

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Wednesday, June 6, 1979 2:30 p.m.

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

## PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

## head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 24**  
**The Department of**  
**Economic Development Act**

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 24, The Department of Economic Development Act. In essence and very briefly, the Bill sets up the administrative structure of the new Department of Economic Development and has many standard clauses relating to departmental administration.

[Leave granted; Bill 24 read a first time]

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill . . .

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview happened to catch the Chair's eye first, to use a mixed metaphor.

**Bill 210**  
**An Act to Amend The School Act**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 210, An Act to Amend The School Act. The purpose of Bill No. 210 is to eliminate any ambiguities as to school boards having the obligation to provide full education for all the handicapped in this province.

[Leave granted; Bill 210 read a first time]

**Bill 214**  
**An Act to Amend The School Act**  
**(No. 2)**

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a Bill to amend The School Act also. It being that I didn't hear the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, I hope it isn't in the same line that he put forth.

In essence Bill 214 amends The School Act to allow band councils to have representation on local school boards where the school is situated within a municipal jurisdiction.

[Leave granted; Bill 214 read a first time]

**Bill 216**  
**An Act to Amend**  
**The Alberta Energy Company Act**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 216, An Act to Amend The Alberta Energy Company Act.

It requires the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources to bring a resolution to the Assembly each spring naming the person or persons to whom the government will give its proxy as well as outlining the [not recorded] proxy. If such a resolution is not introduced, the minister will be required to go personally to the annual meeting of the Alberta Energy Company and vote the government shares.

[Leave granted; Bill 216 read a first time]

## head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Legislature the copy of the annual report of Pacific Western Airlines. A copy will be available to all members.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the Alberta Transportation report for '78-79.

## head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to the Legislative Assembly, two constituents from Champion and Vulcan who made a representation to the Minister of Agriculture this morning with regard to weather modification. At this time I'd like to introduce Mr. Wilbur Matlock and Mr. Art Jones and ask them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The sound system apparently is not performing too well in the northwest corner of the Chamber. I wonder if I could ask hon. members to turn up the volume in their questions and answers.

MR. R. SPEAKER: We need a minister of sound.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, are we on Introduction of Special Guests?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take the pleasure of introducing to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, some 85 students from Westmount junior high school who are in both galleries. They are accompanied by teachers Helen Rogers, Connie Walter, and the assistant principal Mr. Rob Anderson.

Mr. Speaker, I understand they're studying government of the day, both provincially and federally. They have informed me that they know the political party of the government in Alberta and in Canada. I indeed encourage them to take an interest in the political process. I would ask them to rise and receive acknowledgment from the House.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, six grade 12 students from the Holden school in my constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Burden. They are seated in the members gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the recognition of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I have another class of 25 grade 9 students from the Two Hills school in my constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Kozmak, their bus driver Mr. Chrapko, and a chaperone Mrs. Pundick. They are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask that they rise and be recognized.

#### head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

##### Department of Economic Development

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I would like very briefly to announce that transportation industry representatives from all over the world have again had their attention focussed on Alberta, at the world conference of the International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Association, now being held in Helsinki, Finland.

I am pleased to announce that the Helsinki delegates have unanimously approved Alberta as the site of their 1981 biennial conference. It will be the first time the influential 80-nation group has chosen a non-seaport location — a testimonial, I think, to Alberta's global stature in the transportation field. This will be of real benefit to our province and an event of special interest to officials in my department and of course those people connected with all phases of transportation, agriculture, and tourism. Approximately 500 delegates will be in attendance.

The International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Association has been aware that we in Alberta have fresh, new ideas about cargo handling and that we're implementing some of those concepts now. Their conference in our province will add weight to our plans for the more efficient and greater movement of goods to national and world markets.

The membership in this world body includes just about every type of organization and individual connected with one or more of the many phases of transportation. Represented are sea and airport management; terminal operations; stevedores; cargo handling equipment manufacturers; road, rail, sea, air, and inland water service operators; consultants; academics; general manufacturers and distributors; freight forwarders; container and equipment lessors and manufacturers; research organizations; and many other interests. The term "cargo handling" covers the handling and movement of raw material and manufactured goods from the point of origin to their final destination, a mechanism which is of extreme importance to us here in Alberta.

#### head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

##### Alsands Proposal

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. It really follows the questions asked the last two days with regard to the Alsands plant hearings.

Is the minister in a position today to indicate to the Assembly the make-up of the panel which will be holding those hearings, which, if the minister's answer two days ago was right, are starting on June 19?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I'm not today. I asked for a check on the information I had given the House, and while it may have arrived in my office I haven't yet had the opportunity to look at it. I would expect to have it by tomorrow.

MR. R. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. We also asked yesterday if the minister could ascertain whether individuals, such as representation from the Department of Municipal Affairs and others, would be members of the panel. I asked the question in light of the fact that the gentlemen the government appointed to the panel at Cold Lake did, I think, add a great deal to the panel there. Is there going to be that kind of broad representation on the panel?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday or the day before, I expect so. But I want to get the exact details, and I expect to have those tomorrow.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Has the minister received representation from the northeast Alberta commissioner that in fact there should be broad representation on the panel and that the representation should cover at least the Department of Municipal Affairs and one other department involved in people service programs?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I haven't had any discussions with the commissioner on that matter, but representations which I haven't yet seen may have been made to my predecessor or to the department.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Has the minister received representation from the northeast Alberta commissioner with regard to the make-up of the panel for the hearings on the Alsands project starting this June 19?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that I've received any direct representations from the northeast commissioner, although I have certainly discussed the matter of the hearings with him. I don't recall his having verbally or by letter made any comments with respect to the make-up of the persons who would conduct the hearing.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, the question to the minister was: has representation been received by the minister or, on a broader front, by the government, from the northeast Alberta commissioner regarding the desirability of having a broader panel than just the Energy Resources Conservation Board itself?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, that's the question I answered. I said I don't recall having received those representations, either verbally or in writing.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then back to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Could the minister indicate to the Assembly whether the same format will be followed as in the Cold Lake-Grand Centre hearings, when officials from the Department of Environ-

ment — I believe the assistant deputy minister, Mr. Thiessen — had the opportunity to cross-examine all witnesses who appeared before the panel? Can the minister assure the Assembly that that opportunity will be there for the Department of Environment?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I had assumed that that was included in the series of questions on this topic asked yesterday or the day before. I indicated then that it was my impression that these hearings would be wide-ranging, in the sense that they would give the people of the area the opportunity to bring forward to the ERCB in a similar way the types of concerns that were brought forward in the [not recorded]. But I did want to check on the various details, including the one just asked by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I hope to be able to respond to those specific questions tomorrow.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just one last supplementary question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Has the government made a decision on a townsite north of Fort McMurray? I'm thinking specifically of the site of MacKay. Has the government made a decision with regard to that location being selected? What plans has the government now in the works for the development of the town of Fort MacKay?

MR. MOORE: The answer to the question of whether or not the government has made any decision on a new townsite, Mr. Speaker, is no, we have not.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. What kind of time line is the government looking at with regard to making a decision on the location of a population centre north of Fort McMurray?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it would be difficult to say what the time frame will be. It relates to a number of studies being carried out by the northeast commissioner's office on population projections for the region and cost differentials between the town of Fort McMurray and other proposed locations. Indeed, I think the decision and the timing of that will relate to a large extent to the progress made with the hearings scheduled to start on June 19 and the kind of representations made at those hearings.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, one further supplementary question. Mr. Minister, has the government made a decision with regard to the desirability of a population centre being located north of Fort McMurray, and that for major services Fort McMurray would be the major service centre? Has the government to date made a commitment at least to that stage?

MR. MOORE: That's the same question as the first one, Mr. Speaker, and the answer is the same: no.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Has the government received any recommendation as yet from the commissioner of northeastern Alberta with respect to his view on whether we should have a satellite town or whether Fort McMurray should accommodate the increased population?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, yes, we have.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly what the recommendation from the commissioner of northeastern Alberta is?

MR. MOORE: No, Mr. Speaker. We've had recommendations from my department, from the northeast commissioner, and from a variety of sources. We'll not be in a position to make those recommendations public, but indeed will be in a position to make public the government's decision when it's made.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary on this topic. We have a large number of members who wish to ask questions this afternoon.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Could he outline to the Assembly the government's reasons for choosing to have the hearings conducted by the ERCB, albeit under what one might call the Cold Lake format, as opposed to having hearings conducted by the Environment Council of Alberta, as recommended, I believe, by the old ECA several years ago.

MR. LEITCH: As I recall, Mr. Speaker, those reasons were given in the Assembly at an earlier time, when there was discussion about the format for the Cold Lake hearings. We have extended the normal hearings, the things that normally would be dealt with by the ERCB, to include environmental and social concerns with respect to the Cold Lake hearings. It was our judgment that that was the appropriate method of having those public hearings and having the concerns of the local people heard in a public forum.

#### **Hypnosis in Legal Investigations**

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Solicitor General. In light of the recent controversy regarding the use of hypnosis by the city of Calgary police department, could he tell us whether or not the Alberta branch of the RCMP is also using hypnosis?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd first of all like to give my colleague in the House a thank you for giving me notice of the question, so I could follow up on it.

The RCMP apparently have used hypnosis in two cases, not to obtain evidence but to enable a witness to recall information which might lead to the gathering of further evidence. The RCMP require written consent of the individual, parent, or guardian, and they give a medical examination beforehand. They report that defence counsel also used hypnosis on a witness in one case. The RCMP allow hypnosis to be carried out only by a medical doctor or psychiatrist.

The Edmonton police department has used hypnosis only once, and that was unsuccessful. In that particular instance it was a youngster, and they required the permission of a parent.

Calgary has used hypnosis approximately 10 times on witnesses and victims of offences to induce recall of details for the purpose of adducing additional evidence. They use a detective-sergeant trained by the Los

Angeles police department and require permission of the subject or guardian.

#### Longshoremen's Strike

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hurray.

MR. R. SPEAKER: He gets his big chance. Let's hope he has an answer. [interjections]

Mr. Speaker, this is with regard to the longshoremen's strike on the west coast at the present time. I'd like to ask whether the minister has taken any action or contemplates any action on behalf of the Alberta government to the federal government, reinforcing a possible intervention in that strike with much haste.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, while I would naturally like to elaborate on the role of the department in this affair, perhaps it's proper to refer it to the Minister of Labour or the Minister of Economic Development, who I understand have been in contact with their federal counterparts.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, obviously a number of industries in Alberta are concerned about what's happening on the west coast, and have made us aware of their concern. We have taken the opportunity to pass that concern on to our federal counterparts in Ottawa, and have been assured that they are doing their utmost to keep the situation in hand and to take some steps to rectify the situation in due course.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Could the Deputy Premier indicate whether the recommendation from the Alberta government to the federal government was to intervene in the strike and bring about its termination as quickly as possible?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, obviously everyone concerned would like to see the matter solved as quickly as possible. But I would point out to the hon. member that this is a federal responsibility and comes under their exclusive jurisdiction. They are aware of our recommendations.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, as a matter of clarification, did the minister make a recommendation on behalf of the people of Alberta — as the Premier always does, represents the people of Alberta — about terminating the strike? Did you take a position or did you not? That's all I want to know. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

DR. HORNER: The hon. Member for Little Bow has answered his own question. I just said, Mr. Speaker, that we're all interested in having the matter settled as quickly as possible, and that's the recommendation we would make. [interjections]

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, we obviously have an example of a new era in federal/provincial relations.

#### Forest Management

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question of the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. It concerns the announcement on November 21, 1978, concerning both the Berland and Fox Creek development areas, a request for proposals. Is the minister in a position to outline to the Assembly what specific steps are being taken at this point in time to evaluate all the proposals for these timber areas, but in particular the three major ones, which I believe constitute the Canfor proposal, the St. Regis pulp proposal, and the Simpson pulp proposal?

MR. LEITCH: I'm delighted to do that, Mr. Speaker. We made a public announcement on that some time ago, to the effect that hearings chaired by the Member for Athabasca would be held in different locations in the area, at which all the proposals we have received will, I believe, be reviewed in detail. In addition, there will be an opportunity for people in the area to express their views publicly during those hearings.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Now that proposals have been requested, what process of evaluation, if any, is taking place now, prior to the public hearings, to assess the merits of these proposals?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, a number of reviews of the proposals are going on within the government. The economic impacts, the opportunity for new employment, the upgrading of our very important forest resources: all the proposals are being looked at with those things in mind, among others, and that's being done at the departmental level. In due course we will receive recommendations from departmental personnel on that, as well as the very important report from the hearings which, I said earlier, would be chaired by the hon. Member for Athabasca.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Can the minister outline to the Assembly the reasons the government asked for proposals before the receipt of the ECA hearings on forestry?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I fail to see the connection between the two. There was obviously the ECA report on forestry, one that will be given very careful consideration by the government when and if one or more of the proposals is accepted and implemented.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. What process of review is now taking place with respect to the recommendation in the ECA that is so obviously going to relate, or could well relate, to the area in question; that is, that forest management agreements be deliberately undersized, as opposed to the present P & G agreement or, for that matter, the St. Regis agreement, in order to maximize the opportunities for smaller operators? What specific steps is the government taking at the moment to evaluate that proposal?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether the hon. member's question was the proposal or the rec-

ommendation. I thought the evaluation of the recommendation was what he asked.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, the question relates to the recommendation contained in the ECA report dealing with undersizing forest management agreements.

MR. LEITCH: Well certainly, Mr. Speaker, the department is reviewing all the recommendations of the ECA report touching on the forestry operation. Incidentally, as I recall there were something like 150 recommendations, a number of which we have already implemented. But we will have the departmental analysis of this specific recommendation, and certainly it will be very carefully considered at the time we are considering the three proposals.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Again it concerns this recommendation regarding new forest management agreements. My question relates to existing agreements, in particular the Procter & Gamble agreement where some 8,000 square miles, almost half the size of New Brunswick, north of the Peace River is in a provisional reserve. In view of the ECA recommendation as to future agreements, has any consideration been given to sitting down with companies to renegotiate some of these existing agreements where in fact the timber isn't being used?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I think that consideration would be premature. As I indicated, departmental personnel are reviewing the report, making recommendations in respect of it, giving me an analysis of it. Some of them I have received already, but I want to have some further discussions and perhaps some further work done by departmental personnel before we would consider what action might be taken in respect of those recommendations.

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

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly what the time line is in terms of the request for proposals that have been sought? Public hearings are going to be held under the chairmanship of the hon. Member for Athabasca. What is the time line for a decision on the proposals in the area?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, we haven't established a definitive time line. I expect the hearings to be completed in early summer. Obviously some time would be required before a report on those hearings was made. I don't know exactly when a decision could be made in connection with the proposals, except I would hope it could be made at the earliest possible moment so that those who've made proposals will know whether they've been accepted.

#### **Senior Citizens' Housing Construction**

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works. It is with reference to the tender that was sublet

for a senior citizens' lodge in Two Hills. The deadline date was May 31. Could the minister advise whether a contract has been awarded, or any other particulars?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, normally the tendering committee would review the tenders. This process normally takes about one month. So, assuming there is an acceptable tender, the award would be about the end of June.

#### **X-ray Equipment Inspections**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the hon. Minister responsible for Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation. The question arises from a difference in what he said in the House and what he appeared to say outside. For clarification, did the minister indicate there's a backlog in inspection of newly installed X-ray machines or ones that have been in place and are awaiting inspection?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, my people have indicated to me that some of the routine inspections are also included in the backlog, over and above the new equipment and the new facilities.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, is the minister in a position to indicate how extensive this backlog is?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that all effort is being made with the staff that's on to catch up with the backlog, in view of the need to catch up. I don't have the exact numbers. I'd be prepared to take that under notice and provide it later.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister in a position to indicate if new staff will be increased to try to clear up the backlog?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, not at this time.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Is the minister in a position to indicate to the members of the House that in conditions where X-ray machines may be deemed deficient, there will be a stop order that these machines not be used?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, this is always carried out, and provided by the legislation we presently have on the books. The legislation also requires that the operator notify the branch to be able to take that action. A certain responsibility rests with the operator too.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate if closing down machines which may be defective is a serious problem?

MR. DIACHUK: No, Mr. Speaker, it is not a serious problem.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated in his statement that there are unqualified operators. Is this extensive?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I did not make any statement about unqualified people. It was a news item that indicated that in the past two years one of the hospitals had an unqualified operator. The department

people did instruct and order that that machine not be operated.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate if he or the department are reviewing the qualifications of operators in the province?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, the review of qualifications is ongoing, because all new applicants have to qualify to be operators in this province.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, when the minister speaks of defective machines, that the operator should inform the department, can he indicate what mechanism the department has in place so this operator can indicate to the department that the machines are defective?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, the question is rather vague. Operators have monitoring apparatus that they wear. Equipment is available. Other facilities can be equipped, such as dentists being able to obtain a monitor. These monitors are very sensitive. The technicians wear a tape that is routinely checked by National Health and Welfare. If these tapes indicate a positive reaction, response is given to my people by telephone, followed by a letter. All haste is taken. But these are very few and far between, where we have to take action in Alberta on machines that are not operating properly.

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

DR. BUCK: For clarification, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is the minister indicating that if an operator feels that the equipment is defective, he may call the department in, and they will provide monitoring equipment — is that what the minister is saying?

MR. DIACHUK: No, Mr. Speaker. The national health Act requires that all technicians wear a film type of apparatus. True, some professional people don't wish to wear them, but I am advised that in hospitals, in large X-ray labs, the staff are pretty well all adhering to wearing that film strip to be able to provide National Health and Welfare people an indication of just how their equipment is operating.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We've had about eight supplementaries on this topic. I overlooked the hon. Member for Little Bow. Perhaps we could have one further one before going on to another topic.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Could the minister indicate whether his department has a contingency fund to accept any liabilities when cases of injury may occur because of defective X-ray equipment, or because the X-ray equipment has not been checked by the department in this backlog situation we are now in?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wishes, I will take that as notice and inquire about that contingency fund.

### Zero Tillage

MR. KNAAK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. It's my understanding that the Lethbridge Soil Research Institute has completed an extensive study into "no-till farming", meaning you don't have to till the land in order to farm, with substantial positive results both in terms of cost savings and increases in yield.

Given the different soil and moisture conditions in central and northern Alberta, is the department conducting a similar study for this region?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, the practice of zero tillage is not confined to the southern part of the province. Farmers in other parts of this province are practicing zero tillage and working very closely with a team of agriculturists within the department itself. Collectively they are compiling the information and data and arranging demonstrations for various areas to provide to others within those communities the opportunity to view the results of zero tillage. It certainly has some very good results throughout the province, and perhaps is with us to stay as one of the cultivation practices in this province.

MR. L. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture. In regard to zero-till farming, are the people with whom the government is working given any funds for extra sprays or extra expenses?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, at present the sharing of the Department of Agriculture is not in the financial aspect. At present the individuals practising zero tillage are looking after the financial obligations themselves.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture. It's very pleasing to notice the intense interest shown by the Member for Edmonton Whitemud in matters of agriculture.

Could I ask the minister if his department continues to look to southern Alberta, and particularly Lethbridge, for continued leadership in areas of research and experimentation?

MR. SCHMIDT: Not particularly, Mr. Speaker. [laughter]

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture. Last year the department funded a number of agricultural service boards in their experimentation with zero tillage. I was wondering why some agricultural service boards that have done considerable work in this area, such as the county of Flagstaff, were refused funding.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, agricultural service boards establish the workload and the direction themselves, because they are indeed a government unto themselves and, of course, their decisions are made and based on that premise. The Department of Agriculture funds those organizations on request. I would like to check. I'm not aware of any service board that has been turned down within the terms of reference of the service board agreements.

MR. KNAAK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture, please. Mr. Minister, are the results for northern and central Alberta now available for distribution to the public?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, I gather we're discussing the results of zero tillage. The information we have would indeed be available to anyone. I'm not too sure that at the present time it's in a documented form that could be distributed as a printed booklet, but I would certainly look into it.

#### **Vehicle Licence Renewals**

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Solicitor General. Could he indicate whether the government has given consideration to the former Solicitor General's plan of staggering licence plate deadlines?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I believe so. I would have to check, though, and report back.

#### **Cold Lake Project — Manpower**

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. Mr. Minister, I note that your department . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. ISLEY: I note the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower is holding a workshop in Bonnyville next Saturday. Mr. Minister, my question is: what is the purpose or objective of that workshop?

MR. HORSMAN: [Not recorded] Mr. Speaker, there is a fair amount of involvement by the federal government in regard to manpower training and counselling and the other services which are available in the region. The purpose of the workshop is to outline the facilities, including this particular workshop, in the next period of time.

MR. ISLEY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is this workshop designated to serve any particular segments of the population?

MR. R. CLARK: Anyone who wants to work.

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly the question could be answered briefly, but it seems to be an attempt to incite the minister to make a ministerial announcement that might be made otherwise.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the workshop proposes to identify to people in northeastern Alberta generally, and in particular to natives and Metis organizations and associations, what will be available in terms of a research facility.

#### **Postsecondary Education Financing**

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might direct a question to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower as well. The question deals with the Grantham report. Could the minister advise the Assembly whether or not he has received any submissions on the

Grantham report — he was awaiting submissions — and secondly, how he proposes to deal with those and the report.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the report on postsecondary education and students' contribution was filed last December. My predecessor and I have both asked for submissions on that report by the end of May. At this time, I believe almost 20 responses to that report have been received. It is anticipated that recommendations will be coming forward in the next few weeks with regard to at least the student finance portion of those recommendations.

I should advise the Assembly that since there will of course be no student fee increases this fall that have not already been announced, it is not my intention to deal at this stage with the question of level of student fees, but rather to concentrate on the aspect of student finance recommendations that were made in the report and to which I've received responses to date.

#### **Vehicle Licence Renewals**

*(continued)*

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might supplement the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Bow Valley with regard to vehicle registrations.

The department did look into that method of trying to resolve the problem. In particular, they looked at the scheme in the province of Saskatchewan. Apparently officials there had a great deal of difficulty with it. As a result, the department moved to extending the hours of operation and to an experimental mail-in system, both of which have considerably reduced line-ups at the registration desks.

#### **Early Childhood Services**

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the hon. Minister of Education. In light of recent statements by representatives of various community-sponsored early childhood service programs in the province of Alberta, to the effect that they are experiencing serious financial difficulties and that some may in fact be in danger of having to close their doors, allegedly because of the funding on a per-child basis through the Department of Education, could the minister advise the House what steps are being taken to review the situation?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the hon. member for a question which touches on an important issue. Early childhood services recently was the subject of a study commissioned by the Department of Education and conducted by CIR in Calgary. That report has now . . . [not recorded]

Don't you wish this could happen in caucus?

The report addressed itself particularly to some of the questions raised by the hon. member opposite. I have made an undertaking to representatives of private groups in Calgary that their submissions, the report by CIR, and other information which has been directed to the department will be considered this spring and early in the summer in order that we can recommend program changes generally applicable to all programs operating in the province and have at least some of those in place this fall. And I might say the concerns expressed in Calgary are also the concerns of

other private operators throughout the province. I think there is some merit in the concern they are expressing.

I am concerned that ECS should be successful, particularly the private, non-profit programs, because I think they're an important part of the total system. For my part, I will do whatever I can to ensure that they continue to prosper within the system.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has any contingency plan been determined by the department to deal with particular programs which in fact may be in peril of having to close their doors this year?

MR. KING: No, Mr. Speaker, because I think that we [not recorded] time line right now which does not suggest the need for a contingency plan. I believe we're operating on a time line that will enable us to respond on a more global basis to the concerns that have been raised. If during the course of June and July that proves not to be the case, of course we will develop contingency alternatives.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway followed by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member opposite wished to ask a supplementary.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. I guess I'm not in very good view here. Would you explain what CIR means — if that's what you said?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I thought it was quite obvious I didn't want anyone to ask that question.

CIR is a company incorporated under the laws of the province. Its head office is in Calgary, and I don't recall right at the moment what the initials CIR stand for. But I will get that information and provide it to the hon. member. The company does research and consulting work, primarily in the field of education.

#### **Park Development**

DR. PAPROSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Minister of Recreation and Parks. I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House whether he's developing a policy regarding small parks in the province as an alternative to large provincial parks?

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you for the question, Mr. Speaker. If you recall, the throne speech debate mentions that we will amend the Act this fall to allow provisions for park funds to be used for recreation areas other than parks. Come fall, I am hoping I have the support of all members on this very important aspect of recreation areas.

While on that subject, Mr. Speaker, as we drive through the country and see "campground full" signs all over it's pretty important that we should provide such things as small recreation areas. I know I've got some support from the hon. Member for Little Bow, and I ask all hon. members to support this when it comes to the House. And the answer is yes.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I'd like to thank the minister for that good answer. I wonder if the minister would also amplify on whether these so-called small parks will be under provincial or local jurisdiction?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, that's an important question. My thoughts today, as they were last week or a month ago when I first proposed this, are that I would work in conjunction with the local municipality. I would like to see us provide the capital funds, with the local groups to run these recreation areas. Of course this is up for debate, and we might consider that, too, when we make the amendment.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Tourism and Small Business on small parks. I wonder if the minister would indicate whether the development of these small parks is an important adjunct to tourism in the province of Alberta?

MR. SPEAKER: That question is obviously going to lead to something outside the scope of question period.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, then maybe I can try to rephrase the question, if I may. Regarding the policy that the other hon. minister is developing, would the Minister of Tourism and Small Business indicate whether Tourism is developing a policy in conjunction with those small parks?

MR. SPEAKER: If that can be answered briefly. On a number of occasions we have had questions regarding departmental policy, although strictly speaking they are not proper topics for the question period.

#### **Rural and Native Housing**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Housing and Public Works. It deals with the policy of the Alberta Housing Corporation with regard to the provision of mortgage documents to individuals purchasing homes through the rural and native housing program. My initial question is: what is the policy with regard to getting the mortgage documents in the hands of people who have acquired homes under the rural and native housing program?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, the policy is to get the documents into the hands of the people who are ultimately going to acquire the house. The rural and native program, as the hon. leader probably knows, combines funding with Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation as well as the Alberta Housing Corporation. Approval of CMHC is required as well as local approval. So all this does take some time.

I might add, though, that insofar as the individual is concerned, any payments they make that would initially be as rental would be applied to the mortgage of the house, so that whether it takes a month or two months or whatever, the individual of course is not out any money on this transaction. Furthermore, they are paying 25 per cent rent-to-income scale, so I think there isn't really too much concern about the fact that in some cases it does take ... Sorry, I guess this sound system isn't working.

Because of the joint jurisdiction involved and matters



like that, it does perhaps take longer to process the mortgage than it would under normal circumstances.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. I raise the question in light of representation made to my office from the northern part of the province with regard to individuals who have made down payments and have still not received the signed mortgage agreements; cases where homeowners have not been advised of the amount of their payments or where their monthly payment should be made, or what the final costs of their homes are. I might point out that they made representation to the minister's office on this question.

What is the reason for the delay of these mortgage documents? I refer specifically to the Joussard and the Valleyview areas. What's the reason for the delay, Mr. Minister?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I think I covered that. However, I'll repeat that two jurisdictions are involved.

I wonder if the hon. member can hear me.

Two jurisdictions are involved, and of course, as I think hon. members will appreciate, this does take extra time. However, in the specific case of Joussard, we're anxious to move people into the houses as quickly as possible in order that they could have occupancy, even though all the project construction costs weren't necessarily finalized, tabulated, and known. There's a time gap there to process all costs, including associated development costs, whether they be road systems or sewer and water systems, and then work out a final cost for the house.

Now these costs have to be agreed to between Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Alberta Housing Corporation. Then, once this series of processes is completed, the individual is made aware of what the assessed costs of the property are, and the mortgage may be acquired.

But I would like to underline, Mr. Speaker, that the fact that it may take a few months longer does not cost the individual anything extra. What the individual would pay in the interim — rent, if you like — goes toward that mortgage. Again, people in the rural and native program are only paying 25 per cent of income for the 25-year life of the mortgage.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary. We've run out of time in the question period.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then I'd like to direct one further supplementary question to the minister. Having regard that some people have not been advised of what their rental payments will be nor where they should make those payments, and don't know the final cost of their housing units, will the minister give a commitment to the Assembly that no individuals will be evicted by the Alberta Housing Corporation from homes constructed under the rural and native housing program because of this time lag, as the minister would describe it, or foul-up, as I would describe it? Would the minister give us the commitment that people will not be evicted as a result of mortgage documents still not being in peoples' hands for, in some cases, as long as one and one-half years?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, certainly the corporation would never evict anybody under the circum-

stances outlined by the hon. member. I would like to point out that our delivery under rural and native and our other native programs is approaching 1,300 housing units. After many, many years of neglect, this government is delivering a very large quantity of housing to our rural and native people. When you undertake a massive program like that over a period of a few years, obviously it takes a little while to get all the paper processed. But there are a lot of happy people out there living in a lot of good homes, and I think that program was very well accepted across the province. [interjections]

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker [not recorded] the minister pussyfoots around.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. [interjections]

MR. R. CLARK: He doesn't know what he's doing.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. leader may revert to the question on another occasion, but this is not the time for debate.

We've run out of time for the question period, but I believe two ministers would like to answer questions which were accepted as notice. If the Assembly agrees, perhaps we could add that to the question period.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

#### **Government Hiring Practices**

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Member for Clover Bar asked if any studies had been carried out with regard to women sharing positions with other women in the Alberta government service. I indicated at that time that I was not aware of any studies, and that I would look into the matter. I can confirm that to my knowledge there are no studies, but I thought the members would wish to know the facts as they are today.

There are 112 people occupying 56 positions. The positions can be made available at the request of the department or at the request of employees. There are other positions available for that kind of job-sharing arrangement.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Aids to the Hearing Handicapped**

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, last Thursday the hon. Member for Little Bow asked several questions with regard to the new aids to daily living program which will be introduced later in the calendar year. There was a specific question as to whether or not there would be any changes in the current cost-sharing agreement.

There are two programs, Mr. Speaker: one designed to assist senior citizens with hearing aids, and another to assist handicapped children with hearing aids. The new aids to daily living program will encompass the latter of the two. So the answer is yes.

#### **Early Childhood Services** (continued)

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to reply very briefly to a question asked earlier in question period. I have

received information from two different sources as to what the initials CIR stand for. I discover that, in a situation absolutely without precedent in my 12 years of political experience, the information provided to me in this regard by the news gallery is incorrect.

CIR stands for Canadian Institute for Research, headquartered in Calgary.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, I wonder if I might clarify some remarks I made in debate on Resolution 203 yesterday. The hon. Member for Calgary McCall had referred in his remarks to the Russian penal system. I mistakenly interpreted that to mean quite a different system in operation in Russia, and I apologize to the member if I caused any inconvenience or made him a little uncomfortable. I apologize to the member and to the Assembly.

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, may I thank the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry for his very gracious attention to this concern.

[On motion, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee of the Whole]

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

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

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

MR. COOK: Mr. Chairman, with regard to procedure in Committee of the Whole, I wonder if it's possible for the Assembly to consider a no-smoking resolution for Committee of the Whole. Could the Chairman advise me about what a member should do to present such a resolution to the committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Move it.

MR. COOK: If it's possible to move it, I would so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did you make your motion?

MR. COOK: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I would move that smoking not be allowed in Committee of the Whole, for the benefit of hon. members who are allergic to tobacco fumes and who do not enjoy getting tobacco smoke second hand.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, before the matter proceeds too far, perhaps the Chair might want to direct its mind to the question of whether or not such a motion requires notice, as I assume it does.

MR. R. CLARK: With regard to that, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the House would be prepared to give unanimous consent so there wouldn't be need for a motion, and we could go ahead and debate the matter right now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the House prepared to give unanimous consent?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I would beg the indulgence of the House for just a moment to check *Standing Orders*. I believe that with exceptions noted in *Standing Orders*, the rules of the Committee of the Whole are the same as the rules of the House. I would like either you or I, Mr. Chairman, to check whether or not the motion is in order.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that the arguments presented by the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry certainly have a good deal of merit. But in fairness to tradition and all the smoke in this House, I think it might be worth while if we take it as notice and at the next meeting of the committee, which I take it will be Friday morning, that be the first order of the business.

MRS. CHICHAK: Further on this point, if the hon. minister indicated that the rules in committee are the same as the rules when the House is in its formal session, then it would seem there should not even be a necessity for the motion or notice, because those *Standing Orders* should apply here. If there should be a waiver of that, it would seem to me there would need to be a motion that the formal rules be relaxed.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Chairman, perhaps it would be an appropriate matter for the Members' Services Committee to take up and make recommendation relative to *Standing Orders*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. members, I think we'll take that motion as notice at the present time. In reply to the Member for Edmonton Norwood and her reference to what the hon. Minister of Education said regarding the rules of the House, some exceptions are noted for committee stage. So we'll just keep that as notice and come back to it at a later stage in committee meetings.

#### Bill 7

#### **The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments with regard to Bill No. 7.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a few comments with respect to Bill 7; that is, perhaps give recognition to some of the benefits being recognized under this Bill with respect to the increase in renter rebate support, particularly to senior citizens, not only in increasing the amount of benefit being provided for senior citizens who reside in apartment units but, as well, the extension and increase of benefits for senior citizens who reside in mobile units. Although they do not own the home on which the mobile units are situated but do pay rent, they are now able to be recognized on an equal basis as those who are in rented accommodation in apartments.

I'm pleased we have moved in this direction at this time as we are finding that there are changes in a

number of citizens, particularly senior citizens, who now reside in mobile units and are on a limited income. Rentals being charged by landowners are certainly increasing. I have little criticism with respect to that, because no doubt they have experienced a substantial increase in property taxation assessed against them. However, it puts more citizens on a fairer or more equitable basis insofar as assisting them to be able to manage, particularly those on limited incomes, where perhaps their only source of support is their senior citizen pensions.

I know the increase in the renter rebate in the units meets with a great deal of favor for those who are in apartments as well. Year after year there have been substantial increases in rental rates. Many citizens have lived in some of their apartments for a good many years and find it rather difficult to pull up stakes, so to speak, and find accommodation in the newer competitive areas, where perhaps the rental rate might be lower. I don't think they are quite as mobile in moving from apartment to apartment, seeking more favorable rates, as the younger family or couple or individual are in being able to just pull up stakes and do comparative shopping for their accommodation.

So I just want to express the message that has been conveyed to me, of being pleased that we have proceeded to extend what we have in the way of renter rebate; as well, I'm sure, with respect to those people who qualify for the education tax rebate with regard to their farmland and the residences they maintain separate and apart.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to make a comment or two with regard to Bill 7, and question the minister.

First of all, Mr. Chairman, I'm confident that the government has responded in a very meaningful way to the concerns of the 400 senior citizen organizations in Alberta that have made representation to the government, and to the previous ministry of Municipal Affairs, by increasing the property tax reduction from \$250 to \$500. I think it goes without saying that it's welcomed by everybody within the province and will get support from both sides of the House.

In fairness, Mr. Chairman, I think it should be pointed out that reference was made on second reading by a member of the House that, where a senior citizen and his spouse occupy a self-contained housing unit, that should be extended to both senior citizens. I can only recall that where we in Alberta not only have the most progressive but certainly the most successful senior citizen self-contained program in Canada — rents are 30 per cent of income, and reference was made that in other areas of Canada they are 25 per cent — I think one should remember that when you apply the property tax reduction plan and the renter assistance, that's equivalent to three or four or five months in terms of rent. So effectively it's not 30 per cent of income in terms of rent, but indeed somewhat less. I think that point should be made.

I have a question for the minister. I've noted in the proposed applications for the pioneer home improvement program, which is an extension of the senior citizen home improvement program that this government was the first to launch in Canada — and I think they've been very successful. In that announcement where it's increased to \$2,000 for those senior

citizens who have a combined income of less than \$12,000, reference is made that they must be Canadian citizens. It states that he must be a resident of Alberta and a senior citizen. To be consistent with the statements made by the Minister of Housing and Public Works, that for assistance under the pioneer home improvement program applicants must be in effect Canadian citizens, I would ask the minister if that's a requirement for Bill 7 as well. It's not listed on page 2 of the Bill. I would like the minister to respond to that question.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, without exception I think the benefits paid by and for the senior citizens of Alberta are noted across Canada. Indeed our sister provinces would be extremely envious of having a similar program.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NOTLEY: I wasn't going to get into this debate, but I do want to go back over this point I raised during second reading.

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that all one has to do is look at the average last year, the figures Alberta Housing has supplied for the income of senior citizens living in self-contained units. That average for a couple is around \$570 a month, or approximately \$6,800 a year.

Now, Mr. Chairman, when one looks at the difference between the method of calculating payment of rent from 25 per cent to 30 per cent for that average couple — it would be slightly higher this year, but that was using last year's figures — the increase is \$326. What we're doing here is recovering part of that increase through an increased grant from \$250 to \$500, but there's still a loss of \$76 for that couple.

I suppose one could argue that an individual senior citizen is slightly better off, because there the average was somewhat lower than \$570 a month. But for married couples in the self-contained units last year, the average was at a level where the difference between 25 and 30 per cent will not be made up by this increase in grant.

Mr. Chairman, I raise that as a point to keep in perspective when we look at this piece of legislation. I don't think the answer is to increase the grant from \$250 to \$326. If I thought that was the answer, I would move that we increase the grant.

I think the answer will be arrived at, if it is going to be arrived at, when we get to the Department of Housing and Public Works. At that point we can thrash out whether it should be 25 per cent or 30 per cent. It seems to me that's where the government is going to move, and surely we should very carefully evaluate why it's necessary to have 30 per cent when we have 25 per cent in other areas. In talking about the rural and native housing program in answer to the Leader of the Opposition today, the minister cited 25 per cent. Those are the rules for the rural and native housing program. If that's the yardstick we're going to apply in that area, I find it very difficult to understand the logic for 30 per cent when it comes to self-contained units.

I raise that, Mr. Chairman, because I think it would be an error on our part to assume that simply increasing the grant is going to restore the purchasing power of our senior couples living in self-contained units. We're going to have to do that as we pass this particular bill, but it seems to me that the next step is

for the government to take a good, honest look at whether we really need to collect 30 per cent of income from senior citizens in self-contained units.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister what the rate of subsidization is in self-contained units when you add up the subsidization we're already paying and the \$500 renter rebate.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, with respect to the comments made by the Member for Spirit River-Fairview, I don't argue that his motivation is like many of ours. We'd all love to be able to provide all senior citizens of Alberta with everything they want, at no charge. But the hon. member is really not very practical. [interjection]

The point I was trying to make was that in this province we don't set a limit that only poor people are allowed in senior citizens' self-contained accommodations; they're open to all. We simply apply a means. As the province that supplies the highest income to its senior citizens of any jurisdiction in Canada, we simply set as a minimum for couples receiving over \$560 a month, a rent equivalent to 30 per cent of their income, \$156.

Now I put it to the member: with the tens of thousands of our 160,000-odd senior citizens who would dearly love to be able to get into that accommodation ... We can't build them any faster, as the hon. member knows. The minister is out of the House every week opening a new one. [interjections] Surely we have to have some degree of practicality as to how it relates to the rental values in Alberta generally. Surely, raising a benefit to those senior citizens by 100 per cent under Bill 7, is a measure by this government of assisting them in a very substantial way.

I object to the inference of the Member for Spirit River-Fairview that we're not doing very much for senior citizens.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, one would almost think the hon. Member for Lethbridge West is hot on the campaign trail. The election has come and gone, Mr. Member.

AN HON. MEMBER: To be the Minister of Housing.

MR. NOTLEY: Or to be the Minister of Housing. Yes, that's always a possibility if the present minister keeps on the way he's going.

Mr. Chairman, getting back to the basic point: is 25 per cent reasonable or is 30 per cent reasonable? Other provinces have 25 per cent. As a matter of fact, there are one or two provinces where it's lower than 25 per cent.

I would simply make the point, Mr. Chairman — and I think it has to be made in a more impassioned way when we get to the Department of Housing and Public Works — that really we shouldn't demand 30 per cent. Now the Member for Lethbridge West says, sure, some senior citizens can afford far more than that. Catch them through the income tax system. But let's not bring in a system that is going to penalize the many senior citizens whose average income last year, for the average couple, was \$6,800. These are the people who are going to be caught in this increase from 25 to 30 per cent.

With great respect, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Lethbridge West has stated his opinion, and I've stated

mine. I think it puts in context how far we're coming with this Bill. I would simply serve notice that when we get to the Department of Housing and Public Works, we'll have an opportunity to go through the same exercise again, because at that point we should be taking a close look at whether 30 per cent is reasonable for our senior citizens.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Member for Spirit River-Fairview — and I don't do it very often — that when we get into the estimates of Housing and Public Works we should indeed, and probably will, discuss that aspect.

However, I would like to assure the Member for Spirit River-Fairview that some of us care about the concerns of senior citizens, even after election campaigns.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, before going any further, perhaps I could answer a couple of questions. Before doing that, I'd like to say that I agree very substantially with the Member for Spirit River-Fairview and the Member for Lethbridge West. First of all, without debating the merits here, the proper place for a discussion on the rentals charged by Alberta Housing and Public Works for self-contained units could occur during the next two or three weeks during estimate studies; and secondly, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Lethbridge West is essentially correct, in my view, in saying that our programs for senior citizens' accommodations in this province are second to none.

I'd like to comment on a couple of other matters that were raised. The first is the question of eligibility with regard to Canadian citizenship that was asked by the Member for Lethbridge West. I can say initially that citizenship is not a criterion with respect to receiving assistance with regard to the renter assistance program.

Perhaps I could just read very briefly from the application form, which says that in order to be eligible, "you must be 65 years of age or older". To qualify as a renter, "you must have rented living accommodations for a period of not less than [100] days in any year as a normal place of residence". So in fact there is a requirement that you be a resident for at least 120 days and have rented accommodations. In addition to that, "a husband and wife, unless legally separated, cannot each claim renter assistance". There's only one application to a couple. That matter was raised during second reading as well. I suppose there are other less important criteria, but those are the basic criteria.

In answer to the question of what rate of subsidy the government provides with respect to self-contained units, I can't answer that. Again, perhaps that point might be raised on committee study of the Housing and Public Works estimates. I think it would be extremely difficult to get as an average across the province, because the rents paid are based on a level of income, and the costs in various regions vary as well. So one would almost have to look at a specific circumstance with regard to self-contained units in a certain town for a certain period of time. The level of subsidy of course depends on how many people living in those accommodations are paying more than the minimum because their income is more than the minimum.

Mr. Chairman, I think those are about all the questions asked thus far. Thank you.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I move the Bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

**Bill 18**  
**The Local Authorities Board**  
**Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we start, there is an amendment. Everybody has copies, I believe.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, two or three matters were raised on second reading that I said I would undertake to consider and report back to the House, the first being the matter of what was referred to by the hon. Leader of the Opposition as the open-endedness of the amendment with respect to the number of members. At that time I said it was not our intention or wish to go beyond six members. So I've provided an amendment to the Act that will limit the number of members to not more than six, of course providing the Executive Council with the flexibility of having less than that, which I expect will occur after the Edmonton annexation hearings are completed.

With regard to the other issue raised, and the question of whether the Local Authorities Board or the Executive Council would make public the Local Authorities Board recommendations on the Edmonton annexation application or others before an Executive Council decision is reached, I can say this: our legal advice with respect to the wording of the Act, as it is being proposed to amend here, neither prevents nor requires either the Local Authorities Board or the Executive Council to make the order public. In other words, nothing in the Act presently prevents the Local Authorities Board or the Executive Council from making an order of the Local Authorities Board public, or advising those who may have an interest in the matter, of their decision.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that frankly I haven't had an opportunity to review the number of ramifications that might result from making an order public. It doesn't relate just to the Edmonton annexation application; I think we would perhaps want to be consistent about what we do in that regard.

Not having had the opportunity to study all those ramifications — and they relate, for example, to land dealings and so on that may be the subject of some alteration in values if an order is made public and then altered or rejected by the cabinet — I'm not saying it's not possible to do that, but there are some pretty extensive concerns that I think need careful consideration before we would amend the Act to say the Local Authorities Board or the Executive Council must make an order public.

So I would not want to entertain any further amendments to the Act with respect to now requiring that every order be made public. I'd rather take that matter under further consideration over the course of the next few months, Mr. Chairman, with a view to making a policy decision in terms of what our government intends to do, particularly with regard to the Edmonton annexation application.

Mr. Chairman, I think those basically were the matters raised during second reading. And the amend-

ment I proposed, limiting the maximum number of persons on the board to six, is before the House.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I would like to compliment the minister on the amendment he has brought to the committee. I guess that every once in a while that \$2 million spent in the last election campaign to get the five of us back in the Assembly is paying off. We've finally got the minister to consider the amendment, so maybe that \$2 million wasn't wasted, Mr. Minister.

I would like to say that we believe it's a good amendment. We certainly feel it is necessary. But I find it very, very difficult to follow the minister's argument that the recommendations of the Local Authorities Board not be made public before a decision is made by the cabinet or the Legislature. This seems inconsistent with this government's call in 1971, and before that, that we were going to have open government in this province. It's inconsistent with the Tory cousins in Ottawa, who want public information to be made public.

Mr. Chairman, I find it hard to believe that the minister would not accept that amendment. So I would like to move an amendment that will say that. I would like the government to indicate to this committee if it believes the information should be public or if it should not be public. They will have that opportunity, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to move the amendment:

The Bill is amended as follows:

- A. The following section is added after Section 4:
  - 4.1 The following section is added after Section 60:
    - 60.1 Where the Board issues an order annexing the land to a municipality, it shall cause the order to be published as soon as possible in the *Alberta Gazette* and on two successive weeks in a daily or weekly newspaper circulating in the district affected.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the pages get the amendment from the hon. member and pass it around.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I understand the amendment, it would compel the government to make public any order from the Local Authorities Board.

Mr. Chairman, I intend to support the amendment for a number of reasons. First of all, I appreciate the fact that the minister has not yet closed the door on the LAB report on Edmonton annexation being made public. He has indicated he's going to be meeting with the Edmonton area MLAs. So whether other members of the Legislature have access to the report or not, we do know that at least the Edmonton area MLAs are presumably going to have access to the report.

Mr. Chairman, I would go back to some of the comments I made on second reading. As I recall, the argument the government made when it amended the Act several years back, that the Local Authority Board decision should be subject to final decision by the cabinet — the now Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs expressed it in the House, I thought quite well. He said annexation is essentially a political debate. It certainly is. When we talk about changing the boundaries of towns, of cities, of municipalities — affecting even the existence of municipalities — the

decisions we make have tremendous consequences on the quality of life in an area. So, Mr. Chairman, there is no question that we are dealing with a political question.

I think that is generally true, even when we look at the rather small examples I can cite of annexation in little communities. All you have to do is look at the debate between the MD of Fairview and the town of Fairview over proposed annexation by the town, and you very quickly realize that you're dealing with a profoundly political question. Feelings can run very high on both sides of the issue.

Mr. Chairman, I think the reason the government has to give us the assurance that the LAB report will be tabled is not just the general reason for open government — we could make that in a very political sense in this House; I don't intend to do so — but because we are looking at something of such extraordinary importance to the whole future of local government in an area that actually comprises at least one-quarter and probably close to one-third of the population of the province.

Mr. Chairman, what the minister is saying in his initial remarks today is: trust me; we'll try to do the right thing; we'll look at it; I'm sort of leaning toward making the report public, but don't force me to make it public because there are going to be problems. With great respect, Mr. Chairman, I think that when we look at something as fundamental as the request of the city of Edmonton for the kind of annexation it proposes — and I don't intend to get into a detailed discussion of its proposal, except to say that quite frankly it's mind-boggling that they want to enlarge the city of Edmonton as large as they do and to gobble up as much arable farmland as they propose. There'll probably be opportunities to debate whether or not the proposal of the city of Edmonton is reasonable.

But I think it is important that the people of Edmonton have an opportunity to know what the LAB has finally decided and recommended, what the people of Sherwood Park think, what the people of Strathcona county think. After all, the future of Strathcona county is going to be very much on the block in this particular case. And for the people to have only a filtered decision ... Obviously the LAB is going to hold the hearings. The LAB recommendations are going to have great weight with the minister and, I would guess, will probably be the major deciding factor or at least one of the major deciding factors in what the minister decides to do and what the government ultimately decides to do. Mr. Chairman, the idea that we would not have access to that kind of report really troubles me.

To be quite frank, I'd be a little happier with this amendment if what we were dealing with related directly to the Edmonton annexation request. I think it is important that we get an assurance in this House. If the minister would stand up and say, yes, we'll give you the assurance that in this case the LAB report will be made public, I don't think the amendment would be necessary and it would probably be reasonable to have the member who moved it withdraw it. But we haven't got that assurance. All we've got, Mr. Chairman, is: we'll look at it; the legislation doesn't prevent it; it doesn't compel us to it; we'll look at the pros and the cons; trust us.

Mr. Chairman, I have no reason not to trust the minister, but at the same time I have no reason to trust

this government when it comes to making things public. As a member of the House, and as an Albertan having some interest in what is decided on this particular case ... Yesterday one of Canada's leading newspapers had almost a full-page story on the financial situation of the city. Edmontonians are going to be interested in annexation on the basis of what it will do for the revenues of the city down the road; by the same token, so will people in Strathcona county and Sherwood Park. The people of St. Albert are even going to have the existence of their city at stake here. So, Mr. Chairman, the idea that we would not have access to the LAB report frankly is mind-boggling.

I think we should have the assurance of the government. If it takes an amendment to nail that down, I'm in favor of the amendment, because I don't think we can even consider seriously contemplating something as important as Edmonton's annexation bid unless we have a guarantee that the information that to a large extent is used by the government to arrive at its decision is made available to the public.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Chairman, I think the amendment seems to forget entirely that the Local Authorities Board hearing is a public inquiry. I think it's particularly important to think about it in the question of the city of Edmonton's annexation proposal, because certainly that is very much in the minds of people in Mill Woods. So the input to those decisions and the positions will all be well known. I think it would be a disappointment to the people of Alberta if this Legislature and the government did not take ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I might just interrupt for a moment. Hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry, if you wish to talk to somebody, please don't get in front by the bar.

MR. PAHL: I think the important point to be made here is one of responsibility. After the public inquiry, the decision is to be made by the government. I think it would be quite improper for that decision to be, if you will, second-guessed by making the announcement of the Local [Authorities] Board information prior to that. So I would speak against the amendment.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Chairman, very shortly, Whether you look at this as a political move or not, I know it's been referred to a few times already that a few years ago this was changed, taking away the power of the Local Authorities Board. I think this particular happening was over the annexation of land to Vegreville. Now, I think the government has to be involved. The political end of it is that this government had a policy of decentralization of government services. Prior to that time, the minister announced that the Environmental Centre was going to be in Vegreville. In, its annexation, the Local Authorities Board recommended all other parcels except that. That is why the change was made, and I think there was a necessity.

As far as I can see it, I cannot support this amendment. I think nothing is being hidden. Everybody has the opportunity to attend the hearings. I still think that the final rest should be with the government.

MRS. FYFE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In addressing this amendment, I guess the question is: who makes the annexation decisions? I feel it is very important that

in an annexation proposal that affects such a large segment of this province, the real key is that the information presented by those affected and by those proposing to take over a larger area be made public at the time it's presented, that full and public debate be allowed on the question.

At this point in time, a lot of emotion is involved in an annexation proposal. As has been pointed out just a few moments ago, it often is a very, very controversial kind of subject. But the key is to have that information put forward in a public platform so that each community, each party affected by the annexation, has a chance to debate, to examine the information that has been set forward by the other side or the other parties.

The decision is going to have to be made by some body. If we had a parliamentary system based on a straw vote or on plebiscites, we would not have the system we have today; it would not be called a parliamentary system. Therefore, I think it's imperative that after a full public hearing, those recommendations include the political dimension. I don't think making those public at that point serves the purpose of making a decision that is necessarily based on what is best for that annexation jurisdiction.

In total, the Bill is a very important factor that will affect many people. I speak against the amendment because I do not feel it is going to enhance or contribute to full public debate and, in the long run, will not necessarily be of benefit to the areas affected by this annexation.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I had planned to get involved in the debate a little later, and I may anyway. But I just can't miss the opportunity to point out to the hon. Member for St. Albert that the question is not who's going to make the decision. My colleague the Member for Clover Bar is not questioning that at all. No one is questioning the right or the proper role for the Executive Council to make that decision in the end. What this amendment does, hon. member, is make public the recommendation of the Local Authorities Board, so the people in St. Albert, Mill Woods, Vegreville, and all across this province, have that information.

Now the comparison to a public inquiry has been drawn by the three hon. members who just spoke. Let's think for a moment about the steps of a public inquiry. The public inquiry is held, just like the annexation hearings will be. The results of the public inquiry are then made public by the individual, generally the judge who has held the inquiry. He makes his recommendations to the government. That's made public, and then the government decides what it's going to do. The amendment proposed by my colleague would make this process, as far as annexation is concerned not only in the Edmonton area but all across the province, the exact same procedure the members for Edmonton Mill Woods, St. Albert, and Vegreville are saying is the proper procedure; that is, to follow the steps of a public inquiry. Now if we don't get the commitment from the minister to have the results of the LAB's inquiry made public, then in fact we're not following along a public inquiry, which all three members have endorsed.

MR. GOGO: Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman. I have a little difficulty, because I, along with other members of this House, recognize that the motives of the

Member for Clover Bar are really, in the purest form, in the best interests of all Albertans, as long as he can, in some small way embarrass the government to ...

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I would have the member withdraw that. He is imputing motives. I have brought the amendment in because I feel it's in the best interests ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you speaking on a point of order?

MR. R. CLARK: Yes he is.

DR. BUCK: Whatever you want to call it, Mr. Chairman. He can withdraw that statement, because it's unparliamentary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, will you adhere to the rules of the House. If you're speaking on a point of order, just say so.

DR. BUCK: I am rising on a point of order, Mr. Chairman, and I will ask the hon. member to withdraw his statement.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, such a point is not a point of order. If anything, it may be a point of privilege. I think for a member of the House to make a suggestion that another remark was designed to embarrass the government is perhaps not unparliamentary.

MR. GOGO: Well, Mr. Chairman ...

DR. BUCK: Just withdraw it, John.

MR. R. CLARK: Concede.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I would, in all haste, if I have for one moment offended the Member for Clover Bar, withdraw any remark that he would take or even assume that I would say to impugn his motives. I think ...

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I accept his apology. [laughter]

MR. GOGO: The difficulty I have in supporting the amendment, Mr. Chairman, really concerns the whole Local Authorities Board Act. First of all, the members I have heard so far seem only to consider Bill 18 as designed for Edmonton. It's as though there is no other jurisdiction or municipality in this province ...

MR. DIACHUK: There isn't.

MR. GOGO: ... as the Member for Edmonton Beverly might think. You know, he is indicative of some of the thinking around here.

MR. NOTLEY: That's a point of privilege.

MR. DIACHUK: A few in Calgary.

MR. GOGO: And I'm not suggesting that even be X-rayed.

Mr. Chairman, the point we should be aware of is

that Local Authorities Board hearings, as I understand, only take place as a result of applications for annexing one piece of land from one municipality to another. Members seem to view it in the context that it's two vying municipalities.

We've just been through an experience in Alberta as recently as last Christmas, where a developer, perhaps of tremendous resources, initiated the application. The only way the affected municipalities could intervene was to hire someone of the equivalent expertise of those hired by the applicant. So I don't for one minute even believe that the Executive Council, the government of the day, should not in some way be involved in that decision-making process.

The amendment makes reference to the fact that the LAB makes an order. Unless I'm wrong, I thought they made a recommendation, and it's only made public when it's rejected. I would think that, in the interests of serving all Albertans, many other factors are involved in a decision by the Local Authorities Board. My information tells me that a Local Authorities Board can only consider the evidence presented at the hearing. Perhaps the minister will clarify this later when we get back to the Bill, after we've dealt with the amendment. I would suggest that in many cases all the evidence is not presented at the hearing. As a result of that, the Local Authorities Board makes a recommendation based on what evidence is presented — not the other factors, the many sociological factors that could affect the decision. Although I have some strong feelings about who should be able to initiate action with annexation — I've always felt that unless an affected municipality could have some say in the initiation of the application, it shouldn't even proceed — that's another matter.

In substance, I have to vote against the amendment, because I don't think it's in the interest of Albertans. After all, that's really what governing is all about: the best interests of all Albertans.

MR. MOORE: Probably essentially two different points of view are being expressed here by members of the opposition, government members, and myself; the first one being, I think, whether or not the Bill should in fact require the publication of Local Authorities Board orders before they are amended, altered, approved, or disapproved by Executive Council. I've checked and determined that the legislation in fact allows either the Local Authorities Board or the Executive Council to make the orders public, if they so desire.

The other point of view, I think, is being expressed to some extent because of our different responsibilities. There are across this province a great many problems with respect to one or more municipalities, when an annexation order might be published that isn't finalized; problems with respect to landowners, utility owners and operators. There can be a great deal of speculation with regard to the sale of land, the shares in utility companies — all kinds of things — in a large annexation.

I'm trying to express to members of the opposition, Mr. Chairman, that quite frankly there are some difficulties in putting out board orders that have not been finalized. If we were to review the entire Local Authorities Board Act and procedures and maybe turn that board into a board that only made recommendations to government, I could possibly rest easier with such an amendment. That process is under review.

I made a commitment to the House to review the matter very carefully, and I'm sincere about that, Mr. Chairman, in terms of whether or not we will make those orders public. But in my advice to members of the Executive Council, I, as Minister of Municipal Affairs, have a responsibility to ensure that whatever we do is not something that creates some financial hardship on people across this province who are involved as owners of land and so on. Quite frankly, I'm very uncomfortable about agreeing to the passage of an amendment that would require every board order to be made public. I've said I'll undertake to review the matter, and certainly I would expect an opportunity in the fall session of the Legislature, perhaps, to debate it again.

For now, Mr. Speaker, without the thorough review that I think needs to be done, I think my responsibility quite frankly demands that I speak against the amendment and ask other hon. members of the Assembly to vote against it.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I appreciate the remarks made by the minister. Certainly there is a distinction between the present approach — where board orders are made which can be varied, altered, accepted or, for that matter, rejected by Executive Council — and recommendations in a general sense. I think it's certainly helpful that the minister has indicated the government is looking at the whole process. If we change it from the present arrangement to one where recommendations are made, in my judgment there would be no reason at all to keep any of these recommendations private. In fact they should be made public.

Mr. Chairman, I think one could make the argument — and it has been made by a number of people — since we changed the Act several years ago and the cabinet can now vary or alter an order of the Local Authorities Board, that in fact the ultimate decision rests with the cabinet. That being the case, the impact on land values is going to be less significant because the people will know that, notwithstanding a board order, the cabinet has the ultimate authority to accept, vary, or change it, whatever the case may be. There is nevertheless a distinction between the present process of board orders, which can be varied, and one of recommendations. In my judgment, that is an important point which one has to look at very carefully.

Frankly I would be a little happier if at this time we were looking at an amendment dealing with nailing down the release of the LAB report on the Edmonton annexation proposal. I think we're looking at such a huge step for municipal government in almost a third of the population area of the province that we really have to have this information made public. The fact that it may be reassessed this fall is reassuring, but I don't think quite good enough to convince me that we shouldn't at this point in time insist that at least this board report should be released.

Mr. Chairman, I don't want to get into a long discussion, but I really must say I'm a little surprised at some of the constitutional theories that have been expounded today on the role of parliamentary government and responsible government. It has always struck me as important that when public decisions are made, as much public information as possible be released so that the public can in fact make an assessment on whether the politicians did a good or a bad job. I think it was the hon. Member for St. Albert who



argued that it was all right to have the information presented to the LAB hearings, but somehow the final report of the LAB shouldn't be made public; that it's okay for the briefs to be made public, but not the final recommendations. With great respect to that hon. member, Mr. Chairman, I believe it is important that the way in which the LAB has reviewed that information and evidence, the weight of importance it has given to the various submissions, and the final recommendations be made public, because it is obviously indispensable if we're going to have an intelligent debate on the future of government in the metro Edmonton area.

Mr. Chairman, there is just one other point. I don't want to belabor this, because the minister has indicated they're going to take a second look at it. I think it's very important that we have the release of the orders, or recommendations, if the government's going to move in that direction, because right now I think the major obstacle to making information public is that the government doesn't have to. As long as it's up to the government to decide whether they release the LAB order or not, the government doesn't have to answer public opinion as to why they rejected or altered the LAB order.

If we move to a different system where we have recommendations made public, the government is going to have to answer if they choose not to follow the recommendations, as we found for example with the ECA recommendation on the Red Deer River dam. There was a good deal of public interest, and I think informed public interest, because we had the report of the environment conservation authority. One could argue the government's case; one could also argue against it, based on whether or not one accepted the recommendations of the ECA, which held the hearings.

It seems to me that the release of this kind of information is indispensable if in fact we're going to hold the government fully accountable for the decisions they make.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, just one or two comments. I try to make a practice not to rethrash old straw, but the point the minister makes, that the legislation is now permissive and that the cabinet and the minister may release the report of the Local Authorities Board, does not reassure me. I would think that all hon. members from Edmonton and the surrounding area would like to have it say they shall indicate the report of the Local Authorities Board. After all, we can't prejudge what the report will say. It may say yes, no, or a little of both.

But the important fact, Mr. Chairman, is that public business should be done in public. That is very basic, be it at the municipal, provincial, or the federal level. As has been mentioned by hon. members on both sides of the House, the ultimate decision will be made by Executive Council. It may take the recommendations holus-bolus; it may take a portion of them. But that decision will have to be made. So the decision and the public report of the Local Authorities Board will not be binding.

I have difficulty following the minister's argument that it may cause speculation and a lot of anxiety, because that anxiety and speculation are already there. But the decision, as a recommendation by the Local Authorities Board, can be modified, changed, or not

accepted at all by the Executive Council.

Mr. Chairman, I'm sure this government prides itself in open government. I'm sure they would like to have this in, so nobody could accuse them of hiding anything. So I'm sure they will all support the amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're now voting on the amendment introduced by the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

[Mr. Chairman declared the motion lost. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Three minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Buck	Mandeville	Speaker, R.
Clark, R.	Notley	

Against the motion:

Anderson, D.	King	Payne
Batiuk	Knaak	Pengelly
Chambers	Koziak	Purdy
Chichak	Kroeger	Reid
Clark, L.	Kushner	Russell
Cook	Little	Schmid
Crawford	Lysons	Schmidt
Cripps	Mack	Sindlinger
Diachuk	Magee	Stewart
Embury	McCrae	Stromberg
Fjordbotte	Moore	Topolnisky
Gogo	Musgreave	Trynchy
Hiebert	Oman	Webber
Horsman	Osterman	Weiss
Hyland	Pahl	Wolstenholme
Hyndman	Paproski	

Totals:	Ayes - 5	Noes - 47
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MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question on the government amendment?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion on amendment carried]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I move the Bill as amended be reported.

[Motion carried]

#### Bill 1

#### The Companies Amendment Act, 1979

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 1, The Companies Amendment Act, 1979, be reported.

[Motion carried]

**Bill 4**  
**The Alberta Insurance**  
**Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, I move Bill No. 4, The Alberta Insurance Amendment Act, 1979, be reported.

[Motion carried]

**Bill 8**  
**The Alberta Government Telephones**  
**Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions, comments, or amendments?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Minister of Utilities and Telephones, I move that Bill No. 8, The Alberta Government Telephones Amendment Act, 1979, be reported.

[Motion carried]

**Bill 12**  
**The Department of**  
**Recreation, Parks and Wildlife**  
**Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to Bill No. 12?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 12, The Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Amendment Act, 1979, be reported.

[Motion carried]

DR. BUCK: You just doubled your pension, Peter.

**Bill 14**  
**The Fatality Inquiries**  
**Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any comments, questions, or amendments?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. PAHL: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 14, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act, 1979, be reported.

[Motion carried]

**Bill 19**  
**The Alberta Hospitals**  
**Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions, comments, or

amendments?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise a couple of questions. They're not directly in the Act as such, but in the principle of the Act. The Alberta Hospitals Amendment Act, Chapter 19 of the 1978 *Statutes*, gives the board the power of "varying his hospital privileges"; in other words, reinstating or hearing an appeal. I wonder if the minister would clarify that to some extent. As I understand it, there is some concern that this gives the mandate not only to restore the privileges but to extend or contract some of the privileges. I wonder if the minister could comment on that, to clarify the intent in that particular area.

Secondly, in this responsibility is there possibility of a conflict of interest with the medical practitioners' Act, whereby certain privileges are given to a doctor and the hospital says these are in accordance with the medical profession as such, as they have outlined the responsibilities a doctor can take on, then under a review of this appeal board possibly there's an expansion or change of privileges. Could some kind of conflict of interest arise? Has the minister looked at those two problems?

MR. RUSSELL: I'll answer the last question first, Mr. Chairman. No, I don't think a conflict of interest could arise. There is an appeal from the decision of this board on a point of law to the Supreme Court; and presumably that would cover that kind of situation should it arise.

I think I can only explain the matter of varying privileges by giving one or two hypothetical examples. In one case a doctor might have his privileges reduced from full hospital privileges and everything that goes with that to perhaps limited privileges in one area of the hospital. He may be allowed to visit patients but not carry out surgical procedures. That would be one example. Or he might have his classification of staff demarcation changed from, say, full to visiting or courtesy. Those would be examples of variance.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 19, The Alberta Hospitals Amendment Act, 1979, be reported.

[Motion carried]

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration the following Bills and reports the same: Bills 7, 1, 4, 8, 12, and 14; and also reports Bill 18 with some amendments.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the report, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 19 was not included in the report. I wish to add that as being reported.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree to this addition to the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

**Bill 15**  
**The Attorney General Statutes**  
**Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in moving second reading of Bill No. 15, The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1978. This Bill deals with three matters in separate statutes of the province of Alberta, all of which can be appropriately put together in this statutes amendment Act.

In the first case, the proposed amendment to The Administration of Estates Act allows for a judge in certain cases to dispense with the requirement, that would otherwise be a requirement under the law, to serve notice on a spouse in regard to an application that is being made to administer the estate if the deceased in fact had a spouse. At the present time the law provides that a notice must be served. This would allow a judge in certain circumstances to dispense with it. The best sort of example might be in cases where a spouse is known to be alive but has been, say, behind the Iron Curtain for 15 or 30 years or the like. In such a case an application would be made to a court, properly supported by affidavit, and a judge would have the discretion to make a decision and grant such an application. No other change in The Administration of Estates Act is proposed in this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

Under The Land Titles Act, a degree of modernization or updating of technology is involved in, I think, three useful but not high-principle amendments, in that the Act is outdated in some respects having to do with the type of materials that should be used in the keeping of its records. The proposal here is to allow more modern materials to be used by providing the discretion of the registrar of Land Titles Office in that respect.

A third Act dealt with in Bill No. 15 is The Matrimonial Property Act. I should assure hon. members that, as controversial as that legislation may have been in the first instance, I believe the amendments proposed at this time are not matters of controversy or of difficulty in any member according with the principle of it. One change is to provide that where an order is made that has the effect of dividing certain property between the husband and wife — in the typical case of a farm, where the order allows the wife or the husband to continue residing in the farm residence property, and provides that the balance of the property is retained for farming purposes by the other party to the marriage, or recent marriage, that does not constitute a legal subdivision of the land pursuant to The Planning Act. That's an important provision, because The Planning Act, not the dispute between the parties, should govern for subdivision purposes.

Mr. Speaker, the only other proposals are for improv-

ing the drafting of sections 33 and 38. They provide for changes that have been found in practice under the Act, in the last few months since it came into force, where the word "person" might better have been used instead of "spouse", because it makes it more clear if expressed that way; and one other where the reference should have been — this is in Section 37, which I failed to mention; I said sections 33 and 38; it was 33, 37, and 38 — to the parties to the action rather than to the property, in order to make the provisions of the section clear.

[Motion carried; Bill 15 read a second time]

**Bill 17**  
**The Workers' Health,**  
**Safety and Compensation Statutes**  
**Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 17, The The Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation Statutes Amendment Act, 1979.

Through the order in council passed, several pieces of legislation were placed under my responsibility. Within a couple of these Acts are programs of grants. The purpose of this legislation is to provide me the authority to implement the grant programs. [Under] The Occupational Health and Safety Act and The Radiation Protection Act, my office has grants available. Some of them are in research; some of them are in education. Some examples we now have are studies [in the] private sector, such as the Alberta trucking association and the Canada Safety Council. There are also programs within some of the universities: the University of Calgary. We also have research programs in the W.W. Cross Cancer Institute. Some of the grant program is for competitions such as the mine safety competition that takes place annually in Alberta to provide a scale or measurement of the efficiency of different teams in the different mines in our province.

The program of grants isn't very large. In the past year it was a bit over \$100,000. The exact amount of the grant program will be disclosed on Friday night at our presentation of the budget.

The Act is only to provide the mechanism for my office to administer these grant programs.

[Motion carried; Bill 17 read a second time]

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

Moved by Mrs. Osterman:

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

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

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

[Adjourned debate June 4: Mr. Crawford]

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege for me to participate in this speech. I would like to pay tribute to

those who spoke before me: the mover, the seconder, and all the other members. They set a high standard, and I will attempt to live up to the standard they set.

I first would like to compliment the Lieutenant-Governor in his reading of the speech and pay respects to him, for this will be the last speech he will have read in this House. As he enters his retirement, I wish him health and happiness.

I was pleased to see the government bring forward six priorities they will be working on during this session of the Legislature, six important objectives we will be working on to keep Alberta in the forefront in Canada, as it now is. It is important that these priorities receive the attention of this House and that this House support the government toward implementing the programs mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I'm especially pleased with the announcement of the new cabinet post of Economic Development to promote the free-enterprise system in Alberta, and to promote business, transportation, and agricultural processing. It is important to a landlocked province like ours that through this department we explore and take every opportunity to study transportation of goods and development of businesses related to it in our province, so that we are able to compete with the rest of Canada. As we all know, it doesn't seem to matter what business we are in, for a number of years the freight rates have been very favorable to other parts of Canada. It is high time that we get a reasonable break for products made and developed in western Canada. It is very reasonable, Mr. Speaker, that we take steps toward processing many agricultural products that we grow in Alberta.

This is very dear to me, because I come from an irrigation area. Any of you who have heard me speak in the House before will admit that any time I have spoken on the budget speech or the throne debate, I've always mentioned irrigation. We from that area always say that if it can be grown, we think we can grow it. But the problem we run into is processing it so it can be used in Alberta. Through the years, they have developed many things through tests that have been done at the provincial farm at Brooks. One crop grown that seems to be very much on an up and down scale is onions. It appears that the housewife in Alberta needs some education toward using Alberta-grown products instead of importing these products from other countries and having our industry virtually dissolve because there is no market.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this new department, along with Agriculture and the present promotions they carry out for Alberta products, will be able to turn people around so we will think Alberta first, and Alberta products first.

I was also pleased to read in the speech, Mr. Speaker, of the obtaining of the three federal government elevators in Alberta. With the use of these elevators I am sure we can come up with some very innovative ideas toward movement of grain and other products that can be stored in them and moved throughout the system, possibly eliminating some of the bottlenecks that now exist. I believe this is a real challenge for the government in the forthcoming year.

In the agricultural field, Mr. Speaker, I believe we should take some time to look at the high cost of input. For example, we have had questions in the House related to the high cost of fertilizer, and the shortage thereof in some cases.

Also, Mr. Speaker, something we don't hear too much about, but the costs of which are rising very, very rapidly, is sprays needed throughout the province, especially in the intensive irrigation areas. Some of the costs of these products on specialty crops are running anywhere from \$10 to approximately \$30 an acre. It doesn't take very long any more, Mr. Speaker, to go to your local agent who handles these sprays and have a few pails in the back of the pick-up — and I'm sure members who are involved in the agriculture industry agree with me. It doesn't take very long, even if you're fortunate enough to have a new pick-up, to have as much value in the back of it as what the whole truck is worth. Mr. Speaker, that doesn't have to be the whole floor of the box covered with a number of cans. Mr. Speaker, I believe the Department of Agriculture should take a look at the way products made locally are protected on the import duties at the border. For some reason these products have risen very rapidly in the last number of years, and they continue to rise in price at an incredible rate.

Mr. Speaker, in the speech there is an immense program that the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care intends to carry out this year. I know, through the minister's ability, he will get this program done. Without doubt, it's probably one of the greatest hospital and medical care programs in the country as a whole, possibly even in the world. The innovations to the Health Sciences Centre, the children's hospital, and the new medical research foundation: I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that nowhere in the world will you find such innovative means of supplying medical research and providing medical services to people.

I'd like to comment on one other thing involved with hospitals, Mr. Speaker. On May 29 in this Legislature the minister, answering a question from the hon. Leader of the Opposition, stated that he believed the deficits of hospitals from last year had been picked up. I know all hospitals tried to live, within their budgets. But obviously some were not able to, and it resulted in deficits. I believe we should give some consideration to hospitals that provided a budget and were able to live within a budget. Surely we should give some sort of benefit to good management and hard work, and indeed the flak many of them received because they tried to live within their budgets.

I was very happy, also, to read in the speech the interest of the Minister of Recreation and Parks in developing further recreation areas, something between the extensive provincial park we have and the highway campsite. I have a number of those areas in my constituency that I have made known to the minister. I am sure we will have more discussions in the near future on that very subject, and I look forward to these discussions with the minister.

The last thing I'd like to comment on, Mr. Speaker, is some articles we read in some papers just after the election. The editor of the *Journal*: "It is up to [the press] to act . . . the assumed role, I suppose, of being a 'genuine opposition'." Mr. Speaker, we all read in many of the other media throughout the province what they thought of the comment made. All of us in this House went through an election. For the full election period, many of us knocked on doors, talked to people, went to forums. Whether we are on the government or the opposition side, we are here because of the wish of the people. We are the government or the opposition because the people designated us that way.

And in my opinion, nobody who did not go through the election and win is entitled to be any sort of official or unofficial opposition of the people of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence I'd like to quote from an editorial in the *Medicine Hat News*. I must say that the opinions expressed in this article are indeed my own:

Newspapers can and should be critics of government, but criticism is a function the opposition parties can still perform ....

Real criticism tends to be a two-way street, though. The critic must be free to blast his subject for things done badly, or to praise it for things done well ....

Mr. O'Callaghan is quite right to say the Conservatives' majority imposes a special role on the press, but this role is not that of "opposition" to the government.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In making a few remarks in the debate on the Speech from the Throne, I first want to congratulate you for the good job you do in keeping this House in good form; also the Lieutenant-Governor for the excellent work he has done for this province and for his last delivery of the Speech from the Throne. I want to say that I think the maiden speeches have been delivered very excellently, and the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne did a terrific job. The maiden speeches have been very impressive. I just think it's great that we're going to be able to freshen up this 19th Legislature with some new members.

I was hoping when we had the standing vote this afternoon — I can't see why we can't all be together. As the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs said, you were united when you voted yes on the motion, but we were united on the other side. Mr. Speaker, I hope this doesn't happen in the new Legislature. I hope we'll be able to be together on several occasions, and split on several occasions, but not united on both sides as far as voting is concerned. We're a small opposition, and I certainly hope we're going to get some support in the opposition. I intend to support the government at times, as I have done in the past. I don't intend to deviate from that. I'm going to speak on my conscience, and I hope many of our new members will do the same.

When we were in the campaign, I recall that my Conservative candidate was asked by someone at the forum if he would vote with his conscience if he were in the government, and vote with the opposition. He said he certainly would. Well, I looked over at him — things were going pretty smooth — and I said, if you do you're going to be the first I've seen vote with the opposition since I've been a member in the House. He said, that's not so; the hon. Mr. Ghitter voted with you in the opposition many times. I don't think he did, but I certainly appreciated his voice in the Legislature. He spoke his mind, and it was appreciated very much.

Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed this last campaign more than any other campaign, for I went out and knocked on doors. I didn't make very good headway at it, but my response was excellent. I didn't make very good headway because I had to stop and have coffee or lunch or visit, and I almost took it as a survey.

I did find that one of the most critical situations — and it was brought up to me on several occasions when

I was knocking on doors — is the neglect we have in Canada for widows. We certainly don't have a program, and I do hope our new Minister of Social Services and Community Health will get in touch with the federal government to give some assistance to our widows. When a widow on a spouse's allowance, or any situation if they're not 65, loses her supporter she just don't have any help whatsoever.

There was one particular instance, Mr. Speaker, when I had this lawyer knocking on doors with me. We knocked on one door in the apartment building, and this lady came out. Right away this lawyer found that the reception wasn't very good. So we just let her go and she went back in. So we were knocking on the door on the other side, and we heard her say to her husband, there's a couple of drunks out there in the hall. That was really the only bad reception I had, Mr. Speaker, and it wasn't true. [laughter]

It's really great to see some beauty in the Legislature. It's great that we have six ladies elected. That's really great. I always said in my constituency, if I can get all the ladies' votes, which are half of them, I could break the tie myself and win the election. It's nice to have the ladies representing their points of view in this Legislature.

MR. KING: Don't forget their brains, though, Fred.

DR. BUCK: Easy, birds and bees [inaudible].

MR. MANDEVILLE: But I really didn't realize that the opposition members were as important as we were. When I looked at the campaign promises, we had \$2.5 billion in campaign promises. Well, I calculated it down, and it's \$250,000 each to get rid of the opposition. I didn't realize we were that important in the Legislature.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I think our intent in the opposition is to be constructive. On many occasions government members are going to think we're just criticizing to be criticizing, but that is not the case. Our role is to see that we have good government in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to discuss four areas. I'm not going to have time to do it this evening, but I hope we go on with the debate on Friday. I'm going to talk on four areas that I don't think there was enough emphasis on in the Speech from the Throne: agriculture, freight rates, water resource development, and roads. I think these are some areas that there should have been more on in the Speech from the Throne.

I'm sure the rural MLAs in this Legislature will have to agree with me that agriculture is eventually going to be our basic and one of our most important industries in this province. Oil and gas have been very lucrative, and the revenue coming into this province has been great. But I think the intent with the heritage trust fund is to diversify the economy. I think that's what the fund is for, and agriculture is one area where we could certainly diversify the economy.

I talked to many farmers and their concern is: why can we loan money to our maritime provinces, other provinces, and to oil companies for less interest than we loan it to our farmers in this province? They're very concerned in this area, Mr. Speaker, that we don't have more reduction in our interest rates to farmers. Right now, in some cases they pay as high as 13 and 14 per

cent. Under the direct loan program, I realize they do pay 9 per cent. As the hon. member from Forty Mile indicated, with the high input into agriculture our farmers aren't going to be able to service their debt load unless we're able to come with some methods or means. I think one of the areas where we can certainly help is to reduce interest rates to our farmers who want to purchase land and equipment, and some of their other capital costs. I think we should give some concern to cases where farmers, if they have a capital investment or inventory over \$300,000, can't get a loan from the Alberta development corporation. I think the corporation should take a look at this. With the way inflation has been going, in some cases it takes more than \$300,000 to have a good economic operation.

Another area we're going to see problems in is agribusiness in this province. As far as our feedlot operators are concerned, it's been a real problem to keep them in operation and operating viably, because not enough cattle are coming into the feedlots to pay their way at the present time.

We're looking at the same situation as far as packing plants are concerned. With our cattle kill down, a lot of little independent packers are finding problems trying to operate. One of our independent packing

plants has closed down, and we have another one in the process of closing. We need these packing plants, Mr. Speaker, to keep our cattle industry and our feedlots in operation. I have to agree that cattle prices have been extremely good in the past year or 18 months. However, with the high cost of producing cattle, we need good prices, and they're not out of line.

But our grain prices certainly aren't in line with the rest of the cost. For example, trying to grow barley at \$1.50 a bushel is just not feasible, Mr. Speaker, or even growing wheat at \$3 a bushel. We can't make ends meet in the agricultural industry. I think we have to have at least \$6 a bushel before we can sell our grain at a profit.

Then what's really creating problems, Mr. Speaker, is that we can't market that grain. We can't move that grain and get it into the terminals, get it sold, and get the money back into the hands of the farmers.

Mr. Speaker, looking at the time, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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