, obviously the question shouldn't be asked.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'm just asking very broadly what appeal procedure is available to the parents

when they are having a problem, in this instance an actual case.

MR. SPEAKER: This is what I understood the hon. member to be asking in the first place — unless there is some variation in the procedure due to departmental policy, in which case of course the question would be quite in order.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm unaware of any variation in the policy. The appeal is to the courts.

Housing Programs

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works. Has any word been received from the Canadian government in regard to the continuation of NIP and RRAP in this province?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, we've had a brief commentary on it by way of a telex from the federal minister. I've not yet seen detail on the plan, although I expect officials of the department will be working on that.

Grain Handling

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Deputy Premier and Minister of Transportation. It flows from yesterday's announcement by the Alberta Wheat Pool that they're looking at a consortium with respect to a terminal at Prince Rupert. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether he met with delegates of the Alberta Wheat Pool on Tuesday of this week to discuss a terminal at Prince Rupert?

DR. HORNER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we did meet with the delegate body of the Alberta Wheat Pool on Tuesday to discuss the whole matter of Prince Rupert. I might say that our primary objective was to get a major terminal facility built at Rupert. The announcement by the Pool would seem to indicate that we've achieved that primary objective.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Deputy Premier. Is the Deputy Premier in a position to confirm to the House at this time that the proposal he made on behalf of the government of Alberta was that a terminal be constructed, financed one-third by the Wheat Pool, one-third by Cargill, and one-third by the province of Alberta?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, we had a great number of discussions with all the grain companies operating in Alberta. The only two that felt they could enter into an equity position were Cargill and the Alberta Wheat Pool. The problem then came about because each wanted to have 51 per cent. At that point the government of Alberta suggested it might come in and be the balancing act between the two. They had had previous discussions, and that was where the roadblock was coming.

As I indicated, we've had discussions with other grain companies in Alberta. I thought UGG were very positive on the idea of a Prince Rupert terminal, but their resources were allocated elsewhere. But they

indicated a very strong desire to have what is known in the industry as a throughput agreement, so that they would designate some of their grain from both northern Saskatchewan and northern Alberta through such a facility in Prince Rupert.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Deputy Premier. In view of the substantial differences in the amount of grain handled by the Pool on one hand and Cargill on the other — I believe Cargill has approximately 5 per cent of the business — on what basis did the government conclude that an equity arrangement of one-third, one-third, one-third would be reasonable, bearing in mind the percentage of the business?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend has mentioned only one part of the equation. He's talking about the gathering systems. His percentages are in fact correct. But when you talk about the throughputs or the amount of grain that becomes available by various companies, as a matter of fact the throughput through a terminal was almost equal between the two companies. On that basis it became pretty obvious, as I said earlier. They had been meeting themselves. I tried to be a catalyst to move the thing from the stalemate they'd arrived at.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In view of the fact that the delegates, on Tuesday last I gather, unanimously voted down the proposal made by the government, is the government now open to a counter-offer with respect to the possibility of funding from the Alberta heritage trust fund, on a debt or equity basis?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, our parameters from the outset were that it would have to be an Alberta company, or companies doing business in Alberta, I think, to be responsible to the people of Alberta relative to the heritage fund. On the other hand we're certainly very interested, because of the major benefits a terminal in Rupert would bring to all farmers in western Canada, to look at any proposal and then to ascertain, depending on the kind of proposal and who the participants are, whether we might give further consideration to it. But as I indicated at the outset, we've achieved our primary objective; that is, to get somebody moving to get a terminal built in Rupert.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. With respect to resolution three passed by the delegates — namely, the authorization of the Wheat Pool to attempt to develop a consortium which would involve the Manitoba pool, the Saskatchewan pool, and other companies, but the equity would be related to the percentage of the business done — would the government of Alberta look favorably upon resolution three as a basis for investment from the heritage trust fund on a debt basis?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, my answer to that question is similar to the one I just gave. Obviously we have to know who the participants are, what kind of equity they're putting up, and whether they operate in Alberta. Again I point out to my hon. friend that the amount of grain gathering you do in a particular area

is not necessarily as important as the amount of grain you export.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In view of the proposal contained in resolution three passed by the delegates, which would involve companies that are not necessarily doing business in Alberta but are doing business in western Canada and would benefit from the terminal in Prince Rupert, would the government be prepared to reassess its condition and look favorably upon a consortium that involved people in the grain business, led by the Alberta Wheat Pool but not necessarily all doing business in the province of Alberta?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether the hon. gentleman isn't listening or doesn't want to listen. I've outlined our position very clearly. We've tried to act as a catalyst and ensure that something got built in Prince Rupert. I can assure my hon. friend I'll be watching and monitoring it very carefully. If the pools have not moved within a matter of months in a very substantial way, we'll be looking at alternatives.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. elusive minister, in this case.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order, order.

MR. NOTLEY: At some point any consortium will be looking for financial backing. Is the government prepared to favorably consider financially supporting, through the heritage trust fund, the proposal made by the delegates to the special delegates' meeting of the Alberta Wheat Pool?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member is clearly repeating the question he just asked.

DR. HORNER: He should also appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that it is the Alberta heritage savings fund.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Seeing that export has quite a bearing on whether or not the terminal will be of any value, can the minister or his department give us any idea of the export capacity of the grain companies involved? That's Cargill, Pool, and what have you.

DR. HORNER: Well, naturally, as we all are aware, the major gatherers in western Canada are the three pools. They achieved that major dominating position by buying out Federal Grain some years ago. So they are the major gatherers in the country elevator system.

On the other hand, as I pointed out earlier, if you have a look at the amount of grain that was exported or could be available for export at Prince Rupert, the two participants that had agreed to put in equity were very nearly equal. That, along with the real, firm commitment from UGG, would have meant that the flowthrough would be there to make a terminal viable.

MR. TRYNCHY: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister any figures of percentage of world trade in grain exports by the companies involved?

DR. HORNER: I'm sure that anybody who has had a look at world grain trade appreciates that about five major companies in the world handle by far the vast majority of grain movements. Cargill and Continental look after fully 50 per cent of the grain trading done in the world today.

MR. ZANDER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Has a study been made of the savings per bushel to the western farmer? In dollars and cents, how much would the western farmer gain by shipping through this terminal on a flowthrough basis?

DR. HORNER: The minimum premium we see coming to the farmer by increased diversion through west coast access, either through Vancouver or Prince Rupert, would be 25 cents a bushel. On a modest objective of 100 million bushels, that's \$25 million in additional income to western Canadian farmers, not to say about the other important things at Rupert, which include the increased use of hopper cars because we can cut the turnaround time in half, the 500 miles closer to the Far East than the port of Prince Rupert is as opposed to Vancouver, the congestion in Vancouver harbor: all the positive things in Rupert. That's why it's so important that we keep on top of this. Every month's delay means a delay in improving the income of our farmers.

Weather Modification

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. On April 5 the minister indicated that there would be an analysis of the five-year weather modification program. Could the minister indicate the purpose of the analysis, and if the analysis will determine whether the five-year program will be continued after 1978?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, when the five-year program was first announced on the basis that it would be funded 100 per cent by the government of Alberta, it was announced that the intention was to do a review of the value of the program after the five years and try to determine its future from that point, including the manner in which it would be funded. That's basically what the review is all about.

However, the Weather Modification Board itself has told me that the work being carried out by the Research Council of Alberta and others in assessing the performance of that program over a five-year period will take several months to complete; as a matter of fact, very close to a year after the conclusion of the five-year program. It's envisioned that the final report and conclusions will not be available to us until probably mid-1979.

I therefore said earlier, Mr. Speaker, that the program being carried out during the current year will be continued in 1979 exactly as it is now, so there is no lull or space of one year of doing nothing, between when the five-year program ends and when we have an opportunity to make a broader decision on the entire future of our hail suppression and weather modification program.

Landlord and Tenant Legislation

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the

hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, with respect to notice of Bill No. 34, The Landlord and Tenant Act, 1978. I wonder if the minister could advise the Assembly whether or not he intends to introduce that bill in the Assembly during the spring session.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, the situation at the moment is that the bill is on the notices. It appeared in *Votes and Proceedings* yesterday, I believe. I will not be in a position to introduce that legislation this spring.

I might say that the reason is that while we're up to the sixth draft of that particular piece of legislation, one of the submissions made to me is that the landlord and tenant advisory boards be given some additional jurisdiction. In order to do that, I have been advised there is a constitutional problem. As a result, it's proposed that a reference be made to the courts to have that matter determined.

MR. HORSMAN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. When would the minister propose to submit that constitutional reference, and what body would be asked to deal with the question that has been raised?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, the reference would be to the Court of Appeal as soon as possible, with the hope that I could then proceed to introduce the legislation at the fall session.

Highway Clean-up

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Transportation. Mr. Minister, in view of the really successful program we've had with regard to clean-up along our highways and the work and involvement of the 4-H, I wonder whether the minister could give a brief updated report on the stage it's at this spring.

DR. HORNER: I'd be delighted to, Mr. Speaker. It's been a very effective program. Our annual clean-up will take place this Saturday. I'd ask all MLAs in rural Alberta to be out there helping their 4-H young people, so we can continue to have the cleanest highways in the nation.

I might also say, Mr. Speaker, snow is now falling in an area in southern Alberta. We may have to postpone the clean-up in the deep south for a week.

MR. COOKSON: A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker — and I'll be happy to participate. Could the minister indicate whether his department has had any discussions as to whether it could broaden the terms of reference to include other organizations in addition to 4-H, youth groups in particular?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I might say that we've had a great many representations from a whole variety of clubs. I would want to make sure that that kind of diversity wouldn't take away from the program itself. But we'll certainly consider it, certainly in areas where there are no 4-H clubs. I'm thinking now of Fort McMurray particularly, where the Scouts are going to be out on the clean-up project. Perhaps we can work it that way and still try to keep the operation streamlined and effective.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question. Can the minister indicate what percentage of the highways was completed under the program last year? I know there seemed to be a sudden stop about halfway along one of the main highways. Can the minister indicate how much of the system was covered?

DR. HORNER: Practically all, Mr. Speaker. We didn't do the four-lane highways because of a safety factor. Again I want to emphasize that I hope all Albertans would appreciate that these young people are going to be out cleaning the roads on Saturday, and that they'll match their driving to the operation. Essentially, I think that within 200 or 300 miles of all highways were cleaned last year.

Vermiculture

MR. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. It's a concern that has been expressed by some people regarding advertisements in newspapers for people to get into vermiculture. I wonder if there has been any research as to the viability of such an industry in Alberta.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, for those who are not aware, vermiculture is the raising of worms for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to sport fishing. A couple of years ago I had an inquiry from an individual who was making a very good living raising worms on some 40 acres of land. He wanted me to assist him by writing a letter assuring him that he was in an agricultural pursuit and could therefore qualify to be taxed in that manner by the local municipal district. At that time we did declare that vermiculture was an agricultural pursuit. Since that time we have gained a little expertise in our department with respect to vermiculture.

About all I can really say is that the recent advertisements, which have been carried mainly in southern Alberta newspapers, advertising worm starter kits for sale and suggesting that you can be your own boss and make a lot of money, should be viewed very cautiously by individuals, because the market is limited. It takes a certain amount of knowledge and expertise to be in that business, and my advice would be to take a course in worm-raising before getting into one of those situations.

Water Safety

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and flows from my question last week in the Assembly with regard to television advertising of motorboats in Alberta. I wonder if the minister has had an opportunity to review that advertising. If so, what steps have been taken by his department?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, since the question in the House, I must say I've been trying to watch for the advertising. I haven't personally seen it. However, one of the advantages this House has had since 1971 or 1972 has been *Hansard*. I am therefore in the process of mailing a copy of the questions and answers to all motor and boat manufacturing people in the province, pointing out that this matter has been

raised in the House and asking them to consider their advertising material in this regard.

MR. HORSMAN: A supplementary question for the hon. Solicitor General, flowing from the answer he gave in response to this question and arising from the 1977 annual report of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. I wonder if the hon. minister would make representation to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in reference to their water patrols to ensure that their officers also wear life jackets. It appears that the motorboat depicted on page 10 of the report is being operated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police without life jackets. I wonder if he'd take that matter under consideration.

MR. FARRAN: I will, Mr. Speaker, but I'm not prepared to convict on circumstantial evidence. They may be attached to some part of the body you can't see in that photograph.

Meat Inspection Act

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. It concerns that part of Bill 26, The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, which amends The Meat Inspection Act. In view of the fact that the proposed amendment would make The Meat Inspection Act effective retroactive to January 31, 1973, rather than by proclamation, Mr. Minister, was this act ever proclaimed?

MR. SPEAKER: Surely the question by its very nature indicates that it would be a matter of public knowledge whether an act was proclaimed.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, it doesn't seem that the minister or anybody else in the government knows. Can the minister indicate if there have been any prosecutions under any provisions of the act?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, when I introduced Bill 26 I think I indicated that the amendment to The Meat Inspection Act was, as it outlines here, that the act was to come into force on January 31, '73. The reason is that the bill was not proclaimed. That was an oversight by the Provincial Secretary. Fortunately he or his deputy is not represented in the House. [interjections] Because the Provincial Secretary overlooked that matter, I hope it will be amended if the House approves Bill 26, to come into force on January 31, '73. I'm not aware of any prosecutions under the act.

Grain Handling (continued)

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. In view of the fact that from 10 to 16 boats are waiting for wheat in the Vancouver harbor, and that this is costing our prairie farmers a few hundred dollars per ship every day, has the government made any representations to the Ministry of Transport in Ottawa to speed up the making of more hopper cars and the facilitation of the equipment they have in Vancouver?

MR. MOORE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Representations have been made in a variety of ways over a great number of years with respect to the tremendous cost of demurrage charges to farmers in western Canada for ships waiting in Vancouver. Certainly the discussions we had earlier today in the question period relative to the initiatives of the Minister of Transportation regarding Prince Rupert are part of that whole effort we've been making to ensure that those demurrage charges aren't further incurred.

I'm encouraged as well, Mr. Speaker, by the fact that in due course at least three members of this Assembly may well be able to take our case directly to Ottawa.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary. I have no complaint about what the Alberta government is doing. I'm wondering if someone could light a fire under the Minister of Transport in Ottawa.

DR. BUCK: That's your job next year.

Hospital Privileges

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It relates to Bill No. 41, introduced this afternoon. Is it the intention of the government that this bill will be passed at this session of the Legislature?

MR. MINIELY: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GHITTER: I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. minister would advise the House whether this bill would enable Dr. Abouna in Calgary, if he so chooses, to use the mechanisms of appeal to have his matters determined by this tribunal which will be set up under the legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, the hon. and learned member is asking a question about a matter of law which depends on a legal interpretation of the bill.

MR. GHITTER: A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. minister advise the House whether or not the avenues available under this pending legislation will be available to cases already out there within our hospital system?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has very skilfully rephrased the same question.

MR. GHITTER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Possibly the hon. minister would like to comment with respect to the purpose of the bill as to problems which may exist at the present time, or will it only be problems that exist after the passing of the legislation, so we might understand the timing of this very important legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: Might I suggest that this would be appropriate on second reading of the bill or at the committee stage.

Bilingual Education

MR. JAMISON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to

direct a question to the Minister of Education. It's with regard to the communication issued by the Premier and him on Friday, February 24, on minority language instructions. I wonder if the federal/provincial agreement has been signed, if there are additional incentives to put these programs into the schools, and whether the school boards could be notified as to any additional incentives by the provincial government for minority language programs.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, the present agreement between the federal and provincial governments relative to the provision of additional support to school boards that offer instruction in minority languages is due to expire on, I believe, March 31 of next year. We met with the Secretary of State, the Hon. John Roberts, in Toronto last year. Since that time meetings have been taking place between officials at the deputy minister level provincially and, I believe, with the federal government. However, at this date I am not in a position to indicate that any progress is being made in the negotiation of an agreement for that period of time, commencing April 1, 1979.

MR. JAMISON: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In reading the communication, I think it mentions that the provincial government is very much interested in getting a good program into the schools in Alberta, and that they would be prepared to supplement the federal funding. As I mentioned in my original question, are any additional moneys, programs, or materials available to the schools that are putting the program into place?

MR. KOZIAK: Presently, Mr. Speaker, we are providing funds to school boards in accordance with the formula which sees 9 per cent of the cost of educating a student flow through the provincial government to the school boards in the case where French is used as a language of instruction in Alberta; and where the French language is being taught, 5 per cent.

Now in that communique we indicated that one of the three considerations we felt were necessary in terms of a proper program would be the incentive funding. As all hon. members are aware, during the course of estimates I dealt with one aspect, which is the \$2.5 million to be provided over five years in terms of program development, test development, and the additional support the Department of Education can provide for these programs.

I should also point out that we're very pleased with the growth in bilingual education that's taking place in this province. For example, in the past year there's been a 20 per cent increase in the number of students being taught in French.

The incentive funding is a matter we're looking at very closely. I've met with the French-Canadian association in Alberta, and very recently I met with the school Trustees Association for Bilingual Education. These meetings are very useful in terms of the approaches we should take relative to supplementing the incentive funding.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care wishes to supplement an answer.

Hospital Visitors Committee Report

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry the hon. Leader of the Opposition is not in the House today. Perhaps the hon. Member for Clover Bar could carry this to him. I would like to correct a statement made by the hon. leader during the question period yesterday with respect to the filing of the Hospital Visitors Committee reports. First of all, I would like to quote from the statute which applies in the filing of the annual report of the Hospital Visitors Committee, Section 8 of that act:

- (1) As soon as possible after the end of each year, the Committee shall prepare and submit to the Minister a report summarizing its activities in that year.
- (2) Upon receiving a report under subsection (1), the Minister shall lay a copy of the report before the Legislative Assembly if it is then in session, and if not, within 15 days after the commencement of the next ensuing session.

Now the last report that was received by my office from the Hospital Visitors Committee was for 1976, Mr. Speaker; and I would point out to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, through the hon. Member for Clover Bar, *Hansard* of November 10, 1977, which records the tabling of the 1976 annual report of the Alberta Hospital Visitors Committee. Further, we've been in touch with the chairman of the Hospital Visitors Committee, and the 1977 report is not yet complete. Obviously, I cannot under the provisions of the statute file with the Assembly a report which has not been received by my office.

Hospital Privileges (continued)

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, in light of the new legislation proposed by him. Will this in fact give a doctor who had admission problems further permission for an appeal?

MR. SPEAKER: May I suggest the hon. member is also seeking a legal opinion which perhaps he might seek otherwise.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege, on behalf of the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses, to supply all hon. members with a lapel button and bumper sticker in recognition of 1978-79 being the Year of the Nurse. The Alberta Association of Registered Nurses is now meeting in Edmonton at its annual convention. On behalf of all members here, I take this opportunity to congratulate the nurses for their dedication in their profession.

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I move that Motion for a Return 135 stand.

[Motion carried]

140. On behalf of Mr. Clark, Dr. Buck moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of every written instruction from the Minister of Government Services to the director of the RITE system which pertains to any policy or practice of requesting the names of people who place calls through the RITE system.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I move that Motion 140 be amended by deleting the words "a copy of every written instruction" and replacing those words with "a statement as to the instructions".

Mr. Speaker, the amendment is necessary because the instructions and directions I have given to the director of the RITE system are intergovernmental departmental memos, and they cannot and should not be tabled. With the amendment, I will provide the information requested in another form that is acceptable and within the rules.

[Motion as amended carried]

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the response to Motion 140.

141. On behalf of Mr. Clark, Dr. Buck moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing the following information with respect to every trip made outside Alberta by Ms. Jillian MacTavish, Director, Telephone Enquiry Services, which was paid for from public funds during the years 1975, 1976, and 1977:
- (1) the date of each trip,
 - (2) the destination of each trip,
 - (3) the purpose of each trip,
 - (4) the total cost of each trip to the taxpayers of Alberta.

[Motion carried]

head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

216. Moved by Mr. Mandeville:

Be it resolved that the Assembly urge the government to ensure that the young farmers of Alberta receive assistance in purchasing and maintaining viable and economic family farms, either by the provision of low-interest loans or by any other appropriate programs.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I think our agricultural economy is going to be facing some very difficult times, because I think our prices are going to be up and down similar to a roller coaster.

This resolution is in no way a reflection on the Minister of Agriculture. I have to agree he is doing a good job as far as agriculture is concerned, because it is a very difficult area. The young farm program is well accepted in the province. The \$10 million from the heritage trust fund that is going to be used for research is very well accepted, and I'm sure it will serve a very useful purpose.

In the past we've been putting the emphasis on marketing, and I'm sure this has been a great asset to

the agricultural economy. However, we do have cycles in our agriculture as far as our commodities are concerned. At one period of time the cattle prices will be high and at another our grain prices will be high, and that trend will reverse. In agriculture we need all the input possible to make sure we keep agriculture as our number one industry. At this particular time I think we're relying on oil and gas, but we need to appreciate and realize that we're not going to have oil and gas forever. We have to bring agriculture into a position so that it's going to be our number one industry in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I have some suggestions, and I hope they'll be looked at. They're long-term suggestions that are more on production in agriculture. In the past we've been putting the emphasis on marketing, and I think it's been working very successfully. However, now we need to put some emphasis on production.

The first suggestion I have, and I'm thinking of long-term solutions, is to reduce interest rates to farmers to purchase land and buildings. I think we could reduce our interest rates up to 50 per cent. At the present time our direct loans from the Alberta development corporation are 9 per cent and our guaranteed loans are 1 per cent above prime. Looking at the long term, if we cut our interest rates by 50 per cent, it would certainly reduce the debt load on our farmers in this province. Every 10 years we carry a debt load like this, it doubles the capital cost of a farm. If we can give preferred interest rates to Gulf Oil and Cities Service, I think we could be looking at giving preferred interest rates to our farm people.

Possibly we should be looking at a remission, which at one time we had as far as business is concerned. I'm thinking of a remission on loans to the agricultural industry. I'm thinking of agribusiness and specifically *bona fide* farmers. We'd have to be really cautious in this area. We did have that for small business at one time. But instead of letting some of our agribusinesses get into problems and go bankrupt, possibly we could look at a remission of loans. In some cases maybe to our 'dehy' plants, rapeseed processors, potato processors, and so on.

But we'd have to be very careful of remissions of loans as far as farmers are concerned. We'd have to be certain they were *bona fide* farmers. A case I could pick, for example: at the present time we have a fluctuation of supply in hogs, and it makes it hard for our packing plants to operate with continuity of supply. It causes our hog prices to go up and down. If we need to keep production at a level, possibly we could have remission of a loan to areas such as I mention here, Mr. Speaker.

Another long-term area would be to embark on a comprehensive consumer education program. I sometimes think the consumers don't appreciate that they're getting cheap food in this province. Some statistics indicate that from 14 to 22 per cent of the income of consumers is spent on food, a very small percentage of the total income. The average cost of food per week is \$50. I think if we had something like this, Mr. Speaker, we could prevent getting consumer resistance. In many cases we get consumer resistance when our prices start to rise. They think the whole world is going to break down and costs are going to get right out of line.

My fourth suggestion, Mr. Speaker, is to eliminate

royalties on all gasoline, diesel fuel, natural gas, and propane sold to Albertans. I don't think this would cost the province or deplete our heritage fund much, if this were adopted for Albertans exclusively.

Another area that causes problems as far as agriculture is concerned is the freight rate structure we have. I certainly think we have to have more pressure on the government to have equalized freight rates. There is absolutely no reason we should be paying more for manufactured goods than we do for our raw products.

Some of the reasons agriculture is facing problems: take our land costs, for example. In 1971, you could buy agricultural land for \$50 to \$150 per acre. In 1978, round figures are from \$250 to \$500 an acre, and sometimes in excess of that. That's an increase of up to 500 per cent. Why has our land cost escalated? Several years ago, when it started to escalate, we were getting \$5 a bushel for our wheat. We're not getting \$5 for our wheat now; we're getting a guarantee of \$3 a bushel for our wheat. They say the guarantee is \$3; however, unless we get enough quota to handle all our wheat, there is a possibility we might not be getting even \$3.

Foreign investors are causing the price of land to escalate. After all, Canada is the best place in the world to invest in real estate property and farmland. Alberta is one of the best places for foreign investors to invest in land, because they can buy what they feel is cheap agricultural land for an investment. Speculators also invest in agricultural land as a result of it being a good investment. Then we have good old inflation, that has caused the escalation of our land. Today, agricultural land is valued at market value and not at productive value. The demand we have for this land is increasing the value. It in no way relates to the productive value of land.

When we get a loan for 25 or 40 years or whatever, the interest is a big portion of the payment. It's not the capital that is so bad; it's the interest that makes the debt load almost impossible to pay.

All our inputs are high, Mr. Speaker: machinery, labor, gas, repairs, whatever. Agriculture is the only industry that can't pass on increases in production cost. For example, if there is an increase in labor or raw materials, our machine companies can pass the increase on to the price of their machinery. If the price of gas goes up, what do gas stations do? They pass the increased cost on to the consumer. However, the old adage as far as agriculture is concerned: you can't pass it on; commissions are steady, and our prices are up and down.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to read you some Canadian statistics. Over the past few years, while prices for a few farm commodities have risen, the general trend has been toward lower prices. In 1975 farmers' realized net income was \$4.3 billion. In 1976 this figure declined to \$3.7 billion, while the latest estimates for 1977 are \$3.2 billion. A 1978 realized net income for farmers of \$3.1 billion has been projected. This will mean a decline of \$1.2 billion for farmers over a four-year period.

Most segments of society have received increased incomes over this period. Do you know of a union or professional group that has taken a decrease in income over the period? Of course not. At the same time, farmers have suffered a reduction in their incomes.

Mr. Speaker, I have some provincial statistics here. I might say that provincial income is better than Canadian income. These statistics are total farming operation and depreciation charges by value from 1971 to 1976. In 1971 the total spent was \$619 million, up 7.5 per cent; 1972, \$665 million, up 22 per cent; 1973, \$817 million, up 26 per cent; 1974, \$1 billion, up 18.3 per cent; 1975, \$1,000,222,000, up 12 per cent: an average annual increase of 17.5 per cent. As I indicated, income in the province of Alberta has also risen, whereas for Canada it hasn't risen that significantly.

Value of specific operating costs, 1976 compared to 1971: gross farm rent has doubled; hired labor, up 118 per cent; interest on indebtedness, up 146 per cent — that's the biggest increase we have. As far as our interest rates to farmers are concerned, here's where I think we can make some adjustments. Fertilizer is up, machinery is up 115 per cent, taxes are up 54 per cent. So our increases have been going up very rapidly, and our income hasn't been keeping pace.

One of the areas where we have seen some improvement is in cattle. However, in the past, the value of our meat production is down 5.5 per cent, and we've shipped 16 per cent more cattle. But today we've been seeing some really rapid increases in our cattle industry, which is much appreciated by our cattle operators. The reason is that our heifer and cow slaughter has been way up and our cattle population has decreased over the last three years. Our consumption is also up, while our cattle numbers are down.

In Canada the meat stocks are down by 27 per cent; and by kind, beef is down 28 per cent; pork, 23; veal, 25; lamb, 37. So we certainly have a big reduction in Canada as far as meat is concerned. The U.S. is not quite that significant. Meat stocks are down 15 per cent; and by kind, beef is down 25 per cent; pork, 3 per cent; poultry, 16 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to be short of beef and pork in the next few months, and the consumers are going to have to pay for our increased values. I don't think values have increased that much at the present time. I can recall in 1973 we sold beef on the hoof at 58 cents a pound. Today it's around that price. But we've had inflation since '73. Take the 7 per cent inflation factor, and we could be paying 78 cents for beef, the same as prices in 1978.

As I said, cattle population has reduced, and this means that larger producers and feedlot operators can now run viable operations. But what happens to the mainstay of our agricultural economy, the small producer? A number of them have gone back to producing grain, at a time when grain prices are or could be depressed. Unless grain prices pick up in the next year, the same producer who was losing money with the cattle operation is now involved solely in grain producing where he will continue to lose money. It won't be long before these extended periods of losses will drive some of our smaller producers out of business.

A takeover of the agricultural economy by a very big grain farmer and a few feedlot operators would mean higher prices for food in the supermarkets. With control of the beef industry in the hands of a few feedlot operators, consumers could soon be paying \$5 a pound for beef or up to \$2 a loaf for bread.

Rapeseed is another product that is good at the present time. Rapeseed prices are good. But what's going to happen? I was looking at the recent survey on acreage in Canada. There's going to be an increase of approximately 65 per cent as far as rapeseed is concerned. This could depress our Canadian markets. I think processing of our oil and meal could be in trouble.

As far as Canada and Alberta are concerned, the cost to ship our raw rapeseed from Sexsmith to Vancouver is 27 cents, but to ship our processed oil and meal is from 80 cents to 84 cents: three times higher to ship our processed rape than for our raw rape. We can't ship rapeseed to the United States, but they can certainly ship their soybean oil to Ontario. Whelan did indicate at a meeting that equitable freight rates were just around the corner; however, I have seen no sign of adjustments in this area.

Our hog market has been very unstable. You can watch the markets across Canada. They fluctuate so much, for the simple reason that several years ago, I'd say four years ago, the hog market producers were losing a lot of money. Now we don't have a continuity of pork supply and it's causing some problems as far as our packers are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, you could go on and on. There are poultry, grains, vegetables. As far as vegetables are concerned, that's one area I think we could do some work on in this province. We import a lot of vegetables, and we have a vegetable plant down in the Brooks area that's working very successfully. Our potato industry is reasonably successful; however, they are going through some problems at the present time as a result of potatoes that were frozen, and marketing conditions.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, if we don't look to getting royalties from our gas and oil, I would like the minister to take a good look at coming up with some type of propane subsidy. Some areas in the province use a lot of propane. I have petitions on this, and they feel it's not fair that we have the transportation allowances for gas and the natural gas tax shelter, and we don't have any assistance as far as propane is concerned. Since it's been taken out of PUB regulation, it's escalated considerably. Here again, I'll ask the minister to take a good look at putting a subsidy in this area if we're going to keep royalties on propane.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the intent of this resolution is not in any way to condemn what's happening in the Department of Agriculture at the present time. I'm pleased with some of the programs we have. But I'm looking at this for long-term help to stabilize our production, and not to come up with subsidies from commodity to commodity. Because if we do that, it's not going to stabilize the economy and our production. I think we have to keep our farming economy viable. We have to keep our young farmers on the farm.

In 1976 I was looking at some statistics. A third of all Alberta farmers were supplementing their farm operations by having other jobs. I know that in some cases, when they're supplementing their farm operations or want to get into farming, they have problems getting loans through the Alberta development corporation.

Mr. Speaker, one thing that's helping the agriculture economy is the devalued dollar, but it's only

temporary. On the exports we have — for example, beef and cereal grains — the devalued dollar has certainly been helping take care of some of our markets that would be further depressed if we didn't have the depressed dollar. For example, beef: we have a difference of 5 or 6 cents per pound on account of the devalued dollar. Then if you look at the European dollar in relation to the Canadian dollar, that really helps our cereal grain value, because the dollar can come in here and we can compete with other countries as far as our cereal grains are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I'm looking forward to other rural MLAs speaking on this resolution. Thank you.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, it certainly is nice that our hon. opposition member brought this resolution to the floor of the Legislature. I believe it will receive a lot of input this afternoon. I'm looking forward to our hon. Minister of Agriculture getting into this in a few minutes.

Fundamentally, the motion reads that we should offer lower interest rates to beginning farmers. That's a valiant suggestion. It also goes on to say, "... or by any other appropriate programs". Through the beginning farmer loan package and ADC loans in general, I think the Alberta government has offered as good a break as we possibly can to the beginning farmer, without outright subsidy. It's always been a policy of this government that we don't subsidize any business outright. I consider agriculture or farming a business.

I'm a beginning farmer, and I waited 25 years to be able to say that. I did it without a great deal of capital or any break in interest rates. I did it by buying land that had not been broken before. I had to brush it, rock it, and pick the roots. I miss those rocks and roots; I can't wait to get out there and get at it. I think any individual or family that wants to start farming can still find some rocks, roots, and brush. They can still find other farmers in the same situation who need help on the farm. So I don't really buy the complete argument that farmers need a particular subsidy.

If we look at any individual or family that wants to buy a new home or what have you, generally the husband and wife work, or they don't buy some of the other things — toys, snowmobiles, and new cars — that their friends who live in apartments may have. If farmers want to farm, they must do the same thing. They must earn the right to farm. To me, farming is a special right you earn and work for.

Traditionally, if you wanted to be a farmer you either rented land, homesteaded, inherited, or mortgaged yourself to buy some land and worked for another farmer and used his machinery. I don't think that has changed now, and I'm not so sure it will ever change. Interest rates alone are not going to keep a family on the farm. What's going to keep people on the farm is being able to sell their product when they harvest it, to have proper markets, and to have roads and other transportation infrastructure to move their goods.

If we look at some of the things this government has done in recent years — in particular the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Transportation, and in general the government — we're looking at all sorts of new things that other governments in Canada

have ignored. I don't think I can really forgive as well as perhaps I should some of the things that have happened in Ottawa relative to farm policy and the lack of real care and concern for agricultural industry.

We've never really been aggressive in the last few years. With steam engines and boxcars — a lot of those cars were loaded out of wagon boxes with shovels — we used to move as much grain to tide-water in the '30s as we're doing now. Our exports via the ocean certainly haven't kept up with the new production that has happened on the farm. By better farming methods, fertilizer and chemicals, and from greater knowledge, our average farmer today probably produces between three and four times what his grandparents produced on the same amount of land.

We really haven't had a federal presence that has properly addressed itself to that. We haven't built new terminals the way we should have. We have hopper cars replacing boxcars where they should have been complementing boxcars. We have grain moving from number one freight position to far, far lower priority as far as railways are concerned. You really can't blame the railways when we have the Crow rate. If they can make a better income from ore, coal, and potash, you can't really blame them for not having grain as a top priority.

The member immediately ahead of me said that balance of payments would probably help our exports. Probably they should. But when I got \$1.65 for my barley last fall, and I believe they offered me \$1.40 for it this spring, I can't see where the devalued dollar has helped my operation a heck of a lot. Fortunately I sold most of it last fall. [interjections] Lucky. I'm broke. I had to pay the bank.

Mr. Speaker, we have to look at some different marketing proposals. We're still selling grain on the dockage basis we have followed for many years. We have tried to maintain the highest quality of grain delivered anywhere in the world. I don't think that's completely necessary. We're still selling grain on the basis of dry weight, when we should be selling it on the basis of moisture content. If you work out these figures or read the Hall report carefully, you'll see just a fantastic difference in price as to grain that has 9 per cent moisture content compared to 16 per cent. We should be selling and promoting the sale of grain based on the protein value. We should be doing lots of things like that. I think our government, through our capable Minister of Agriculture, is attempting to wake up some of the so-called big boys in Ottawa and a few other places. There are markets out there. We must develop those markets; I believe we're going to.

Finally, I'd like to say that the concept of the resolution, that the interest rate is a dominant factor — I would have to remind the hon. member that I know of several people who have had farms given to them, set up, lovely, ready to go. I'm sure he also knows several people. And they haven't been able to make it, even with farms given to them. I don't see farming in Alberta any tougher today than it was 30 years ago. Although our income is down, our standard of living on the farm is up. I would like to see us able to do better on the farm. But we must look at the total package. We must never look at farming as something so special that it will jeopardize other businesses or occupations. I think we have to look at our whole economic strategy in this province as one of fair play for everybody, everyone given an equal op-

portunity and equity in front of their peers or neighbors.

So I would have to very, very definitely oppose the motion, Mr. Speaker, not on the basis that I wouldn't like to see it happen, but because it is too narrow and it's isolating one group.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to speak for a few minutes on this particular subject. I thank the Member for Bow Valley for bringing it to the floor of the Legislature for discussion.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not what you would classify as a beginning farmer. I guess you'd probably more likely classify me as a finished one.

I think the whole agricultural scene in western Canada today is worthy of discussion and review, because if we're expecting our young people to get into an industry we should certainly expect the industry to offer them an opportunity of livelihood equal to what they could expect from any other endeavor. I think the biggest problem agriculture has to face is the rapidly rising amount of capital required to carry on that type of enterprise.

We've gone from the day when a man bet the government \$10 on a quarter of land that he could live there long enough to prove up a homestead, to the point now where the capital requirements to buy a viable farm have gone almost to the point that if the man had that much money, he could probably retire and live off the interest rather than go into that enterprise. With this rapid escalation of land values, it's unfortunate that we're now in a position where we're trying to talk of ways and means of getting young people into the industry. This escalation has taken place in such a short period of time that I don't think we really recognize yet what the result in our economy is going to be.

In the period from 1971 to 1978, the value of the products that can be produced has decreased while land values have doubled. To all intents and purposes, cost of production has doubled. Yet we're trying to farm more efficiently to be able to survive under those circumstances. If they haven't had a strong base to start from, I'm afraid the people who have gone into agriculture in the last five years are going to find themselves in the impossible position where their debt load is going to be so heavy that the interest is going to be more than the profit they can take out of their operation. If this is the case, we're heading for some very tough times in agriculture, unless the world price of the products we produce increases at a very rapid pace, which I can't anticipate.

Consequently there has to be a re-evaluation of how much money a person can invest in land, and actually expect to pay for it with production. Certainly if we look at older parts of the world, we find that land values are very high, even compared to ours. And we realize also that to start from scratch — if a person would use that term — to buy and pay for a farm in a lifetime is almost beyond anybody's expectations.

The criterion we've been using since this country was opened up is that with a lot of hard work and a little luck a man bought and paid for a farm and supposedly did it in his lifetime. It has been accomplished several times in the 70 or 80 years this country has been open for agriculture. I'm not sure

this is ever going to be the case again.

The transfer of farmland from father to son is a practice carried on in other countries. I think it will continue to be here. But the day is gone in Alberta when a young man with nothing but ambition is going to be able to go out and buy and pay for a viable farm. I think a lot of people would like to believe it's still possible. Personally, I'm not one who believes that. We have to come up with some alternatives for people who want to get into agriculture. We don't particularly like tenant farming as a way of life, but I believe it's going to have to be accepted by people who do not have a family base to start from.

There's no doubt that as food production in the world does not keep up with demand, the value of what we're producing will naturally increase. We had it forecast five years ago that by 1980 not enough food would be produced to feed the world. Well, 1980 is not very far away, and right now we're selling barley and wheat at a lower value than we were at the time this forecast was made. Experts can make projections, but the way the dollar values have moved around the world, and that there is the need but not the ability to pay, are deciding factors on the value of production.

I have no quick answers on how to raise the value of the products we're trying to sell on the export market. I'll leave that for the international traders and the people who understand the monetary system a lot better than I do. But I do believe we have to be realistic in Alberta. We like to see young people on our land, but let's not talk them into something they can't achieve. I think that inflating land values have created a situation where subsidization of interest would only be an enticement to get people into something they couldn't achieve.

I personally would not want my sons or yours to be involved in an enterprise that government had suggested it would assist them to do, that in the end would result in destroying probably the best years of their lives, and their outlook and philosophy. Someone who spends 10 or 15 years in an industry or enterprise, has to declare bankruptcy, pick up the pieces, and leave that industry, is not a very satisfied or happy person. I don't think we should be encouraging people to get involved in something in which we cannot, in all justice, assure them a reasonable chance of succeeding.

I will look with interest to the views of other members of the Assembly on this matter.

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Speaker, I am certainly happy to have the opportunity to speak on this motion. Although it's narrow in contact, and it's related, it's broad in the other sense. Yet I can somehow sympathize with the hon. member who introduced it. Having been a farmer for many years, I can speak with some experience in the field of farming and, I think, for the information of the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, he would probably learn a lesson. Maybe he will become a farmer also. I'll give our urban friends here first-hand knowledge of what a farmer is.

Farmers are a special breed of people not normally found. I would venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that 75 per cent of the farmers in Canada, particularly in Alberta, are not asking for a handout, a grant, or whatever one wishes to call it. The farmer considers himself a specialist in every field. He should be an

accountant. He must be a veterinarian, mechanic, welder, lawyer, and an environmentalist. If there is anything I've missed in the professions, I'm sorry, but he must be those also. He is at the mercy of all the weather conditions the elements can throw at him. He is a gambler. He enjoys the challenges; at least I did.

A farmer reminds me of a man who plays the stock market; he doesn't know whether to cut the hay today, bale it, or whatever he wants to do, because if he lives in Alberta he doesn't know what the weather is going to be. He has to be either an immigrant or a damned fool, because he can't forecast the weather, and he can't listen to the weather forecasts either. He must also be knowledgeable in marketing. He must be prepared to work 24 hours a day, if he so chooses. He also enjoys the outdoor life; at least I did. I don't think a farmer would change his position even if the opportunity occurred.

Mr. Speaker, some farmers who have been established some 20 years — I would say that not too much can be said that these people have endured. They had to pay for their power. They have to pay for gas, subsidized by the Alberta government. And whenever possible they must also make plans not only for one or two years; they must be prepared to make plans for 10 or 15 years, as long as they wish to stay on their farms.

Oh, yes, Mr. Speaker, he must also be a carpenter. I forgot about that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Veterinarian.

MR. ZANDER: I said that too.

AN HON. MEMBER: A wormologist.

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Speaker, I cannot understand the motion as it stands; I'm somewhat confused about it. Does the mover mean an outright gift or a purchase of land or machinery and equipment? If so, we are embarking on a very dangerous policy. I can understand the motive. As the mover has suggested, he would prefer to see subsidization or removal of royalties from gasoline or propane.

If we subsidize or grant outright to a farmer today, how about the individual who wishes to buy a service station? Are we going to set him up in business also? Are we going to guarantee him a livelihood from the cradle to the grave? How about a group of people coming to the government, asking for an outright gift to buy a factory? I think we could go on and on, Mr. Speaker. But as I said before, a true farmer has never asked for a government handout.

Let us examine what has happened since 1971. This government has given direct funding to the extent of almost \$100 million and has also set a support price per MCF; I'm dealing with rural gas. If a young farmer or an old farmer had to pay the full cost of bringing natural gas to his farm, Mr. Speaker, I would venture that there wouldn't be very many people burning that type of clean fuel. Maybe we should examine that policy. It could be somewhat amended.

We have the Agricultural Development Corporation. Mr. Speaker, this Crown agency was established to take the risk which no other lending institution in this province would, to lend to this individual. No doubt

the government will have some losses; and we did expect losses. I can well remember, almost where the mover of that motion is sitting today, a former member who is not in this House today. I can recall his words. When the hon. minister, Dr. Horner at that time, brought in the ADC, he said: lend to the farmers to buy land, machinery, or whatever they wish, and the government will end up owning all the land. There is a possibility that the government will be owning some of this land. There's no doubt, because some loans that we have outstanding occurred in the '73 and '74 era where the prices of cattle and hogs were so low that most of them did have to leave the farm.

We as a government made provision under Alberta Housing to enable farmers to build homes on their farms, to install water and sewer; funds available for rebuilding the rural electric lines in the province of Alberta that were built in the 1952 era and upwards. The deterioration of those lines and the funds available to those REAs were not able to sustain that many years, and the depreciation was high. Of course the telephone poles fell down and the power went off. I don't envy the farmer's position today, because electric power is a necessity on a farm. It has to be. Natural gas is perhaps not a necessity, because there are other ways and means of heating his home.

Let's look at the transportation allowance for farm fuels. I think the hon. member well knows: if I recall the figures in the estimates, it was upwards of \$12 million last year. We have added another 4 cents to that. I can agree with the hon. member that the problem lies in the equalization of freight rates. Many farmers in western Canada are outbid for cattle for their feedlot because of the difference in the price of cattle in Toronto and the price in Edmonton and Calgary. Now can the hon. member tell me why the price of cattle should be 2 and 3 cents less in Edmonton than in Calgary? If he can also tell me why they should be worth at least 9 cents more on the hoof in Toronto than in Calgary, then he's answered my question.

I went through this exercise some years ago, and for the life of me I cannot understand. Ontario buyers can come to this province, pick up feeder cattle and ship them to Toronto for about \$5 a head. When the farmer sells his grain at the elevator, he pays the freight rate to the source. So I'm saying that we are looking at two factors: one is the price in Toronto, the other is the price the feeder in Ontario pays for feed grain for which the farmer has already paid the freight. If we can equalize the freight rates across Canada, western agriculture will be at least 25 per cent ahead of what it is today.

The hon. member mentioned high input costs. I fully realize that. He also mentioned the high cost of agricultural land. I don't care what government is in the province of Alberta. Certainly the government is not responsible for the price, because it is a decision that has to be made between the buyer and the seller. If a young farmer is going to go out and buy a farm for agricultural purposes and look at \$500 an acre, he is sunk before he ever starts. If he figures the capitalization on that land over 20 years, he is still going to owe at least half as much as he owed before, because the soil will not produce it. It can't. In raising rape — and I don't think the hon. member has experience in it — I know we are looking at a gross

income of \$200 an acre. The cost the farmer must put into that acre is almost \$80. If you figure depreciation on your equipment, the hourly rate you're going to put on that field, you're probably going to wind up with about \$40 net.

But suppose the elements are against the farmer for one or two years. You know what happens. If you haven't crop insurance, you are lost. Mr. Speaker, to me that is something this government and the former government have made available to the farmers of the province of Alberta. No farmer should be so foolish as not to insure his crop. You're compelled to insure your car, which is only worth about \$8,000 or \$10,000. Naturally you're going to insure your house and household contents. You wouldn't leave those uninsured. But most farmers will take that risk and hope to get away with \$600 to \$1,000 of crop insurance. A 20-minute hail storm, and you're completely wiped out.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe we can come to a conclusion on how we can help the farmers. I think we will have to look at marketing as the prime factor, so that he receives a greater amount of money for his labors. But to subsidize the farmer by way of trying to keep him on the land, you might as well put him on welfare, because that's where he'll end up.

We have a number of farm unions in this country, and they're all asking for farm subsidies. But the percentage of farmers in the unions is very low. Most of the farmers out of the unions will remain outside, because they cannot go along with union policy. Mr. Speaker, it was once said — and I've seen it in my experience — that a farmer is poor until he dies. Then he's rich. There's never a poor farmer buried in a cemetery. I saw a farmer who . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Rusty, they don't bury the poor ones.

MR. ZANDER: Oh, they do.

A farm agent is trying to impose a sale on me right now. But you know, in the past two years I have seen farmers who had three quarter sections, sold them, sold their equipment, everything, and walked off with \$350,000. [interjections] He wasn't dead. He was smart.

But most farmers — and I'm judging this from myself — will remain there and die with their boots on. That is their life. They are free. They can choose to go fishing today, or leave the combine standing in the field and go out and do something else. The man in industry cannot do that. He must punch the clock. Sure, he's guaranteed a wage, but only as long as the boss has him on the pay roll. If his cheques start bouncing, I'm afraid he's going to look for another job. Mr. Speaker, I think society in general is about on an even keel.

We can make the attraction more for the young farmer to go into farming if at all possible, but not by putting him into debt. Let's start working on the equalization of the freight rates, so the farmer in Calgary can get as much for his cow as the feedlot owner in Toronto. It's not fair to expect any different. They want our oil for the same price. Have you ever asked the GMC dealer to give you a car for the price it is in Oshawa? He won't do it. He will say: this is it, plus freight.

That is the trouble of the western Canadian farmer.

He has a problem with the freight rate structure as it exists today. We cannot deny that this government, the minister now and the former minister, have done almost everything possible to convince the federal government to change that structure. If that structure is changed, hon. member and Mr. Speaker, I'll go back to farming again.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, because of the time, I know it's necessary I move to adjourn debate. Before doing that I would like to say briefly that our total farm lending in this province over the course of the fiscal year ending March 31, 1978, including direct and guaranteed loans, was in the order of \$88 million. That compares in one year with the old Alberta farm purchase board lending of 20 years, about four and a half times as much in one year as occurred in 20 years under the Alberta farm purchase board program, which we terminated in 1972. I mention that to indicate that I don't think we need to be at all defensive about the loans and guarantees which have been provided to the industry in this province.

When the matter comes before the Legislature again, I'd like to make some extensive remarks with respect to beginner farmers' loans and other matters. With that I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

Bill 217

**An Act to Amend
The Provincial General Hospitals Act**

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move Bill 217, An Act to Amend The Provincial General Hospitals Act, to in fact allow that hospital board members be elected. I don't know a better way of scrutinizing, overseeing, and being watchdogs of the way public funds are spent, particularly in the hospitals, where the budget is now higher than the school boards. It is hard to believe that somehow we haven't been in the area of electing hospital boards to this time.

One begins to wonder: what is most effective, appointed boards or elected boards? In my view it certainly doesn't lean to any favoritism as it does in appointed boards. If one studies the situation between the two, certainly the pluses are for elected boards. Our main concern is to provide the best care at the least cost, and that the general public would be able to have access to wrongdoing or services that really provide for the people who need care and who come to hospitals.

Also, I personally have experienced that appointed boards certainly are not accountable and in fact get to be uncontrollable as far as services are concerned. I cite an experience we've had in Calgary, the situation of Dr. Abouna. If the Foothills Hospital board had been elected, I question very much if that situation would have gone as far as it has. That's my personal opinion, but also the opinion of many citizens as well as some people on staff, be they nurses, orderlies, caretakers, or even some of the doctors.

Therefore I think it has a lot of merit. But I am not too concerned here today that this bill be approved. I

think it would be wrong that it would be approved, because I think great input is necessary to be able to come to some logical conclusion. I am a sort of farmer at heart. You sow in the spring and thresh in the fall. I think there's a lot of sowing to do before we do any threshing, before we actually come out with a bill that would be acceptable. Should the majority of the hospital boards in fact be elected and the others appointed, or should they all be appointed?

Knowing that if boards are elected they are subject to public opinion and are known to the public — I'm sure if a survey were taken on hospital boards that are appointed, particularly in the cities, very few people would know their names and who they are. Furthermore, those who are appointed are not really accountable to anybody in particular.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe in more boards, appeal boards, commissions, because ultimately, even if they are appointed by politicians, what wrongdoing they may do, if they do — eventually the politicians have to carry the can anyway. I know it would be almost an impossible task to say that MLAs possibly should be able to sit on provincial general hospital boards or the municipal boards, whatever the case may be. In some cases, in a municipality, an MLA may have as many as three or four hospitals and it would be impossible to sit on them all. It probably would not create the same problem in the cities. We have about five or so big hospitals in the city of Calgary. Out of 13 MLAs or so, I don't think that would be a really serious problem.

I'm not too sure if they would be the proper people to serve on the board. In fact they would be as close to the problem as the elected officials. Not only that; sometimes people appointed to these boards by elected officials or otherwise serve on these boards not necessarily because they want to, but they have no choice. Maybe they're repaying a favor or whatever the case may be. I think you would get much better and able people to sit on the board.

We're dealing with a very huge sum of money. I think it would bring about better housekeeping than we have at the present time. You can only compare the hospitals we have in the city of Calgary, which I can particularly speak of, those that have some elected members on the board and those that have not. We don't seem to have as many problems for one reason or another on the boards that have elected officials.

I certainly appreciate the opportunity of bringing in this bill. As a former member who sat on three hospital boards, I have experienced the pressure that comes from the medical staff. It has been said from time to time that laymen are not competent to make a decision on medical performance, whatever it may be. On the other hand, they would expect the same people to make a decision on which doctor should in fact have hospital privileges. At that point in time the medical profession feels that the board members should in fact be the ones to ultimately make a decision. To me, that is wrong.

I feel that the medical profession should be able to screen their own profession, if they're competent or incompetent. I know there are doctors who have not received hospital privileges because they weren't part of the club or of the right color. In fact it has happened. The only way a board member can make a decision is again from information provided by the

medical staff. They've got to rely on that. If that is so, the medical profession should be able to come out and say that is their recommendation, rather than using the elected or even appointed people maybe to do some of their work that they should be able to try to control themselves.

So, Mr. Speaker, it really doesn't matter to me. I'm not selfish or jealous if hospital boards should be elected or appointed. But I am concerned that they would perform the service of providing care for the sick at the least cost, and be most efficient and sensitive to the needs of the community in getting hospital privileges or even getting into the hospital and receiving hospital care.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to be saying much more in conclusion. Again I appreciate that I've had that opportunity, and I know there are other speakers who probably would like to express their feelings in regard to hospital boards, if they should be elected or appointed. I'm sure this bill is not broad enough, because I feel that it possibly should involve the municipal hospitals as well, that they possibly should be elected.

As an alderman, I know that many, many times such discussions have taken place in the council chambers on whether the hospital board should in fact be elected. I've always come to the conclusion that possibly they should, but somehow nothing has been done to this point.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure this afternoon to say a few words to congratulate the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View for bringing forth the amendment to The Provincial General Hospitals Act, and to debate it in the Legislature. I think an issue like this is probably fairly timely in view of some of the problems we seem to be experiencing in the area of hospitals, and the review, possibly next week, of the estimates under hospitals, and the tremendous investment the province has in hospitals and medical care.

I just happened to glance at the estimates. I don't know whether the people of Alberta realize the tremendous amount of funding that is created here through these estimates to be really turned loose to finance hospitals and medicare. It's in the area of \$701 million. That is approximately a little under 20 per cent of the total budget for the province of Alberta. So it's such an important issue that I don't think we should treat lightly the amendment being proposed by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

I was looking at the capital costs which are part of the total figure for hospitals and medicare. I don't see it just at the present time, but I think it's in the area of \$36 million a year.

I represent an area in the Lacombe constituency that has two hospitals. One is quite small in terms of the concept of the University Hospital at Edmonton; in fact, I think you could probably put that hospital in the rotunda of the University Hospital. But our people are quite proud of that little hospital, and so am I.

I'd just like to say too that there's tremendous dedication by the people who represent these boards at the municipal level, tremendous dedication with which they carry out their responsibilities. It's very easy for us as members of the Legislature to pass legislation which will affect the lives of all Albertans,

and sometimes perhaps treat lightly the fact that we are putting the onus on municipalities, municipal governments, school boards, and hospital boards to carry out the legislation we pass. I can honestly say that the people who have served at the hospital level in my constituency have really done an excellent job.

As I say, they represent very small hospitals. Although the one at Lacombe is a 50-bed hospital, the one at Bentley is a 16- to 20-bed hospital, hoping for some addition. These boards meet regularly and, with the assistance of the professional staff of the hospitals, administer under both The Alberta Hospitals Act and other overlapping legislation. They're very proud of the work they do. I've sat in on some of the meetings and they really treat their work with sincerity and responsibility.

The issue that arose in Calgary over the so-called Abouna affair is not necessarily unique to the Foothills Hospital in Calgary. It's an issue that has arisen on occasion in other parts of Alberta in varying degrees. I'm very happy the province has seen fit today to bring in some legislation that hopefully will deal with some of these really frustrating problems that local boards have attempted to cope with.

For those who aren't aware of the operation within a hospital, doctors generally apply for privileges. This is normally handled through the local boards, with advice from the College of Physicians and Surgeons. Generally speaking, the province stays at arm's length on these decisions. They've always done this. As I told my board at the local level, I think it's important that they themselves deal with this particular issue.

While the legislation we've tabled today won't deal with a doctor who is first applying for privileges, it does go a step in that direction in that it deals with the situation where a doctor may have been, or has been, suspended from privileges within a hospital. I think it's a reasonable piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. I know it's going to make it a little bit easier for those local boards which have to really take the heat on issues like this.

The situation in my constituency really has caused a division within the community. It's unfortunate it had to happen, but it did, and it has been going on for some time. I'm hoping now that the problem has resolved itself. But as I say, I've suggested consistently to the boards . . . In this case where the board grants privileges, that remains the responsibility of that board at the present time. They can gather advice and direction from all sources including the College of Physicians and Surgeons, but it still remains their responsibility.

Perhaps with a quizzical look on your face, Mr. Speaker, you might wonder how this is related to the amendment. I wish to come back to the point of appointing members to a hospital board versus election of members.

I was on municipal government for a number of years, and we have found in our experience that, number one, it's very difficult to get a nominee for an election to a small board. The only thing that's more difficult is trying to get someone to volunteer to be on the board. It's not an enviable position. It's certainly not much in terms of remuneration, and it does carry with it considerable responsibility.

I think there are some advantages to the proposal by the Member for Calgary Mountain View. Perhaps

if I could make a positive comment on his suggestion, we could broaden the proposed amendment. As I understand it, it is an amendment to The Provincial General Hospitals Act which basically deals with provincial general hospitals in Calgary and Edmonton. Broaden it to include perhaps amendments to The Alberta Hospitals Act which would then include amendments with regard to boards in general, auxiliary, and municipal hospitals throughout the whole province. In other words I'm saying if we make this shift in legislation, that we incorporate the shift for all hospitals in the province.

As I say, the greatest problem we face in the smaller hospital districts is to encourage people to participate and be part of the board. Elections might encourage more interest. They would certainly bring forth those people about whom you may not know. They ask us as members of a municipal council, could you find someone to sit on this particular board? The range of people you know is limited. So you zero in on someone you hope will fill the bill who is perhaps well established in his community, a respected citizen, and prepared to dedicate his time. But we always seem to forget that there are some quiet little people out there who don't necessarily put their best foot forward, but are there and are prepared to participate. This never happens. They never get an opportunity to become involved unless perhaps through an election of representatives. So in this respect, Mr. Speaker, there is some advantage to the proposal to have an election of officers to sit on these boards.

I think the same principle applies in other areas of jurisdiction such as our schools, where we hold our regular elections and elect representatives to the school boards. The same thing applies to all our municipalities at the municipal level. It does create interest. The local media pick this up particularly if there's competition, which is perhaps the most we could hope for, certainly at the smaller board level. But if that were possible and you could have forums and the consequent dialogue, I think the people themselves would probably be better versed in the responsibilities of hospital boards. I suppose I'm really surprised, and not surprised, how little the people out there — constituents, members, taxpayers who are in a hospital board district — really know or realize the responsibilities of a board at that level.

Mr. Speaker, that raises another very interesting question, the method of taxation. Then I'll let someone else have an opportunity to speak. As I mentioned earlier, this year the province is picking up \$701 million of total costs for hospitals. This government, after election in 1971, agreed to take that taxation off property. I was very concerned about that at the time; I still am. I'm hoping our government will reassess that, because there's nothing that will create more interest and concern in hospital costs and spending than if it hits the pocketbook. That alone will create interest, and if we go to election of officials that will compound the interest. So in conclusion, I support the potential amendment to the legislation.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in the motion by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View, I note there has been some wandering around and around the issue, but his motion does specifically state election of boards of provincial general hospi-

tals. I must say I have different feelings on the municipal aspect of hospital election and/or appointment. But that is covered in the municipal act in the way a local municipal authority wishes to put forth either its appointments or elections. So, Mr. Speaker, maybe that is for a debate at a different time.

But just a few words on this act. It says that it should be elected from the area in which the hospital is located. Presumably, Mr. Speaker, the hospitals are in Calgary and Edmonton. Many of the provincial hospitals are indeed referral centres that are very important to the hospitals of other areas such as Bow Island, where I come from. It's very important to the doctors and the people to have a hospital of the stature of the Foothills in Calgary, especially to refer people to when the doctors come upon some illness that they are not able to handle in such a small hospital. So I think with the ability to appoint people to a board we can appoint people from an area, so that we get an area feeling on that board, such as we do on the smaller boards in the municipal areas the hospital serves.

I am somewhat afraid that if we have a board elected from an area in which it's located, it will lose the feel of what's going on in the rest of the province. They'll have the feeling of what's going on in their city, but will lose that feeling of what's going on in the area in the cases they get referred to them.

Mr. Speaker, I spent a number of years on a board. Some comments have been made this afternoon that a board would be qualified to assess the abilities of a doctor. I don't believe that's true at all. They have to be assessed by their peers, the people who know what the big words mean when they fill out the application. That may seem like a funny matter, but some of those medical terms that are quite long may mean something quite simple. If you don't have a medical dictionary, don't get them looked up fast enough, and you're sitting on a board, you don't know what you've agreed to let the doctor do in your hospital. And you could be in a great deal of trouble. So we must leave that part of it to the discretion of their peers. It's their advice that I followed in granting privileges when I was on a hospital board.

But in finishing, Mr. Speaker, I have different feelings on the hospitals that serve smaller areas throughout the province, but a big hospital, as this bill is aimed at — it gives me a great deal of discomfort to think there will only be members of that stature on that hospital [board], and that other doctors throughout the province have to refer to them if it is operated by a board elected from the municipal boundaries in which it happens to exist.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, in rising to debate this amendment, I confess to my colleagues in the House that I'm going to have a little difficulty following the argument of the Member for Calgary Mountain View, but I will do my best. He and I sat together on the General Hospital board in Calgary for several years. It's rather strange, the different views two people get sitting in the same room, discussing the same problem.

I recall we had one gentleman who was quite high on vitamin C, and he was going to cure everything from mental illness to the common cold. We had another chap who was going to perform lobotomies that were going to look after all the mental illnesses

that were coming into the hospital. Fortunately the head of surgery stopped that on one particular patient. We had another chap performing abortions on women who weren't pregnant, and when we suggested he cease and desist, he suggested we were prejudiced because of his color.

Mr. Speaker, I think just these few examples should serve to point out that we would be very foolish indeed if we allowed ourselves to be carried away by yellow journalism or things of that nature in defence of what some people think are doctors concerned only with patients. Actually I sometimes question the reason some politicians support these kinds of people. I quite often wonder if patient care is the last item which seems to enter their heads.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the idea of electing people to anything is appealing to politicians, but there are some difficulties. As other hon. members have mentioned, first of all, they don't have the right to tax. Most politicians, when they have power — the only way in our materialistic society that you can exercise that power is having the ability to raise and spend money. In this society, if you haven't any money to spend, you're not going to achieve very much. I think, as the hon. member — I can't remember the name of the constituency — pointed out, \$700 million is put into . . .

MR. DIACHUK: Lacombe.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Lacombe. Thank you. The province puts \$700 million into hospital services throughout the province. There has been talk that perhaps we should be thinking of raising money in the local municipalities to try to offset the excessive demands of the municipalities, and I think the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has mentioned this. Perhaps we should, but if we do that, I suggest the people who are going to spend this money should be the elected people of that community, not any board appointed or elected just to run the hospital.

My experience when sitting on that board with the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View was that when we added up all our bills, subtracted the grants we were getting from the province, and found we were short, we just sent a bill down to city hall. That's what you get in the way of stewardship. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, if we're going that route, the people at city hall should have a lot of punch on that board, for the simple reason that if you are going to charge the taxpayers, the property owners, and all the rest of the people in the community, their representatives should certainly be participating in the raising of those taxes.

Just dealing with the present make-up of board members, the hon. member mentioned that because we weren't able to harass them — and there are newspapers in the city of Calgary that have sure harassed members of this Assembly, 12 of us from Calgary.

AN HON. MEMBER: Thirteen.

MR. MUSGREAVE: No, they haven't harassed 13. They've only harassed 12. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it's very easy to get publicity of this nature, but this particular board had no opportunity to respond. They were dedicated citizens performing a

good task, appointed by this government. They had no opportunity to defend themselves. I suggest that the amendment the member mentioned would allow the community to pressure the board into responding to those cases — the Abouna case keeps coming up. They mention such cases or others; I think Mannville is another one. These kinds of cases come up, and the implication is that if there had been politicians on that board, they would have responded, thrown out the recommendations of the medical committees, and reinstated that chap. Now if the patient had died after that, that's of no concern, because we responded to the community. That's a pretty fuzzy way of thinking, in my view.

Mr. Speaker, another aspect of the bill is very narrow. Just dealing with my own city, we have the Bethany Care Centre, Grace Hospital, Calgary General, just to name a few hospitals that have boards made up of appointed members or a combination of appointed and elected members. Take the Grace Hospital, which is run by the Salvation Army and has a tradition of service to the community at a very low cost. Or take the Holy Cross Hospital, which again has a tradition of service to the community. When the nuns were operating it, it was at a very low cost. But both of these hospitals have a tradition built into them that perhaps has helped them avoid some of the problems Foothills has gotten into.

Yet Foothills is one of the biggest hospitals in North America. It's a new hospital in relation to the others, and I would say it serves roughly a third or a quarter of the province of Alberta. It has a huge area of people referred to it, not just in Calgary but throughout the southern part of our province. If we had the Foothills Hospital board become a board created by elections, here's the kind of situation that would develop in Calgary. At Foothills you would have a work force that doesn't have the right to strike, but you would have an elected board. At Calgary General you have an appointed and an elected board, but it does have the right to strike. In my opinion, if you made it so that Foothills is an elected board, all you're adding is further confusion to the medical scene in the city of Calgary.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that perhaps a better amendment would be that all operations in large urban areas such as Calgary and Edmonton, and even Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer, have one hospital board. The one board would have a global budget set by the province. They would have the opportunity to increase this budget by, say, up to 10 per cent from the local taxpayers, but at least a third of this board would be composed of city aldermen.

In this way, Mr. Speaker, if local municipalities wanted to raise more and have gold-plated services in their community, they could do it. There would be enough input from members of the local council to ensure that the taxpayers as such were not exploited. It would give enough balance to the board that politicians wouldn't react, as we are prone to do sometimes, in a manner that is not in the best interests of society. Unfortunately too many of us are concerned with our careers as politicians rather than with the job we were sent here to do, which is to look after the interests of the people of the province of Alberta or, in the case of a city, the citizens of the municipality, town, or village.

Mr. Speaker, it always worries me that people think

if a politician is in office . . . For example, I think the Member for Calgary Mountain View said that if politicians were there, they're going to be able to better judge the operation or the management of the hospital than, say, medical people. We don't accept that philosophy in the British system of government. When you have a cabinet minister who runs a department, you don't have an engineer running the highways department. We have a chartered accountant running the health department. We could go right across the front desk, Mr. Speaker, and you would find that in many ways this philosophy does not persist in the parliamentary system of government. We have a civil service; those are the experts who carry out the policy. This is where a lot of people seem to lose sight of what these boards are all about: to set policy, not to get into the day to day management of the thing.

I had no problem at all in taking the recommendations of the medical people, because I had confidence in them. I did have problems, though, when sometimes they would come and say, we're unhappy with a certain member of the profession, and the College of Physicians and Surgeons here in Edmonton would not act to have the man's licence lifted. That is a different situation. When those kinds of situations develop, I don't think you have to be an expert at medical care or anything else; it's just having some plain common sense.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, the only positive thing I can see about this Act to Amend The Provincial General Hospitals Act is that it does give us an opportunity to consider the very difficult problems of administering hospitals in our community. For three years in the city of Calgary it was my good fortune to serve on a board appointed by the Executive Council, known as the Calgary metropolitan council. This was a council made up of board members, medical people, and those interested, concerned, and responsible for delivery of health services to the community of Calgary and district.

Mr. Speaker, the interesting thing I came away from that board with — and I'm still getting some correspondence — one hospital wants a particular piece of equipment and another says, it's our turn to get a burn unit, so we'll support you on the X-ray unit this time. The hospital on the other side of the city wants to get a laundry, so we'll support them next time around.

So I come back to my first suggestion, Mr. Speaker, if we had a metropolitan board responsible for the entire management of hospital facilities in the large regional areas, I think it would get rid of a lot of our problems. It could be a board composed of both elected and appointed officials.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, in considering this bill I'm reminded of a story in our old readers when Sir Roger de Coverley was asked whether he favored something or not. He said, much could be said on both sides. And I think that's very applicable in this case. When we look at Canada, the country is governed by elected people. The Prime Minister of Canada must be elected; the cabinet members must be elected. If the Prime Minister appoints someone who is not elected, that man must win a seat in order to hold that portfolio.

When we look at the United States, the president is

elected, but the cabinet ministers are not elected. They are appointed by the president. Consequently, they're responsible to the president, to the people through the president. They don't have to appear before the elected representatives day in and day out, as cabinet ministers do in Ottawa and Edmonton. They carry out their business.

There's some advantage to the appointments, because the President of the United States can look over the entire country and pick out the best qualified man for every portfolio. The Prime Minister of Canada in practice may really only look over those who have been elected, and choose the ministers for the various portfolios from those on his side of the House. Whether they are highly capable or otherwise, he must choose from that group, or choose somebody outside who then must win a seat. The Premier of the province of Alberta must choose from those who are elected.

I don't know whether or not you can compare the results in the United States to the results in Canada on that one item. I think there's a place for appointed officials and a place for elected officials. Generally speaking, I prefer the Canadian method of electing our cabinet ministers, provincially and federally, and the Prime Minister choosing from those elected officials.

I think when it comes down to municipal government, you have to view it somewhat similarly. School board members are elected, yet they do not levy the taxation, they requisition from their municipality the amount of money to run their schools. The system appears to be working very satisfactorily. There are also some appointed members to school boards, particularly in counties, which have had generally very beneficial results in giving a voice to areas such as villages which do not have an elected member.

We have some hospital boards that are elected and some that are appointed. One of the points I seriously object to, and it was mentioned by the last speaker, is having too many hospital boards. In the city of Drumheller — and I've mentioned this a number of times in this House since the present government was elected and before — we still have two hospital boards, one running the hospital and the nursing home, and a separate board running the auxiliary hospital. In my view, this is a waste of public money. I can't see why one board wouldn't co-ordinate the events better. I have no disrespect for the members of either board, but I just think there are too many boards and too much unnecessary overhead on the people when we have that number of boards.

I was also intrigued with the idea of the last speaker in suggesting one hospital board for the entire city of Calgary, operating all hospitals. That may have a very excellent effect. It's something that would have to be explored and studied.

Generally speaking, I support the idea of elected members, because they are then responsible to the people who elect them. In appointments, the person appointed is responsible to the person who appoints him. In the case where the minister of health appoints members of a hospital board, they are responsible not to the people of the area but to the minister. The minister in turn is responsible to the people. There is the advantage that he can choose highly qualified men, as can the president of the United States in governing that country.

Generally speaking, I like the idea of elected representatives, but I realize there's a different set of circumstances in every hospital district in this province. If I had to make the final decision in regard to this, I would want some flexibility, where an area that wanted appointed members — where it appeared appointed members could do the job better than elected members — would be able to do that. But generally speaking, I do support the operation of our hospitals through elected representatives.

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Speaker, I guess this must be my day.

The bill has some merit, Mr. Speaker, but I think it is also centred on some parts of government hospitals. We have to take the view, if I may, to look over and take all the hospitals in the province of Alberta wherever they may be. A few moments ago it was mentioned that the appointed members would not be as efficient, would not really care how much money they spent, or where the funds were coming from, because in the long run the government was paying it anyway. Money is money whether it comes from the government Treasury or the taxpayer's pocket. The only thing is, when the taxpayer gets a little short-changed on the services he gets, he immediately goes to his local representatives.

I'm not too hung up on the question. As The Municipal Government Act now stands, they may be appointed or elected. But I think we should consider one part; that is, the appointed members in the counties of the province of Alberta. I think some hon. members have mentioned the burdens they have to look after. County councillors are elected to the county council. They are municipal persons, also members of the school boards. They are appointed to the health unit boards, public works committees, senior citizen lodge boards, nursing home boards, and lastly, of course, the hospital boards.

I've been on both sides of the fence, Mr. Speaker. I didn't like it, because one simply hadn't time in one day to look after the affairs of a county and a health unit. Sometimes there were as many as three meetings, and we sat until 1 o'clock in the morning. I can assure you that when you sit on a hospital board meeting until 1 o'clock in the morning, your thinking isn't quite equal to what it would be if you were sitting at 9 or 10 o'clock in the morning. The workload is there and we must recognize that. I think many municipal men have said they would appreciate it if the act, as it now stands, read "shall" instead of "may". Then everybody does the same.

Let me give you an example, Mr. Speaker. In the town of Drayton Valley the hospital has two members from the town on the board. They're elected. Then we have two members from the IDs who are appointed, not elected. Then of course we have two members from the county who also are appointed. I can understand that when the elected people, who have time to attend to the business of the hospital and who have to serve on the hospital board, find many times that they're at a meeting and the appointed members are not there because of their workload, the meeting is of course postponed. Sometimes it is very frustrating to be at two or three places at the same time. A human being, a member of a board or a county council, can certainly not be at two or three meetings at the same time. Consequently

the tempers begin to rise. You hear the elected people of the hospital board say, but you are appointed; if you have too much work, get rid of it.

I think the hon. Member for Lacombe has probably stepped on the other part of it and has mentioned it. When this government took office, wisely or otherwise we picked up the last cent in hospital care. My opinion has now changed. I would say I think we should put some responsibility back on the local people. It's sometimes hard to make that decision and reverse your decision. But I would say the time has come, when our hospital costs are rising in the manner they are, that we should put some of the onus, whether it's a mill or whatever — that the unapproved costs have to be borne by the local taxpayer.

It has been said too many times that these members go back to government and the requisition comes in to their local government, and I was in one of them. It's sometimes very hard to explain to the council that you come back for a requisition of \$40,000 or \$50,000. Consequently, in most cases in the rural areas the county doesn't care too much, because it has such a high industrial assessment that one mill will perhaps yield \$100,000. So really levying half a mill on the tax notice goes by unnoticed.

Mr. Speaker, I would submit that I believe the workload of some of our municipal people in the rural areas is too much. They can't pay enough attention to the hospital board, the municipal portion of the school board. Most of the time the members are — it's a job that lasts for almost 365 days a year. I think to get better judgment we should perhaps be looking at separating the school boards from the municipal portion, and also the hospital boards in order to bring some sense of responsibility back to local government. I don't think a municipal man can wear that many hats all in one day and do justice to them all.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to join in debate on Bill 217, but in view of the time I would like to adjourn the debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, this evening the Assembly will proceed to second reading and committee study of bills on the Order Paper. I move we call it 5:30.

[The House recessed at 5:21 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.]

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

Bill 1 **The Interpretation** **Amendment Act, 1978**

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading

of Bill No. 1, The Interpretation Amendment Act, 1978. As indicated on the bill, this provision is merely a drafting provision to assure that in the future the term "province" will make it unnecessary to say "province or territory of Canada" in an enactment in order to ensure that it extends to the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory.

[Motion carried; Bill 1 read a second time]

Bill 5
The Alberta Insurance
Amendment Act, 1978

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of The Alberta Insurance Amendment Act, 1978. This amendment was required in order to correct a problem that arose between the printed version of the bill and the bill that was passed when we made the amendments to this legislation. It makes clear that the loan company referred to must be designated as a mortgage investment company. I might say that the amendment is really to correct a drafting error.

[Motion carried; Bill 5 read a second time]

Bill 8
The Survival of Actions Act

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 8, The Survival of Actions Act. This bill is based on a report entitled Survival of Actions and Fatal Accidents Act Amendment by the Institute of Law Research and Reform, dated April 1977. The draft Survival of Actions Act in this report is a model act recommended by the Conference of Commissioners on Uniformity of Legislation in Canada. Bill 8 is generally the same as the draft act.

Mr. Speaker, the primary purpose of this bill is to abolish in Alberta the claims an estate would make for the headings: loss of expectation of life, loss of amenities, and pain and suffering. In addition, it would allow an award to certain beneficiaries for their bereavement. I believe that all provinces in Canada except for Alberta and Manitoba have previously taken actions similar to what this particular bill does.

Earlier laws in Canada provide for survival of causes of action for the benefit of the deceased's estate. In other words, if you took action against another individual but died before damages were awarded, your estate could benefit from an award resulting from that action. These rights are currently outlined in The Administration of Estates Act, sections 51 to 55. The Survival of Actions Act, Bill 8, will replace sections 51 to 55 of that act. However, those sections in The Administration of Estates Act I referred to give a victim's estate a cause of action in which the estate could recover, under such headings of damage as loss of expectation of life, pain and suffering, or loss of amenities.

For example, suppose as a result of a car accident a man receives severe head injuries which, on the basis of medical and actuarial evidence, reduce his life expectancy from, say, 75 to 60 years of age. The man has suffered a loss of personal life expectancy, which not only may have an emotional effect, but will have economic consequences on his ability to ar-

range for his family's future. Therefore, loss of expectation of life, as a heading under which damages may be assessed, is entirely separate from any special damages for actual losses, such as the cost of the car damaged in the accident, or medical and legal fees.

One of the other headings, entitled loss of amenities, often refers to loss of faculty or capacity, such as capacity to enjoy life. Typical instances in this case would be loss of a limb, brain damage, or things of that sort. This Survival of Actions Act only provides damages that result in actual financial loss to the deceased or his estate; only those are recoverable. As I said before, it excludes personal claims, such as loss of expectation of life, loss of amenities, pain and suffering — claims by the estate of the deceased person.

This exclusion is based on the theory that as these are personal claims, if the plaintiff dies before his action has been completed or judgment has been rendered, the right to claim those damages expires. Again, another example — I'm enjoying this; this is great fun. My legal background has really prepared me for this tonight, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Wait until the questions come.

DR. WEBBER: For example, if a man is awarded \$10,000 for the loss of expectation of life in an action commenced after the accident but completed before he dies, the \$10,000 cannot compensate him for his personal loss of expectation to life, because he's already *d e a d*. [interjections] If the award were to go to his estate, it would be a windfall and would serve to compensate the heirs for something they didn't personally suffer. Their suffering could be compensated for under different headings.

Mr. Speaker, this act also amends The Fatal Accidents Act to make certain wordings consistent with The Survival of Actions Act, and removes the \$500 limit with respect to funeral expenses. Further, it creates damages for a heading entitled bereavement. With respect to the damages for bereavement, this would allow a spouse of a deceased person, the parents of a deceased person, or the children of a deceased parent to claim up to, I believe, \$3,000 each for what is referred to as bereavement.

On that, Mr. Speaker, I'll sit down.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, after that very lucid explanation, I really will have to take some time and have the explanation of the hon. member checked out. Could I say this to the hon. member: early in his remarks, he indicated that the work done by the Institute of Law Research and Reform basically had been followed by the government in taking these recommendations forward. I'd like to know, then, what the basis is for the decision not to exclude the actions of adultery, seduction, and inducing a spouse to leave, as recommended by the institute. Perhaps when we get to committee work on that piece of legislation, the hon. member could give us the thinking of the government on that.

Also, what's the basis for the decision not to include a new maximum for an award of funeral expenses when the old limit was eliminated? Or, in fact, was it government's decision that that would be left entirely to the courts to decide?

[Motion carried; Bill 8 read a second time]

Bill 10
The Agricultural Societies
Amendment Act, 1978

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, in moving second reading of Bill No. 10, The Agricultural Societies Amendment Act, I'd like first to say that the ag. societies in the last few years have done a great deal to improve life in rural Alberta. There is at least one society in all rural constituencies. I know Cypress has two, one just starting and the other that is — I just gave them a cheque for a grant of six thousand and some dollars. They have taken over a small old school that was closed because of centralization. It's what they call the grain school in the Aden area, and they operate it as a community centre for the people of the area around there.

I believe that in enriching rural life in Alberta one often forgets that also in these ag. societies, sponsored and helped by them, are the fairs and exhibitions, especially of the two larger metropolitan areas of our province, Edmonton and Calgary, and fairs in the other major cities. Very often we forget that these are agriculturally oriented and are started by the agricultural people of the province. It is, too, partly with the borrowing limits for these fairs that the increase in the amount of borrowing was raised \$10 million, enabling these organizations to fulfil the borrowing limits they would need.

Other than that, Mr. Speaker, throughout Alberta the ag. societies are involved in various things — arenas, swimming pools — either by themselves or in co-operation with other organizations. I understand that the biggest share of them are working quite well. Naturally when you have a lot of activity in rural Alberta, probably some will have problems, but we are attempting to solve these problems in conjunction with them. We hope in the near future that everything will be ironed out and things will be working quite well.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that a tribute should be paid to the people who are involved in these rural ag. societies. In many cases they've worked very hard in organizing their groups and getting their projects off the ground. It is volunteer help. They did it with a desire for improving the facilities in their local areas, and they should be commended.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, just a few words on second reading of this particular bill. I also want to say that we appreciate the ag. society and what they've done for my particular constituency. Many projects went up, and they're much appreciated. I want to say to the past Minister of Agriculture, now our Deputy Premier, that it was a good program he started. It certainly has been appreciated throughout the province.

Mr. Speaker, there's one principle in this particular bill that bothers me to some degree; that is, the new director to be set up for agricultural societies. When he closes debate on the bill, I would like the hon. member who is piloting the bill to give some of the reasons for giving the director as much power as allocated in this bill. For example, he can prevent a society from selling any property or borrowing money; he has the complete power to investigate any of the

societies; he can enter any facility any time he wants; he can remove any of the documents, books, records, photographs, or take copies of them. In other words, he can take over a society completely and order the society from doing anything.

So I'd like the hon. member, when he closes debate on this, to indicate why the director needs this much power. I think we could leave the powers in the hands of the society boards.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just following along the comments made by my colleague from Bow Valley. Really, when one listens to the justification we heard from the hon. Member for Cypress of the reasons this director has to be appointed and get these, I think you could really call them police-like powers: the director or his inspectors can descend, unannounced, on the office of a society and literally ransack their books, files, and other documents — even police are required to get warrants before they take that kind of action.

From the explanation we've heard from the hon. member during second reading, when we're supposed to discuss the principle of the bill — I know the hon. member made a comment about some agricultural societies having problems. But, Mr. Speaker, unless there's a great deal more elaboration on the reasons and kinds of problems there are, I think, frankly, this isn't good legislation. This is really giving to the director of agricultural societies, who's an appointed civil servant, powers far greater than the RCMP has. He doesn't have to get a warrant. In fact, he can go in unannounced and go through the files of this voluntary organization. I can't imagine the kinds of things that have happened in agricultural societies that warrant this kind of broad legislative sweep, which puts agricultural societies and voluntary organizations behind the eight ball. I'm being very charitable when I put it that way.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member and the hon. Government House Leader would consider holding the bill — it's second reading now — until we get an explanation from either the minister or the hon. member when he's closing the debate. With the reasons given this evening, I don't think in principle we should be moving in this direction at all. So I'd like to ask the Minister of Agriculture to elaborate on the problems, then a decision can be made whether we really have to go this far; failing that, ask the hon. Member for Cypress to adjourn the debate, then come back to the House armed with some of the examples, not naming the societies but some of the situations that have happened so we need this kind of legislation.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I know in closing debate the hon. Member for Cypress is fully prepared to make some remarks with respect to various aspects of the act and the changes that have been made. The hon. Leader of the Opposition did ask for some response from me, and I'd like to provide some.

First of all, if we followed the Social Credit line of having ag. societies come in and beg for a few dollars, not having any loans, any grants, any expansion, we wouldn't have to change the act at all. We could leave it just like it is, because instead of 208 ag. societies in Alberta, there'd be less than 50. None would operate capital facilities, none would provide

recreation facilities for rural communities. They'd sit out there rather stagnant, with no leadership whatsoever from government.

In the last few years since my colleague, now Minister of Transportation, gave an uplift to ag. societies in rural areas of this province, we've loaned or guaranteed more than \$10 million to various agricultural societies throughout Alberta. In addition, we've had a very extensive grant program. Because of the extensive loan funds provided to ag. societies, it becomes necessary from time to time to ensure that the affairs of agricultural societies, accounting procedures and so on, are looked after. If the hon. Leader of the Opposition would take the time to look at the previous ag. society act, he would see there is the ability under that act to appoint an inspector who would have full powers under The Public Inquiries Act, far broader powers than are envisioned in this act.

MR. CLARK: That's a public inquiry, my friend.

MR. MOORE: The hon. Leader of the Opposition has failed to recognize that what we're doing here is attacking the problem in the manner of appointing a director of ag. societies who has certain powers we feel may be required from time to time, but not the full and broad powers under The Public Inquiries Act that existed in the old act. Mr. Speaker, I don't see any reason at all that anyone should be concerned about the kind of provisions in that act.

I want to say as well on discussing this amendment that before it came into this Legislature the question was raised with me whether or not there should be an appeal mechanism in the act to the Minister of Agriculture, to an elected official. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, it's not written in the act, but there is. The director of ag. societies is an appointed civil servant working in the Department of Agriculture. In that context, if that director does something untoward, which he shouldn't have done, takes action considered excessive by an individual involved in an ag. society or group, certainly there is appeal to my office, and appeal to the office of the Minister of Agriculture when I no longer occupy that position.

Mr. Speaker, my view of what we're doing here is really updating legislation, bringing in legislation that's contemporary and appropriate, given the circumstances today. Those circumstances, quite frankly, are that we're involved to a very great extent in assisting ag. societies by way of direct grants, guaranteed loans through the Provincial Treasurer's office, many of those loans coming from the federal government. We feel the limited ability we will have to oversee the operations of ag. societies in this act are not unjustified, and certainly not something we will use unless absolutely necessary.

MR. CLARK: That's what they always say about taking that kind of power.

[Motion carried; Bill 10 read a second time]

Bill 9
The Natural Gas Pricing Agreement
Amendment Act, 1978

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to move second

reading of Bill 9, The Natural Gas Pricing Agreement Amendment Act, 1978. The purpose of this act is to make it clear that an original or a second buyer of gas who becomes a seller of gas or a constituent of gas within the province does not qualify for the export flowback or the price adjustment. We felt it was clear in the original legislation. However, one seller of gas received a legal opinion — there always seems to be at least one . . .

MR. GHITTER: There are always two.

MR. GETTY: . . . that questioned the judgment we had. Therefore, we felt this legislation would make it completely clear.

[Motion carried; Bill 9 read a second time]

Bill 12
The Motor Vehicle Administration
Amendment Act, 1978

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 12, The Motor Vehicle Administration Amendment Act, 1978. This amendment will permit the use of valid out-of-province operators' licences for up to six months in Alberta, and will permit the use of non-commercial vehicles in Alberta for up to six months if they are validly registered elsewhere. There's a small minor amendment in relation to financial responsibility cards issued outside Alberta, and there's a correction of a couple of drafting errors in the existing act.

[Motion carried; Bill 12 read a second time]

Bill 15
The Motor Transport
Amendment Act, 1978

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move second reading of The Motor Transport Amendment Act, 1978. This in fact modifies the sections relative to the offence area, and quite frankly is something that was overlooked in the original motor transport bill passed last fall and does sort of complete the actions there.

[Motion carried; Bill 15 read a second time]

Bill 16
The Cultural Development
Amendment Act, 1978

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to move second reading of Bill 16, The Cultural Development Amendment Act, 1978. Just yesterday, under the estimates of the Department of Culture, we heard from the hon. minister of the vastness of the programs with respect to the preservation of our cultural heritage in the province, the promotion of cultural development of the many ethnic groups, and recognition of the extensive contributions the peoples of Alberta have made since the first settlers came to this province. The passing of this bill has some major significance for Albertans in that regard.

It is a rich cultural heritage of our past that abounds here, not only in artifacts but in language,

art, music, and rites of ethnocultural groups. To preserve this cultural wealth, to support and contribute to the development of an understanding of the ethnocultural background of Alberta, and to provide persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in the preservation and promotion, we feel that perhaps the greatest measure of success in accomplishing such preservation is by way of a foundation.

Therefore, this bill will enable us to establish two significant foundations, the Alberta Cultural Heritage Foundation and the Alberta Foundation for the Performing Arts. The establishment of this foundation is for the purpose of assisting in the promotion of the performing arts and giving individuals and organizations the opportunity to participate by giving them assistance in a variety of ways. The bill will enable the minister to acquire works of art on behalf of Albertans and Alberta by purchase, gift, bequest, loan, or otherwise; to sell, lease, exchange, or otherwise dispose of any such works that may have been acquired in exchange programs.

The foundations to be established under this legislation would be so established by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, their number to be determined by him when the complete outline of their function and their services is determined.

Powers that would be given to the foundations to enable them to meet their objectives would permit the foundation to acquire real or personal property, whether by purchase; acceptance of gifts; leasing of properties, gifts, or works of art; accepting them by bequest, and in any other manner that may be beneficial and helpful in meeting the objects of the foundations.

It would enable the foundations to make grants to persons or organizations carrying on such activities within the objects of the foundations. It would allow or enable the foundations to publish, produce, and distribute books, pamphlets, films, and any other productions which relate to the objects.

From time to time, the foundations would have the power to borrow funds from any persons and to give any security for the repayment of such funds. It would enable the foundations to conduct fund-raising campaigns or other means of raising funds enabling them to meet the objectives of the foundation.

It is significant to note that the legislation would also appoint the Auditor General as the official auditor of the foundation. An annual reporting would be required on the part of the foundation, with the auditor's statement attached to it.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in regard to Bill 16, it's certainly our intention to support the legislation. Frankly, when I heard the legislation introduced I was much more enthused about it than after having a look at it. When it was introduced, I got the feeling that here in fact we were going to be setting up a foundation for the performing arts, two foundations that would be perhaps some distance from the government; that the government was going to take some money and perhaps make some contribution to establish the foundation and that these foundations then would assume some pretty major responsibilities. In fact, perhaps one of the better things the government of Manitoba, I believe, did a number of years ago was to set up a foundation along this line, which I think

made a significant contribution in the area of the performing arts.

As I say, I was very keen on the legislation when the hon. member introduced it. I will have a number of questions in committee with regard to various clauses of the bill, but suffice it for me to say that perhaps between now and the committee, the government and the hon. member who is piloting the bill through the House may well look at the idea of moving the foundations to be established perhaps somewhat more at arms length from the government, really to have representation from the various cultural ethnic groups in the province to take on the responsibility for the operation of the foundation, and that that foundation then report directly to the Legislature yearly.

I notice in the bill that the actions of the foundation will be very closely tied to the minister. Where there are some advantages to that from the standpoint of accountability, there are, on the other hand — and other provinces who have had this problem of how much freedom does a foundation in this very sensitive area of the performing arts and cultural heritage really need to meet the expectations of a number of the people who will be dealing in this particular area. So when we get into committee on the bill, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that we look at the kinds of flexibility and freedom that the foundations being set up will really have. Perhaps that's a better place to do it than now. But suffice it to say to the hon. sponsor of the bill that I hope the government will give some consideration to that between now and when we get into committee, so that in fact we can have a meaningful discussion on that particular aspect of the bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 16 read a second time]

Bill 11

The Feeder Associations Guarantee Amendment Act, 1978

MR. HANSEN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 11, The Feeder Associations Guarantee Amendment Act, 1978. This amendment guarantees that 25 per cent of the total loan will be guaranteed by the government. If anyone in the association fails to pay their dues and the government has to pick up the tab, the Provincial Treasurer will have the right to use all the collection rights the association would have to collect its debt.

Also in this bill are stipulations that where a feeder association doesn't follow the rules and regulations, the government can cut off any further loans to the association.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, commenting on this bill on feeder associations and the actual guarantee. As I understand it, in the bill they are now going to be guaranteeing 25 per cent of the actual money advanced, and the minister will be able to stop any payment or any advance from being advanced to a feeder association. But the one portion that concerns me in the bill is where the government's going to guarantee 25 per cent. However, if there is a default in any of the feeder associations and they don't make the payment, the minister can take all the security on the particular loan. As I understand it, it's going to

restrict our lending agents from loaning out the money, if the government takes all the security and leaves the lending agent without holding any security when they are going to be putting up 75 per cent of the money.

Could the sponsor of this bill just explain this and the reason for taking the security when they are only putting up 25 per cent of the money as far as loans are concerned?

MR. HANSEN: Well the way I see this bill, Mr. Speaker, is that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member answering a question or is he closing debate?

MR. CLARK: He's answering a question.

MR. SPEAKER: If he's answering a question, that's fine. He's not closing the debate.

MR. HANSEN: Mr. Speaker, under this the treasurer takes over the right to collect the loan of the individual. If one person in the association defaults and we have to take over, that is the one we take over; the same right as the association to collect the bill, if we have to pay the bill the borrower hasn't paid.

[Motion carried; Bill 11 read a second time]

Bill 29
The Condominium Property
Amendment Act, 1978

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I will take some time this evening, if I may, to explain the changes we are proposing for the condominium legislation in this province.

Just a little background: the first condominium legislation in Alberta was introduced in 1966. After a number of years of operation, the act and its operation in the province was studied by a committee under chairmanship of the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo. That report and other government studies led to the introduction of Bill 55 in the Legislature last spring, on May 18.

During subsequent weeks, as the bill was allowed to remain over the summer for public input, a number of representations and comments were made with respect to the legislation. As a result the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs decided that public hearings should be held in Calgary and Edmonton, the major metropolitan areas where most condominiums in Alberta are located. Those hearings were held in Edmonton on September 22 and in Calgary on September 26.

The bill before the Assembly is a revision of Bill 55 which reflects submissions received by the committee which heard the recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, I can advise the Assembly that Mr. Gitter, myself, Mr. Harle, and other members . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. member please refer to members by their constituencies and ministers by their portfolios.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, the hon. Minister of Consumer and

Corporate Affairs, myself, and other members of the Assembly who were present from time to time, took part during the hearings in both places.

The bill itself relates to residential condominiums only, and that is important. We believe some of the amendments proposed in Bill 55 last year, and in this legislation, are innovative. Mr. Speaker, primarily the developer is required to make full disclosure of basic information so the purchasers of condominiums can make informed decisions when buying their residences from the original developer. When buying first from the developer a purchaser will have a statutory right to rescind within 10 days of the purchase if the purchaser has not received certain basic information, which is laid out in legislation.

Mr. Speaker, last year Bill 55 included the provision that subsequent sales between owners and new purchasers, not from the developers themselves but in fact from subsequent sales, would also have that right of rescission in a 10-day period. However, many representations were received which made it clear that that would create undue and unnecessary delays, and that provision has been removed. So new legislation provides that the obligation to disclose is upon the initial developer.

The developer will also be required to hold purchaser's money in trust until title documents have passed and can be delivered into the hands of the purchaser, and until the unit and the common property are substantially completed. One of the provisions in the legislation provides that interest earned on that money held in trust will go to the developer, subject to certain statutory requirements. Also these trust requirements will not apply where the developer provides a plan which is approved by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. This also protects the purchaser against loss. The new home certification program of Alberta is an example of such a plan.

The condominium corporation board which comes into effect, and really is made up of the owners of individual units within the condominium, and which is in itself a new legal person, will have a statutory right to terminate any management agreement the developer may have entered into with any management corporation, individual, or organization while the developer still controlled the property. So so-called "sweetheart deals" between the developer and any management organization or corporation can be terminated by the new condominium corporation which, as I said, Mr. Speaker, is comprised of the individual owners operating the condominium.

There's also a provision that the board will have some new powers in dealing with the owners of the units and will be able to fine and enforce penalties against owners for breaches of the by-laws by individual owners. This was one of the things that certainly came before the committee, and I'm sure the committee chaired by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, from the owners and condominium boards who made representations.

Where a condominium unit is rented — and this is a common situation — the corporation will now have additional powers under this legislation. I believe these additional powers will be welcomed by condominium corporations and owner-occupied units throughout the province. Those provisions will permit the corporation to obtain security deposits from owners who are absentee owners and will also per-

mit the condominium corporation to terminate the tenancy between the unit owner and the tenant if the tenant causes damage to the common property or fails to comply with the by-laws. This in itself is a marked departure from the normal law of contract which exists at common law, in that a third party may now introduce itself into a contractual relationship which had been entered into previously by the owner or landlord and the tenant. But it is necessary, we felt, because of the serious problems created in many instances in condominiums by large numbers of absentee landlords renting to tenants and then being unavailable or unwilling to enforce their rights against the tenants who occupy the individual units.

I'm sure many hon. members were familiar with the terms of Bill 55 of last year. Over a period of several months that bill was available for hon. members to read and study. I'm sure they did so, and that they spent many late hours combing through those amendments to make sure we were going to bring about the best possible condominium legislation in Canada. The representations of individual members as well as those directly affected — developers, condominium corporations, and unit owners — will indeed make this legislation a model for condominium operations throughout Canada.

I just want to touch upon a number of other topics, because they are significant. Under Bill 55 the developer had to estimate the monthly contributions of owners for a period of two years. Monthly contributions are assessed by the corporation in order to enable it to meet its obligation to maintain the common property. In the event this estimate was low, under Bill 55 the developer had to pay the corporation any difference between actual expenditures and his estimate. This provision has been deleted from the new bill, since it was felt this would be almost impossible to predict for a two-year period, given the inflationary problems being experienced in the country today.

Transitional provisions have been added in the new legislation. As a result, some of the sections of the bill will not come into effect until January 1, 1979. The most important of these sections will be those dealing with the developer's obligation to disclose. In this legislation we are imposing a new requirement upon developers. It is felt it is only right and fair to permit developers an opportunity of developing a mechanism to meet the obligations imposed upon them. In the new legislation, failure to disclose is subject to fairly substantial penalties.

It is felt, Mr. Speaker, the by-laws themselves, which are provided as part of the act, are considerable improvements over the other by-laws which had been suggested. Some of the provisions, such as the capital replacement reserve fund which was previously to be included within the act, has been transferred into the new by-laws.

Bill 55, Mr. Speaker, contained a requirement that the condominium plan itself was to make reference to such things as landscaping, location of sidewalks, parking areas, fences, et cetera. Those items will no longer need to be shown on the plan itself; instead they will be shown or described on a plan which must be attached to the purchase agreement by the developer. So that information will be available to purchasers of condominium units, but it's not necessary that it be registered as part of the plan when it's

registered in the Land Titles Office.

Under the previous bill, the developers did not have to provide copies of all disclosure documents if any of those were already on file at the Land Titles Office. This requirement has been changed to provide that the developer must provide all copies, regardless of whether these have been filed. Mr. Speaker, I think that will once again materially assist individual unit owners or purchasers in regard to the information they require in order to make a judgment decision which will allow them to make one of their most major investments.

Insurance provisions have been modified substantially from Bill 55 by deleting the provision which dealt with the insurance placed by a unit owner. Bill 55 restricted the unit owner's right to insure his unit for fire, as this obligation was placed upon the corporation. Deletion of this provision will give the unit owner complete discretion as to the type of insurance coverage he wishes to place on his unit. Any particularly valuable additions unit owners may have made by way of fancy wallpaper, panelling, carpeting, or things of that nature, may now be protected by the individual unit owner. The obligation to insure those extras, if I may call them that, will not be a requirement on the corporation.

Under Bill 55, the unit owner's right to vote was taken away if his unit was rented. One of the matters that was changed in favor of the unit owner who is renting to a tenant was that that provision has been deleted from the new legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I realize this legislation is lengthy and perhaps somewhat complicated, particularly to many people who are not familiar with the concept of condominiums in our society. Recognizing the changing nature of home ownership and the fact that condominiums will become an increasingly important method of providing accommodation for single families, we feel this important legislation and the process by which it has been placed before the Assembly are in fact very important and significant responses to public concerns. Of course there may be those who wish it had been done a year ago, but I suggest that, by taking time and listening carefully to the representations of developers, condominium corporations, individual unit owners, and other interested people, we have come forward with legislation which will not only be significant for the immediate future, but in fact will provide a framework by which condominiums may be developed and operated, and will prove to be a very significant addition to our way of life in this province. While it is true that at the present time most condominiums are located in the two major metropolitan areas, I'm sure other parts of Alberta will see an increasing number of condominiums being built, placed on the market, and sold to individual unit owners.

Just before concluding, Mr. Speaker, I will welcome comments, and those questions by members of the opposition or our government members I will attempt to answer in committee. I'm sure there will be representations and perhaps some suggestions for amendments. In fact, in the last few days I have received some memoranda from individual members requesting some drafting changes which are presently under consideration and which may result in amendments being introduced during committee study of the legislation.

I just want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by outlining those items which the developer must deliver to the purchaser so the purchaser is fully aware. Those are the purchase agreement, the by-laws or proposed by-laws, any management agreement or proposed management agreement, any recreational agreement or proposed recreational agreement, any lease or mortgage that affects the title to the unit, the condominium plan or proposed plan, a detailed description of interior finishing of common property, the calculation of the unit factor, and details of the capital reserve fund. Such disclosure cannot be waived by the purchaser, and the purchaser may rescind the agreement at any time up to 10 days after signing, which, as I have already indicated, is a cooling-off provision.

With respect to the question of the mortgage which affects the title to the unit, there is a provision in the legislation which provides that if that mortgage is not in itself available, certain material factors must be provided. That is set out in Section 20.5, which provides that we must know exactly what's owing and so on. That, I think, is set out in the legislation. I may be wrong on that section, but it is set out clearly that those particulars must be provided.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I welcome comments, suggestions, and representations from members of the Assembly, as we have had from the public. As I say, very meaningful representations have come forward as this legislation has been planned and now presented for benefit, clarity, and complete understanding.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 29 read a second time]

Bill 31

The Hazardous Chemicals Act

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move second reading of Bill No. 31, The Hazardous Chemicals Act. This act is essentially as I described it on first reading. It deals with chemicals that are really too hot to handle in normal agricultural ways and are intended primarily for industry or special licensed operators.

[Motion carried; Bill 31 read a second time]

Bill 21

The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1978

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in moving second reading of Bill No. 21. At this time, I'd like to acknowledge in the House the very useful work done during 1976 by the select committee on The Workers' Compensation Act, chaired by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican, and as always, the work that is done annually by the advisory committee to the minister. In November 1976 the select committee presented their report and recommendations based on their intensive review of the act. They examined both administrative procedures and the benefits to the recipients under the legislation. The benefits, of course, are annually examined also by the advisory committee to the minister.

The majority of the recommendations of the select committee comprises the bulk of Bill No. 21 that is before hon. members for second reading this evening.

The actual benefit levels related to dependent spouses, along with disability awards and payments for dependent children, are the items reviewed annually by the advisory committee to the minister.

This bill is highlighted by one of the recommendations of the select committee. There are a number of them of course, but one of the most important is doing away with the anomaly that had existed in regard to widows who were able to claim benefits only under the law in force prior to January 1, 1974. What is proposed in this bill in that respect is to bring those into line with the post-1974 widows in almost every particular. There is also a basic across-the-board increase for all classifications, averaging 6 per cent this year in regard to benefits paid.

Some of the other features that are very significant, Mr. Speaker, relate also to increasing the flexibility of the act. The allowable maximum upon which a worker's contribution can be made by his employer is being increased this year in order to continue to stay in line with the generally increasing levels of wages and salaries in the work force, in order that the amount the worker might receive after disability is not so much less than his normal earnings, as would otherwise be the case.

Provisions have been made more flexible in regard to making payments to dependent children outside the household of the deceased.

A number of other changes have also been made more flexible and usable, including recasting the remarriage payment to dependent spouses and the conduct of some of the work of review committees of the boards. An important provision in regard to workers who are temporarily disabled for more than one year includes the increase of the compensation to the same amount that would be available if the disability they were under at the time was a permanent one. That was an anomaly in the act that had been causing hardship in some individual cases where the disability, having been styled temporary, nevertheless persisted for more than one year.

Another very important one in the sense of the overall fairness of the act, although it would not involve many cases, is the waiver of the three-year limitation on claims by dependants of deceased workers. I would think all hon. members have had occasion to talk to a person who may be involved in a very old claim and has found that the claim appeared to be meritorious in every respect but the statutory time had gone by. This does not automatically open up a number of cases and call upon the board to make automatic settlements in regard to those cases. What it does is enable them to do something they couldn't do before. That is, on their discretion, being satisfied that the reasons for the claim not being made within the limitation period are adequate, they can then respond to a request to open up the case on their own decision at the board level. I know that will increase the overall equity and fairness with which the board will be able to act toward an admittedly small but no doubt important group of people who may have missed benefits they would otherwise have had.

Now I would like to say a little about the scale of benefits included in the act. I mentioned the proposals that relate to the pre-1974 group of widows. Under present circumstances, for example, a widow with no children, whose benefits began in 1944, would have been limited in 1974 and after — actually

in 1978 — to \$345 per month. The new proposals will automatically increase that to \$463 per month, which is the minimum that can be received by widows who fall into the post-1974 classification. The typical example of another widow with three children, who under the old rules would receive \$615 per month, will now receive \$748 per month. I think that's an extremely important change. In the case of the widow with no children, the increase this year would be 34 per cent over what would have been received otherwise. For the widow who has three children, the increase would be 22 per cent.

So in light of an overall increase in benefit levels of about 6 per cent, the special consideration given to that group is well worth while. I know that all hon. members will concur.

A number of other features in the sense of the specific benefits: I mentioned that the maximum insurable earnings was being increased this year to \$16,550. That is slightly behind some of the other western provinces, but basically about right when you look at it across Canada as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I think those are the principal changes that demonstrate the principle of the bill. I look forward to the participation of other hon. members in the debate.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a few comments on the principle of Bill 21. In doing so, I have to first point out that for the last three years I've had the pleasure of acting on the advisory committee to the minister on workers' compensation. That being the case, I find myself in a slightly difficult position. I would very much like to talk about the report made to the minister, but it would be inappropriate for me to do that. It was made to the minister. If I hadn't been a member of the committee and the information had been leaked to me, sent in a brown paper envelope, I would have felt no constraints at all about talking about the report.

Unfortunately, having been part of the committee, I can't refer directly to that report. But I'll try obliquely to make known some of the concerns I share as a member of the House, and perhaps shared by other members of the committee.

Might I just say, Mr. Minister, that apart from the responsibility assigned to us of recommending benefit rates for the forthcoming year, one of the most useful meetings the advisory committee held was a session one afternoon when we had the gentleman responsible for setting up the total accident compensation program in New Zealand. I think if hon. members have an opportunity at some point to review the report this particular gentleman made to the committee, they will find it extremely useful. Through the compensation scheme in New Zealand they look after not only automobile insurance, workers' compensation as we know it, but a system of accident compensation which is portal to portal for the worker, and even includes the housewife in her home. He went into the mechanics of how that system operates.

Quite frankly, I would have to say that the two company representatives were as impressed with the discussion that took place and the way in which it's done in New Zealand as were the two labor representatives and myself. Unfortunately the hon. Member for Calgary Millican wasn't able to be at that particular meeting. But it shows what can be done in

applying the compensation concept beyond the perimeters of the work place. I raise that because it was an extremely useful meeting.

Least some of the hon. members are rather concerned that we had a creeping socialist from New Zealand, he may have been a creeping socialist, but to my knowledge he was a Conservative judge, although the Conservatives in New Zealand are rather red by comparison with their brothers in Alberta. In any event it was an extremely useful meeting.

Mr. Speaker, the good points in this bill: certainly eliminating the three-year waiver is a plus; and finally, dealing with the question of the anomaly of the pre-January 1, 1974 widow pension is long overdue. I think one of the recommendations made by the select committee in 1977 was that a widow, widower, or foster parent receiving an award in regard to the death of a worker caused by an accident sustained prior to January 1, 1974, received an increase to bring the award to the current minimum prescribed for total disability. I would vote in favor of this bill for that reason, if for no other. I think we are clearly moving in the right direction.

Where I part company with the minister and the government, Mr. Speaker, is on the compensation being made available during this coming year. We have an average increase of 6 per cent. Now I know that's consistent with the government's policy. But it seems to me that when we're dealing with people who are the victims of industrial accidents, we really have to ask ourselves, is 6 per cent adequate? Is 6 per cent reasonable? When it comes to MLAs' indemnities, one can say 6 per cent is reasonable. One can say perhaps, when it comes to higher paid public servants, 6 per cent is reasonable. But is 6 per cent reasonable when we look at the bottom end of our compensation cases?

You know, this whole business for the last three years — and the minister knows this was discussed by the select committee, as well as the advisory committee. The whole emphasis has been focused not on improving the compensation for the higher income worker, but the emphasis has to be on improving the package for the person at the bottom end of the scale. Mr. Speaker, what we're doing here for the totally, permanently disabled, and I think members should be very clear, is that we are moving the compensation from \$436 a month to \$463 a month, an increase of \$27 or 6 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, all one has to do is look at the Statistics Canada estimate of the poverty line. The poverty line for a family of five is now \$8,600, for a family of four \$7,500, for a family of three \$6,400, and for a family of two \$5,373. The only way with this new schedule that the permanently, totally disabled person is going to be out of the poverty line is if only a couple are in the family. But as the minister knows, many are in a position where there are two, three, or four dependants. Then they are going to be clearly in the poverty line.

I just say to the minister that I don't believe 6 per cent is adequate, fair, or enough. I don't believe that 6 per cent is consistent with the thrust of the previously announced policy of this government, that the emphasis should be placed on increasing the people at the bottom end of the scale. I look at the other increases, and with the exception of dealing with the anomaly of pre-January 1, 1974 widows where there

is significantly higher than a 6 per cent increase, we are looking at 6 per cent monotonously across the board. That may be government policy, Mr. Minister, but I just argue as strongly as I can that I don't think it is a reasonable increase for people who demonstratively need more.

Now let's look at the cost of living. The Provincial Treasurer is talking about a lower rate of inflation in the future, guessing that it may be 7 or 6 per cent, and therefore the 6 to 7 per cent guideline, says the Provincial Treasurer, may be applicable. We don't know what the increase will be in the next 12 months, but we do know what the increase has been in the last 12 months. Keep in mind that this will go into effect on July 1, so we're really dealing with the catch-up period of July 1, 1977, until June 30, 1978. How are we catching up? We are increasing it by 6 per cent.

But, Mr. Speaker, to the minister, in both our cities the 12-month inflation rate as of March was 8.9 per cent. Hopefully it will moderate, although few of us would want to climb out on a limb and predict that. But it's not going to do these people any good, because this is the catch-up period. At a time when the inflation rate has been just a shade under 9 per cent, we're offering 6. I suppose it can be argued.

I don't have any great difficulty saying that the Attorney General may find it pretty tough to get highly paid Crown counsel because of our guidelines, because we're talking about high-income people. I don't think there's an ounce of sympathy for MLAs on the 6 per cent as it applies to us or to members of the cabinet. We're not dealing with this category. Mr. Speaker, we're dealing with the permanently, totally disabled who are getting \$436 a month and will now be going up to \$463 a month, an increase of \$27 a month. I say with great respect, Mr. Minister, and members of the government: think it over; it isn't enough. In a province like Alberta we should not be subjecting the people in this category to the poverty level.

If we were going to run rampant and deplete the public treasury as a consequence of this increase, it would be a different matter. But the minister knows perfectly well, even though the public treasury is responsible for bringing up these old awards — I'm not going to release the figures, but I have them — we know perfectly well we could go substantially above what is being done here and it wouldn't make the slightest difference. It wouldn't be two hours' interest of the heritage trust fund; it would be such a small amount, maybe half a week's on the gasoline tax, probably less than that.

Mr. Speaker, the point is that we are applying this 6 per cent slavishly across the line, and I think that's wrong. I say that, watching what this government has been attempting to do in the last six years. I forget what year it was, but I remember when the hon. Deputy Premier raised the case of somebody, I believe in Barrhead or some area — no, it was Westlock I believe — who was on the permanent total disability pension. I believe that was several years before the government changed. He made some very good points about the totally inadequate compensation at the time. To be fair to the government, there was an increase. And to be fair to the government, for the first two or three years those increases were reasonable and, I think, were going some distance

toward improving the lot of people on the permanently, totally disabled list. But now, for some reason, we're caught, and we're applying this 6 per cent rule across the board.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, to me that is wrong. I have no choice but to vote for the bill because of the question of the widows' pension. I think we're moving in the right direction there, and that is worth the support of the Legislature. But I appeal to the minister and the government caucus: reconsider this 6 per cent, because it isn't enough.

MR. DONNELLY: Mr. Speaker, if I might just say a few words regarding Bill 21. I have the pleasure of sitting on the advisory committee with the Member for Spirit River-Fairview. I too have gone through a lot of the same motions he has. I've read the report to the minister, so I won't discuss it either. But I would like to say to the member that there are two sides to every coin. I think we found that out in the advisory committee.

As far as the restraints are concerned, I feel they're just as important here in this bill as anywhere. Personally I find myself quite happy with the position the government is taking. I won't take that any further. I'm sure in committee the minister will be able to cover that with the member.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the select committee, I would like to add on behalf of all the committee members, who I'm sure would agree with me, that we are certainly pleased to see the government has implemented all the recommendations in the report. I would also like to thank again all the companies, associations, and individuals who presented briefs, both written and verbal, to our committee. I may have some other remarks on the bill, but I will leave that for committee.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a comment or two on the bill, because it does affect a great number of people whom I have the honor to represent.

Before dealing with the items of the bill, I would like to pay a tribute to the chairman and the other members of the committee who studied workers' compensation. As far as I could see, the members were very dedicated and listened very carefully to the representations that were made. I think this act does away with one of the worst anomalies we've ever had in our legislation. That is the one dealing with the different classes of widows.

The members of the committee will recall very vividly how some widows came to us and said, is my husband not worth as much as her husband because he happened to be killed at a different time? It was very difficult to answer. You could explain all the workings of the compensation until you were black and blue in the face, but you still couldn't convince that widow that her husband wasn't just as good a man as the one who was killed from her neighbor. The amount of money each was getting was different. Even if both sums of money were sufficient to meet all their needs, there was still that agony within that there was some reflection on the husband who had died; his widow was not receiving as much.

I want to commend the minister and the government for bringing in this amendment. I think it's going to be heartening to everyone and certainly to

the widows who are concerned.

There's another noteworthy item in this that deals with widows. I don't think anybody has mentioned it yet. Under the old act, if a widow was going to remarry and she married on or after January 1, she got \$2,700. I don't know whether that was a bounty or what it was supposed to be, but she got \$2,700. I suppose it's based on the fact that so much money is amortized at the time of the death of the spouse, and this was still saving money for industry and the board, but did give her a little wedding present. However, if she was able to wait one year and two months, she could get not only the \$780 but another \$360, which gave her \$1,140. If she was really patient and could wait another year and five months, she could get another \$3,840. So the temptation, whether it happened or not, was for the widow to wait it out. The temptation was to live in sin until that time expired, then collect the greater sum of money. I'm not saying this actually happened, although I have heard some people say they were encouraging a certain widow to take her time, wait a few months, and get this extra sum of money.

MR. CLARK: Did you ever give advice like that?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, I've given it some thought, but as per usual, I was a little slower than the other guy.

But I think the way this is amended is a very excellent way of handling it. If the widow or widower wants to remarry, they now get \$5,556. There's no date or specification in there. I think this is a sensible way in which to deal with this.

Some people before the committee wondered why we pay them anything. If they're going to remarry, that ended the responsibility, they claimed, of the deceased husband. They are now taking on all the responsibilities of the wife of another man or the husband of another woman. It then becomes the responsibility of that new man or new woman to look after the needs, and there shouldn't be a wedding present at all. However, I think it's a pretty fine compromise, and I think widows will be encouraged to remarry. Maybe it will do away with a few of the bachelors in the country as well.

The other item I want to deal with, and feel a little uncomfortable with too, is in connection with the maximum amount payable for total disability. This is a difficult thing to handle. If it were based entirely on the earnings of the workmen, as compensation normally is, it probably wouldn't come to what is now being worked out. There is a maximum in the act, and even though that maximum has gone up and up and up, it still is not equal to what the workman probably would have been able to earn had he not been injured in industry.

Coming from a coal mining family, I lean very strongly toward the fact that if a person loses part of their body in industry, that industry should include the cost of that accident in the product being sold. That should become a number one item in looking after those who leave part of their bodies in the coal mines, on the shafts, or in whatever type of work they're doing. Generally speaking, I think this is a reasonable approach to workers' compensation. I realize there are some practical considerations that make it impossible to follow in all cases, but I would ask the minister to deal with the rationale that

brought about the amount now recommended for total disability. I find most of our injured workmen, whether with partial disability or total disability, are very, very reasonable if we can carry their judgment. I would like to hear the rationale the minister used in reaching the decision that the total amount for total disability would be \$463.

MR. CLARK: Before the hon. minister concludes the debate, I simply lend our voice to the comments made by the Member for Drumheller and the Member for Spirit River-Fairview with regard to the total disability situation. Mr. Minister, hopefully between now and when we come to committee the government will reconsider its situation in this particular area. That likely is the time to become more deeply involved than just for the government's exact reasoning for going 6 per cent and just there. It's our intention to vote for the bill on second reading but, come the time of the committee, to explore that area much more.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make just a very brief comment because of the remarks of the hon. members opposite in regard to the \$463 a month as being the minimum under the act for post-1978 cases. Those would be extremely rare, because the level of earnings would indicate that almost everyone post-1978 would clearly receive more than that. By bringing the pre-1974 widows up to the minimum as provided for the post-1974 cases, we are dealing with about 1,000 people. The reference to the \$463 was made often enough that I wouldn't want hon. members to go away in the frame of mind that that is a payment that is very often made. There has to be a minimum somewhere, and that is the one that's established. However, 6 per cent over the previous figure, of course, is a much different figure at any of the higher awards than it is at \$463 or \$436. So in the larger awards, which are the vast majority, it's a more meaningful amount.

It should also be pointed out that all moneys involved are non-taxable, so the 6 per cent is a full benefit to the individual receiving it and, indeed, not to be whittled away by other charges, primarily income tax. Closing on the reference to \$463, I would hope that not too many hon. members would go away thinking that is at all a common amount to be received.

Mr. Speaker, I'm now going to use some examples provided by the board, in an overview sense, not in detail. Working back from the figures would show the amount the deceased would have been earning, if one wanted to take into account the percentage increases since the date of death in each case. Typically, a 1974 widow receiving \$824 last year will receive \$873 this year. That is not \$463. Typically again, a widow in 1976 who had been receiving \$974 would under the 6 per cent increase receive \$1,032. Once again, that is not \$463. A 1977 widow who had been receiving \$975 would go to \$1,033 with the 6 per cent increase. I can only underline — I know all hon. members made note of it when I said it — with non-taxable dollars and the comparison across Cana-

da for benefits, that is something no member of this Assembly need, in any way, feel reticent about approving.

Again, it's the finest program in the country and deserves full support. I know all hon. members feel that and will do so.

[Motion carried; Bill 21 read a second time]

Bill 22
The Election Statutes
Amendment Act, 1978

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, in moving Bill 22, The Election Statutes Amendment Act, 1978, I'd like to make the same explanation I made on first reading.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important piece of legislation to all of us here. I do hope the comments I made tonight can be concluded this evening without too many questions. I'm sure they will be.

A brief explanation: members will recall that when we passed The Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act, we provided in that act a financial mechanism whereby during an election candidates report their election expenses to the Chief Electoral Officer, along with supporting bills and vouchers. We had also provided earlier, in The Election Act itself, that election expenses should be reported by individual candidates to their constituency returning officers, and had left in The Election Act the requirement that the returning officer publish in a local newspaper the statement of expenses of candidates. Therefore there was a duplication of financial reporting in the two statutes, The Election Act and The Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act.

We have concluded that it would be appropriate to have the financial reporting only through the one statute. Accordingly, we are removing the requirement from the first act, The Election Act, and leaving the responsibility with the Chief Electoral Officer to publish the financial statements through the latter act.

[Motion carried; Bill 22 read a second time]

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

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 28, The Real Estate Agents' Licensing Amendment Act, 1978. Two main principles are involved in this particular amendment. The first is to make it clear that either the person whose appeal is heard by the appeal board or the superintendent may appeal the decision of the appeal board to the court. As the act presently reads, it does not specifically state that the superintendent may appeal the decision of the appeal board, and we wish to make that clear.

The second main principle contained in the amending bill is to allow the person whose licence has been cancelled or suspended to have the cancellation or suspension removed so the person may continue to operate in a real estate business until the superintendent's decision is in fact heard by the appeal board. Of course it does permit the superintendent to

be able to present his case to the court, should he consider that the cancellation or suspension should not be removed. These procedures, I would submit, would be fair both to licencees and to the superintendent who has the responsibility of administering the legislation.

[Motion carried; Bill 28 read a second time]

Bill 26
The Attorney General Statutes
Amendment Act, 1978

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill 26, The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1978. As I indicated on first reading, this bill purports to amend several statutes of this House.

The first is The Juvenile Court Act. The amendment here will make it easier to assign judges, particularly in rural areas — this is of the provincial court — to cover juvenile court matters. I wouldn't want the House to read anything of particular significance into this with respect to Kirby 3, which did recommend establishment of a separate provincial court. I think I commented on that during my estimates. This perhaps could be seen as an amendment to cover the situation where a specialized family court judge was not available in some areas, and provincial court judges will be able to handle certain of those responsibilities.

The land titles amendment will allow us to set assurance fees by regulation in the same way that other fees are set under the act. I want to assure the House that there is no intention at this point to increase those fees, but we will be looking at the fees generally with a view to shortening the list and perhaps simplifying it, but not necessarily making any difference in the total revenue that will be available.

Another amendment to this act is to provide for the gradual implementation of metric measurement in the land titles system. During the question period this afternoon, I commented on The Meat Inspection Act, and the need to provide for proclamation on that effective January 23, 1973, which was the original intention.

The Mechanical Recording of Evidence Act and The Provincial Court Act amendments enable the implementation of sound recording equipment in the provincial court. The Provincial Court Amendment Act will specifically provide for making regulations providing for the appointment of operators and transcribers, and fixing their fees and expenses, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, there is just one section of The Land Titles Act that worries me a little, the section that provides for the implementation and use of metric units of measurement.

I hope the Lieutenant Governor in Council is not considering changing our acres to hectares, et cetera. I can understand the changes that are going to have something to do with world trade, but for the life of me I just can't see any rhyme or reason for changing our present survey system in the province, which does not in any way affect business or activities outside the province. I hope this is not intended to cover that area.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make very few comments, specifically with regard to The Meat Inspection Act. My colleague Dr. Buck asked some questions in question period today. But first of all, I would like to ask the Attorney General how this happened; secondly, whether the information we've received is accurate, that since January 31, 1973, the meat inspectors who have been going across the province inspecting various operations, primarily in rural Alberta . . . I think this is the legislation by the Member for St. Paul, if I recall correctly.

Mr. Attorney General, is it accurate that these inspectors have been going across the province without really any legislative support? Are you in a position to indicate what's happened to charges which have been laid? I happen to know in my own constituency a threat of charges was laid some time ago. Then the charges never materialized, and no one could understand why they didn't. Now it's pretty obvious to see why.

I think from time to time the Attorney General has great fun kidding the members of the official opposition about the lack of legal contribution from certain political parties in the province of Alberta. I know the Attorney General wouldn't expect me to let this opportunity go past and say, with all the sizable and extensive legal advice he has, how could we have a piece of legislation in the province for five years, having meat inspectors trotting across the province without any authority, and then all of a sudden find out we forgot to proclaim the legislation?

AN HON. MEMBER: That's the problem, too many orders.

MR. CLARK: I'm not too sure it's too many or what the problem is. I also note it was rather interesting how the Attorney General kind of slid the piece of legislation into The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act. I must say that last year you slid one through with regard to the Department of Transportation more successfully than you were able to slide this one through. But when we get into committee it will be very interesting to hear just how this has worked for almost five years when inspectors have been running across the province with absolutely no authority at all.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the comments of the hon. Member for Drumheller, I want to assure him that Alberta does not intend to give up the reference to acres. On the other hand, we do have a situation where linear and area measurement in a wide variety of categories is now in metric in this province, and we're having urban subdivision measurements — planning and all that kind of thing — generally in metric. Obviously the land titles system is not capable of handling two separate measurement systems. So what we will be doing primarily is accepting the urban subdivision plans that come in metric. With respect to those rural areas where you have blocks of land that are not subdivided, so there is an acreage reference, we will include both a

reference to the acreage and, where appropriate, a reference in square metres or in hectares. But the use of acres will still remain in those titles so people can be aware of what they are.

I think over the passage of time, and years and years, acres may fall into disuse, frankly. But for all members of this Assembly and a great many other people in Alberta, hectares and square metres don't mean anything. Acres I understand, and that will remain for some time. But they will be in both languages, if you will.

To my hon. colleague opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, it is a little embarrassing for the Provincial Secretary, who seldom rises in this House in this office, to stand and say . . .

MR. CLARK: Just a little embarrassing.

MR. FOSTER: Just a little embarrassing — to stand and say that we goofed and a proclamation was not made. It came to our attention fairly recently. I'd like to be able to blame my absent colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, but I really can't. It's my responsibility to see that this legislation is proclaimed. I believe the O.C. was passed, but the formal document was not signed. Therein lies the problem.

We will be moving to cure that by providing for proclamation with one document, which is the order in council. By tradition, I think, we have been using two documents, an order in council and then a separate proclamation which gets published in the *Gazette*. We'll be doing away with two documents. There's really no need for it. Proclamation will simply follow on the passage of the O.C.

But this is one example — over the years there may have been others I'm not aware of — where this particular bill simply escaped our attention, and we woke up to discover that it had been in place for several years. No doubt many charges have been laid under this section. I don't know what prosecutions are pending, if any. I frankly doubt that since this has come to the attention of the responsible members of the Agriculture Department, they have been very aggressive laying charges or prosecuting people. So I'd be very surprised if there were any cases before the courts.

With respect to those cases that have gone through the courts and there have been findings of guilty, guilty pleas, or the like, those will stand unless someone chooses to challenge them. But they will stand, certainly, by the passage of this amendment. I don't know of any way to cure the problem other than as proposed in this bill, unless we start again and let bygones be bygones. But I think that would be unnecessary.

AN HON. MEMBER: The problems of big government.

MR. FOSTER: Yes, the problems of big government.

I don't want to leave the impression that I was trying to slide this through. I'm sure that wasn't the suggestion. I may try to slide certain things, but it's very difficult to slide something through this House when it's a bill in the Assembly, and the like. But it is in the A.G. statutes legislation because of the office of the Provincial Secretary. That may explain why it's with me and not the Minister of Agriculture. I'm carrying the can on this one, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: I might ask the Attorney General just one question. Mr. Attorney General, do you know of any other retroactive legislation that will be brought before the House this session?

MR. FOSTER: I'd probably have to think about that pretty carefully. Nothing comes to mind quickly. The Matrimonial Property Act, which we introduced today, applies to everybody in Alberta. I wouldn't call that kind of thing retroactive legislation. That wouldn't be my turn of phrase; it may be others'. I may be wrong. Maybe something should come to my attention quickly, but I don't recall.

[Motion carried; Bill 26 read a second time]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I propose to move adjournment of the House. Tomorrow morning we'll proceed first with second reading of those bills on today's Order Paper that were not covered this evening. Following that, if there's time, we would do committee study of those bills which were dealt with in second reading tonight, except 10 and 16.

[At 9:57 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]