

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: **Thursday, April 10, 1980 2:30 p.m.**

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

**PRAYERS**

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the '78-79 annual report of the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to file with the library of the Assembly and provide for the information of Members of the Legislative Assembly the report of Dr. Mowat on the response of the public to the report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Student Achievement. Some hon. members will be interested in knowing that contained herein is a summary of the analysis of certain questions asked by the Gallup organization last fall on behalf of the Department of Education with respect to the future of student achievement programs in the province.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table the annual report of the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower for 1978-79, and the sixth annual report of ACCESS.

**head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly some 65 students from the Elizabeth Seton school in the constituency of Edmonton Beverly. They're seated in the members gallery accompanied by teachers Mrs. Adams, Miss Bruni, Mrs. Bianchini, and Mr. Hunka. I'd like to ask the students and teachers to rise and receive the usual welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you today, and through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly, 75 students from the Albert Lacombe school in St. Albert, one of whom is my daughter, which I promised her I would point out. These classes are accompanied by four teachers, Mr. Peter Holt, Mr. Ernie Klita, Mr. Darren Milke, and Sister Anne Honig; and three parents, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Melik, and Mrs. Parker.

I would like to mention that these classes have participated in mock legislative assembly sittings in the last few days. I understand the debates have been extremely interesting. I was advised that yesterday one of the members of the mock opposition asked the minister responsible for wildlife if he — or she, I believe, in this case — could do anything about the hazard of bears to people. The very astute minister responded that they were proceeding to train the bears. [laughter]

I would ask these students and the adults accompanying them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to meet the bear trainer. It gives me great pleasure at this time to introduce to you and to the members of the Legislature a student from J.R. Robson high school in Vermilion, who is also a member of my constituency since her home is in Clandonald. Janice Osinchuk was the winner of the speaking contest for northeastern Alberta. I know that the members of this Legislative Assembly will be extremely proud to know that Janice will be our representative at the United Nations. At this time I would like Janice to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, we have a group of 4-H people in the galleries. I haven't spotted them yet, although I met with them just prior to coming into the House. They're working on getting ready for the annual 4-H clean-up of our roads and highways this spring. I would like to have them stand if they will identify themselves, and receive the welcome of the House.

**head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Department of Education**

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, on May 15, 1978, members of this Legislative Assembly adopted a statement on the goals of schooling and of education. Also in 1978, the Alberta heritage learning resources project completed its first year of activity. These two facts are notable in that they directed Albertans' minds toward the purpose of education and toward the means of achieving this purpose. Today Albertans are increasingly aware that knowledge begins with knowledge of ourselves. To understand others, which is increasingly important in our world, we need to understand our own origins.

Students, parents, and educators throughout Alberta will be interested to know that effective September 1, 1981, what is known as the 1978 social studies curriculum will be mandatory throughout the Alberta school system. This decision marks a change in the intention of the Department of Education. My announcement today is meant to provide school boards throughout Alberta with the necessary time, approximately 16 months, to implement the new program. Use of the curriculum was formerly meant to be optional, at least until 1982.

Second, Mr. Speaker, and also effective September 1, 1981, the social studies curriculum will have mandatory components for each grade, dealing with geography, history, and citizenship. In each division — that is, elementary, junior secondary, and senior secondary — the mandatory content will include Canadian, including Alberta, history, geography, and citizenship. Details of the mandatory content are not yet finalized, but will be by September 1 this year. In the meantime, it is important for the public to know the government's intention.

Third, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education intends to test students' knowledge about Canadian history, geography, and citizenship. The test will be conducted in September this year. A sample of students in elementary, junior secondary, and senior secondary will be tested. The test will be developed with the advice of knowledgeable Albertans. It will not be a test of current curriculum or instruction. It is intended as a pre-instructional test and is expected to assist in assessing appropriate instruction and content for the future.

Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to quality education for our students. Because of the importance of

this issue the Premier has, on a number of occasions, indicated the policy position of the government in this regard. We believe that such an education must include particular knowledge of our history, geography, and form of government, as a precondition of integrated studies, which are also essential. The government expects Albertans educated in our schools: to understand the dynamic nature of our historic development; to understand our system of government; and to understand how our history and geography have influenced and will continue to influence our provincial development, both nationally and internationally.

The future of this province lies in a positive outward-looking attitude, firmly established on the basis of self-awareness and self-confidence.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

##### Child Care

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. It's a follow-up to a question that was raised yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition with regard to Miranda Phipps, the child who was released earlier from government care. I wonder if at this time the minister could indicate to the Assembly what recommendations the social worker made to the court prior to the judge's order that supervision be discontinued on September 5, 1979.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the social worker recommended to the judge on September 5, 1979, that the child be allowed to remain with her mother as there was no evidence of physical neglect or abuse during the period of the supervision order. In addition the social worker pointed out that during that period of three months there had been limited contact with the mother and the child and that, in the opinion of the social worker, the mother was still engaged in prostitution. Notwithstanding that, the judge made his decision, and the supervision order was terminated at that point in time.

MR. SPEAKER: Yesterday I had some misgiving about this line of questioning, and that misgiving persists. It could be very much a matter of opinion, but just to deal with it in a preliminary way I should explain what that misgiving is. I'm concerned whether it can be said that the official duty or responsibility of a minister includes reporting on what happened in a court. It would seem that we're almost assuming that the minister is responsible for what happened in court and must report on the court proceedings. As I said, I have real misgivings about that. As the questioning proceeds, I'll continue to think about the point, but I would suggest that both the questioners and the answerers might have that in mind.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the concern of your office, certainly my intent is not to raise questions outside the jurisdiction of the minister. My intent is to raise questions with regard to actions of people within the department. I will certainly heed the notice you have given me.

In that light, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the minister if the information provided by the social worker was supplemented by other professionals in the department. For

example was a case conference held or were other professionals called in with regard to this case to provide advice prior to the time the recommendation went forward to the court?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I might mention that during the period of time — the months of June, July, and August — preceding the court hearing on September 5, there were three visits by the social worker: first with the mother prior to the decision by the court, and the two visits following that, on June 9 and on August 2. During that interval, the mother was in Edmonton with her daughter because of court proceedings here. The social worker in Calgary was unable to make contact with her on a number of attempts: June 21, 29, and July 5. On July 12 the social worker contacted the grandmother. On July 12, as well, the social worker contacted the city of Edmonton police morality squad to see if they could assist in locating the mother and the child. A letter was sent on or about the same date and, upon receiving the letter, on July 23 the mother did call the social worker and contact was re-established.

I've had an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to review the contents of the material the department has on this very tragic situation. I'm going to recommend that the material, along with the transcripts of the three court proceedings, be forwarded to the Cavanagh Board of Review, in the line of the review they are doing on the whole area of child care in Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate that action by the minister. Could the minister indicate whether any contact was made by the department with the mother or the child after the child was placed in the custody of her mother?

MR. BOGLE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my previous response, a home visit was made to the mother's apartment immediately prior to the court hearing. The accommodations were certainly in order. The social worker was satisfied of the mother's desire to have her child returned to her.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether or not there were any complaints with respect to the care of the child after the court decision the minister alluded to of, I believe, September 9, awarding custody of the child to the mother?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, that was the other question asked yesterday that I took as notice, and I am pleased to give an answer to it today. During the period of the supervision order, from June to September 1979, there were no specific complaints from the grandmother regarding neglect or abuse. On several occasions the grandmother did express concern for the occupation of her stepdaughter and the effect that might have on the granddaughter. However, no complaints were registered as to abuse or neglect.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. My question relates to any complaints subsequent to September 9, as opposed to the period between June and September.

MR. BOGLE: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In the question period yesterday the minister indicated that the government was entering into discussion with the Alberta Association of Social Workers with respect to the question of qualifications of child care workers in the province. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether it is the intention of the government to reduce the accreditation course for child care workers from two years to one year?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I indicated yesterday that there were a number of questions which Mrs. Gail James and I had addressed, and that presently we were working on an agenda for a follow-up meeting that will take place sometime this summer. The question of professional conduct and qualifications of social workers in the province is one of a number of questions. I am not considering any changes or lowering of educational standards at this time. My hon. colleague the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower may wish to supplement that answer.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question then. May I direct it to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower and ask that hon. gentleman whether any discussions have taken place with the officials of Grant MacEwan college concerning the accreditation course, presently two years duration, for child care workers in the province and whether any suggestion has been made that that be reduced to one year?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, no suggestions of that nature have been made by me. I will have to take the question as notice, as to whether any discussions have taken place between the board of governors of the institution and my department.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, may I supplement that. I clearly understood the question by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview to relate to the accreditation of social workers, a degree program. I was not aware of any discussions that may be taking place in one of the community colleges in the province.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, so there is no misunderstanding, my question to either hon. gentlemen relates to the course presently at Grant MacEwan college which, I understand, is a two-year course leading to accreditation as a child care worker in the province, and whether there has been any discussion by either department. The Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower indicates he has made no direct representation. Has any representation been made by anyone in the Department of Social Services and Community Health with respect to changing that course?

MR. BOGLE: Certainly not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister, in light of the minister's answers. Has the minister given any consideration to having discussions with the Attorney General with regard to reviewing the procedures used with regard to cases such as the one we have been discussing here today.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, that's the entire purpose of the Cavanagh Board of Review. There are nine terms of reference which the government has given Justice Ca-

vanagh and the other members of the board of review. Very clearly they are to allow the maximum latitude in looking at child care practices, policies, and procedures in the province of Alberta. In fact, the ninth point clearly is intended to cover "such other matters that the commissioners consider relevant ...". So there's very broad latitude in that search for information, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have one further supplementary question. It flows from the first answer I believe the hon. minister gave, with respect to the efforts of the worker in this case to contact the mother. If I understood the minister correctly, he indicated that the worker in fact was in Calgary and had some difficulty contacting the mother in Edmonton. My question, Mr. Speaker, relates to the procedures within the department. Is it not the standard procedure of the department to transfer cases from one area of jurisdiction to another, so that in fact the social worker responsible would be close enough physically to be able to handle the case?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the mother and daughter were in Edmonton temporarily. They had not moved and made Edmonton their permanent address. In those cases, no, it would not be standard procedure to transfer responsibility. As I've indicated, efforts were made through the city of Edmonton police department to contact the mother. A letter was sent to the address in Calgary. When the mother returned, she responded to it; contact was re-established.

#### Asbestos Fibre

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Labour. It's a follow-up to questions posed yesterday with respect to asbestos fibre. Is the government prepared to make the tests which the minister alluded to yesterday and which assured the minister that there was in fact very little cause for public concern — is the minister prepared to make the tests and the procedures for the tests public, in view of the concern of some people with respect to the methodology used in determining whether there was a serious level of asbestos fibre in the air?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I'd certainly consider that. Inasmuch as no such concern has been brought to my attention, I would invite the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview to invite those who have expressed a concern to him about the nature of the tests to communicate with me in order that, if they have the time, they may be shown exactly how the tests are conducted.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. The minister indicated yesterday that he was well briefed. While this is a rather detailed question, the concern has been brought to my attention that there's a rather significant difference in the types of microscopes — optical versus electron microscopes — and that the optical microscope is seriously inadequate in judging low levels of asbestos fibre.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. member would get off the scientific dissertation and on to the question, that would please the Chair a great deal.

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be very happy to please the Chair. The direct question is: is

the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether the type of procedure involved an optical microscope or an electron microscope?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I have not been into the lab to check to determine whether it is either, a combination of both, or whether both are used concurrently or in tandem.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. The minister indicated yesterday that the level was one-twentieth the acceptable level for workers. Is the minister able to advise the Assembly whether the government is referring to the level for asbestosis or the lower level of asbestos fibre that could cause certain types of cancer?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I referred to some tests which were conducted in three schools. Those three schools were schools in which asbestos fibre was used in a spray-on situation. According to all our information, that is the situation which seems to be the most dangerous. It was found in those three schools that the maximum level according to the test was one-twentieth the level which would be permitted under occupational health and safety standards for persons who are continually exposed to asbestos in a working atmosphere. There is no problem, Mr. Speaker, in the schools of Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the yardstick the minister is using as to the level of asbestos fibre related directly to the question of asbestosis, which is the normal yardstick, or is it with respect to other types of cancer that could be caused by a lower level of asbestos fibre in the air?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I regret very much what may be construed to be an alarming situation. I regret very much any discussion of same, as there is no problem. I've already indicated that the tests were shown to be one-twentieth the allowable level for people exposed on a continuous basis in a working relationship with this material. Now I assume that when those standards are set, they cover all potential forms of problem which can be caused by asbestos. We are talking about persons who have a very intermittent exposure, if any, in situations where the facts show that the exposure is well below anything permitted on a continuing basis. Mr. Speaker, on that basis I say again that there is absolutely no cause for concern or alarm at the present time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister specifically with respect to the issue of whether we're looking at a yardstick that has traditionally been associated with asbestosis as opposed to the problem of certain types of cancer where a very much lower level can in fact be dangerous. What yardstick is the minister referring to?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I'm not referring to a yardstick; I'm referring to standards as they are proposed for occupational health regulations. To the best of my knowledge and to the satisfaction of the experts involved, those standards are quite acceptable. I'm unable to grasp the significance of the continued repetition of the questioning beyond the response I've given.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Will it be the intention of the minister to discuss this matter with other responsible ministers in other provinces, particularly in view of initiatives recently taken by the minister's counterpart in Ontario and the review taking place in Manitoba?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that we are talking about the use of building components which may contain asbestos fibre. This is something which is reviewed by a panel of the National Research Council and experts in the area concerned about the general health and safety of the public. It's through that procedure that the National Building Code is developed. This is part of the National Building Code. I understand Alberta is more stringent in the use of components containing asbestos than is the National Building Code.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. It's fine and good that we are now more stringent than the National Building Code, but I'm talking about buildings built before 1975. Will it be the intention of the minister to consult specifically with the responsible ministers in Ontario and Manitoba with respect to their action on this question?

MR. YOUNG: Well, Mr. Speaker, I had hoped we as provincial ministers would have had some opportunity to have had a meeting before this time, under the aegis of the federal minister, most likely. But it seems that some political parties — not the party I represent — decided that was not to be, and precipitated a federal election which effectively removed for the duration any possibility of a federally sponsored meeting of ministers of labour.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. While I admire the minister's effort to side-step the issue, that really does not relate to a federally sponsored conference of all ministers but whether it is the intention of this Conservative government of the province of Alberta to discuss with the Conservative government of the province of Ontario and the Conservative government of the province of Manitoba their concerns and their action over the issue of asbestos fibre.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, when I have the opportunity to meet with my fellow ministers, it is my intention to discuss those issues which are topical and current. This would certainly seem to be one of them. But I would not go so far as to say it should be the Minister of Labour, because I'm not at all sure that in some provinces it is the Minister of Labour who has that particular responsibility.

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

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I address this supplementary to the Minister responsible for Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation. Has the minister had an opportunity to review the pulmonary fibrosis regulations, particularly with respect to the minister's answer yesterday which indicated that medical examinations since 1970 have been discretionary? My understanding of the regulations is that they have been compulsory since 1970.

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member has asked a question referring to an answer I gave yesterday, I am reviewing the details of those regulations. When I

receive the answers, I will be able to respond more fully to him. The understanding I had is that the program has been on a voluntary basis. If that is not accurate, I will report to the House later.

#### **Early Childhood Services**

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Education. It relates to the rather precarious financial predicament of community-sponsored early childhood services programs in Alberta, particularly in light of a recent decision by the Calgary Public School Board to charge ECS programs a rental of \$180 per month for classroom use as of September 1 where previously there had been no charge or a charge of \$1 per month, and a similar decision by the Department of Education with respect to the use of mobiles. In light of those decisions, can the minister advise the Assembly what steps he intends to take to ensure the continued financial viability of our community-sponsored ECS programs?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by saying that as a matter of policy the government supports community endeavors in the field of early childhood services. In terms of our program, we would attempt always to ensure that we enable community operators to provide early childhood services programs wherever possible.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we face a problem in that some community operators in some locations enjoy more support from a greater variety of other community agencies than in others. They can use funds which they receive from the provincial government toward program rather than toward maintenance, administration, and accommodation. What has developed over a number of years is that some community operators with the funding available to them from the provincial government have established fairly large surpluses, which they carry as reserves in their annual budget declaration to us.

On the other hand, in some communities — and Calgary would be a good example of this — where complementary resources are not available from other community agencies, that has not been possible for community operators. Admittedly community operators in Calgary are in quite a different situation from community operators in some other locations across the province.

Mr. Speaker, the result of that has been a realization on our part that some changes would have to be made in our program of financial support for ECS to acknowledge the different status community operators have in different municipalities. I have said to the community operators in Calgary — and am pleased to be able to repeat in the House this afternoon — that I expect to be able to make announcements regarding their financial situation which will be apart from the budgetary provisions available to members of the House in the estimates. I hope I would be able to make an announcement to that effect before the conclusion of the spring sittings of the House. I know those community operators have to be developing their program now for September 1.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister advise whether that supplementary assistance is going to include a shift from the present basis of a strictly per capita grant to a program which would include a base grant and administrative allowance for those programs that have a smaller student population?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, that's one of the options under active consideration at the moment.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Given the fact that the change from no fee to a \$180 per month charge for classrooms has been made in some schools in Calgary which had previously been scheduled for closure and in fact have empty classrooms, can the minister advise the House when we might expect some new policy directions with respect to the use of community schools?

MR. KING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the throne speech indicated there would be an announcement with respect to community schools during this session of the Legislature. I certainly hope it will be during the spring sittings rather than the fall sittings.

If I could conclude on ECS programs, the point which is very important in this regard is that ECS has never been intended as a strictly educational program. Certainly the government has never thought of it as a strictly educational program. It was always our hope, and in some municipalities it has developed, that a variety of other community agencies and organizations provide support to the ECS program to complement the educational component.

I might say that I regret that an organization as large as the Calgary board of education, with a surplus of the order of \$180 million, is going to commence this September charging ECS programs \$180 per month on a selected basis for classroom space in some of the schools described by the hon. member as under-utilized or potential candidates for closure.

#### **Drivers' Records**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Solicitor General. Can the Solicitor General indicate what co-ordination there is between the four western provinces as to driving records as they apply to driving licences? Can the minister indicate what dissemination of information there is, say, for a driver from British Columbia as he's presently driving in Alberta and across the four provinces?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that question as notice and respond on another occasion.

#### **Public Service Hiring Practices**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration. The question deals with personnel administration in the motor vehicles branch, and an unusually large number of senior employees in the motor vehicles branch who were formerly employees of the Alberta health care commission. Has the minister done a review of the personnel hiring practices in the motor vehicles branch?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I believe I should clarify for members of the Assembly that all the promotions, all appointments to the civil service are carried out under The Public Service Act, which requires basically that the most suitable candidate be selected. I believe we've had over 7,000 competitions in the last two years. I understand we're looking at four positions outside this House where some complaint has allegedly been made. Working with the departments, I'm satisfied that our personnel administration office has a monitoring process. The com-

petitions carried out, whether for positions within the bargaining unit or for management positions — there are steps people can take that are available to them if they are dissatisfied with the fact that they haven't been selected. But in those cases the Leader of the Opposition is referring to, I'm satisfied the most suitable candidates have been selected.

MR. R. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Education on a point of privilege.

**Early Childhood Services**  
(continued)

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, it's been drawn to my attention by a number of my colleagues that I just credited the Calgary board of education with a surplus of \$180 million. Their annual operating budget is approximately \$180 million. Their surplus is of the order of \$5 million. They're a wealthy board, but not quite as wealthy as I suggested.

**Public Service Hiring Practices**  
(continued)

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has the minister personally checked the hiring practices in the motor vehicles branch?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, there is no way I would be able to personally check appointments. I've just mentioned the number. It wouldn't be my responsibility to do that in this department or any department.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In light of the matter raised and the large number of people who have moved over to the motor vehicles branch from the health care commission in the course of, I think, some three and a half years, will the minister give an assurance to the House that the minister, or certainly the minister's office, will investigate the practices in senior management places in that branch? All I'm asking the minister is whether he will or he won't. [interjections] Touchy.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I'm certainly not touchy about this. I've indicated in my previous answer that I'm satisfied our processes are being followed by the departments and/or the personnel administration office in the selection and promotion of our government employees. I'm satisfied, too, that if there are problems they would be identified through the normal process, or to the Public Service Commissioner or me. I'm not aware, nor is he — perhaps the Solicitor General may wish to supplement my answer, but I have not had any allegations brought to my attention, nor has the Public Service Commissioner, which is where they would normally be brought in that case.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to either the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration or the minister responsible for the motor vehicles branch. Is either hon. minister in a position to indicate whether there has been a high rate of personnel turnover in that particular branch during the last two years?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General may wish to speak specifically about his department, but turnover varies from month to month, from season to season, and by department. I'm satisfied that our total turnover is about the turnover level we would expect in a growing province such as Alberta. I'm not aware of any particular areas of concern in that division.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister responsible for the motor vehicles branch. Is the minister in a position to indicate to the Assembly what the rate of turnover has been in the motor vehicles branch during the last two years?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, the figures I have indicate that from April 1, 1978, to March 31, 1979, there was a turnover of 25 per cent. A comparable figure over the total public service, I understand, is 23 per cent. In the period April 1, 1979, to March 31, 1980, the turnover was 30 per cent. I don't have the figure for the total government service.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration. From the minister's answers, we take it that a 30 per cent turnover in a branch as large as the motor vehicles branch isn't an area of concern to the minister?

MR. STEVENS: [Inaudible] the figure 30 per cent mentioned. I understood the Solicitor General indicated a 25 per cent average turnover, and 23 per cent in that particular division. So that wasn't 30 per cent. He can correct me.

But what I would like to say is this: when you talk about turnover, that also includes promotions. There are positions where, one by one, people may cross departments; they may leave that department for another department; they may come into that department. That also includes retirements. It also includes the normal growth and choice of people who may wish to move into the private sector, or other levels of public service.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, if I may, to the hon. Solicitor General. Has the Solicitor General had an opportunity to review the management promotion and staffing pattern in the branch in view of the information that has been brought to public attention concerning seven of the top 11 officials coming indirectly or directly from the Alberta health corporation?

MR. HARLE: I have had the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Deputy Solicitor General. I am assured by him that the proper personnel practices have been followed for the particular Senior Officer I position that was eventually filled in September 1979. I believe there were 49 applications for four equivalent positions. Of those, 16 were selected for interviews. The interviewing panel consisted of three individuals. The deputy contacted the personnel member of the interviewing panel and has been assured that proper procedures were followed and that those selected were people who most properly filled the positions applied for.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether those public servants who were in positions of responsibility in the department have been forced to leave, shifted to other departments, or forced to

take a pay cut? Where do things stand with respect to these valued public servants?

MR. SPEAKER: I'd have some concern about whether a question like that ought not to appear on the Order Paper. It would seem to require a very considerable amount of detail.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister responsible for Personnel Administration. I wonder if the minister could advise the House if it is the present policy of this government that when through reorganization in a given department of government people are inevitably let go, priority is given to those people to bid on other employment areas in the provincial government service.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to answer that question. Generally within our discussions with our Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, we are obligated to advise the employees of those kinds of situations through the normal processes. We do seek to find placements within the service for persons in that position.

MR. GOGO: One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In effect then, Mr. Minister, to a degree there's job security. Is that correct?

#### ADC Loans

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Has there been an increase in the number of applications for farm loans as a result of the changes in the Alberta development corporation programs?

MR. SCHMIDT: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the corporation taken any steps to ensure that these applications will be processed in a reasonable period of time?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, there were a fair number of applications, of course, awaiting the announcement of some changes, especially in the beginning farmer portion. Recognizing that the 1980 farm year is about to start, many applications would normally be available at this time. So yes, making every possible effort to handle them on a first come, first served basis.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the corporation taken any steps to increase the asset limit for farmers to qualify under the direct loan program?

MR. SCHMIDT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The assets under the old policies of direct lending have been increased to make them realistic.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate what the asset limit is in that particular program? The other program I was concerned with is for those farmers who qualify for a loan under the direct farm package, the 12 per cent loans. Is there a loan limit and an asset limit on those particular loans?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, not a limit as prescribed and laid down; certainly a degree of flexibility that would fall within the gamut of those making application being a course of last resort, recognizing of course the application itself and the amounts the individual would be asking for.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister indicate whether any short-term plans are being made at the present time with regard to supplementing the staff of the Agricultural Development Corporation across the province to meet this immediate need, such as using some of the district agriculturists or even home economists to process the applications in a faster method, and possibly also looking at an expansion of the board in Camrose to make judgment on the applications that are before them?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, recognizing the interest that's certainly been taken and expecting it as well, of course those areas of manpower that were deficient through ADC — certainly recruiting and an increase in the basic numbers, which are just showing up now because of the applications throughout the province. If it becomes necessary, an opportunity to sit down and review the areas and the availability of people such as the district agriculturists certainly could help in the processing of applications.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. A number of agreements signed between the seller and buyer expire as of May 15. Has the minister some type of emergency or contingency plan? When will he be able to make the judgment that more staff is required to meet that requirement?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, as of yesterday morning in a meeting that we had, there were no indications of any particular area of those who would meet that requirement that would be left because of the time element involved. Certainly, some areas a lot of interest in the submission will be followed with applications but, at the present time, none that I am aware of would lose that opportunity because of the time factor.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I apologize for interrupting the hon. member, but I believe the hon. Member for Macleod wished to ask a supplementary in regard to the previous line of questions.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture to clarify the upper age limit on the beginning farm program.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, we haven't placed an age limit on beginning farmers, recognizing that there are many over, say, the 24 bracket who are now changing their views as to what their future vocation would be. We've left it open and flexible.

#### Drivers' Records (continued)

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a further question of the hon. Solicitor General. He may have the information; if not, he can take it as notice. Can the hon.

Solicitor General indicate if drivers' licences in Alberta are computerized? Are records of violations on a computer system?

MR. HARLE: That is my understanding, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Solicitor General. Has the case been brought to the minister's attention of the young man who was incarcerated in Saskatchewan because incorrect information came back from the motor vehicles branch indicating he was suspended when, in essence, he was not?

MR. HARLE: No, Mr. Speaker. If the hon. member has some information and a name that I could follow up, I would be only too pleased to receive it.

#### **Water Quality — Peace River**

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Environment. It concerns complaints about poor water quality in the town of Peace River. Has the department had an opportunity to investigate these complaints, and is the minister able to report to the Assembly whether any assessment has been made as to the reason?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, my officials have been reviewing the situation in the general area. The source, of course, is the Procter & Gamble pulp plant on the Wapiti River, I think some 200 miles from Peace River. We haven't been able to pin down precisely what the problem is within the operation itself. One of the major contributing factors is the low flow of water, which is causing a disagreeable odor and color to find its way to Peace River. Through some very forceful presentations from the hon. minister Al Adair, I've continued to pursue the problem and, hopefully, we can resolve it.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In the minister's fast pursuit of the problem, which has been in existence now for about five months, is the minister in a position to give the Assembly some time line as to when he may catch the problem?

MR. COOKSON: No, I can't give that at this time, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Spring run-off.

#### **Child Care (continued)**

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, could I provide an answer to a question asked earlier in the question period with respect to courses at Grant MacEwan college? It's very brief.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HORSMAN: The answer to the question raised by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview is no. Both Grant MacEwan and Grande Prairie colleges have two-year diploma courses in early childhood workers. Neither has asked for a change. Both Mount Royal and Red Deer colleges have a one-year course, and their boards have asked that their one-year early childhood worker programs be extended to two years. Presently that request is

under review by the department, and no decision has been made.

#### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the questions and motions, I would move that motions for returns 102 and 111 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

#### **head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

104. Mr. Notley asked the government the following question:

- (1) What was the original purchase price, per acre, paid by the Alberta Housing Corporation for the land involved in what is known as the Smoky Lake Subdivision;
- (2) what was the price of finished lots in Stage 1 of the Smoky Lake Subdivision, and what different cost elements made up the selling price;
- (3) what is the price of finished lots in Stage 2 of the Smoky Lake Subdivision, and what are the different cost elements responsible for the selling price;
- (4) what is the reason for the recent escalation in lot prices in Stage 2, resulting in an addition of approximately \$2,100 per lot to the selling price?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, we accept Question 104. I'd like to table the response to the question.

CLERK: Question No. 105, Mr. Notley.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg your pardon. I would ask that that question stand and retain its place on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

106. Mr. Notley asked the government the following question:

- (1) What was the total expenditure by the province of Alberta for advertising in 1979;
- (2) what was the total expenditure by the province of Alberta for advertising in weekly newspapers in 1979;
- (3) what was the total expenditure by the province of Alberta for advertising in daily newspapers in 1979;
- (4) what was the total expenditure by the province of Alberta for advertising on radio in 1979;
- (5) what was the total expenditure by the province of Alberta for advertising on television in 1979;
- (6) what was the total expenditure by the province of Alberta for advertising in magazines in 1979;
- (7) how much of the advertising expenditure by the province of Alberta in 1979 was spent in the province;
- (8) how much of the advertising expenditure by the province of Alberta in 1979 was spent in the rest of Canada?

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, having had an opportunity to discuss this briefly with the responsible minister, I would like to make one change, with unanimous leave of the House. It presently reads "1979", which is inconsistent with the budgetary year of the government of Alberta. So



I would like to obtain leave of the Assembly to amend the request for information from "1979" to "April 1, 1978, to March 31, 1979".

MR. SPEAKER: I'm not sure that there is a recognized mechanism for amending questions, as there is for amending motions. But if the Assembly unanimously agrees, there's no reason why it can't be done.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: So ordered.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, we would accept the question as amended.

#### head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

107. Dr. Buck moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) the total weight of sulphur being released daily into the atmosphere from each of the oil sands plants in Alberta;
- (2) the total weight of sulphur being released daily into the atmosphere from all industrial sources in the province.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to accept Motion 107.

[Motion carried]

108. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing all studies, reports, and written information received by the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care concerning the existing and projected utilization patterns of the Berwyn hospital district.

[Motion carried]

109. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing all submissions to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care from municipalities, public interest groups, and interested individuals concerning the relocation of the Berwyn hospital from Berwyn to Grimshaw.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I just have two comments on the motion. I'd like to amend it by adding at the end "subject to the concurrence of the correspondents", because I think there are some letters from individuals, and we'd have to get their concurrence.

The other thing is a question to the proposer of the motion. Perhaps when he closes debate on this, he could give some indication of time. The way it reads, we could go back 50 or 60 years. I don't assume that was the intent of the motion. Perhaps he could indicate some reasonable time period.

MR. SPEAKER: We first have to deal with an amendment moved by the hon. minister.

[Motion on amendment carried]

MR. SPEAKER: Now we have the motion as amended. If the Assembly agrees, the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview may conclude the debate.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in concluding the debate very briefly, the time frame that I would be requesting would be from 1975 to the present.

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly to regularize this, we should deem that to be a motion for a further amendment. Would the Assembly agree to the motion being amended in that way?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion as amended carried]

110. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing all studies, reports, and written information received by the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care regarding population projections in the Berwyn hospital district.

[Motion carried]

#### head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

214. Moved by Dr. Buck:

Be it resolved that this Assembly deplores the invocation of the force majeure clause applying to the pricing agreements between the federal government and the oil sands companies without sufficient cause, and that this Assembly expresses its determination that Alberta receive a fair price for its natural resources.

DR. BUCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In rising to lead off the debate on this motion, I would like to say that it's unfortunate the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources isn't here. The puppet show has tried to arrange here that the hon. member from this side of the House was to ask a question of the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources so he could get up and make a speech. But the man who proposed the question didn't do a very good job of asking the question, so it didn't give the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources an opportunity to make a speech. In light of that fact, I think it's only right that we give the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources an opportunity to make a speech this afternoon. [interjections]

Mr. Speaker, I think first of all we must provide a little bit of background information to the hon. members as to what has been going on, because problems have arisen just recently. And I'm sure the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources will want to bring us up to date on what has happened just recently. But the expression "force majeure" means: in the law of insurance, superior or irresistible force; such clause is common in construction contracts to protect the parties in the event that a part of the contract cannot be performed due to causes which are outside the control of the parties and could not be avoided by exercise of due care.

Now what does that mean as it applies to the oil pricing situation? Mr. Speaker, the force majeure, or superior force, is an unpredictable or uncontrollable event which prevents a party to a contract from meeting contract commitments. I would like to indicate to the members of the Assembly what the commitment was by the former and now Liberal government when they were the government in 1975. I would just indicate to the hon. members one short section of the letter that was given to

the chairman of the board of Imperial Oil Limited, Mr. Armstrong, and signed by the then Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to indicate what we're talking about when we talk about the force majeure being put into effect.

I think it's French, hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Anybody who is Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs should blush when he asks if "force majeure" is a French expression. [interjections] I would be very, very embarrassed, as the hon. minister is because he's blushing appropriately, to find out if it's a French expression or not.

But in the commitment that was made to this province by the former government, now the present government, and by a former minister, Mr. Speaker — I will read just one section. When we're talking about oil pricing:

It will therefore be the federal government's policy to provide for the application to the production from this particular plant the higher from time to time of either [i] international prices or [ii] the prices for Canadian crude oil adjusted for quality and transportation back to the plant gate. The international price for the purposes of the policy referred to in the immediately preceding sentence would be based upon the average cost of imports from foreign sources laid down in Montreal, or in a location in Ontario where Canadian and foreign crude oils compete, with appropriate adjustments for quality and transportation cost back to the plant gate. The Ontario basing point would only be used if substantial quantities of foreign crude imports were required in the Ontario refining area.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important portion of the section:

It would be understood that under circumstances of emergency international disturbance resulting in extreme escalation of prices to a level not required for normal profitability of the project, the government might be compelled in the national interest to invoke the conditions of "force majeure".

Signed, the Hon. Donald S. Macdonald, at that time the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Mr. Speaker, what has happened? Very recently the federal government indicated that that force majeure section will take effect. All Albertans, all members of this Assembly, should be very, very concerned about what that will mean for Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, in 1976 when the pricing agreement was made between the oil sands companies and the federal government, when it was negotiated the hon. Mr. Donald Macdonald, the minister at that time, indicated, as I mentioned, that "under circumstances of emergency international disturbance" would be the only time that force majeure section would be implemented. I would say to the hon. members of this Assembly that the invocation of the clause is clearly a misuse of emergency powers so that the federal government can weaken the position of the rightful owner of the resource, the province of Alberta. I want the issue and the point to be very, very clear: as members of this Assembly and members of the caucus of the official opposition, we have always supported the stand that the resources belong to the people of this province. Let there be no equivocation or misunderstanding that that is our official position.

Mr. Speaker, I know it's fine for the government to play little games. In politics, I guess we do play our games. Before elections it's a good play on the part of the

government to say: only we, the Tories, are looking after the interests of all Albertans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: That's a good technique; it has worked.

MR. NOTLEY: It gets the votes.

DR. BUCK: And it gets the votes. It gets the job done. You can't argue with that.

But, Mr. Speaker, we want the people of Alberta to know that all members of this Assembly support that stand. It's very, very important. [interjections] I'm sure there are a few right-wing Tories who would like to make a few speeches on their own behalf if the muzzles would come off; so if they wish to do so, they can go ahead. But let us make ours, and the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview can make his. [laughter]

Mr. Speaker, the need for a world oil price for our tar sands is very, very important to Albertans, because extracting oil from the tar sands is very expensive. Last year the average cost of a barrel of oil from the tar sands was approximately \$25. With an increase in cost predicted as inflation takes its toll, the cost will be even higher. Such costs will mean that the Alberta government will be able to recoup very little from the use of its resources at any price less than the world level.

There's an area of concern that I will touch upon a little later, Mr. Speaker. I just can't understand how the people in central Canada can feel it's right to be paying world prices for offshore oil, when they seem to think that oil produced right here in western Canada should be available to them at a much lower cost. I find that very, very hard to understand. I find it very, very hard to understand that the Premier of this province and the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources do not bring this fact up time after time, and very forcefully. Where has the minister been, to make the people of eastern and central Canada understand?

MR. JOHNSTON: Where have you been?

DR. BUCK: Where have I been? Well, the minister who's retired in the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs is certainly not earning his money, Mr. Speaker, because he hasn't been telling the people of eastern Canada that it seems to be all right to ship that money overseas, but it doesn't seem to be so good to ship it to western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the province cannot be expected to sell our resources below world price. We are going to have to have world price if we are going to develop our resources. The oil sands are and will be in the future one of the major employers in this province, if these plants do go ahead. Uncertainty leads to an inability to co-ordinate the necessary manpower, the infrastructure, the financing, and the government capital expenditures required for these megaprojects. The invocation of the force majeure clause only adds to that uncertainty in the development and increases the problems, both social and economic, which are to be found as a result of the oil sands development. This is the third year in a row that the government of Alberta has been forced to undertake huge capital expenditures to keep the construction industry at an acceptable level, and keep the much-skilled people in the province for the next oil sands plant. That's why we feel the government's been very derelict in its

responsibility to come up with some kind of reasonable system of keeping these skilled people moving from one project to the next.

In the past two years we have seen increases of 31 and 41 per cent in the capital budget of the province of Alberta. These increases are the direct result of the slack which has been created in the Alberta economy as a result of the plant-by-plant oil sands strategy of this government, and are further complicated by the unwarranted — and I do say unwarranted — invocation of the force majeure clause by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, we hear talk about energy self-sufficiency. If Canada wishes to remove its dependence on foreign and, possibly, unreliable sources for its single most important resource, energy, then it must encourage the development of the non-conventional reserves which are to be found in this country, especially in this province. Unless the developer of these reserves and the owner of the resources are given a fair return on their investment, the much-needed energy will not be forthcoming.

As a native-born Albertan, I dread the day when the power brokers in the east wake up to the fact that there is a genuine energy shortage in this country. Then in their wisdom they will say to Alberta, we need a tar sands plant every three years. Mr. Speaker and members of this Assembly, I do not welcome that kind of chaos. It will be nothing but utter chaos, because those plants cannot come on stream every three years. When the people in eastern Canada wake up to the realities of life, not only the labor chaos, the business chaos, but the social chaos — and we have already seen a start of that social chaos in our province as people come into the province. But if they come in because we require a plant every three years, it will be absolutely uncontrolled chaos.

On the problem or approach of conservation, it seems that unless the price rises to an effective level we don't seem to be able to practise conservation. We had a commitment by the former Prime Minister of Canada that there would be a commitment to conservation in our country. But from the statistics I've seen, Mr. Speaker, we as Canadians and Albertans do not seem to be taking the issue of conservation very seriously, because as our resources are depleting in volume, our consumption is going up. And as I'm sure the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs is well versed, as our conventional oils go down and as our tar sands oils go up, there is still a large, major shortfall as we try to reach self-sufficiency.

So, Mr. Speaker, the question we have before us this afternoon is a very, very serious one. This government seems to feel that because we had a commitment from the previous government, they don't seem to be making too much progress in their negotiations with Ottawa at this time. The invocation of the force majeure clause by the people in Ottawa really raises a red flag to Albertans, saying: we think we have a bigger cannon than you have in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, maybe we've brought some of this upon ourselves in the provincial government's negotiations, and its method of negotiating.

MR. NOTLEY: Chickens coming home to roost.

DR. BUCK: I would hate to think that the Premier, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, and the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs come back from the oil price negotiations and don't receive at least what Prime Minister Clark promised us we would re-

ceive. Then I would say the Executive Council of this province has not done the job for the people of this province.

So, Mr. Speaker, maybe the clause that has been brought down by the federal minister responsible for energy development is really an attempt to coerce us in Alberta and say to us, we have this power. And maybe it's time that Alberta just got off its ego trip and cultivated the support of the other provinces: British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the other provinces that may be threatened that their resources will be taken away. Mr. Speaker, that is statesmanship. Maybe we do need our friends so that we go down to Ottawa with a united front. The other provinces — the maritimes, Newfoundland, and Quebec — are also threatened, because if this clause can be injected into these negotiations, it can also be injected when they're negotiating with other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the participation of the members of this Assembly in this very grave matter, and most importantly, I welcome the support of the government members.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: I welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. As I look at the resolution, I certainly agree that the force majeure clause was unilaterally and arbitrarily enacted by the federal government. I'm not sure whether my Didsbury and Fairview French is any better than the French of the hon. Member for Clover Bar. Nevertheless, the issue is a very important one. I don't believe that it was a totally one-sided situation over the last number of months. I believe this government has made some very serious errors in its negotiation of future energy prices in Canada. But in my judgment, that does not in any way justify the action of the federal minister a few days ago in unilaterally indicating that the federal government was going to impose this particular provision of the 1975 and 1976 agreements.

Mr. Speaker, this is particularly unfortunate, coming as it does from Mr. Lalonde. I think many people hoped, when he assumed the office of federal Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, that he would bring to that particular duty a degree of statesmanship which is obviously going to be required if Canada is to reach a new energy pricing package. But unfortunately, there is clearly no question that the minister's announcement the other day was pure and simple provocation. What is even more regrettable is that while that kind of action is not directly associated with the equally unilateral decision of the Minister of Transport to renege on the previous government's position with respect to the infrastructure costs at Prince Rupert, the two taken in total can only lead to increased bitterness among people in western Canada at this time. I find that very difficult to understand, because I know the present leaders of the federal government are concerned about preserving Canadian national unity, and to react in two very significant ways that strike at the heart of western Canadian development — one in the grain industry and the other in the question of the force majeure clause — in my view is really playing with fire.

Mr. Speaker, as I said the other day at a news conference, I think that during the next few weeks it's going to be important for both sides in this issue, the provinces — and that includes not just the province of Alberta but the other energy-producing provinces, Saskatchewan and British Columbia — and the federal government, to play

their cards in a pretty skilful and, I might say, as diplomatic a way as possible. Because frankly, Mr. Speaker, with the referendum taking place in Quebec, nothing could be more dangerous to the federal cause than to have a renewed energy war, with a shouting match between Edmonton and Ottawa. We have Mr. Ryan, who is a very, very able man, developing a logical and impressive — I don't agree with all of it — but certainly a very logical and impressive constitutional treatise which is going to be presented to the people of Quebec during the referendum period.

But I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the average person, whether that person lives in Quebec or Alberta, is less interested in constitutional theories than in action, or in their perception of what the ongoing actions of government, both federal and provincial, may be. I say this as sincerely as I can, Mr. Minister and members of the government: during this critical period, during the next few months that the people of Quebec are going to be called upon to render perhaps the most important verdict in the history of Canada, now is not the time to have a repetition of 1973. That's why I can support a very deep sense of concern over the federal government's unilateral decision to invoke this particular clause.

Certainly, whether or not the oil sands pricing should be at the world level could well be part of a package dealing with a future energy price, and I'm going to come to that in a moment. But there is a difference between making that part of the negotiations with the province on one hand, and the federal Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources calling a news conference in Ottawa and saying, this is the way it's going to be. It's my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that not only do we have here a case with respect to this force majeure where the federal government has acted in a rather arbitrary way, but one could even question the legal grounds on which the federal leadership has acted. As I read over that particular clause, it seems to me that it could well be challenged in court. That again seems to me to be an unnecessary form of provocation at a rather crucial time.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, the fact must also be made clear that over the last few months Alberta has not been, in my judgment, to put it mildly, overly constructive through public statements. We've had the speech made by the Premier in Vancouver. While government members certainly won't admit it in this House, there's little doubt privately that that kind of speech contributed to the backlash in Ontario which, probably as much as anything else, resulted in the re-election of Pierre Trudeau on February 18. Statements suggesting that we will move beyond the normal provincial control of resources, which everyone in this House accepts, to the question of influencing and going beyond influencing interprovincial trade, which is essentially a matter of federal jurisdiction, are provocation too. Mr. Speaker, I say as sincerely as I can: for the next couple of months let's play it cool, both the federal side and the provincial side.

Now, if I may look at the question of a fair price for both oil sands and conventional crude. It seems to me that there may be some real danger in losing the forest for the trees on this question of oil sands pricing. Oil sands pricing is crucially important; no doubt about that. But from the standpoint of the province of Alberta, our present depleting supplies of light and medium crude are a matter of considerably more importance. As members know, at the present time our price is approximately 40 per cent of the so-called world price. It's my understanding that recently the Canadian energy research study has

indicated that an increase of approximately \$8 a barrel would increase the supply of conventional crude oil in Canada by one-third.

So there is little doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the price of oil must rise. But should that rise be to the present world level? Is that a reasonable increase? It is very hard to keep track of the world level because with the power grab of a combination of the Arab OPEC states plus the uncertain international situation, one finds it difficult even to keep abreast of a rapidly escalating world oil price.

What then is a fair price? It seems to me that a fair price is certainly going to have to increase the level from the present \$14.75 a barrel to at least the amount necessary to bring on additional conventional supplies of crude oil. But beyond that replacement price, I just reassert in this House what I've said outside. While the minister doesn't agree and the Premier doesn't agree with me — and we had a little bit of a fracas on this last spring — I don't think, Mr. Minister and members of the government, that we can divorce the question of transportation from energy pricing. I believe that the two are inextricably linked.

The hon. Member for Clover Bar talks about the need to develop a consensus among producing provinces. Members will recall that during the national economic conference, in the latter part of November 1979, the Premier of Saskatchewan made a very dramatic case for a trade-off: if we're not going to get the world price for Saskatchewan and Alberta oil, then on that difference we should be looking at a trade-off on transportation matters and tariff barriers as well — that kind of give-and-take. Now the minister in Alberta says no, and the Premier says no, we're not prepared to consider that; we want to have the best deal we can on oil and we want to have the best deal we can on transportation. That's a fair rhetorical statement to make, Mr. Speaker, except that in a federation there has to be give-and-take. The Premier of Saskatchewan has very properly put on the bargaining table the possibility of some mutual shielding. I raise that because it seems to me that when you look at the impact of rising energy prices, the more isolated parts of the country are going to bear a disproportionate burden of higher energy costs.

You know it's one thing for the people in Europe today — I'm sure hon. members will quickly rise and say, look, in Europe they are paying the world price. That's true. But you know, Europe has a much greater population in a relatively small geographical area. They don't have to contend with the problem of a country that's almost 4,000 miles from one end to the other, with a very sparse population. In the long run, increasing the price of energy to the world level without some kind of accompanying trade-off on transportation, Mr. Speaker, is going to cause very serious problems for the development of our renewable resource-based economy in this province. I know that the government members don't like to hear that. It may not be very popular in this Assembly, or even at an assembly of Tories which, I gather, is going to take place in a day or two, as they greet and meet one another over the weekend. But a growing number of people in this part of Canada recognize that there surely has to be some kind of trade-off.

The irony, Mr. Speaker, is that if one looks at what is taking place in Europe today, even with a much greater population and a smaller distance to transport goods and much greater access to water, which is a much cheaper form of transportation, they heavily subsidize their transportation systems. The rail system in Germany and

Sweden is massively subsidized, so that they can move goods efficiently and quickly throughout those countries. I'm saying that when we look at a question of a fair price for oil, we must recognize that fundamental to that question is a very close examination of trade-offs in other areas, most particularly with respect to transportation costs.

Well then, Mr. Speaker, let's look at the question of oil sands pricing itself. I would suggest to the members of the House that oil sands pricing should be part of a negotiated, overall deal on energy pricing. It may well be that there's an argument for a slightly higher price for oil sands. As I said before, I don't think that Mr. Lalonde should be making unilateral statements. But it does seem to me that whether or not we continue with the world price for petroleum produced from the oil sands is a reasonable thing to be placed on the bargaining table by both sides.

I think it also has to be said, and in this I agree totally with the hon. Member for Clover Bar, that the province of Alberta must receive a reasonable return from the development of oil sands. There is no doubt that infrastructure costs we've had to bear — 15 years ago with respect to the Sun Oil project, more recently as far as Syncrude is concerned, in the future with the Cold Lake plant and the Alsands plant, and perhaps, who knows, several years down the road a major venture in Peace River — that these are projects which require enormous investments of provincial public funds. So it is right and proper that we should be insisting that we make a reasonable return. But again, what should that reasonable return be? And what is a realistic price?

Mr. Speaker, I look back on the information tabled in this Legislature in 1975. At that time, the then Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and the Premier tabled the Foster report. The Foster report predicted, interestingly enough, that by 1981 the price of oil would reach \$13.70 a barrel. On the basis of that \$13.70 price, they suggested that the Syncrude venture would be profitable — this was after the huge increase in the cost of Syncrude, which most members are aware of — and that Alberta's share would be \$74 million. Interestingly enough when one looks at this table, which was presented to the Legislature, we don't get to the present world price until the year 2003. That's when the Foster report suggested we would be reaching the now world price.

Mr. Speaker, those who are developing the oil sands quite obviously make the point that they would like the world price. Why not? If the year 2003 can come in 1980, that certainly improves not only the viability but the profit margin of any venture of this size. But whether or not we should take information, which is totally different from the consulting report on which the government of Alberta presumably made its estimate and made the basic decision in 1975 to invest very heavily in the Syncrude plant — suddenly we are to assume that everything has changed — without asking questions as to why it's changed and without finding out why it's changed: I find that a little difficult.

Now, the minister can well say, we're convinced that prices have risen, costs have gone up. No question about that, Mr. Speaker. But I would say to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources in this province that it might well be a wise route for the government of Alberta to appoint its own inquiry. I know that the suggestion made by Mr. Kennedy a few months ago was rejected out of hand by the government. But I say to members of the Assembly that it would be prudent and in our interest to

commission this type of inquiry so that we can put the facts on the table, as much as we can obtain them, as to what the cost of production is in the present Syncrude operation. I say that because if we don't move, Mr. Lalonde will. He's indicated very clearly that he's bringing in legislation which will set up a monitoring agency which will be doing that for us in the case of the oil sands if we don't take the initiatives ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, it's rather interesting to look at the change in policy over the last few months when Mr. Kennedy suggested that Syncrude was something of a lemon. We were told by Mr. Barr, the PR man for Syncrude, that the company could make a profit at between \$15 and \$20 a barrel. Now we're told by the chairman of Gulf Oil that we must move to the world price. I find it just a little difficult to jump from a situation in September where Syncrude could make money at \$15 to \$20 a barrel, to the point where we now need \$35 a barrel. It may well be, but I have not seen any evidence. The only evidence I have seen in this House, including government reports, would indicate that that kind of price is not necessarily required.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a couple of other points in addressing this question. We can talk all we like about the need to develop Canadian energy self-sufficiency. Again, I agree with the Member for Clover Bar that unless we proceed now on a reasonable, planned basis, there is some danger that down the road we're going to have a panic reaction by people in other parts of the country who will force us into much more rapid development than is in anybody's interest. But as we look at the question of future development of the oil sands, I believe it is important that one of our basic policy considerations be a deliberate effort to increase the Canadian ownership and control of these ventures. All the money we've put indirectly into Syncrude: the tax concessions, which are enormous; the infrastructure costs, which we bear in many ways as we look at the departmental estimates in a few days' time, or in the fall when we review the estimates of the heritage savings trust. There are just millions and tens of millions of dollars of infrastructure costs, Canadian money being put into the project without the equivalent equity. The members may say, yes, but we have \$200 million directly. That's true. But beyond that question, what about the up-front money that we as Albertans must place in that project? No consideration on the equity ownership of Syncrude. Or the tax concessions that Imperial Oil is demanding, that the Alsands people insist upon, that we'll have to come up with if Peace River is to proceed? I know tax concessions are a little easier to get by the public.

Nevertheless, tax concessions mean revenue foregone. And at a time when we have a \$12 billion annual deficit in our federal government, revenue foregone is revenue which we can ill afford to lose if we are going to make even some pretext of balancing our budget. If we're going to provide grants, up-front money, infrastructure costs, or even tax concessions, is it that unreasonable that we should not be insisting on some increase in equity?

The other day in Toronto, the Premier of Saskatchewan made this point — and he made the point in the province of Quebec, as he's made it in Regina and elsewhere in the country, even in Alberta — that if we're going to be putting up money indirectly, surely it is only reasonable that we increase the equity to the extent that Canadian dollars are being used either directly or indirectly. One of the initiatives recently undertaken by the government of Saskatchewan with respect to their heavy

oil is the Gulf project where one-third is owned by a multinational corporation, one-third by Saskoil, which is a Crown corporation owned by the people of Saskatchewan, and one-third by Petro-Canada.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that's the kind of model that could well be considered in major projects in Alberta. Yes, there's an opportunity to work with multinational corporations, but let's work with them in an arrangement where, if the chips are down, the Canadian ownership is in a majority position. That should be the kind of model we look at for the future. My understanding through the grapevine on the question of royalties is that we're talking about reduced royalties: 50 per cent of the profits in the case of Syncrude, a little less than that in commercial terms with some of the other projects — 35 per cent is the figure I hear. I'm not sure whether that's right or wrong. But I would say what I think is a very strong feeling: from every public opinion survey I've seen, there is a growing view among Canadians — yes, even in this true blue Tory province, Alberta — a feeling that we must deliberately devise policies that will increase Canadian ownership and control of our energy resources.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude my remarks on this subject today by saying, first of all, that provocative action by either the federal government or the provincial government is ill-timed now, particularly now. Secondly, as we look at a new energy pricing formula, it's my strong belief that we must frankly put on the table the trade-offs on other items that are important to the west and crucially important to our renewable resource industries in western Canada. Finally, in developing future policies there must be a much greater emphasis on acquiring more Canadian ownership of these projects in the future.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak to Motion 214, proposed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar, I can only say to that member and his party, to paraphrase the present Prime Minister of Canada: welcome to the 1980s. I am, of course, pleased at their awakening. I use that term advisedly, and I will explain why in a moment. I am also very pleased to speak in support of this motion, and to comment that I think it's very important that this House have very nearly unanimous support for the sort of position our government has taken and the need to get a fair shake for Alberta. A fair shake for Alberta in these terms, Mr. Speaker, is to have a fair price for our depleting oil and gas revenues.

I think it's fair to say, listening to the remarks of the hon. Member for Clover Bar, that the expression of support for this government is gratifying. He properly identified that we really have a supply problem, particularly with respect to oil. He also identified quite properly the infrastructure problems that we have to face up to and that we bear a cost to. He mentioned the aspect of the conservation element of increased prices for our oil and gas resources. That, of course, is illustrated all over the world. The United Kingdom, with a population three times that of Canada — admittedly we have a colder climate, but we have roughly the same energy or crude oil consumption on a daily basis. The only difference is they've faced the reality of world prices some time ago.

It's also interesting to note that the federal government has cha-cha'd down to Mexico to happily provide something like \$40 billion worth of hard currency to upset a favorable balance of trade that is in the millions, not the billions, rather than dedicate that money to solving a problem here in Alberta. That money is on the order of seven or eight oil sands plants.

I say that the hon. Member for Clover Bar has had a re-awakening. In his comments, he suggested our Premier needed to provide some level of statesmanship. Obviously, he didn't have an opportunity, nor I suppose an interest, to listen to the first ministers' conference held November 11, 1979, in which I think our Premier adequately demonstrated the statesmanship and the willingness to go more than part way for the rest of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair enough to say we as a government agreed to the concept of a force majeure clause within the Syncrude agreement. I too had to consult the dictionary to make sure where I was. Reading the two definitions that I came across, I think we certainly would have to say that our government certainly does not support the unilateral declaration which, in the words of our Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, has brought two very dark clouds over the issues of oil and gas pricing and new oil sands plants. I must say I agree with the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview — in fact, the only thing I can agree with him on, despite his attempt to suggest the voice of sweet reason — that we do need to play it cool, because with the sort of behavior the federal government's bringing into this, if, heaven forbid, a bullet is fired across the Iraqi-Iranian border, we'll probably have one of those twinned Quebec MPs sitting on pump-jacks from High Prairie to Wizard Lake.

Really, in listening to the comments, I must question the strange position of the Member for Spirit River-Fairview. As I understand it, he has completely forsaken Syncrude. Let's ask ourselves: what is Syncrude? What is its ownership? Well, 8 per cent is owned by the Alberta government, the taxpayers of Alberta. A further 10 per cent is owned by Alberta Energy, half of which is owned by those same taxpayers. The other half of Alberta Energy is owned mainly by some 50,000 people who, guess what, are also taxpayers in the province of Alberta. We also have an opportunity — although if the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview gets his way, I doubt we would want to exercise the option — to get another 10 per cent. So we have almost — well, there's a possibility of some 25 per cent ownership by the people of Alberta.

There's also a 50 per cent share of the profits he has so willingly given away to provide this give-and-take atmosphere. I really don't know. This giving away is nice, and I must compliment the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. You know, he has to be the best kind of socialist, and unique. Most socialists I know are inclined to give away something that belongs to somebody else. Here he is, Mr. Speaker, very willingly giving away his share of the Syncrude project, the shares of the constituents of Spirit River-Fairview, and apparently the shares of the constituents of Edmonton Mill Woods. Well, Mr. Speaker, it won't wash. I don't know how it will wash up north, but it won't wash in Mill Woods. [interjection]

The other thing is his concern about Canadian control and equity. Here we have a member of this Assembly who wants to throw out the baby — Syncrude, 20 per cent Alberta-owned — and the 50 per cent royalty share, so that he can start over with 100 per cent or largely Canadian content. That seems to be a bit of a backward step.

I understand from his remarks he would also like to dump the Canadian natural gas industry and all the jobs and secondary economic activity that go with it. That position is apparent, because he would like us not to sell any gas. That means shut down the industry. I don't know how that washes across the province. I don't know just what the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview is

peddling. I know it's spread well across the land in Alberta; it sticks to your boots, but it certainly isn't tar sand. [laughter]

MR. NOTLEY: More intellectual effort.

DR. BUCK: You got hit a couple of times too many, Milt.

MR. PAHL: Don't ring any bells.

MR. NOTLEY: Too bad you've only got three minutes left.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Speaker, I want to make some further remarks, and I see that the time is fast disappearing. I wonder if it would be possible to have the unanimous consent of this House to carry this debate further?

MR. SPEAKER: Is there the requested unanimous consent?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. PAHL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Vote on it today?

MR. NOTLEY: Let's have a vote.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Speaker, I also have some concerns with the very reasoned debate of the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview that says, play it cool, let's have a give and a take. We've had a pretty considerable give-and-take on the question of oil and gas pricing. For the last eight or 10 years, Alberta has very generously given and Ottawa has very co-operatively taken. The prospect of tying our energy package to give-and-take on such things as trade-offs — I think the evidence of the federal government is quite clear on that. They've already shown in terms of transportation that they're all for having the user pay, and they've backed up their position on that by pulling out their money with respect to Prince Rupert. I find this rather a strange perception of the real world.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I also find rather distasteful the suggestion that in standing up for Alberta, our Premier is acting in a rather arbitrary way that doesn't lead to a solution of this problem. I'm very pleased to see that the hon. member of the official opposition of this House is prepared to stand behind the government on this matter. With the concerns I have expressed for certain points of view that have prevailed from certain corners, I would say that it is important that the people of Alberta, and hopefully the people of Canada, receive the message that this Assembly is firm in its resolve that the people of Alberta receive a fair price and a fair break on their natural resources.

On that basis, I would urge the Assembly to support unanimously the motion proposed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Motion 214, proposed by the Member for Clover Bar. As the Member for Clover Bar pointed out, I took an earlier opportunity to attempt to bring this matter to the attention of the House. At that time I was rather surprised that some member of the opposition hadn't seized an early opportunity to do likewise.

Mr. Speaker, this issue — that is, the force majeure clause of the Syncrude and Suncor agreement — stirred more apprehension among Albertans, particularly those in business and the investment field, stirred more interest and more resentment than any issue that has come to my attention for some time. It is of great concern that this apprehension is liable to further impair federal/provincial relations, particularly in the area of petroleum negotiations.

I find the invocation of the clause rather unusual, Mr. Speaker. Looking up the statistics, I find that the maximum output of Syncrude is 140,000 barrels per day. Their present output is 100,000 barrels, which represents about 8 per cent of Canadian consumption. So to use the force majeure clause to retaliate against this particular organization looks like using the sledge hammer to kill the gnat.

I also noticed that the Member for Spirit River-Fairview went over rather quickly the statement of the president of Gulf Canada. By your leave, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read what he had to say:

After 18 months of operation, interrupted by production problems and shut-downs, Syncrude is in a substantial loss position. Based on our experiences to date, there is absolutely no justification to invoke the force majeure at this time.

In other words, at the present price being paid Syncrude, they are not showing a profit, and if an occasion were to arise to invoke the clause, this surely was not that time.

But probably more damaging, Mr. Speaker, is the public's perception of a perceived breach of trust on the part of the federal government. Indeed, as one businessman expressed it to me, his reaction to the announcement of a week ago Friday was almost one of disbelief. Following hard on the heels of the federal reversal of the Prince Rupert terminal agreement, the latest announcement cannot help but cast a pall of doubt on future federal commitments.

I believe the federal Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Marc Lalonde, stated recently that he was quite prepared to go the extra mile. Mr. Speaker, if this is the extra mile, it's quite apparently a mile in reverse, not forward. It's also created a climate of great uncertainty. I cannot help but feel that in addition to any other minuses, the timing of that announcement was most unfortunate, most inappropriate, taking place almost on the eve of the upcoming meeting between our own Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and the federal minister. It could very well nurture a very unhealthy feeling of suspicion and apprehension, not the best environment for negotiations of this magnitude.

Supply, not price, is the real issue, however. I was privileged recently, Mr. Speaker, to attend the Commonwealth parliamentary conference in New Zealand. The principal topic of that conference was worldwide energy. I can assure you, from speaking to these representatives from many, many countries, that Canada has the most reasonable — that is, the cheapest — energy package in the whole world today. Our hydrocarbons are becoming a rapidly depleting resource. I understand that our Canadian objective is self-sufficiency in the 1990s. Indeed, the urgency of self-sufficiency may become rapidly more acute by reason of the present deteriorating political situation in the Middle East. Today Canada imports 40 per cent of its crude oil, a very substantial figure.\* Should these imports be seriously curtailed, we would be in a very difficult position. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, any gov-

\*See page 301, right column, first paragraph

ernment action which would tend to discourage Canadian production must be viewed as counterproductive and self-defeating. Supply, not price, has become the issue.

Countries such as Japan and West Germany, which import all their crude oil, seem to compete effectively in world markets, in spite of paying OPEC or "world prices". How much more fortunate are we, therefore, with an opportunity to become self-sufficient in our time and, at the same time, with the profits of these sales accruing to Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, I personally support Motion 214 and would urge all members to do likewise.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate this afternoon on this very important motion, which is very critical to Albertans. I would like to congratulate the hon. Member for Clover Bar for his support of current government policy which relates to oil sand pricing and to the question of Alberta's receiving fair value for its resources. As a member of the Assembly and of the government, I appreciate that support from the opposition.

To deal specifically with the question of the invocation of the force majeure clause by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Mr. Lalonde, I really believe that was a very regrettable move on his part. In his news release to the people of Canada, he specifically mentioned the reason for invoking force majeure as the question of the escalating price of oil. But he left out, probably obviously, that the force majeure condition, which was stated in the letter by the Hon. Donald S. Macdonald on March 4, 1975, related to the question of an emergency international situation which would result in an escalating price beyond normal profitability. So he neglected even to mention a condition of emergency international disturbance; he forgot to mention the question of a price going beyond normal profitability. I would suggest that both those conditions have not occurred, and I think it's regrettable he felt he had to take this action of invoking force majeure. In my mind, it's obviously an abrogation of the agreement signed in Winnipeg, in the terms and conditions of which the federal government at that time accepted world price or the Canadian price, whichever was higher — I mean the Canadian price in terms of cost of production. So I think it was very regrettable he took that action at that time.

I'd like to deal briefly with the question of receiving fair value for our resources in terms of the remarks of the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. Obviously he's forgotten that this government's mandate, and one of the reasons for going to the people in 1975 and 1979, was on the basis of receiving fair value for our resources and continuing to maintain control and ownership over our natural resources. If I recollect correctly, in 1975 the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview was telling us what a poor deal the Syncrude project was. The people of Alberta strongly supported this government in 1975 on those questions of receiving fair value for our resources. They strongly supported us again in 1979. I hope he hasn't forgotten that, but in the position he's putting forward today it seems he has forgotten the overwhelming support this government has received from Albertans on both of these issues critical to us now and in the future.

MR. NOTLEY: Ask them for a verdict today.

DR. BUCK: I bet they asked him about [inaudible] million.

MR. BRADLEY: Now, Mr. Speaker, continuing on this very important subject, and particularly the position of the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview with regard to ownership and benefits which Albertans receive from oil sands plants, I'd like to point out again, as the hon. Member for Edmonton Mill Woods did, that we are in a joint venture: 50 per cent Alberta and 50 per cent of the profits to go to the participants. So we receive 50 per cent of the profits from the Syncrude plant. And he suggests that perhaps we shouldn't get world price.

DR. PAPROSKI: Shame, shame.

MR. BRADLEY: I'm not quite clear of his position. He said in his remarks that it does not justify the invocation of the force majeure clause, but now he's saying we should accept less than world price. You'd invoke force majeure only if there were circumstances where an emergency international situation would escalate prices. That hasn't happened, and I think he is in a bit of a conundrum in this situation. He said today that it does not justify invocation of force majeure, but we should accept less than world price. I really can't understand his reasoning on this whatsoever.

DR. PAPROSKI: Amazing, amazing. Grant, we don't understand you.

MR. BRADLEY: I really find that difficult.

Going on, Alberta presently has an 8 per cent equity position in the Syncrude project through Alberta Oil Sands Equity. And the Alberta Energy Company, in which the people of Alberta have a 50 per cent interest, has 10 per cent in the Syncrude project, which gives us another 5 per cent. You could add those two together and get 13 per cent ownership. In addition, this government had the foresight to negotiate some very favorable convertible debentures in the amount of \$200 million, which at some point in the future we could convert to a further ownership in the Syncrude project, which would accrue further benefits to Albertans.

I'd now like to turn briefly to the question of commodity pricing and the implications of world price on that and what we receive as Albertans. The Member for Spirit River-Fairview suggests that we should receive less than world price. I believe quite strongly in the principle this government has put forward that we should receive fair value for our resources. I don't think we should look at receiving much less than world price; I think we should look at receiving commodity price for our oil, whether it's Syncrude production synthetic oil, or whether it's conventional oil. No matter where it comes from, oil is oil. Oil is a valuable commodity. It's a very important part of the engines of the western world.

To suggest that we should receive less than fair market value, or that some oil should be priced differently because it's synthetic or it's conventional, I can't understand that whatsoever. Gold is produced at different costs in different parts of the world, but it's certainly receiving commodity pricing. In terms of receiving prices for different resources, I haven't seen that we in Alberta have paid less than what it is worth in terms of the cost in other countries, particularly looking at production of certain commodities in some of the eastern provinces.

What about the benefits of a project like Syncrude to the Alberta economy? I'd just like to look briefly at the geographical distribution of expenditures to the end of 1979, where the benefits flowed in terms of the expendi-



tures on a project like Syncrude. To the end of 1979, clearly 62 per cent of the expenditures of a capital nature and otherwise were committed in the province of Alberta, and another 17 per cent in other parts of Canada. I think that is pretty significant in terms of where the expenditures are being made and where the benefits accrue. It's very significant in terms of Alberta and in the future return we will get from these projects.

In terms of some of the remarks of the hon. Member for Clover Bar, I'd just like to comment briefly on a couple of points he made. I think some of them were also followed by the Member for Edmonton Mill Woods. He is suggesting that perhaps we should have a policy which would bring on an oil sands plant in a certain period of time, every few years or whatever you delineate it at. We don't have an agreement with the federal government on price yet, but he suggests we should proceed anyhow, not knowing what the terms would be or what Alberta would receive. I would suggest that that would be very irresponsible. On the other hand, perhaps the hon. member has forgotten that as part of the agreement which was being negotiated with the previous federal government, the Clark government, Alberta had agreed to an orderly development of these plants and was looking at establishing a permanent work force. Perhaps that has evaded the hon. member's attention in terms of the remarks he made today.

He went on in his remarks to suggest that we were somehow going to negotiate an agreement in which we would receive less than that which we had negotiated with the previous administration. Again, I suspect perhaps the hon. member didn't hear our hon. Premier's statements that we would accept no less than the same net benefits in the agreement which had been negotiated previously. I really couldn't understand that he could forget that and suggest that we would actually negotiate a deal for less than what we had with the previous administration.

Perhaps the hon. Member for Clover Bar did not pay a great deal of attention to the conference in Ottawa last November. I think the hon. Member for Edmonton Mill Woods alluded to this. The hon. Member for Clover Bar was suggesting we should negotiate with the other Canadian provinces, bring them on stream and have them support our position. Well, from my interpretation of the conference — and I'm sure that of most Albertans and most Canadians — on the question of ownership and control of natural resources, clearly at that conference last November I believe there were the provinces of Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, British Columbia, Quebec and, as the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview has indicated, the Premier of Saskatchewan, the province of Saskatchewan. I add that up and it comes to nine. Nine provinces supported us. So I take from that, that that isn't good enough for the hon. Member for Clover Bar, and that he would also like to have Ontario on stream with us. Perhaps he should go down to Ontario and campaign there and run an election there to convince the people there that they are also threatened.

I'd like to get back to this point the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview brought up with regard to trade-offs. Somehow there's a possible trade-off here that Alberta should be looking at, that we should not — well, he said it — we should not get world price for our oil; we should not be negotiating toward that; we should accept less than world price. In return for that, we should gain some benefits in terms of transportation.

I've always looked at Canada and Confederation —

that we're an equal partner and we should receive no less or no more than any other province would expect in terms of both those areas. In terms of natural resources, we should get fair market value. I think that's a reasonable position for us to have. In terms of transportation, Canada is a country and there should be equitable freight rates for all parts of Canada, regardless of where you live. I find it difficult that it costs more to ship from Toronto to Calgary than it does from Toronto to Vancouver. Those are some of the inequities in Canadian Confederation. But to suggest that we should take significantly less for our natural resources when other provinces are receiving full, fair market value for other than petroleum products; that we should accept less, then have a trade-off in the very inequitable position we've been in for 50 years, and that's the trade-off: I find that completely unacceptable.

Then the Member for Spirit River-Fairview suggested there should be an inquiry into what the operating costs of oil sands plants are. Surely he's well aware that the Energy Resources Conservation Board has held very exhaustive public hearings on future oil sands plants and what their costs would be — what the costs, the effects, the benefits of the heavy oil plant in Cold Lake would be. There have been extensive hearings. I suppose at this point he's coming forward and suggesting non-confidence in that very competent board, the Energy Resources Conservation Board.

On the other hand, in terms of Canada or Alberta having information or access to information regarding operating costs of current plants, in the Syncrude example Petro-Canada, which is an agency of the federal government, is a participant and has direct access to that knowledge. Alberta, through Alberta Oil Sands Equity, has direct access to that information. It is accessible to the government. So I can't see why he wants to launch this inquiry, because we have the information.

Just to comment briefly on what Syncrude was receiving as of December this year, its current rate of production, and what its profitability picture is: based on \$27 oil last year, Syncrude did not make a profit on its production. This year, based on somewhere around \$33 to \$34 oil, it is not yet known whether Syncrude will in fact make a profit. So the question of world pricing is very important to these oil sands plants. We may turn a very marginal profit on Syncrude this year, but it depends on continuous, reliable production. Current projections would indicate that if we do not have any major upset in the plant, we will in fact make a small profit.

The Member for Spirit River-Fairview goes on talking about moving toward more Canadian ownership of the petroleum industry. I think we've had a significant increase in ownership of the petroleum industry by Canadians. We look at AGTL's acquisition of Husky Oil and the acquisitions by Petro-Canada. I think we've had a significant increase in total ownership of the industry by Canadian sources.

The last point I'd like to comment on in the remarks of the Member for Spirit River-Fairview: he talks about these incredible tax concessions the companies have received to proceed with these plants. He says that Canada cannot afford the foregone revenues from these taxes. He compares it to the federal budget. Once again I'd like to point out to the hon. member that when he's talking about foregone revenues, Alberta has foregone approximately \$18 billion in revenues because we have not received fair market value for our resources. That's a tremendous subsidy that the people of Alberta are paying

or have been foregoing in terms of not receiving fair value for our resources. I can't see how, on the one hand, the hon. member makes the argument to forego revenue from taxes, but on the other hand, he's willing to accept foregone revenue from less than world price or less than fair market value for our resources.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the hon. Member for Clover Bar has put forward this motion today. I urge all hon. members to support it. It has very serious implications for Alberta, and I'm glad to see he's onside with the government of Alberta in terms of this problem.

[Motion carried]

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

**Bill 207  
An Act to Amend  
The Ombudsman Act (No. 2)**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 207. Bill 207 is somewhat similar to the Bill which was debated in the Legislature last week. The major difference is to clearly extend the power of the Ombudsman to cover specifically, among other contract institutions, privately operated nursing homes in the province of Alberta.

In prefacing my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure most members of the Assembly will agree that the current Ombudsman, Dr. Ivany, has been doing an excellent job. One of the concerns I have felt is that there is at least some danger of proliferating the office of ombudsman and having, for example, civic ombudsmen, and university ombudsmen, and having review committees here and there — all in a sense attempting to deal with complaints people have in different jurisdictions. It seems to me that if the concept of the Ombudsman as envisaged by this Legislature some years ago is to be fully reached, we have to expand the jurisdiction of the office. Mr. Speaker, there must be one place, one central clearing house, as it were, where people who have complaints about the operation of government, government departments, or those contract facilities that receive their operation from the government can go to evaluate, to adjudicate complaints.

It seems to me there's a very serious error in providing too many other avenues apart from the Ombudsman, as opposed to increasing the scope and jurisdiction of that one office. It's difficult for the average person, Mr. Speaker. MLAs well know that one of our jobs, as people contact us every day, is: where do they go to look after this problem? Where do they go to examine yet another problem? What are the differences between federal, provincial, and municipal? Mr. Speaker, one of the advantages of extending the scope of the Ombudsman's office is that that particular office would be able to investigate the range of complaints that come in about government or quasi-government operations. Rather than having to decide to send a complaint to some other area, the individual can con-

tact the Ombudsman's office, and the Ombudsman is then in a position to follow up and investigate the complaint.

Mr. Speaker, in the last few months we've seen several examples of why the Ombudsman's office should have its jurisdiction expanded to include all contract facilities. The most obvious example was the northern treatment centre in Peace River. I would reassert again in the House what I said in the Speech from the Throne debate: it is fortunate for us that the young couple in question, instead of assuming that everything would be all right in a department which was taking a very leisurely approach to the situation, directed their complaint to the Ombudsman's office. Even though Dr. Ivany was not able to look into it because the northern treatment centre was outside the jurisdiction, nevertheless the matter was referred to the senior people in the department. As a consequence, slowly but surely — very slowly — nevertheless some action did occur. We now have the Cavanagh Board of Review, which several members alluded to in the debate last week, which is hopefully going to herald a new day in terms of child welfare legislation as well as health care facilities in this province.

Mr. Speaker, when the Hesses complained to the Ombudsman about the treatment of the children in the centre, it would have been much better if the Ombudsman had had the opportunity to look into it, to review it, to assess it, to decide whether or not the complaints were justified. As happened, we have lurches, if you like, into one of the most important reviews, I suppose, in recent memory in this province; but almost by happenstance, as a consequence of hubbub, of public controversy — which in most instances, things being the way they are, would probably not have occurred. But, Mr. Speaker, had the Ombudsman had the jurisdiction that this Bill allows him, the office would have been able to investigate those complaints.

It isn't good enough, Mr. Speaker, for members to say: well, it is hardly necessary; look what happened. Look, what happened was purely happenstance that it occurred that way. What we have to do in drafting legislation is to ask ourselves: are there changes that we can make in the laws of this province which better define the responsibilities not only of public servants but of those people who have contract arrangements with the province of Alberta?

Mr. Speaker, recently the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees submitted a brief which contained very strong representation for extended jurisdiction of the Ombudsman's office. They look at extending the purview of the Ombudsman's office not only to facilities like the northern treatment centre but to the operation of the private nursing homes in the province of Alberta. I recall a debate which took place in this Assembly, not specifically but in general debates, as well as in the public, about whether or not the Ombudsman's office should be extended to include investigating complaints directly from private nursing homes. At the time I took the view that the office should have the opportunity and the right to examine complaints from patients or other people who had concerns about the operation of private nursing

homes in Alberta. The government chose not to go that route, and instead we had the creation of the Health Facilities Review Committee.

Mr. Speaker, it's worth noting that recently the Canadian Union of Public Employees was sufficiently concerned about the operation of nursing homes in Alberta to commission a workers' inquiry. I think it's worth taking a moment and expressing an observation about the decision of CUPE to undertake that inquiry. Too often the only news that we hear from trade unions is that a strike vote has been taken and people will be walking the picket line. That of course is a fundamental right of people in a democratic society. But often the rather positive contributions made by unions toward improving social justice are overlooked.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that this province is frankly indebted to the Canadian Union of Public Employees for organizing a workers' inquiry into the operation of nursing homes in this province. It seems to me that it is incumbent upon the government to respond adequately to the concerns that have come to light as a result of that workers' inquiry. Quite frankly, the information that CUPE has brought forward in a preliminary report — and I should mention that there will be a final report. But for the interest of members of the Legislature, when I conclude my remarks I'll table this report; it's important that people have an opportunity to look at it. But the bottom line is that in order to properly evaluate the complaints from nursing homes, we must extend the power of the Ombudsman to be able to investigate the concerns brought to his attention. Presently he can't do that because the legislation does not provide for the Ombudsman's office to have that power.

Mr. Speaker, the preliminary report of the CUPE investigation into nursing homes — and I cite that as evidence why we should pass Bill 207 — highlights a number of concerns. First of all, lack of adequate staff. Secondly, some real concern with respect to medication: the observation is that in many of these homes, untrained people are handing out and dispensing medications. Now, Mr. Speaker, that's a very, very serious allegation, an allegation which at the present time, I suppose, can be reviewed by this Health Facilities Review Committee. But how much better it would be if it were within the responsibility of the Ombudsman's office to be able to look into a question as important as that. They also cite the availability of medical attention. They raise concerns about the quality and quantity of the food in many of the homes in Alberta, the lack of adequate supplies and, in some homes, extra charges. Residents are forced to pay extra in many homes for items such as Kleenex, bath soap, bath oil, et cetera. Finally, they say there is a lack of therapy and rehabilitation programs in some of the homes in Alberta.

To be fair — and I think the CUPE preliminary report is a rather balanced assessment of the situation — they observe that some of the nursing homes in Alberta operate well within the standards set by the province. But they conclude that in a number of cases, the nursing homes operate below the minimum standards set by the province of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I guess the question that members

of the Legislature have to ask and answer before they can render a judgment on either Bill 207 or the Bill introduced last week by the hon. Member for Bow Valley is whether we presently have adequate protection for the public. I note that in the debate last week the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood observed that the Health Facilities Review Committee offered protection for the public. Well, Mr. Speaker, with great respect to that hon. member, I would frankly disagree.

First of all, the time: the report of the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee indicated that the time spent in each institution ranges between half a day and a day, depending in the size of the institution. I would argue that that really isn't enough time to be able to make an objective evaluation, particularly when the committee doesn't come back for another two years. There's no public access to government reports or compliance orders.

There's also the question of the likelihood of patients complaining themselves. The annual report indicates that only four patients complained. That's true, Mr. Speaker, because, first of all, how many senior citizens in a nursing home know there is an Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee? You know, if you walk down Jasper Avenue and ask 100 people what they know about the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee, I suspect that 99 out of the 100 have never heard of it. On the other hand, if you ask 100 people on Jasper Avenue about the Ombudsman's office, everybody would know that there is an Ombudsman's office and that it is set up to investigate complaints.

So the question of having an office of high visibility that can review complaints — it's not that the people on the health facilities committee are not attempting to do a good job; I'm sure they are — but the basic question is of a committee that frankly has very low visibility. The CUPE workers' inquiry found that as far as the average person who worked in the institutions, the nursing homes in Alberta, few of them had ever even heard of the committee.

So, Mr. Speaker, if we're going to evaluate complaints properly, it does seem to me that we have to have an agency set up in such a way that there can be a proper investigation. But that agency also has to have sufficient visibility that either the worker or the patient — and it's unlikely that the guest in a senior citizens' centre or nursing home is going to complain, but perhaps family members; even the complaints we hear from time to time as members of the Legislature — this office has to have sufficiently high visibility, enough of a public presence, that people can submit their complaints to it.

I note as well, Mr. Speaker, that 55 per cent of the nursing home beds are in the hands of private owners — incidentally, the highest of any province outside of Newfoundland — and that the highest percentage of private nursing home beds are really in the hands of three major corporations: Parkland Nursing Homes, Central Park Lodges, and N.B. Cook Corporation. I would simply invite some opposition across the way by saying in the House, as I've said outside, that in my judgment nursing homes should not be operated for profit. I don't

think that is a proper area for the profit motive. Nursing homes should be owned either by charitable organizations or by the public, and should not be operated on the basis of somebody making a buck. There are all sorts of opportunities for entrepreneurial aspirations in this province outside of the care of the sick and the elderly.

Mr. Speaker, since 70 per cent of the funds coming into nursing homes in this province flow directly from the province of Alberta, and since in fact we're dealing with an essential service, under government regulation — albeit according to the workers' inquiry undertaken by CUPE, most of them operate below the minimum standards set by the government — I would maintain that if we're putting up the largest part of the money and these institutions are presumably working under provincial regulations, then it's only right and proper that the Ombudsman's office should have the opportunity to look into complaints.

Mr. Speaker, I noted in the debate last week that several other members took [part]. The hon. Member for Edson indicated that the concern he had was with respect to the dilution of the role of the Ombudsman; that is, if the Ombudsman has too broad a jurisdiction, somehow the staff of the Ombudsman's office will have to be expanded and the Ombudsman would no longer be able to deal personally with problems. Quite frankly, it seems to me that that bridge must in fact be crossed. As Alberta's society becomes more complex, such a host of legitimate concerns are going to be brought to the attention of the Ombudsman that it is not going to be possible for any Ombudsman to deal individually with every single complaint. In large measure, the Ombudsman's staff are going to have to do the investigative work. While the Ombudsman will have to take responsibility for that work, in the same way that ministers must accept ministerial responsibility for their departments, nevertheless, as Alberta becomes increasingly subject to more challenging social problems and greater conflicts with various departments of government, it's a little unlikely that the Ombudsman is going to be able to look personally into each and every case.

But I would look at the larger question of the dilution of the role of Ombudsman that the hon. member raises: do we in fact dilute the role by extending the jurisdiction? While we may make it mandatory that this Legislature approve more funds so that the Ombudsman's office can increase in size, I would say that the role itself will not be diluted. The role itself would be extended. Nothing is more frustrating for people who write to me and say they've contacted the Ombudsman's office and are told that the Ombudsman can't look into it because it's just outside his jurisdiction. I would say, Mr. Speaker, that where we deal with contract facilities, whether they be institutions such as private nursing homes or centres such as the one in Peace River and the manyscore others, it is important that the role of the Ombudsman be clearly defined, so that the office can in fact investigate those complaints.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with the introduction of a Bill a few days ago and the operation of the present Health Facilities Review Committee, we all know that the government has, in its wisdom, chosen

not to go that route. I would argue that to extend the powers of the Ombudsman would be a better way of protecting the public. I have some real doubts about the role of these facilities. But the proper time and place will come to discuss the roles both of the health facilities committee and the Bill introduced the other day by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West, if my memory serves me correctly. The proper time and place to discuss the merits of those will come . . .

[Two members other than the member speaking conferred, one having gone over to the desk of the other]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I just question the degree of informality which has suddenly been introduced into the Chamber.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, speaking to that point of order, sir. Having been a visitor in the House of Commons in London, sir, it seems that in the mother House they do not have seats that have names beside them, so maybe the member was not out of order.

MR. SPEAKER: They do certain other things in the Mother of Parliaments as well, including holding meetings behind the Speaker's Chair. But in this Assembly we try to serve the members for their intra-Assembly communications by means of pages.

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In concluding my remarks, I would argue that Bill 207 is consistent with the original purpose of setting up an Ombudsman. I realize that some members may point out that other ombudsmen don't have this power at the present time. That's fair enough. As a province we pioneered in setting up the office; it seems to me that we, as members of this Assembly, should pioneer in expanding the jurisdiction of the office.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to speak to Bill 207. This amendment to The Ombudsman Act is similar to Bill 205, which was debated April 3, 1980. I allude to that particular debate, as the speeches by government members refer to many points which are relevant to the Bill before us today. The hon. Member for Edson referred in his remarks to the excellent work that the Ombudsman is doing in his role, and also the members of his staff. In Dr. Ivany's 13th annual report of the Ombudsman for the period of January 1, 1979, to December 31, 1979, it is interesting to note that the investigations cover many government departments, boards, commissions, and corporations.

It is also interesting to note that the number of written complaints has decreased from 1,010 to 823, an 18.5 per cent change. The decrease is most dramatic in terms of written complaints directed against government departments and agencies. Further to that, 37 per cent fewer complaints were received from the various correctional institutions and mental health facilities. Speculating why, one might consider that there are not enough people who are concerned, but we know that that is improbable, particularly in view of the fact that we have a rapidly expanding population.

I would like to put forth the premise that the reason there are not as many complaints is that people have many different routes to take their concerns. While the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview feels there should be an expansion in the department of the Ombudsman, many of us feel that this would very quickly become just another government department.

I would like to look very briefly at some of the various roles the member alluded to. Also, the Member for Edmonton Norwood reviewed the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee in detail. While it may be true at this present time that some or a lot of Albertans are not aware that this exists — the name has been changed fairly recently — I think in time they will come to see this as a very valuable resource to be utilized, particularly in view of the fact that it covers over 350 facilities. Even more relevant to this debate, of course, is the legislation before us, The Social Care Facilities Review Committee Act. Under this legislation, 500 facilities will be reviewed.

The hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health announced the Cavanagh Board of Review. In fact, today he alluded to its terms of reference. Many agencies in Alberta have advisory boards and/or boards of directors. These boards truly reflect the policies of an agency. Generally, they are local in nature. And who knows best the particular problems that the agency is dealing with? It is a valuable resource for any person to feel they can make a presentation to these local boards.

Another source to direct one's concern — unfortunately, it's one that the public doesn't think to use very often — is the professional associations. Members registered in a professional association or in a health occupation have a responsibility as a member of that association. The Member for Calgary North Hill stated in his response last week, when one particular issue had been raised — the Member for Spirit River-Fairview has raised the issue again today — that by the time the issue had been brought to the attention of the public, the decision had already been made; the issue had been settled. The opposition seemed to allude to the fact that the minister and the members of

his department did not care or did not take specific positive action.

Lastly, I would like to point out that this Legislature has the Select Standing Committee on the Offices of the Auditor General and the Ombudsman. Surely this would be another appropriate route for discussing such a change in legislation.

The Member for Spirit River-Fairview alluded to the concern brought forth by the public employees about nursing homes. I think it is very commendable for these people to take such an interest. In fact, while he stated that generally their concern may be with regard to collective bargaining, I have to disagree with his statement. When I researched the Gale commission, regarding occupational health and safety, I was very much aware of the programs the unions have undertaken in that particular area. So I commend the unions also for being very interested in nursing homes.

However, this debate today is not really on public versus private ownership of nursing homes. Basically, it is irrelevant to the debate. But I would like to make some comments. While the member has one idea, that all these agencies or institutions should be publicly owned, I submit there are many Albertans who feel the private sector is very, very conscientious in running nursing homes. They do adhere to the standards. I think they are quite capable of doing a very good job in this area.

I think the bottom line the member kept referring to is not the issue about the Ombudsman or his office being expanded. I think the bottom line is the fact that the people of this province know they have legitimate routes to bring their concerns to.

In view of the time, I would like to call it 5:30, and urge members of this Legislature to vote against this Bill.

[Motion lost]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is not proposed that the House sit this evening.

[At 5:25 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]

