

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: **Tuesday, May 20, 1980 2:30 p.m.**

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

**PRAYERS**

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege this afternoon of introducing, through you, to members of this Assembly two individuals whom I and several other members of this House had an opportunity to meet in Quebec City at a conference just a month ago. They're seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are Erika and Andrew Scott. I should mention that Erika Scott's father is the distinguished chief librarian of the Library of Parliament in Ottawa. They're travelling across the country, and we have the privilege of having them here with us this afternoon. I would like them both to rise and receive the welcome of this Assembly.

**head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 218**  
**An Act to Amend**  
**The School Act (No. 2)**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 218, An Act to Amend The School Act (No. 2). The Bill establishes guidelines for the maintenance of teachers' personal files.

[Leave granted; Bill 218 read a first time]

**head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file with the Legislature Library a petition signed by 1,252 Edmontonians requesting that a higher priority be given to human resource programs in the province of Alberta.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a response to Question No. 105.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee for the year 1979.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1979 annual report of the Farmers' Advocate.

MR. BORSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to file with the Legislature Library a report, Health Needs in Northern Alberta, prepared for the Northern Alberta Development Council; also the summary report of proceedings of the Workshop on Health Needs, held in St. Paul in February 1980.

**head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure and privilege today to introduce to you, and to all members of the Assembly, some 60 grade 6 students from a very fine school, Stehelin elementary in the town of Barrhead, in the constituency of Barrhead. The students represent two different classes. They're accompanied today by their teachers Mr. Marvin Sheets and Mr. Ken Graham, who also doubled as the school bus driver and custodian. The group is in the members gallery. I would ask them to stand and receive the welcome of this Assembly.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 35 grades 5 and 6 students from the village of Elnora in the constituency of Innisfail. They are accompanied by their principal Mr. Dick West; a teacher Miss Pam Klymyk; three supervising parents Mrs. Joyce Silbernagel, Mrs. Lynne Kadar, and Mrs. Joan James; and their bus driver Shirley Hughes. They are seated in the public gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I also take some considerable pleasure today in introducing a gung-ho group of students, 23 in number, from the Van Home secondary school in beautiful downtown Calgary Foothills. They are grades 10 and 11 social studies students. They're accompanied by teachers Frank Dyck and David Bulmer. They're very, very interested in government; as a matter of fact, one of them handed me a letter today with what I thought were a number of very complex questions in it. I assured them that, with the assistance of the Minister of Education, I would get a prompt reply to them. So part of my submission today is that the Minister of Education respond to me very promptly.

Mr. Speaker, they're in the public gallery, and I would ask that they stand and be recognized.

**head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****Government Legislative Plans**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question today to a number of ministers. It really takes an assessment — perhaps it's an appropriate day to ask this kind of question — of where we are with regard to the legislation in this session.

My question to the Government House Leader: is it the intention to introduce legislation during this spring session dealing with professions and occupations? I refer basically to the legislation which was held over last fall. There was an intention at that time that the legislation would come in in this spring session.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, it may be that the intention at the time was that it be in the spring sitting. But I think the references that have been made recently are that it would be during the session, and that would allow for the fall. It's not proposed that any of those items be introduced in the spring sitting.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Government House Leader. At what stage is the consultation between the government and various professions? I would perhaps use engineering as a profession the

Government House Leader may want to key on, as far as consultation between the government and the profession is concerned.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower could respond better to that.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would perhaps refer that question to my colleague the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works.

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, there is ongoing discussion with the architects and engineers. I'm hopeful that the areas of difficulty or concern exhibited in the past will be resolved over the summer, and that we'll be able to introduce legislation in those areas in the fall.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Solicitor General, who is responsible for operation of the Alberta Liquor Control Board. Is it the intention of the government to introduce changes to The Liquor Control Act during this spring session, then have those amendments sit over until the fall?

MR. HARLE: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the same minister: is it the government's intention to bring in legislation at the fall session dealing with certain rumored changes as far as the operation of the Alberta Liquor Control Board is concerned? [interjection]

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I hope to have it ready and introduced in the fall.

MR. R. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. When the hon. minister says "introduced in the fall", is that a commitment, Mr. Minister, that the legislation would be introduced, would sit over an intervening period of time, and would then be reintroduced and dealt with at the following spring session? What I'm trying to ascertain is: is there a plan for the government to introduce legislation with regard to The Liquor Control Act, then a period of some months before the legislation would be brought to a conclusion here in the Assembly?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, that has not yet been decided.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the Government House Leader. Is it the intention of the government to move through the dependent adults legislation, introduced just last week — and rather substantive legislation — and finish it at this spring session? Or will that be held over to the fall session?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed important legislation. The present proposal is that it be dealt with in the spring sittings.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, not to leave out the Minister of Labour, I'd like to ask him if the government has had an opportunity to reflect upon the concerns expressed by a large number of concerned individuals with regard to the individual's rights protection legislation. Is it the government's intention to hold that legisla-

tion over until the fall, or to put it through at this spring session?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. leader. It's the intention to proceed this spring. Hopefully the debate will indicate the nature of the legislation and help clarify some of the concerns.

#### Volcanic Ash

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Environment with regard to the volcanic ash in southern Alberta. What kind of tests and monitoring by the Department of Environment are being carried out with regard to that ash at the present time?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, at the present time we are doing some monitoring in southern Alberta with regard to volcanic ash. It might be of some interest to note that the acidic impact of the material is no more serious than, for example, unpolluted rain water. So it's not going to have an impact in that regard.

Secondly, there is some irritation because the particles are sharp. Therefore, anyone wearing contact lenses, for example, might have some irritation. Other than that, so far we just continue to monitor.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Does the Department of Environment co-ordinate its works with the works of the American authorities, such as those in the Pacific northwest?

MR. COOKSON: Well, we're all having trouble trying to co-ordinate the volcano. [interjection]

MR. KOZIAK: Get an emission control order. [laughter]

MR. COOKSON: I even have trouble walking on water. [laughter]

Mr. Speaker, we do have dialogue with the Department of Environment in the United States. I can't cite any specific correspondence in the last day or two, but we have been in communication with them.

#### Water Management

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also to the hon. Minister of Environment. Has the minister had any recent meetings with any officials of the Eastern Irrigation District with regard to the rehabilitation of the Bassano dam?

MR. COOKSON: Not recently, Mr. Speaker. As the hon. member knows, we're still trying to come to an agreement with the federal government with regard to ownership. We're quite insistent that it belongs specifically in their bailiwick until such time as they have verified the ownership, and it's their responsibility to upgrade the dam.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, regarding the money allocated by the federal government several years ago for rehabilitation of the dam. Is that commitment still going to be held up? Will we still be able to get money from the federal government to repair the dam?

MR. COOKSON: I would think so, Mr. Speaker, but perhaps I could check on that. I don't see any lucrative

source of funds coming from Ottawa at any time. In any correspondence I've had with them, I've almost had to put a stamp on the letter in order to get some correspondence. [laughter] But I could pursue it.

DR. BUCK: You pay your tax, Jack?

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, has the minister or the government given any consideration to coming up with an overall water policy? I'm thinking of water storage on some of our river basins, the Eyremore dam for example.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, if the Member for Bow Valley would just contain his curiosity, perhaps within weeks I can make some announcement that will deal with the general problem, and alleviate everyone's concerns.

MR. NOTLEY: The day after the Legislature rises.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. The minister has indicated that an announcement and a decision will be made with regard to the Oldman. Will that decision be made in the same announcement you're talking about to the Member for Bow Valley, or prior to the end of this session?

MR. COOKSON: There are several interesting issues being dealt with in terms of that report, and I think probably it would be wise just to contain one's curiosity for several weeks yet.

#### Utility Companies

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones. It concerns the announcement today of a bid by Calgary Power to buy up to 42 per cent of the outstanding stock in Canadian Utilities. What assessment has the government of Alberta given to the possible purchase by Calgary Power of a substantial share of Alberta Power, in terms of undue concentration of ownership of the power industry in one company's hands?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker since being assigned responsibility for Utilities and Telephones, I've been considering many aspects of the utility industry, including the very complex area of electric utilities in the province.

With respect to the specific question as to the impact of a purchase of 42 per cent of CU shares by Calgary Power, before determining what impact that would have, the hon. member should realize that any acquisition of one utility by another has to be dealt with by the Public Utilities Board. So it would be premature to give an impression of what may or may not happen as a result of an acquisition that may take place.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Have there been any discussions between Calgary Power and the Alberta government with respect to the possible purchase of CU stock by Calgary Power? Or will this matter be kept strictly at arm's length until such time as the Public Utilities Board renders a judgment?

MR. SHABEN: The view of the government is that such an acquisition would be a business transaction. Throughout the past several weeks I've been kept informed of the

intentions of Calgary Power, and that is strictly in the nature of being kept informed of their intentions.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. With respect to the possible purchase of Alberta Power by Calgary Power, what impact has this move had on the request for proposals on the Dunvegan dam, where the government indicated that they were making an opportunity available to various companies to bid on the dam proposal? Has there been any impact on that question by the moves that have been discussed subsequently?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, first it should be clear that I believe the announcement this morning by Calgary Power was not an effort to acquire Alberta Power, but an effort by Calgary Power to acquire 42 per cent of Canadian Utilities, of which Alberta Power is a part. As far as any impact on the request for proposals, there has been none. As all members know, the government invited proposals, and we expect them to be in by the end of June. We will await the nature and number of proposals before making a decision.

#### Dunvegan Dam

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether there have been any proposals to date on the Dunvegan dam? Will it be the position of the government that the end of June is the deadline, or has there been any suggestion that that deadline might be extended?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, we've had indications from companies that have advised us they are prepared to make application for development of the capacity at Dunvegan. We are not yet certain how many will be received. It would be premature to indicate whether it would be necessary to extend the deadline. At this stage we don't believe it would be necessary, but as I indicated earlier, I believe it's too soon to say whether it may be necessary.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Has the government any updated timetable in terms of the Dunvegan dam proposal? It has been suggested in some quarters that construction could start three years from the date of the completion of the bids. Is the minister in a position to be any more definitive than that in the Assembly as to a possible timetable?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, no, it isn't possible to be more definitive. Bearing in mind that the required capacity for Alberta is either committed or in place until the end of 1986; the fact that, along with Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the government is examining very closely the possibility of importing power from Manitoba; and also the applications which are before the ERCB: all of these would have to be fit into the Alberta requirements over the years ahead. Those decisions are yet to be made.

#### Long Distance Telephone Rates

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Associate Minister of Telephones arises from statements in the Assembly by the hon. associate minister on April 21, at which time he expressed some concern about an

order issued by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to Alberta Government Telephones with respect to a long distance rate, and the concern that this constituted an attempt to control and regulate long distance rates in the country. My question to the minister is: has any decision been made by Alberta Government Telephones on the commencement of legal proceedings to attempt to thwart this move?

DR. WEBBER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, Alberta Government Telephones has sought legal opinion, and as a result of that opinion has taken action so that in the federal courts an attempt has been made to prohibit the CRTC from rendering a decision based upon the information supplied to the CRTC from Trans-Canada Telephone System and proprietary to AGT, and to have this information turned back to the telephone company.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: A supplementary. Could the associate minister advise whether a court date has been set for hearing this matter?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, it's May 22.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: A final supplementary. Could the associate minister advise whether any other measures are being considered or any other action taken in an attempt to resolve this impasse?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, this action was decided to be a sort of initial action by Alberta Government Telephones. However, as I mentioned in my responses some weeks ago, I did send a telegram to the federal minister indicating our displeasure with the CRTC's getting involved in an area which we feel is within provincial jurisdiction. In addition, Alberta Government Telephones has appealed to the Governor [General] in Council to have the order rescinded which the CRTC issued in the first place.

#### Road Construction

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transportation. In light of the advanced road construction program because of this year's dry spring, can the minister indicate if he will be requesting a special warrant or a supplementary budget at the spring sitting to further road construction in the province?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, we're doing an ongoing review of the stage of our contracts as they're let, as well as monitoring the proposed completion times. I think it's a little early to make this kind of decision, so we're watching it very carefully.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, supplementary question. In this inventory-taking the minister is now proceeding with, can the minister indicate if crude for asphalt is available and plentiful?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, so far we haven't encountered any difficulty with supply. We are assured that we shouldn't.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate if an inventory has been done by his department as to construction equipment and personnel being adequate for the construction season?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, in discussing this kind of thing with the construction industry, they indicate they need about a year's lead time in order to purchase. Keeping in mind that the indicators were that we would be busy this year, I think they must have gone through that exercise, because they've indicated their equipment inventory is in good condition.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Can the minister indicate what representations have been made by the Alberta road construction association as to the need for a three- to five-year budgeting program, so that the construction people can gear up more than one year at a time?

MR. KROEGER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, this has been suggested by the industry. Keeping in mind, however, that we seem to be moving ahead very rapidly, as I've said once before in the House it's difficult to put a fence around the amounts needed, because we seem to be escalating every year. I think the assurance is with the industry that the work is going to be there.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, if I might pose a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In responding to the second question from my colleague, the minister indicated that the industry needed one year's lead time so that it would be able to have its inventory in place. What type of direction has the minister now given the industry for next year?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, I really haven't tried to give them any direction. In view of the fact that the budget was increased substantially this year, it would be difficult for me to indicate in any way what we can contemplate for 1981. At the moment they're pretty busy trying to cope with the contracts that have been offered, keeping in mind that almost all of them are out at the present time.

MR. R. CLARK: To the hon. minister. Mr. Minister, given the comment just made that the industry needs one year's lead time to have its situation projected ahead, what indication has the government at this time — either the minister or the Provincial Treasurer — given to the industry as far as next year is concerned? Should the industry expand next year? Should they sit tight? What kind of indication has the government given the industry?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, I can't add very much to what I've said, unless the Provincial Treasurer is prepared to be optimistic and guess what the budget might look like for next year.

I think, though, that the indicators are there very clearly that there's going to be a very serious demand on the construction industry, that the government hasn't been reluctant to fund those things that appear to be necessary to do. I think we are in pretty good hands. The people you were talking about, the construction people specifically, read the signs pretty well and haven't indicated to me that they have a specific worry for lack of information. In the event that any knowledge comes to me that would help them, I'd be glad to go with them.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Can the minister indicate if he has given any assurance to the industry that there will be a different program for the rehabilitation portion as compared to the

new road construction program? Is the minister willing to give a long-term commitment to the rehabilitation program so that the construction industry can gear up for that?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, we try to keep a reasonable balance between grading and rehabilitation, which generally consists of paving; the work divides into those two parts. We do try to keep a reasonable balance so that we don't shut down the grading and earth-moving section in any given year because we overreact and go too much on the rehab side. However, we are actively assessing what is going to be necessary on the rehab side, keeping in mind that loads on existing roads are getting heavier all the time. While I can't guarantee the industry exactly the kinds of work we are going to be doing, nevertheless we do aim at keeping a balance.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, just one short supplementary. In light of the fact that the minister has indicated, I believe either in estimates or publicly, that we are over \$1 billion behind in our rehabilitation program, is the minister now not committing to the industry to look at picking that up over a five- or 10-year period?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, we do develop an approach within the department as to how best to cope with this kind of thing. But I simply can't prejudge the Provincial Treasurer's position when I go to him with a sales pitch and say, here's what I think we should do, keeping in mind that we have to be able to keep our funding in balance with the capability of the construction industry itself.

#### Quebec Referendum

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Premier. It relates to the very important question being answered today by the people of the province of Quebec. Could the hon. Premier indicate if he has had any recent conversations with Mr. Ryan? If so, has Mr. Ryan made any observations with respect to the role Alberta has played in this referendum debate?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I believe the only communication I've had subsequent to discussion in the Legislature was some two weeks ago, when Mr. Ryan called me with respect to the referendum debate. We discussed the matter of my involvement. I believe I mentioned this publicly. He said to me that he did not believe there was any need to participate in the debate during the period of the referendum, but he did suggest to me that . . . First of all, he expressed his confidence that the federalist forces would be successful in the referendum tonight, but in addition, he felt it would be useful if I participated in subsequent discussion and communication in Quebec relative to change in the constitution.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, supplementary question to the hon. Premier. Could the Premier indicate if he will consider favorably that request of Mr. Ryan's and stand ready to work within the province of Quebec with respect to the changes necessary in the constitution?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, it's difficult to answer that question today; perhaps I can answer it better tomorrow. But I could say this: as the statements in the communiqué which was tabled in this Legislature reflect,

the western premiers took the position that in the event of a "no" vote tonight, we would attempt to do everything we could to communicate a desire for constitutional change in Canada, reflecting on the view that both in the "yes" vote and the "no" vote there seems to be an overwhelming feeling by Quebecers, which is shared by the people of Alberta, of a desire for change in the present arrangements in Confederation. If I can be helpful in that regard, I would certainly consider pursuing it.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, just one further supplementary question for clarification. Is the Premier then indicating that the government, or the Premier in particular, would be willing to participate directly within the province of Quebec in helping to inform the citizens of that province of the Alberta government's position with respect to constitutional changes?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is tentatively yes, but I believe it would depend a great deal on some indication from the Prime Minister of Canada that he does not hold to the views of a high degree of centralization in our country which he expressed to the constitutional conferences in the fall of '78 and in February of '79.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct two questions to the Premier with regard to the referendum today in Quebec. First, is it the Premier's intention to make an official statement on behalf of the government of Alberta in the Legislature tomorrow afternoon, once the government has had an opportunity to assess the vote in Quebec today?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, it was our original intention to do it that way, but because of the timing of the results it is now our intention to make a public comment this evening, with the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and myself. But in tomorrow's question period we certainly would be quite prepared to respond further to any matter that the Leader of the Opposition or other members might like to raise, arising either generally or from any observations in comments I might make tonight.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier or the Government House Leader. In light of the importance of the referendum in Quebec today — and this is somewhat speculative, depending on the results — is the government prepared, perhaps in co-operation with members on both sides of the House, to consider some resolution to come forward from the Assembly tomorrow, allowing for some consultation after the results are in this evening, so that this Legislative Assembly would be able to speak as one voice to the people of Quebec?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, that's certainly a suggestion we can consider. As the hon. leader puts it, it's difficult because we're speculating on the result, and that would obviously have some bearing. The only point we would want to make in any resolution or any discussion of constitutional reform is that the people in western Canada feel very strongly about constitutional reform as well, and we don't want to be involved in a matter of constitutional discussion that is emanating only in the atmosphere of the debate within the province of Quebec. We think it's very important that this constitutional discussion reflect the views of the people in western Canada.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier — making it very clear that the proposition I put forward deals solely with the question of the referendum in Quebec today — as to the possibility tomorrow, coming from either the government side of the House or this side of the House, of some resolution dealing with the results, once again depending what those results are. But I'm looking solely at the results of the referendum in Quebec today, not the broader constitutional issue.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, we certainly could take that under advisement and see how events transpire over the course of the next 24 hours.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**  
(*reversion*)

MRS. CHICHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It certainly gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, another group from the Grant MacEwan college, Cromdale campus. The group is the adult development group. There are approximately 15 of them in the public gallery, accompanied by their teacher Mr. Don Whalen. I'd like them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

CLERK: Government Designated Business; Committee of Supply.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, my understanding was that we would deal with Motions for Returns. Then I would ask all hon. members while we are in Assembly, rather than in committee, if it was their wish that we continue after the government's one hour of designated business. If hon. members indicate, as I believe they just have, Mr. Speaker, that that is what they would like, I would ask the unanimous consent of the House to continue until 5:30 with government business.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the request for unanimous leave by the hon. Government House Leader?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **MOTIONS FOR RETURNS**

115. Mr. R. Speaker moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) the number of children that can be accommodated at the Branch-a-way Home;
- (2) the number of children that were accommodated at the home in each of 1977, 1978, and 1979;
- (3) the vacancy rate, by month, at the home in 1978 and 1979;
- (4) the total payments made by the province to the

- Branch-a-way Home, by month, for 1978 and 1979;
- (5) the amount presently paid by the province for each child at the home;
- (6) the rate paid by the province for empty beds at the home;
- (7) a description of the selection process used for accommodation at the home.

[Motion carried]

120. Mr. R. Clark moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) the total number of full-time salaried employees for each government department and for Alberta Government Telephones as at March 31, 1979;
- (2) the total number of full-time salaried employees for each government department and for Alberta Government Telephones as at March 31, 1980.

[Motion carried]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should also indicate that when the House rises at 5:30 it could reconvene at 8 o'clock in Committee of Supply, if that is the stage we're at.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree that having gone into Committee of Supply, the House will stand adjourned until the Committee of Supply rises and reports?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: So ordered.

head: **GOVERNMENT DESIGNATED BUSINESS**

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**  
(*Committee of Supply*)

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply will please come to order.

### Department of Agriculture

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Red Deer.

MR. MAGEE: On Wednesday, May 14, 1980, in the Agriculture estimates debate, I made an error. I said that our federal government had just announced that the initial price for grains would be down 50 per cent per bushel. I meant to say 50 cents per bushel.\*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sure the hon. member's correction will be noted in *Hansard*.

### 11.1 — Financial Services

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, just before we complete this, I had raised several questions with respect to the consulting firm for the Foster committee. I wonder if the minister is in a position to bring us up to date on where that stands, or is it still being assessed?

\*See page 976, left column, paragraph 4

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, I believe the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview touched first of all on the basic decision as to judicial inquiry versus the independent review. I guess we've discussed this at times before it was a decision; it wasn't ignored. We looked at every aspect of inquiries and reviews, and at that time felt an independent review would achieve the result, which was a mechanical system of carrying out marketing agreeable to all. That was the decision at that time, and of course that's why we have the independent review.

With regard to the question asked re consultants to the independent review, I still have received absolutely no requests for any sanction of any help either financially or for manpower to provide assistance to the independent review committee.

The other comment, with regard to the pork producers, may need some refreshment. If I remember correctly, it's involved with the basic philosophy and tied to the announcement. To date, I've had no adverse comments indicating any severe hardship from the pork producers. Indeed, they have accepted the \$35 over and above feed costs as being a fair return, as a short-term, stop-loss program.

Mr. Chairman, from memory, it seems there was a comment with regard to Safeway and Safeway's mark, I guess, on hog marketing within this province. Not having an answer at the time, I checked into it. Apparently, if Safeway were a factor it had to be in the past, because at the present time there appears to be an adequate system whereby the packers in this province have an opportunity to bid on the basic supply. Of course, in many cases operating of the packaging in the city of Calgary gives some advantages both ways, that a supplier within the province — of course, the product goes beyond our bounds. So we feel there should be no great problem with regard to the actions of Safeway at the present time.

Agreed to:

1.1 — Departmental Services:	
1.1.1 — Financial Services	\$939,412
1.1.2 — Personnel	\$392,483
1.1.3 — Communications	\$2,519,417
1.1.4 — Systems and Design	\$1,104,001
1.1.5 — Minister's Office	\$138,958
1.1.6 — Deputy Minister's Office	\$116,254
1.1.7 — Agriculture Library	\$215,431
1.1.8 — Director — Departmental Services	\$141,904
1.1.9 — Assistant Deputy Minister — Research and Operations	\$105,608

12 — Agricultural Assistance:

12.1 — Planning and Research Secretariat	\$550,250
12.2 — Agricultural Societies and Research	\$13,109,800

### 12.3 — Farmers' Advocate

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to express a few comments on this particular vote. It seems that over the past while there has been an increasing request that an ombudsman be set for the rural municipalities in the province. We just got our annual report for the Farmers' Advocate, which I haven't had a chance to view. Nevertheless, looking at the accomplishments of the Farmers' Advocate over the past few years, I think it

would be very wrong to start looking at expanding the role of the Ombudsman. I think that if it's a real necessity to have a watchdog over the rural municipalities and the urban municipalities outside the two large cities, maybe the minister would be wise to look at the possibility of expanding the office of the Ombudsman. As I say, with the very small staff he has, when you look at all the accomplishments even in here, I think our rural municipalities especially would feel very deprived if this would not go this way.

Those are the comments I wanted to make, Mr. Chairman.

Agreed to:

1.23 — Farmers' Advocate	\$182,676
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### 1.24 — Surface Rights

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, just before we move on this one, could the minister indicate to the committee — if the minister has already, I'll check *Hansard* — what the government's plan for the next year is as far as surface rights are concerned? I seem to recall some discussion of the possibility of a legislative committee being set up to look at this whole question of surface rights. Is that ...

AN HON. MEMBER: Read your Votes and Proceedings.

MR. R. CLARK: It's in Votes and Proceedings, is it? Okay, I shall read.

Agreed to:

1.24 — Surface Rights	\$790,488
Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$20,306,682
2.1 — Program Support	\$949,613
2.2 — Irrigation	\$5,667,650
2.3 — Animal Products	\$7,129,630
2.4 — Animal Health	\$4,679,202
2.5 — Plant Products	\$16,081,268
Total Vote 2 — Production Assistance	\$34,507,363
3.1 — Program Support	\$765,339
3.2 — Marketing Services	\$5,181,501
3.3 — Economic Services	\$1,717,933
3.4 — International Marketing	\$1,271,464
Total Vote 3 — Marketing Assistance	\$8,936,237

### Vote 4 — Rural Development Assistance

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. A number of comments and some questions with respect to one aspect of Vote 4, dealing with the Agricultural Development Corporation. As I recall, when ADC was originally set up in 1972, it had two major objectives. One was to provide financial assistance in order to maintain and establish family farms in Alberta. Second, the corporation's role was further defined by establishing it as a lender of last resort. Over the years, I recall the Premier of Alberta and the former Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture indicating to the House that they thought that, as a guide, the Agricultural Development Corporation should function at approximately a 5 per cent loss per year in terms of its total lendings.

I note that a statement in the annual report of the Agricultural Development Corporation tabled for 1978-79 indicates that for that fiscal year the dollar value of the arrears, compared to a total portfolio of \$135 million, was something less than 3 per cent. That percentage loss concerns me. I'm not concerned that in fact there was a loss. I think the inherent philosophy of the Agricultural Development Corporation, that it is to function as a lender of last resort, necessitates by the very definition of that phrase that ADC is to be innovative, risk-taking, and is to go out of its way to cater to and deal with a number of people who might be considered marginal in agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, I'm concerned that perhaps that loss was not as large as it was originally intended to be. While that may sound like a strange statement for one ordinarily very concerned about fiscal responsibility, I'm very concerned that the mandate of ADC is perhaps not quite as aggressive as it might be. I really would like to know from the minister what discussions he might have had with the chairman of the Agricultural Development Corporation in regard to that 3 per cent loss or arrears factor.

The second area I'm very concerned about today is loan processing. I would like to read for the benefit of all members here today, and to you, Mr. Chairman, and the Minister of Agriculture, three letters I received recently on the subject of loans processing by administrative officers within the Agricultural Development Corporation. I've selected these from a series I have received — and that I'm sure all members of this Assembly have also received — from farmers throughout this province, because I think they highlight and put forward some basic concerns. The first comes from a farmer in the Fort Assiniboine area:

I applied for a debt consolidation loan through the [local] D.A. office about two months ago. Today I contacted the D.A.'s office and was told my loan had not been looked at yet and it wouldn't be for at least six more weeks. I was told that the loans officer was greatly overworked especially since the latest changes were made to the A.D.C. Loans Program . . .

My loan application was completed and delivered two months before the new changes and it still has six weeks to go before it is processed. What about the farmers who apply now?

Our government took great pride in announcing the new changes and how these changes were going to ease some of the financial burden for some of the farmers. The changes were welcomed . . .

I feel [however] that your personal attention and intervention is needed in this matter. I feel you should help the train get on the right track. Find out the reasons loan applications are treated so listlessly by government employees . . . It could be the Loans Officers' Department [locally] is overworked and under staffed.

I'm confident if this situation is not rectified soon the new Loans Program will eventually do more harm for our government than good.

A second letter received from a constituent of mine is a little longer:

The Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation's new "Beginning Farmer Loan Program" has received much publicity. This program while it can be invaluable in encouraging further development of the agricultural industry has one serious shortcoming in its administration which promises to eliminate its

effectiveness for any beginning farmer. This is especially true for a person beginning a farming enterprise completely on the strength of his own resources and who then most needs financial help.

The main problem appears to be a manpower shortage in the local Agricultural Development Corporation office. Because the ADC loans officer . . . is severely backlogged in loan applications due to the apparent lack of . . . assistance for him . . . the minimum waiting period just to have a loan application reviewed is over three months. This kind of time lapse while it may serve to discourage applicants who are not completely serious in their efforts to obtain financial assistance becomes ridiculous for any beginning farmer who attempts to purchase land for his future farming enterprise. There is no vendor of farmland who is willing to wait for more than three months while his land is tied up by an offer to purchase. This is only part of the time needed for a buyer to receive final word of . . . confirmation or rejection from ADC.

It is obvious that anyone who is obligated to purchase farmland to begin a solid farm operation, even though on his own he may be able to acquire land, will not find this at all practical if further financial support from ADC is not assured.

In the same way a prospective farmer with the necessary [applications and] qualifications but without a great deal of equity cannot begin to consider the purchase of land . . . even though his chance to eventually receive ADC assistance may be excellent.

When real estate agents encourage vendors not to allow potential buyers more than three weeks to obtain financing a waiting period of over three months caused by an administrative difficulty certainly cancels a lot of the effectiveness [of this very positive] "Beginning Farmer Program" . . . Until this waiting period is reduced to some sort of reasonable time there is no real "Beginning Farmers Program" . . .

It is important for ADC to maintain reasonable standards and from these a good reputation with respect to giving quick notification regarding financing for land purchases. Vendors of farms while they may prefer to sell their property as agricultural land, are often not prepared to wait indefinitely for a prospective farmer to receive word from ADC. They may choose for the sake of convenience to sell to someone who is able to obtain fast mortgage approval from a bank but likely will not use the land for agriculture.

And a third arrived today from a local agricultural development committee. Again:

. . . much concern was expressed about the great amount of loan activity in the area and subsequent loan processing back-up.

There exists in this area a problem with the [Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation] lending policy — in specific regard to time of processing.

Mr. Chairman, I'm most concerned about the message that keeps coming through in these letters. To paraphrase that message, its simply something along these lines: you politicians have created a good policy and a good program, but it is not reaching farmers because of internal ADC administrative problems. It is in the area of internal ADC administration with respect to loan application processing that I raise this particular concern today.

Mr. Chairman, ADC is not doing the job that I as an

elected representative expect from it. It's slow and it's tardy in reacting to current economic problems in agriculture, particularly in the loan area. While there are several areas that might be raised, I simply want to concentrate on the one of loans processing. The question to the minister is: why is ADC so slow? If the answer is a lack of staff, then I'd like to suggest that the minister pass on to his deputy minister and to the chairman of the Agricultural Development Corporation that several steps can be immediately implemented to remove this backlog of applications.

The first step is kind of obvious. They could cancel all leave or all holidays scheduled by senior ADC officials and loans officers for at least the next three months until the backlog of applications is cleared away. They could deal with Agriculture Canada, and second from that particular organization the local FCC loans officers. Third, they might check with the Alberta Opportunity Company. I see advertisements and statements in papers coming forth periodically from the Alberta Opportunity Company saying that the number of their loans is down. There very well may be a few loans officers there who might be seconded to assist the Agricultural Development Corporation. A fourth item might be that for the next three or four months at least, senior internal administrative people in Alberta Agriculture might be redirected from their normal day to day responsibilities to assist the Agricultural Development Corporation in its efforts to concentrate on removing the backlog. Fifth, ADC might hire on a contract basis a number of retired or semi-retired farmers who have served on local agricultural development committees over the years. Sixth, we now have in our society a group of senior citizens with a world of experience in a variety of other areas, including banking and financial institutions, who might very well be prepared to devote some of their time to assisting the Agricultural Development Corporation in clearing up this backlog.

A third area, Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wonder if I could apologize to the hon. member and ask the committee's permission to have the Minister responsible for Culture make an introduction of visitors.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

#### head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS** (reversion)

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, 52 students from St. Joseph's school in Whitecourt. They are here with their teachers Sue Melnyk and Terry Gerling, and their bus driver Norm Vandenhoueten. They have come for a tour of the Legislature Building. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

head: **GOVERNMENT DESIGNATED BUSINESS**

#### head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS** (Committee of Supply)

#### Department of Agriculture (continued)

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The last point I was getting to dealt with the board of directors of the Agricultural Development Corporation. In the past, in a variety of different capacities that I've had the good fortune to be associated with in the government of Alberta, I spent a considerable amount of time working with and dealing with the board of directors. I think they're fine people; they come from all parts of the province. Unfortunately, they seem to have the one tendency today — not to be overly critical; I just point it out as an observation I have — that all too often they've concentrated their efforts in the boardrooms of the Agricultural Development Corporation at its head office in Camrose.

I'd like to recommend to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the minister that that board of directors start touring this province and talking to farmers in all parts of this province. I don't believe their board meetings have to be held in Camrose. One of the things this government has done over the last number of years, of course, is build a variety of airports in and around Alberta. Communications systems are as excellent in this province as they are anywhere, and to me it's high time the board of directors got out of Camrose and started touring this province, started talking to farmers in all parts of the province. It's an extremely large province, and they may — may — get the current reaction from local farmers with respect to the area of activity they're involved in. An ivory tower approach is not necessary in 1980. It's back to the grass roots. That's something that has to be instilled from the top and by the top in the Agricultural Development Corporation.

On that point, Mr. Chairman, I'd say thank you.

MR. BORSTAD: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the minister's recent announcement on the beginning farmer program. I hope the field staff do not find reason to turn most of the applicants down. I have had a number of complaints from my constituents. They say that when they phone for a request for information on the program, they are almost turned down over the phone. So I would agree with the Member for Barrhead, though this is probably a complete reversal of the problem he's having. We're eliminating them pretty fast. If this is the case, not many people will qualify in my area.

Could the minister advise the Assembly if this is the policy of the board?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, with your permission I'll reverse the order, because it's easier to start backwards.

To the Member for Grande Prairie: that is not the policy of the board. The intention in announcing the program was to do exactly what it was meant to do; that is, provide young people with the opportunity to become involved in agriculture. If there is a problem in that particular office, I have a note and I'll certainly check into it.

To reply to the questions of the hon. Member for

Barrhead with regard to ADC; first of all, the limited loss discussions in the annual report. Judging that ADC at that time of course was a lender of last resort, the losses that would have accrued would have been substantially larger than those indicated in the report itself. I suppose one should judge that report in two ways: first of all, the number of farmers it basically helped; secondly, to look at the position of those individual farmers with whom ADC as a lender of last resort were involved and had any dealings in the acquisition of land. The escalating prices in farmland throughout the province — and of course, as a lender of last resort for the acquisition of land, made the collateral which ADC would hold until such payment were made — made it very, very difficult. If you were trying to set a target of losing or even remaining equal, for those who found it difficult and could not meet the repayment ability, the escalating cost of land through inflation made it difficult for ADC to lose any money in land itself. So I suggest to you that the only aspect that really would be involved, tied directly with ADC and its losses, would have been at that time tied with agribusiness in those areas of direct loans which were available.

To the hon. Member for Barrhead and to all hon. members with regard to ADC and the loan processing activities: indeed unfortunately, I suppose, the timing of the announcement of the program itself made some pressures upon a normal system, because many young people, in anticipation of some changes, had been waiting at that time. Of course the announcement of the program itself, coming very close to spring planting, provided yet another stress on the system as it pertains throughout this province.

But that is not to say there are some indications that we have, first of all, an influx of applications that vary throughout the province. Some loans officers are receiving more work than others. Also, a few comments are filtering back that communication directly to the loans officer could perhaps be improved. I say to the hon. Member for Barrhead, and indeed to all hon. members, that I'm as concerned as the individual in regard to seeing that the program itself is successful.

In achieving that, if the backlog we've built up at the present time is causing some problems in the main office in Camrose or, indeed, continues to be a problem in the field, we're in the process at the present time of looking, first of all, at the work load, the individuals involved, as to whether we can provide some short-term, interim help that would carry them over the heavy period. We're also looking at the opportunity of utilizing full-time for a period other members of Agriculture or those who have been involved with the Ag. Development Corporation on an ongoing base, which would perhaps catch up the backlog, if it is tied with the limited number of applications that can be handled in Camrose itself.

If necessary, we're quite willing to look at bringing in individuals from the private sector, if it'll speed things up. If we can change the basic documentation to provide the basic information and do it in a much better way, that is being looked at at the present time. If it requires the hiring, on a temporary basis, of some field staff to do the appraisals or to tie it with the industry or other aspects of people involved in agriculture, we'll certainly do that as well. So all the items that were mentioned are indeed under review at the present time.

I recognize that perhaps it is quite difficult when you have a sort of period of peace and quiet, and then announce a new program, which I'm sure has generated many, many applications, certainly more than the

average, and indeed more than the new program will generate after it has the opportunity to run for a few months, particularly at this time of the year. So I'm quite willing to look at all the suggestions that have been made — some of them were already being reviewed — and say to all hon. members that our goal, and indeed the goal of all members within their constituencies, is as stated: to provide that type of service to those who are interested in agriculture from the beginning farmer aspect, and to provide services of direct lending of last resort in the other two areas that ADC will provide to those already involved in agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, some questions were asked. The Member for Bow Valley was interested if we have any people, involved on a full-time basis, who are looking at land use. The [answer] is, yes, we have one full-time person who represents Agriculture at all the basic hearings. Any decisions that are made in suggested new lines of communication, whether they be power lines, main transmission lines, to attend hearings where there are changes in basic pipelines applications, and to work with all government agencies; but mainly to make sure that agriculture, through the local individuals who are affected, has the opportunity to present the side of agriculture, because it's so important. Transmission lines in irrigation areas — any change in the pattern that hinders the operation not only slows down production but costs money. So, indeed, we have one full-time individual doing nothing but going around looking after the basic interests of agriculture and helping in any way he can.

Secondly, in regard to purple gas as tied with sod farms, the Provincial Treasurer will touch on that when his estimates come up. So if the hon. member will watch, he's been alerted that it's part of the question.

The new ag. building, in a rough forecast, should be ready somewhere in 1983. Whatever renovations are done to the existing building, of course . . . No decision has been made as to its disposition and who should use it.

Mr. Chairman, with those few remarks, I think we've caught most of the questions.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I might ask the minister four very quick questions with regard to ADC; without any build-up, simply four questions about the announcement just made.

Mr. Minister, why did it take about 11 months to get the changes in the ADC program started? During the session last spring, Mr. Minister, it was indicated that a very extensive review of the program was under way. Number two, why didn't the staff know about the changes, so they could tell people about them as soon as they were announced rather than having to wait the best part of a week?

Thirdly, why weren't the forms in shape? They're talking about redoing the forms now. It's going to be late. Fourthly, what are the problems between the staff and the board? Very frankly, there seems to be a communication problem there.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, first of all, time. I guess it's very difficult to answer. The problems that exist in a total review and, I suppose, the suggested changes all take time. Because the program is strictly an agricultural program, the onus timewise certainly falls to Agriculture. But rest assured, Mr. Chairman, that as much time as possible was placed in the total review, in trying to arrive at a solution that would meet the terms of reference or the goal we set to achieve. If a time factor was involved —

that it should have sooner — I guess that rests on my shoulders. I suggest to you that sometimes the wheels turn more slowly than one would like to see.

Staff were aware of the program almost immediately; at least, Camrose was notified of the new program even before the announcement.

Forms. It's not a matter of changing forms. It's my understanding that the forms that exist certainly meet all the requirements of the new program without any changes. I mentioned that perhaps if the number of forms is the factor slowing up the applications at the present time, then I suggest that either we have too many or they're too cumbersome. The review of the form at the present time is not tied with the program. But if it is a problem timewise in getting the applications to Camrose, perhaps we should take a look at it.

Fourth, the problems of communication: it's difficult, and at the time I feel that perhaps a better line of communication is needed between Camrose and the loans officers in the field. Perhaps the suggestions and the review ongoing at the present time would give us the opportunity to bring the regional loans officers in who could communicate directly to their people in the field districtwise.

So I'm as concerned as the hon. Leader of the Opposition with regard to clearing up, hopefully, no serious problems in the matter of communication because of dealing with individuals. Secondly, if the forms are not the problem, they apparently need no change. The availability of staff in this case — there are vacancies in some of the loans areas. Certainly we'll do everything in our power to see that those vacancies are filled with competent people to carry out the program.

Agreed to:

4.1 — Program Support	\$1,810,509
4.2 — Family Farm Services	\$20,345,819
4.3 — Advisory Services	\$5,800,035
4.4 — Community Services	\$7,126,750
Total Vote 4 — Rural Development Assistance	\$35,083,113

#### Department Total

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, before we go into the final vote, I understand the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, his counterparts, and federal counterparts all met to discuss the drought in western Canada. Have they come up with any suggestions or changes other than what we've discussed in the estimates as far as taking an inventory on forage or feed in western Canada, or pumping water? Were any other areas discussed?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding departmental people met again on Friday with the western provinces. I haven't had the opportunity to sit down with them and go through the total review of items they discussed, other than the information on inventories. Apparently we have looked at inventories on a much broader scale other than the ones mentioned that we usually take a look at, tied with our own provincial need, and that's the availability of existing hay left over from the winter, pending those that will continue to feed because of no grass. They have gone much further than that, looking at the total inventories across western Canada from the point of view of coarse grains and feed in general that might have to be, if it were to continue,

moved from one province to the other, if it were necessary; first of all, trying to establish whether there are surpluses within western Canada that would give us the opportunity to have that sort of interprovincial movement of feed.

So I would say, other than the information I have on a total inventory classification and the in-depth study there, nothing that I haven't already mentioned when we were discussing the estimates, although we'll certainly keep hon. members abreast of the information as it's available.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the minister with regard to the ECA report on the Oldman River and, as well, the studies on the Bow River and the future use of those two major water streams in the province. Listening to the Minister of Environment, one of my concerns is that the input from Agriculture, which has the biggest stake as far as I'm concerned — we have a big stake in the future use of the water in those two specific rivers I mentioned — that potentially the Department of Environment and environmentalists are determining the future use and structures that are put on those water streams. As farmers across the province of Alberta, we depend on the Minister of Agriculture to represent our point of view. Certainly it may have some biases, because we have certain vested interests. In the operation of the minister, are those the points of view the minister takes and imposes very intensely upon the Minister of Environment, and debates the side of agriculture when the question is before . . . I believe a cabinet committee will determine, hopefully, the final outcome of the ECA report and the studies on the Bow River. It's my hope that Agriculture takes a very firm stand about our future needs and that we benefit.

As I look at the ECA report — which is totally a compromise report, nothing else — the chairman, Dr. Platt, attempted in the best way he could, in his normal fashion of displaying things, to compromise between agriculture and environmentalists. I think it's time we had some leadership. As far as I'm concerned, the point of view must be made. The representation I make on behalf of people in agriculture in southern Alberta is that we must look at the needs of water in both the Bow River and the Oldman River for agricultural purposes.

It isn't a time for compromise reports. I would expect from my Minister of Agriculture here in the province of Alberta that that side of the question be placed very firmly with the Minister of Environment. It's becoming more urgent. I think you must urge even upon your colleague the Minister of Environment that the question must be answered. In the Assembly today I felt the answer to my question in question period was a put-off again; that it will come eventually, I must wait, and I must have patience. I'm just about getting fed up with that nonsense from the Minister of Environment. We just shouldn't expect those kinds of answers or that kind of timetable, in his mind or in this Assembly's mind.

I only want to impress on the Minister of Agriculture that I and the farmers of southern Alberta expect more from him. Particularly in relation to the weather we're having not only in southern Alberta but all across Canada, the question becomes even more urgent. I know that if we continue the way it is, the Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District will have a water shortage. When beets and row crops are in a very vulnerable time of the year, we're going to have to shut the water off. We're in that kind of situation. Announcing the dam or dealing with the Oldman and the Bow River doesn't quite solve the

problem this year.

Since I started raising the question last fall and since the ECA report, the Minister of Environment — and I don't know what other committees are having input — hasn't given the question top priority. We're going to slide into this summer, and in the answer to the question from the hon. Member for Bow Valley, it sounds like the Minister of Environment is sliding along with the question. If we don't answer it until this fall, that means the first budgeting we can do for any type of program is in 1981-82, which is just about two years down the line. I was expecting budgeting in this year's budget for that whole report down there. But it isn't in the estimates this year, which only leads to difficulties. We have a dry year this year; and who knows, we may even have one equally as bad next year. That's a lot of assumption, but we're not getting the item in place. Maybe we're just a small opposition of four or five people on this side of the House that doesn't issue any political threat, but I think the Minister of Environment must realize . . . I think you, Mr. Minister, as the Minister of Agriculture — someone must become vocal not only in placing the issue at the desk of the Minister of Environment about the needs of the farmers, but as a leader in agriculture. We expect that from you, Mr. Minister.

Through you, Mr. Chairman, to the minister. What point of view is the minister taking at this point? On behalf of all those farmers in southern Alberta, can I expect a firm position, even public? It's nice to stand alone and maybe even differ from your government colleagues. We do need the voice at this point in time.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, in reply to the hon. member, rather than pick a site or sites within southern Alberta and to pass comment on the particular area and what the solution should be, I would like to say this. As the Minister of Agriculture responsible for agriculture in the province, my responsibilities go deep. As an Albertan, my responsibilities to Canada could go deep. As a member of the North American continent, they go just as deep because we are now talking about . . . You mentioned the word "compromise". I don't think we have that opportunity that we should be able to compromise agricultural production, because if you look throughout the world at the responsibilities that indeed lie to North America in its capability in food production, and look at Canada and its capabilities — both past because abilities and capabilities have been shown by individuals in the agricultural field, what they can do — and look at the areas of production on which we have barely touched, our basic responsibilities go deep. Certainly as deep, because we're talking about basic survival, about agricultural production.

I say to the hon. member, and indeed all hon. members, that when you talk about water management it's a responsibility to see that agriculture is safeguarded, because water management, coupled with soil and heat, is the backbone of production. Agricultural potential and the opportunity to represent to see that that potential is achieved is my responsibility, and I intend to carry it out. I might say that when you're talking about water management, the Minister of Environment is not walking alone in that aspect as well. From an agricultural point of view, it's quite easy to understand what water management can mean to the future of this province, because not every other area throughout North America has, first of all, the availability of water and, secondly, the availability of land you can get that water to with the system that

exists in southern Alberta.

I think the funding that has been allocated on an annual basis in working with the areas on the upgrading is of most importance. Indeed part of the storage systems, whether on-stream or off-stream, that has continued to date and will continue is an indication that we're certainly dedicated to the area in its ability to be able to meet that requirement, and accept our responsibilities. All hon. members can rest assured that water management has had and will have the agricultural input, because it has to be part of it.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I want to make it very clear to the minister . . . I guess partly I was being critical of the minister's actions, but the point I was attempting to make is that in the agricultural industry we support any kind of public statement the minister can make, any urging the minister can make with the Minister of Environment, who seems to be the key person to make the public announcement about the future of the Bow River and the Oldman River. We only ask that the minister clearly, and I would even say publicly, be very forceful about the minister's position.

Mr. Chairman, I know the minister is concerned about the future of agriculture, certainly the availability of water for agriculture in southern Alberta. I know the minister is concerned about that. I'm only impressing that we want that voice to be as public and as strong as possible at all times, so that we know we have a voice here in the Legislature and certainly in the cabinet of the government of Alberta. I personally know that the minister feels that way. I can only say that the money for rehabilitation, the money for assisting the districts, certainly has some good purpose. But we're in a new era of decision-making with regard to water management in southern Alberta, and that's the question with regard to on-stream or off-stream storage and how it has to be made. Certainly the farmers in southern Alberta want on-stream storage. They want the capability of having the water resource available to them when they need it, not having any worry about that supply being there when they need it. I can only say, Mr. Chairman, that I urge that on the minister, and in the comments, which I felt were a little general, the minister has partly said that to me.

Agreed to:

Department Total

\$98,833,395

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, I move the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

#### Executive Council

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe we held Vote 6 on Executive Council. The others were approved.

#### Vote 6 — Natural Sciences and Engineering Research

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I should make three or four opening comments. I appreciate the House holding the estimate.

Mr. Chairman, I think I would like to see us accomplish four objectives from the course of the questions we asked in question period and from some commitments

from the hon. member Mr. Musgreave. Those four commitments or objectives would simply be this: first of all, some kind of commitment from the member and from the council that from here on regular medical checkups will be provided for people who are working with potentially dangerous materials. Secondly, the administrative procedures at the Research Council will be reorganized to retain administrative credibility. Thirdly, research in areas where there are potential health hazards will be recommenced only after adequate safeguards are in place. Fourthly, the hon. member will take seriously his responsibilities reporting to the Assembly.

While I wasn't here the other evening, I noticed that the hon. member talked about meetings we were going to hold the next day. It seems to me rather incumbent upon the member to assume that responsibility for accountability to the Assembly. So the four objectives from my point of view are: getting some kind of commitment that regular medical checkups are provided for people working in those dangerous areas; secondly, this question of accountability; thirdly, the rearranging of the administrative procedures of the council. And fourthly, the work that has been stopped until new facilities are in place — that we get a commitment that work will commence when those facilities are in place.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Chairman, as chairman of the Research Council of Alberta, I would like to take this opportunity the committee has given me to review the questions raised in committee today and the other evening. First of all, though, I'd like to point out that I think it's important that we clarify the role of the Research Council and its relation to the Legislature.

Under the Alberta research Act, as amended July 4, 1979, we have a 15-member council made up as follows: Dr. Forester, Dean of Graduate Studies, the University of Alberta; Dr. Cooper, vice-president, research, the University of Calgary; Dr. Bowman, chairman of AOSTRA; Mr. Brooker, president of Brooker Engineering; Dr. Evans of Sherritt Gordon Mines; Dr. Hardy of R.M. Hardy & Associates; Mr. John Nodwell, president of Canadian Foremost Ltd; Mr. Pike, a retired businessman from Wetaskiwin; Dr. Stanley, president of Stanley & Associates Engineering; Mr. Tottrup of Tottrup & Associates of Edmonton; Mr. Williams, president of Calgary Power Ltd; Dr. Cloutier, president of the Research Council of Alberta. In addition, there are two members of the Executive Council, the hon. Hugh Planche, Minister of Economic Development, and the hon. Jack Cookson, Minister of Environment, and myself as chairman.

As part of the new mandate to the Research Council, approval was given to block funding of the council. This will give us our flexibility in making contracts with clients, provide for more accurate accounting of various research projects, and be more responsive in setting guidelines for recruitment and retention of staff.

Mr. Chairman, as the chairman of the council, I see my role as helping to guide the activities to serve the needs of the people of Alberta and, of course, if I have the support of my board, developing and pursuing policies that will see the approval of our estimates. I see my role as an important part in developing new scientific opportunities that will strengthen our province and improve the welfare and progress of the urban or rural life of the people of Alberta and our nation.

In 1979, Mr. Chairman, we carried out an extensive

review aimed at assessing current research activities and establishing the direction for the further development of our activities. This operation, which involved a major effort by the staff of the Alberta Research Council, was carried out in consultation with government departments and with agencies, industry, and universities. It resulted in a long-range plan which was approved by the board of the Alberta Research Council last fall and subsequently endorsed by the government. This plan calls for major expansion of our activities in the next few years in a few key areas.

To ensure that the proper implementation of this long-range plan is carried out, the management of the council proceeded to examine and review the internal operation and proposed a new organization and management structure. This reorganization was approved by the board of the council at the end of 1979 and implemented early in 1980. Apart from a regrouping of the management of research activities along the major thrusts identified in the long-range plan, special attention was given to the general administration and support services.

Firstly, Mr. Chairman, I would like to deal with some aspects of our accounting operations. Formerly, for the information of the members of the committee, we were operating two accounting systems: one to account for funds for research activities financed from government appropriation, and the second to account for funds received from contract work. Running two systems was deemed necessary to perform contract work within contract deadlines. Continued growth in the contract work — in this year alone we will have 333 contracts to administer — increased the volume of work in the second system. Inconsistencies between the two were creating difficulties in relating the two sets of accounts. One area of difficulty has involved the accounting for shared resources such as administrative and technical support, the use of capital assets, and the sharing of staff hired on appropriations. Problems were created in the allocation of overhead costs and the ultimate determination of accurate full-cost data related to specific projects.

Last fall, Mr. Chairman, the board of directors approved a proposal for consolidation of all accounting information in a single system of accounting which would emphasize a zero based budget approach to our accounting methods to give us better control over budgeting and accounting information. The firm of P. S. Ross and Partners was commissioned to assist council in the design and implementation of an interim project costing system which was to be implemented in the current fiscal year. The design of the system was completed last month, and the council is now using that design. Significant features of the new accounting system include labor costing, internal transfer pricing for in-house services, allocation of overhead costs, cash receipts, revenue reporting, and asset control.

During the present transitional period as we move from the old system of accounting to the new one, we are experiencing delays which inevitably occur whenever changes are made to accounting systems. With respect to the overpayment of accounts in the year ending March 31, 1980, alleged by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, I find it difficult to confirm his information. Our audit for the year is not yet complete, so if there is an overpayment we have not yet found it. However, Mr. Chairman, anyone with the slightest knowledge of accounts payable procedures, invoicing procedures, and monthly statement procedures appreciates that there are times when human beings, being human, make errors. This is why we have

auditors — not only to ensure that funds are not stolen, but to ensure that proper accounting of goods, services, and salaries is carried out.

With regard to the \$90,000 that was overpaid in April, which the Leader of the Opposition mentioned, I think he misunderstood the information he was given. As a result of our revised accounting procedures, which I'll speak about in some detail later, we recovered \$80,761 in April that related to our 1979 accounting year. He also questioned whether the University of Alberta would continue business and research relations with us. After the hon. member said to check the accounts, we checked with the university and, to the best of our knowledge, they have never refused to deal with us. Still on the matter of accounts, the Member for Little Bow stated:

We find that nine companies have decided to stop doing business with the Research Council because of non-payment or overpayment . . .

In January and February of this year one Toronto based office supply company refused to do business except by C.O.D. because of slow payment. Two U.S. companies also requested C.O.D. payments earlier this year. Mr. Chairman, I'm going to outline our corrective action. But the hon. Member for Little Bow also said, and again I quote *Hansard* of May 13:

We find that a large sum of money has not been accounted for.

Now obviously he must have garnered this information from someone who knows about the disappearance of public funds. Mr. Chairman, I ask: will he as a responsible member of this Assembly supply the name of the individual or individuals suspect? We would like to have the police investigate this immediately, because we do not want any clouds of suspicion hanging over the heads of loyal employees who are handling money at the Alberta Research Council.

Similarly, the Leader of the Opposition asked why Woods Gordon were engaged by the Alberta Research Council. The answer is quite simple. Mr. Chairman, Woods Gordon management consultants were commissioned to propose a management pay policy system which would reflect the revised roles of the management group within the new organizational structure. The revised pay structure is designed to be internally equitable and competitive in the external market place.

Still on the matter of accounting, Mr. Chairman, I'm now going back to the fiscal year ending March 31, 1979, and dealing with the questions raised by the Auditor General on accounting procedures for that period. I'd like to advise members of the committee of our actions after I received the letter from the Auditor's report, and my response to the Provincial Auditor on January 21, 1980. First of all, dealing with fixed assets: we immediately hired an accounting firm early this year to establish fixed asset records. We have established a procedure to record and document asset acquisition and control in the future. This work was completed by March 31, 1980.

With regard to our sponsor's account: all research management filed copies of research contracts with our accounting department. Legal responsibility was confirmed with sponsors before expenditures were made for proper budget control on all research projects. Periodic billing of sponsors was to be instituted. These procedures were in place by March 31.

With regard to discretionary funds: unexpended balances in sponsors' accounts and accumulated amounts of recoveries of overhead expenses were placed under the control of the council's board of directors late in 1979.

All expenditures incurred under this account must now receive approval of the board.

With regard to investments and patents: a list requested by the Auditor General of all council investments, sponsoring organizations, and patents arising from research has been prepared. A project control system which provides for recording expenditures relating to possible investment and future patents has been installed.

With regard to our cash receipts: an expense account has been established, and receipts are recorded daily and deposits are made promptly.

With regard to accounts receivable: we now have an aged trial balance of accounts receivable which have been prepared since November '79. These are reviewed monthly by the director of administration, who has the responsibility to report regularly to the board on the financial condition of these accounts to the council. On our cutoff procedures, all Alberta financial information system cutoff procedures have been established and documented prior to March 31.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to deal with some questions relating to the health of our workers and the handling of hazardous materials. One of the questions raised was: is there an ongoing monitoring of hazardous materials and the way they are handled at the Alberta Research Council? Our professional staff are trained in the handling of any such substance, and they must ensure that all necessary precautions are taken. Further, the Alberta Research Council uses the university's waste disposal system in handling chemicals under our supervision. Various accumulated substances were removed in April of this year. A special committee of qualified staff reviews the handling and use of chemicals within the facilities, to assure that chemicals are identified.

Another question was: has the Alberta Research Council asked for and received advice on handling waste of organic compounds? The answer is yes. At a meeting of the Alberta Research Council, Alberta Labour, and the city fire departments on February 20 of this year, Occupational Health and Safety officials were fully apprized of all our activities in the campus building and their possible hazards. The Alberta Research Council also uses the skill and expertise of the university waste management group and private companies, whenever doubt should arise as to the correct means of disposal.

Another question was: what steps does the Alberta Research Council have to deal with an extremely dangerous situation, from the standpoint of handling a variety of chemicals and organic compounds? Any handling of chemicals can be dangerous. To that extent, numerous substances no longer needed for research were recently removed from the campus building prior to the much-needed renovation of that structure. Proposed renovations are designed to bring the entire structure to a suitable and safe standard for our expanding research programs.

Mr. Chairman, the question was raised: where were hazardous materials being stored? Any waste or surplus materials which may have been present have been removed by a private company that specializes and is capable in the disposal of such materials. Those chemicals still required by Alberta Research Council staff are being retained by our professional staff in chemical areas in our laboratories.

On the matter of health hazards and resulting ill health, Mr. Chairman, I'm concerned about the mistrust and fear raised by the suggestion that five employees of the Research Council have died or suffer from cancer because of

working conditions. As a former chairman of the Cancer Crusade for the city of Calgary, I am saddened that opposition members would cause such concern in our community by suggesting that we are not looking after the health of our employees. From my experience with the cancer organization, raising these kinds of doubts often causes more distress and ill health from worry, when what we should be doing is concerning ourselves with minimizing health hazards. Within the limits of confidentiality of medical and other records, we have established that the cancers were of different natures and the work histories of the given employees were also of different natures. In conclusion on this item, Mr. Chairman, there is no correlation between their cancers and their work histories.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to deal now with the facilities at the Alberta Research Council. The council occupies space at 11 different locations in Edmonton, including the facility adjacent to the campus of the University of Alberta. In mid-1979, a consultant's review of the space facilities required by the Alberta Research Council to meet government standards indicated a shortage of 133,000 square feet. In December 1979 the Executive Council approved a long-range plan for the Research Council, which calls for a doubling of staff by 1984-85. Early this year, and as announced in the Assembly, a 157-acre site to house the new facilities was approved by the government at a cost of approximately \$13 million. In my view, the approval of the long-range plan, the acquisition of the site, and the support of the planning for the new facilities emphasize the importance this government places on research. The confidence they have in the Alberta Research Council and its board of directors in carrying out their expanded role in developing research is well exhibited by their commitment of public funds.

With regard to the campus building, after our site was acquired early this year, a letter from our president, Dr. Cloutier, was sent to all staff at the campus building advising renovations and a curtailment of activities would be necessary. This letter stated first of all that Dr. E. A. Babcock would be in charge as the building manager; that discussions had been held with Housing and Public Works and Government Services advising some operations would be housed elsewhere. There would be staff movements of some activities to provide laboratories for selected programs; some activities would be curtailed while a complete chemical inventory of the building was being carried out. One Alberta Research Council employee would be working with a radiation safety officer at the University of Alberta to ensure that movements of chemicals throughout the building were carried out safely. There would be temporary inconvenience and crowding. All of this was to result in an improvement of working conditions, and the president hoped they could count on the staff's full co-operation.

There has been no delay in starting reservations, as suggested by opposition members. It is the opposite. Moving staff, changing functions of building use, making sure that the changes meet the building codes, that exhaust systems are designed and work properly, that adequate working space requires plans to be drawn by engineering and architectural experts to house an extra 400 people in the next five years, and providing proper space will mean spending a large sum of money on several locations, not just the campus building. We hope to secure the initial financial support and complete our moves of staff by late summer.

Mr. Chairman, to go over this once again for the

benefit of committee members. Members of the Legislature will readily identify that with current cramped space, as identified on the '79 consultant's report, together with a doubling of research effort over the term of the long-range plan and before the new facilities are available for occupancy, one of the main problems facing the council was a provision of adequate facilities in the interim period. It will take some three years before the staff will start to move into their new permanent facilities. Having identified council's prime problem with respect to space, the following actions were taken. Effective January 1, 1980, an individual at the Research Council was identified by the board of directors to take charge of facilities development. Following a study of the current facilities, it was determined that three facets of the space problem need resolution in order to provide adequate facilities to carry out the council's obligation over the next few years. First of all, this meant reconstruction of the campus building to increase laboratory space through better utilization of that space. It meant leasing office space for a consolidation of purely office activities. It meant leasing suitable warehouse space for a central stores materials testing laboratory and a high-pressure laboratory.

With respect to the campus building, in order to maximize the utilization of that facility, a major upgrading will be undertaken, including the removal of hazardous substances, surplus solvents, and the disposal of inadequate fume hoods. Following this action, the utilization of the building was determined as suitable for purely laboratory and office activities. Because the present pilot plan of the campus building was to be converted to new uses, certain projects more suited to the pilot plan facilities were temporarily closed down and are in the process of being relocated to a new high-pressure facility at a site yet to be determined. Some of the laboratories are over 20 years old. It was found they did not meet current safety standards. Activities in these laboratories have been shut down until these standards are met. While it is true that the upgrading operation identified and removed certain hazardous chemicals to safe storage and/or disposal areas, this operation had to be carried out in preparation for the reconstruction.

Another question raised, Mr. Chairman, was that some members suggested we could not obtain insurance. Here are the facts on insurance. After consultation with Alberta Housing and Public Works, insurance risk management of Alberta Treasury requested consultants of Reed Shaw Stenhouse to evaluate our facilities. After a cursory review of the facilities, the risk evaluation consultant group from Reed Shaw Stenhouse concurred with the Alberta Research Council's internal evaluation of the campus building. In reviewing the situation at the campus building and our action plan to deal with renovations, the insurance and risk management group of Treasury agreed and felt they would not be involved further unless requested by the Alberta Research Council and Alberta Housing and Public Works to act as a resource in the renovations. Treasury informed us at the Alberta Research Council and Housing and Public Works that they would not be contacting the insurers as an uncontrollable and unaddressable risk was not identified. Therefore my understanding is that our buildings are insured under our group policy.

Dealing with the matter of the health of our employees, first let's look at the technical people. About one-third of our staff, or 140 people, work in chemical laboratories and pilot plants where chemicals are used. Whether this constitutes working under exposure to toxic chemicals is

debatable, as toxicity depends on concentration and length of exposure. We would be very concerned if any staff were exposed to toxic chemicals under hazardous conditions. We have much better measuring devices than heretofore, and we are better informed. Also more research is available that tells us of the hazards. Many of you remember watches that glowed in the dark, and playing with liquid mercury in your science labs. These are both considered hazardous activities today.

Only two of our staff have complained about what they thought were work-related health problems. They were referred to the diagnostic health referral unit of the personnel administration office. Medical doctors could not identify any medical problem relating to their work.

Some members questioned what ongoing medical examinations of our employees are carried out. This is not normal government practice. However, to emphasize again our expanding knowledge of the chemicals around us, a benign substance such as carbon tet., once a very common dry-cleaning agent, can have a long-term, serious effect on users of the product. The matter of ongoing, routine medical checks will be discussed at the next full meeting of the board of the Research Council.

As for safety, we have always maintained an active safety effort. Our policy, adopted by our board on March 21 this year, is as follows.

MR. R. CLARK: I apologize to the hon. member. Would it be possible for the hon. member to repeat what he indicated he would be taking to the board on this medical question?

MR. MUSGREAVE: I thought the hon. Leader of the Opposition missed that. The matter of ongoing, routine medical checks will be discussed at the next meeting of the full board of the Research Council.

As for safety, we have always maintained an active safety effort. Our policy, adopted by the board on March 21 this year, is as follows. First of all, safety ranks equally with research. The goal is the prevention of accidents. Council will take the necessary measures to provide safe working conditions and ensure safe working practices. Those members with supervisory responsibility are accountable for the safety of the employees in their unit. Each employee must accept his safety responsibilities and work and act safely at all times.

Mr. Chairman, I'd now like to read the introduction to our safety program distributed to our employees:

The Alberta Research Council accepts that the frequency and severity of accidents and injuries can and must be reduced. The booklet describes the implementation of a co-ordinated occupational health and safety program for the Research Council, in keeping with the Council's policy on safety.

This program covers all matters that may have an effect on the occupational health and safety of Research Council employees during the performance of their duties, and in no way limits any employee's rights under any legislation or legal agreement.

All standards and applicable regulations made under the authority of The Occupational Health and Safety Act and other protective legislation are minimum requirements of this program. Furthermore, additional standards will be set by the Council whenever it is deemed appropriate.

A key element of this program is the establishment of safety committees and will be formed from both management and employee representatives. These

committees will deal directly with the specific safety problems of each work area in order to ensure that all concerns are reported to those supervisors and managers who have the responsibility to correct unsafe acts and conditions.

Every effort is to be made to provide employees with basic information about the Safety Program, and specialized training will be available as required.

Mr. Chairman, to summarize the Research Council's safety effort, the primary objective of our program review was to establish shortfalls in safety at our facilities and rectify the concerns. We are continuing our safety committees at the campus building, at Clover Bar, at Campus Tower, and at Penhold. We are continuing the emergency unit at the campus building. This consists of a six-member group controlled by mobile communication to respond to an emergency situation. We are developing an emergency unit for our Clover Bar facility. We are developing an approved safety policy ranking safety with research. We are developing a safety program which familiarizes both staff and management of their safety responsibility with council.

We are developing a comprehensive training program covering areas of chemical safety handling and control; first aid; emergency survival for field crews; cardiopulmonary resuscitation; confined space entry, where some of our employees have to go in tunnels, sewers, or cells of this kind, so they'll be aware of the problems in these kinds of areas where there may be noxious gases or explosives. We are developing environmental monitoring for employees at our facilities and an educational training program which is consistent with specific needs; for example, back safety, accident prevention, fork lift safety, chemical spills, and emergency evacuation procedures.

Our safety program is parallel to that of the Alberta government safety program of 1977, with which our co-ordinator liaised with Personnel Administration of the Alberta government. The Alberta Research Council is one of the leaders in agencies and boards in appointing a full-time safety co-ordinator, establishing a safety department, and developing a comprehensive safety program and policy.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I'd like to say that many things are now happening at the Research Council. We're moving ahead with the implementation of our long-range plan. We're going through a reorganization that will allow us to manage our challenging growth. We are planning new major facilities that will consolidate most of our activities in one central location. Finally, Mr. Chairman, it is developing into one of the major, leading research organizations in this country. I'm confident that members of this committee, as well as the people of this province whom they represent, will give the Research Council the support it needs to carry out its mission.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, in responding to the comments from the hon. member, I think I would like to say four things. First of all, to the chairman of the Research Council, I take it the chairman is prepared to recommend to the board that there be some system of ongoing medical checkups, that that kind of policy is started. If we can get that kind of commitment from the chairman, certainly it seems to me that would go some distance toward taking the first step needed. I would like a very specific response to that.

I can appreciate the hon. member feeling that we may not have raised this matter the way the hon. member would have liked us to. But in the course of hearing

about the report of the committee talking about the health and safety conditions at the Research Council, if my counting was accurate, we heard at least six times the statement "we are developing" with regard to this area, with regard to monitoring. At least six times reference was made to that in this whole question of health and safety.

The second point I'd like to make to the hon. member — and whether the hon. member will agree to this is of course entirely up to him — is that I would hope that in the future we would get some kind of report such as we have today as far as the Research Council is concerned. We were being asked to approve some \$11.5 million without ever — and I could be mistaken; certainly very easily so — having a report in any detail to this committee at all from whoever is responsible for the Research Council. I would suspect that if members go back and check *Hansard*, we'll find this is the first time in the last 10 years that we've had any kind of detailed report as far as acts in the Research Council are concerned. Now I could stand corrected, but that's certainly my recollection.

The second point is: I would hope the hon. gentleman would establish this kind of practice of accounting to the Assembly prior to asking for the approval of the \$11.5 million.

The third point I want to raise is centred on this question of how it was that from the standpoint of space, of handling the chemicals — and the hon. member in his remarks indicated, Mr. Chairman, that there'd been a build-up over a long period as far as toxic materials, chemicals and so on — how it was that this particular situation developed. If I could be very candid about it, are we looking at ... In fact I had a letter from one of the members of the board of the Research Council suggesting to me that I should never have raised the matter in the House; that really the Research Council has an important role to play in Alberta. That's true. Then this individual went on to point out that the Research Council was not in very good shape in 1971 when the present government came to office. And that could certainly be the case.

But I would ask the hon. gentleman rather candidly: how long have we had this rather rudderless organization, if I can put it that way? I'm very pleased that now the government is giving the thing some form, but we heard about the need of getting space all across the city, the question of removal of the chemicals, the need to get accommodations in shape, and then the question of administration organization. I couldn't help but sit here and write down in my notes, how long has this been building up so we are now at the stage where, according to the hon. member, a number of changes are going to be made?

Mr. Chairman, to the hon. member who is accountable for the Research Council, I take it that the administrative organization, the work being done by Woods Gordon and the other firm — that some of those recommendations have been implemented and that has resulted in the \$80,000 the member referred to as money which was reclaimed, if I might use that term, as far as the last month or two are concerned.

The last question I'd put to the hon. gentleman on this occasion — and I don't like to get involved in personalities — is that I'd be very interested in knowing the present status of Mr. Eastman who, I understand, is the man in charge of administration over at the council. What's his situation?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I want to refer to last Tuesday's debate with regard to the matter at hand. The matter we were discussing at that point was the concept of member accountability. We've had earlier discussions, as we said then, about ministerial accountability. Our discussion and focus at that point in time was member accountability. I was a little concerned when the member rose in his position today and was going to say, I want to explain the operation of the Research Council. I thought at that point the member was going to say, I'm not totally responsible for the Research Council, nor am I responsible to report everything to this Assembly or be accountable to this Assembly for what goes on in the Research Council. The member didn't completely answer that question. I feel that the report given today showed a kind of accountability, and we appreciate that. The other evening when we raised questions with regard to specifics, the member didn't know of those specifics because the meeting was going to be the day after, or on Wednesday after last Tuesday. We didn't feel that that was very accountable, so we raised some questions with regard to sums of money and employees and things that needed investigating.

The hon. member today reported that a large sum of money — I think there was indication that some \$90,000 was of concern to begin with. Some \$80,000 is now accounted for, but there is still \$8,000, \$10,000 there. Now that's a fair sum of money that still needs to be reported on, and maybe the hon. member could mention a few details with regard to that.

But, Mr. Chairman, the question I'd like the member to make very clear to us is that being chairman of the Research Council, being a member of this Legislative Assembly, means that the member is accountable for what goes on and answerable in this Assembly. If the answer to that question is yes, then I'm satisfied, and we can proceed with other questions.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, just very briefly. I was one of the members last week who argued that we should delay the estimates until we had some answers, and I must confess that I thought the answers the member gave today were comprehensive. Some other questions have been raised and no doubt there may still be in the remaining time we are spending on the estimates, but what we received this afternoon was the kind of comprehensive report that frankly should have been available last week. We were being asked to accept, in a hasty way, \$11.5 million of public expenditures, with an assertion by the member responsible to this Assembly that the meeting was going to be tomorrow. I appreciate the fact that the hon. Government House Leader recognized that this committee's moving on the estimates last week would have been injudicious, and "injudicious" is the kindest way I could put it. Today we got the kind of comprehensive report that, if it had been received last week, no doubt would have meant that the estimates would have gone through as would normally have been the case.

But, Mr. Chairman, I think the Member for Little Bow makes an appropriate point; that is, the question of member accountability. As far as I am concerned, without getting into the discussions we've held before on ministerial accountability, this Legislature must be given a full and complete report and must be in a position where we have the questions that are raised in the committee answered before we as a committee grant supply.

I would just simply say to the member, who maybe got

caught in what was a delay in passing the estimates, that when it comes to this member or any minister, when we get into situations in the future where quite frankly the meeting is going to be the day after we deal with the estimates, I think this committee has to balk and dig in its heels and make sure we get the answers. We got the answers to a large extent today, at least to my satisfaction, and I appreciate those answers. It's just that I hope that next year when we deal with the estimates, we'll have the kind of comprehensive report prepared by the member, with the ability to answer the questions so that we don't need to go through this process again.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Chairman, to deal with the first point raised by the Leader of the Opposition, one of the difficulties I have ... I'd like to deal with your question and the question raised by the members for Spirit River-Fairview and Little Bow. I don't quarrel that a cabinet minister certainly has to be responsible to this committee for his estimates. The point I have tried to make, and why I detailed who the board members are, is that while I know I have a responsibility to this committee and to the House, on the other hand I am working with a board made up of 15 people, of which I am only one member, and I have two cabinet ministers with me. Granted, if they don't do what we want them to do, we have the power to get rid of them. But in the interim we do have to deal with these people. So I don't quarrel with the request for information.

But I would point out two things which are perhaps humorous. The other night, when you asked for a delay in Vote 6, which I was quite happy to do, you passed Energy Resources Conservation, \$11,320,000, and it took just long enough to say "agreed". Now I know how the system works; this is my fifth year. I must confess I've never heard questions raised about the Alberta Research Council. I came with as much information as I could. You asked me questions for which I didn't have detailed information, and I wasn't prepared to give it until I had an opportunity to get it. It was not a matter of stalling; it just takes time to dig out some of this material.

With regard to the medical inspections, I am recommending to our board that this matter be reviewed. I want the board to tell me why we shouldn't do it. My position is that we should do it, but we've got to listen to our medical people. We've got to know what it will cost, what kinds of results we can get from it, and what kind of program they recommend. But I want the board to consider that proposal. I can't tell the board, you've got to do this or else I'll resign. I have to work with my board. I'm saying that at the next meeting of the full board — and I've already instructed the president — that matter has to be on the agenda.

MR. R. CLARK: Don't worry about the cost.

MR. MUSGREAVE: I would like to point out one other little thing with regard to the Research Council. In fairness to the Leader of the Opposition, he told me he was going to ask me questions on the Research Council. I said: you know, I've sat here for 10 weeks; now you're going to ask me a question when I'm not going to be here. But he delayed. What I would like to point out to him — I believe he said last summer, when my appointment was made, that perhaps now we were getting a breath of fresh air at the Research Council. Let's hope it is, because there is a lot to be done.

As far as the \$90,000 is concerned, I think the hon.

Member for Spirit River-Fairview said there's \$10,000 missing. I'm saying it wasn't \$90,000. I think the figure was \$80,700; I haven't got the specific amount here. We don't have a figure of \$90,000 that we can identify; we're saying we do have one that's \$80,000. Okay?

As far as I know, Dr. Eastman is still our manager for administration. When you asked me that question, I immediately got a little concerned. I see him in the gallery, and I hope he's still on the board with us. He's responsible for our accounting functions, personnel, safety, building administration: many of these areas of responsibility.

To deal again with accountability, I think I have perhaps answered the question of the Member for Little Bow. I don't quarrel with that concept at all. If you felt that I wasn't responding the way you asked the other night, perhaps I was going on your performance of the last four years, when the Research Council went through fairly fast. I had a lot of material here, but I didn't know the number of people dealing with hazardous chemicals, and I didn't know that any of our staff had cancer. I didn't have all the answers to all the questions.

Agreed to:

Vote 6 — Natural Sciences and Engineering Research	\$11,561,000
Department Total	\$64,174,722

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

#### Treasury

Agreed to.

Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services:	
1.01 — Provincial Treasurer's Office	\$124,070
1.02 — Deputy Provincial Treasurer's Office	\$406,900
1.03 — Legal Services	\$102,700
1.04 — Administrative Support	\$929,100
Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$1,562,770
Vote 2 — Statistical Services	\$1,600,200

MR. PAHL: Mr. Chairman, with respect to Vote 2, I'd like to ...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The vote's already been voted on.

MR. PAHL: I know, but you didn't recognize me. Short of throwing something at you, Mr. Chairman, I guess I'll have to ...

AN HON. MEMBER: This corner of the room has that difficulty.

MR. PAHL: With your indulgence, I want to compliment the Provincial Treasurer on his commitment to increase the effort on the co-ordination of land-related information systems within the province. This was pointed out in last year's estimates. I see it even warranted a paragraph in the throne speech. On behalf of backbenchers ...

AN HON. MEMBER: Upper benchers.

MR. PAHL: . . . upper benchers who are concerned with this thing, although it's not a high-profile item, I believe it's very important to the management of our province, and I want to compliment the Provincial Treasurer directly on the initiative taken in this vote.

### Vote 3 — Revenue Collection and Rebates

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, lest the Provincial Treasurer think no one's interested, I think we should stop someplace and ask what research Treasury is doing in the area of long- and medium-term expenditure projections. I'm thinking in terms of 5 to 10 years, but there's nothing magic about the 5- to 10-year frame of mind. And what research is Treasury doing in the area of long- and medium-term revenue planning? I'd be very surprised, and very bitterly disappointed, if the Treasury people haven't done some projections as to long-term revenue, based on the present production of oil and natural gas in the province, moving to 85 per cent of the world price and perhaps some fallback positions. I would certainly want to be assured that some of that kind of work is going on.

I would also be very interested in knowing what projections the province has for accumulated surplus — the size of it now and, once again, the projections for the foreseeable future — because that rather becomes part of the overall question of financial management in the province. Certainly I see the Treasury Department having that kind of responsibility. Whether it's done inside, with the Treasury people, or whether it's contracted out to some firm, fair ball; but I'd like assurance that the work's being done and, secondly, some indication of the projections.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I can certainly assure the hon. opposition leader that work is being done in both those areas. I guess one can best say that scenarios are being developed, consonant with good financial management. I might add that it's very difficult, with the province of Alberta growing as it is, to be able to predict with any precision the rate of revenue or the rate of expenditure in the years ahead. I think the public accounts every year indicate a fair variance as to the amount of surplus or deficit that can be predicted. That's partly because we are unable to predict the exact rate of growth of the province, because of its rate of growth. However, we are certainly running off projections as to possible amounts of revenue that would accrue under various scenarios over varied numbers of years. As the years move ahead, of course, it becomes even more difficult. I think most would agree that 10 years ago any projections with respect to revenue or expenditure in 1980 would probably have been wide off the mark. But those projections are certainly taking place.

As I said in the budget, any projections, particularly of revenues, have to be based on the realization that the future looks basically sound. But that is only provided that the province is dealt with in a fair way by the federal government in the months ahead. So the situation is varying; it is fluid; it is somewhat volatile. When looking, for example, at future surpluses and projections of accumulated surpluses, I think there's no definitive way those can be pinned down either, because the province's economy is still vulnerable. Over the past two or three years we have had the benefit of being able to use surpluses, firstly for the municipal debt reduction pro-

gram, and more particularly this year, to begin the partial funding of pensions and the retirement of hospital debentures.

Those things are possible when there is a surplus. It's not possible to predict how long those surpluses will be enjoyed. It's quite clear that at some time, probably in the '90s, revenues from conventional crude oil will drop, and at that time there's going to have to be a reference and a taking by the Treasurer of the day, first of the surpluses, then of the income of the heritage fund, and then its capital. So we enjoy these at the moment. Predictions are being made and they'll be carefully invested in the meantime.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, to the Provincial Treasurer. The Provincial Treasurer said that sometime in the '90s there may well be this turnover. I'm not sure whether one should refer to them as the most liberal or the most conservative projections, but whichever way one looks at it, I take it that the best feel the government has today as a result of its projections is that sometime in the '90s we'll get to a turnover point. Mr. Treasurer, I interpret that turnover point to mean that that would be a time when our revenue from resources would not enable us to meet the day to day financial commitments of the province, and at that time there would be a decision made as to potentially using interest from the heritage fund to offset the General Revenue Fund of the province. So if that's the case and my interpretation is correct, we're looking at at least 10, and perhaps between a 10- and 20-year period, to use the government's own projections, as when interests will continue to go back into the fund. Is that an accurate assessment, Mr. Treasurer?

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. HYNDMAN: Not really, Mr. Chairman. My statement was based essentially on one of the government's key revenue sources for the General Revenue Fund and the heritage fund, and that is crude oil production. It's no secret. As we all know, it's dropping from 1.1 million barrels a day now, to something in the order of 300,000 in the early '90s. Of course the revenues from crude oil are far higher than they ever will be from synthetic oil.

Who knows when the day will be reached or when the lines will cross? For example, we don't know the extent to which there will be secondary recovery of conventional crude, massive, limited, or what; we don't know whether big new oil fields will be found. So there are a great many uncertainties. Every time an operating cost is built into the budget, though, we have to look carefully at what the expenditure down the road will be.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 3 — Revenue Collection and Rebates	\$32,586,200
Total Vote 4 — Financial Management, Planning and Central Services	\$19,746,600
Total Vote 5 — Public Debt Service	\$21,645,300

### Vote 6 — Public Service Pension Administration

DR. BUCK: One question to the Provincial Treasurer, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to know if the government's planning changes to The Public Service Pension Act which will require higher contributions to be paid by the people contributing to the plan. I'd like to know if the

Alberta Union of Provincial Employees has been consulted about the proposed increases, and will the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees be consulted before any increases are instituted? Can the Provincial Treasurer comment on that or answer those questions for me.

MR. HYNDMAN: We're not making any plans or proposals in that area at the moment, Mr. Chairman. In order to implement the partial funding approach, we are planning to bring that Act, plus the other related ones, into the Assembly this fall. But no changes are proposed at this time with respect to contributions. However, as part of a total review of pensions, down the road I would foresee reviewing the contributions by employees of all these pensions in light of and in relation to those made by the employer, to ensure that they're fair and equitable. If and when that review proceeds, there will be appropriate consultation with those who are interested.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, on the point of pensions. I believe representation has been made to the government, especially when the Deputy Premier Dr. Horner was here, on some type of pension program for farmers. I know there has been an advocate in the province who has brought that point to the attention of the members. I wonder if the Provincial Treasurer or the government has given any thought to some type of pension program for farmers, where they would be contributing . . . I can give a "for instance" to the committee, Mr. Chairman, where the farmer sells his land, his property, and has \$100,000 or \$200,000 in the bank. So he would be contributing a portion of that to sort of set up his own pension plan, but with some assistance from the provincial government in administration and maybe in putting something in from the provincial side.

I raise that because I believe Germany, or one of the countries over there, has taken some move in this direction. I'd like to know if any representation has been made — I believe Reg Kendrick made some statements to private members, and possibly to the government, looking at some program such as that. I'd like to know if the Provincial Treasurer has given any thought to it, or if any representation has been made to the Treasurer.

MR. HYNDMAN: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Chairman. No representations in that specific area have been made personally to me. I have not perceived any wide-ranging, in-depth, or broad cry for that approach on the submissions on that point, or feel that is something of general, wide-ranging interest in the farm population, then we'd certainly be happy to have a look at it. To date that degree of interest hasn't been demonstrated.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, then the government can provide the initiative. I would like to say to the Provincial Treasurer: would the Provincial Treasurer give an undertaking to feel out the farm organizations in this province to find out if the Provincial Treasurer's department and these farm organizations can get together and have a look at the problem?

MR. HYNDMAN: I would invite any and all of those involved in the farm area — if they'd like to make submissions, and if their members feel this is an area of special priority and prominence, I'd be happy to have a look at it to see if anything is developing.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 6 — Public Service	
Pension Administration	\$102,762,511

Department Total	\$179,903,581
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MR. HYNDMAN: Before finalizing the vote for the department, Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to acknowledge very briefly the wide range of competence and talents of the department, of the deputy minister, of all those in it, and of those of the minister's office. They often work against very significant time deadlines, and their work is of a very high calibre indeed.

I move the Vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now the vote for the salary contingency on page 421.

Agreed to:	
Salary Contingency	\$46,000,000

MR. HYNDMAN: I move the salary contingency vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Legislation.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, maybe we could do the special warrants on page 395 before we do Legislation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed, then, that we proceed to special warrants now before we go to Legislation?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

#### Special Warrants

Agreed to.

#### Attorney General

6 — Fatality Inquiries	\$13,713
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6 — Housing for Albertans	\$8,093,501
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#### Solicitor General

1 — Departmental Support Services	\$138,870
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#### Transportation

2 — Construction and Maintenance of Highways	\$1,800,000
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#### Treasury

5 — Public Debt Service	\$5,412,811
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MR. CHAIRMAN: Legislation; support to the Legislative Assembly.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, inasmuch as the hon. Speaker asked me to make some comments in carrying through the estimates, I wonder if I could just make some observations at the beginning of the vote. Then perhaps if members have questions . . . Oh, I'm sorry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the hon. member. We are voting special warrants that were required during the year for special services. We are not on the Legislation vote as such yet.

Agreed to:

### Legislation

1 — Support to the Legislative Assembly \$198,343

### Advanced Education and Manpower

2 — Assistance to Higher and Further Educational Institutions \$2,868,662

3 — Manpower Development and Training Assistance \$1,350,000

Department Total \$4,218,662

### Agriculture

1 — Departmental Support Services \$16,959,000

2 — Production Assistance \$250,000

3 — Marketing Assistance \$500,000

4 — Rural Development Assistance \$3,465,000

Department Total \$21,174,000

### Attorney General

2 — Court Services \$757,000

6 — Fatality Inquiries \$148,000

7 — Crimes Compensation \$84,000

Department Total \$989,000

### Consumer and Corporate Affairs

3 — Business Registration and Regulation \$241,638

4 — Regulation of Securities Markets \$543,700

Department Total \$785,338

### Culture

2 — Cultural Development \$7,000,000

3 — Historical Resources Development \$245,996

4 — International Assistance \$1,530,000

5 — 75th Anniversary Celebrations \$50,250,866

Department Total \$59,026,862

### Economic Development

1 — Economic Development and International Trade \$271,000

3 — Financing of Alberta Grain Terminals \$7,040,000

Department Total \$7,311,000

### Education

1 — Departmental Support Services 65,000

### Energy and Natural Resources

1 — Departmental Support Services \$688,745

4 — Forest Resources Management \$9,534,050

5 — Public Lands Management \$12,975

6 — Fish and Wildlife Conservation \$162,231

9 — Oil Sands Research Fund Management \$270,500

Department Total \$10,668,501

### Environment

2 — Pollution Prevention and Control \$28,921,100

3 — Land Conservation \$34,578,060

Department Total \$63,499,160

### Executive Council

1 — Executive Council Administration \$350,000

5 — Personnel Administration \$250,000

7 — Energy Resources Conservation \$1,571,000

10 — Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response \$708,000

Department Total \$2,879,000

### Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs

1 — Intergovernmental Co-ordination and Research \$35,000

### Government Services

3 — Government Transportation \$50,000

### Hospitals and Medical Care

2 — Health Care Insurance \$10,151,000

3 — Financial Assistance for Active Care \$8,537,524

4 — Financial Assistance for Long-term Chronic Care \$989,998

6 — Financial Assistance for Capital Construction \$1,000,000

Department Total \$20,678,522

### Labour

5 — Individual's Rights Protection — Human Rights \$25,000

### Municipal Affairs

2 — Financial Support for Municipal Programs \$2,290,200

3 — Alberta Property Tax Reduction Plan — Rebates to Individuals \$500,000

4 — Support to Community Planning Services \$409,000

6 — Regulatory Boards \$157,500

Department Total \$3,356,700

#### Recreation and Parks

2 — Recreation Development \$5,450,000  
3 — Provincial Parks \$67,000

Department Total \$5,517,000

#### Social Services and Community Health

3 — Child Welfare Services \$731,000  
10 — Financial Assistance for  
Community Preventive Services \$1,139,600

Department Total \$1,870,600

#### Solicitor General

1 — Departmental Support Services \$285,000

#### Tourism and Small Business

2 — Development of Tourism  
and Small Business \$55,900

#### Transportation

2 — Construction and Maintenance  
of Highways \$25,480,000  
3 — Construction and Operation  
of Rail Systems \$2,000,000  
4 — Construction and Maintenance  
of Airport Facilities \$1,240,000  
6 — Urban Transportation  
Financial Assistance \$6,500,000

Department Total \$35,220,000

#### Treasury

6 — Public Service Pension  
Administration \$7,322,521

TOTAL SPECIAL WARRANTS \$245,231,109

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move that the supplementary estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1980, under Sections 1 and 2 of The Appropriation Act, 1980, be reported.

[Motion carried]

### Legislation

#### Vote 1 — Support to the Legislative Assembly

##### 1.0.1. — Administrative Support

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I want to respond to part of the vote of the Legislative Assembly and point out to the members that in terms of administrative support there are some significant changes this year. One is the constituency offices that come under administrative support. I want to point out that the constituency offices, as amended by The Legislative Assembly Act, are being opened for the benefit of members, generally speaking. There are about 29 now in the province. The administra-

tive support would include such things. I think it's important for members to be aware that certain services are needed in those constituency offices, one being photocopying services. Another would be telephone service, Mr. Chairman, as an extension of the offices here in Edmonton, and also electronic secretaries such as telephone answering services that would be available within the constituency whether or not a member had a constituency office. I think it would be important to point those out. In addition, provision has been made for twice-a-year mailings by the members to their constituency. That's about a \$0.25 million estimate, and it's included in the estimates.

While I'm on my feet I'd like to comment that there are only two changes in the estimates of the Ombudsman. One is an overall increase of 6.5 per cent, which is probably in accordance with the general increases in terms of wage positions. There's a substantive increase in travelling, in that the Ombudsman and members of his staff will be attending a world conference of ombudsmen in Israel this year. In terms of the Chief Electoral Officer, the increase is somewhat minimal in view of the fact that it's between elections. So I would ask members to support the legislative estimates, Mr. Chairman.

#### Agreed to:

1.01 — Administrative Support	\$1,995,832
1.02 — Members' Indemnities and Allowances	\$2,662,273
1.03 — Speaker and Deputy Speaker — Office Services	\$106,216
1.04 — Government Members' Services	\$422,749
1.05 — Opposition Members' Services	\$440,082
1.06 — Legislature Committees	\$100,000
1.07 — Legislative Interns	\$87,595
1.08 — Hansard	\$518,008
1.09 — Legislature Library	\$482,489
Total Vote 1 — Support to the Legislative Assembly	\$6,815,244

Total Vote 2 — Office of the Auditor General	\$5,935,367
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Total Vote 3 — Office of the Ombudsman	\$527,741
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4.1 — Administrative Support	\$279,232
4.2 — Electoral Support	\$103,162
Total Vote 4 — Office of the Chief Electoral Officer	\$382,394

Department Total	\$13,660,746
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MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee adjourn until 8 o'clock this evening, at which time the report can be made to the Assembly. I might indicate to hon. members of the opposition that following that we would be proposing to introduce, with unanimous consent, the appropriation Acts, and following that the second readings that have been previously indicated.

[The Committee of Supply recessed at 5:28 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Committee of Supply please come to order.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. APPELBY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions and reports as follows:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1981, sums not exceeding the following for the purposes described:

Department of Agriculture: \$20,306,682 for departmental support services; \$34,507,363 for production assistance; \$8,936,237 for marketing assistance; \$35,083,113 for rural development assistance.

Executive Council: \$2,359,061 for Executive Council administration; \$7,767,351 for occupational health and safety; \$10,648,400 for workers' compensation; \$1,866,521 for support to native organizations; \$6,242,301 for personnel administration; \$11,561,000 for natural sciences and engineering research; \$11,320,000 for energy resources conservation; \$129,100 for women's information; \$10,303,927 for multi-media education services; \$1,690,500 for disaster preparedness and emergency response; \$286,561 for public service employee relations.

Treasury Department: \$1,562,770 for departmental support services; \$1,600,200 for statistical services; \$32,586,200 for revenue collection and rebates; \$19,746,600 for financial management, planning and central services; \$21,645,300 for public debt service; \$102,762,511 for public service pension administration; \$46,000,000 for salary contingency; and supplementary estimates as follows.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, sums not exceeding the following for the purposes described:

Attorney General, \$13,713 for fatality inquiries; Housing and Public Works, \$8,093,501 for housing for Albertans; Solicitor General, \$138,870 for departmental support services; Transportation, \$1,800,000 for construction and maintenance of highways; Treasury, \$5,412,811 for public debt service; Legislation, \$198,343 for support to the Legislative Assembly; Advanced Education and Manpower, \$2,868,662 for assistance to higher and further educational institutions, \$1,350,000 for manpower development and training assistance; Agriculture, \$16,959,000 for departmental support services, \$250,000 for production assistance, \$500,000 for marketing assistance, \$3,465,000 for rural development assistance; Attorney General, \$757,000 for court services, \$148,000 for fatality inquiries, \$84,000 for crimes compensation; Consumer and Corporate Affairs, \$241,638 for business registration and regulation, \$543,700 for regulation of securities markets; Culture, \$7,000,000 for cultural development, \$245,996 for historical resources development, \$1,530,000 for international assistance, \$50,250,866 for 75th Anniversary celebrations; Economic Development, \$271,000 for economic development and international

trade, \$7,040,000 for financing of Alberta grain terminals; Education, \$65,000 for departmental support services; Energy and Natural Resources, \$688,745 for departmental support services, \$9,534,050 for forest resources management, \$12,975 for public lands management, \$162,231 for fish and wildlife conservation, \$270,500 for oil sands research fund management; Environment, \$28,921,100 for pollution prevention and control, \$34,578,060 for land conservation; Executive Council, \$350,000 for Executive Council administration, \$250,000 for personnel administration, \$1,571,000 for energy resources conservation, \$708,000 for disaster preparedness and emergency response; Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, \$35,000 for intergovernmental co-ordination and research; Government Services, \$50,000 for government transportation; Hospitals and Medical Care, \$10,151,000 for health care insurance, \$8,537,524 for financial assistance for active care, \$989,998 for financial assistance for long-term chronic care, \$1,000,000 for financial assistance for capital construction; Labour, \$25,000 for individual's rights protection; Municipal Affairs, \$2,290,200 for financial support for municipal programs, \$500,000 for Alberta property tax reduction plan — rebates to individuals, \$409,000 for support to community planning services, \$157,500 for regulatory boards; Recreation and Parks, \$5,450,000 for recreation development, \$67,000 for provincial parks; Social Services and Community Health, \$731,000 for child welfare services, \$1,139,600 for financial assistance for community preventive services; Solicitor General, \$285,000 for departmental support services; Tourism and Small Business, \$55,900 for development of tourism and small business; Transportation, \$25,480,000 for construction and maintenance of highways, \$2,000,000 for construction and operation of rail systems, \$1,240,000 for construction and maintenance of airport facilities, \$6,500,000 for urban transportation financial assistance; Treasury, \$7,322,521 for public service pension administration.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1981, sums not exceeding the following for the purposes described:

Legislative Assembly: \$6,815,244 for support to the Legislative Assembly; \$5,935,367 for the office of the Auditor General; \$527,741 for the office of the Ombudsman; \$382,394 for the office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

#### Bill 52 The Amusements Amendment Act, 1980

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure this evening to rise and present Bill 52, The Amusements Amendment Act, 1980.

The Bill has three main features. It redefines "film" to include videotapes. In that section, I suppose we are going to close a loophole that some people will regret. I understand Cinema 100 in Edmonton has had a roaring business showing some rather racy films that, to this point, have not been included in the purview of the board

of censors, because the definition of the word "film" did not include videotape. The Bill repeals some sections dealing with qualifications of projectionists. The third major feature that members will be interested in is the scalping legislation proposal.

I'll deal with all three at some length, but would like to begin by pointing out that this is an open government, a progressive government, and we welcome public input on proposed legislation. [interjections] This evening I am pleased to make a commitment to the Legislative Assembly that Section 24 of the amendment Act has been reconsidered, and we will not be proceeding with legislation to decriminalize, if you like, scalping. I think this is a good demonstration of the democratic process. [interjections] We've had very effective representation from interest groups from the professional sporting fraternity. After hearing their comments and criticisms, we accepted their advice. Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat: it's an example of the democratic process, with an open government, in operation.

I'll deal with the sections other than scalping, having made the commitment to the Assembly that that will be withdrawn in an amendment to be brought before the Assembly during committee study of the Bill. I trust hon. members will accept that, and we will treat that in an academic light.

We'll go on to the two other features of the legislation, that I think members will be interested in. If members want to take out their draft Bills — and I'm sure they all have them — on the first page, Section 2 is amended by repealing clauses (b) and (e). In that section, Mr. Speaker, we're simplifying and expanding the definition to include videotaped films. I mentioned that some theatres in the province have made a specialty of showing videotaped films, basically on a television screen, and have evaded our censorship section of The Amusements Act through that loophole. I think most hon. members will agree that this is an area that should be closed. It will mean that theatres will be governed by the same code of conduct and standards of public decency, regardless of the medium they're using. It's not an administrative item, but it simply brings one part of the industry into conformity with the rest.

The other section of the Bill that I think will interest members is Section 8 in Part 2. I believe that's on page 5 of the proposed legislation. Mr. Speaker, we are repealing Part 2. I think most members, as they read through, will see that basically it deals with the licensing of theatre projectionists setting out a process where they would be examined on a curriculum, that they would pay a certain fee to the Lieutenant-Governor, that an advisory board administers this section, that the advisory board does not receive remuneration.

All this is pretty well redundant, Mr. Speaker, because of technological changes. In the 1910s and '20s, when moving pictures were a new art, and a highly technical and dangerous one at that, there was some need, right across the country, to protect the public by requiring that certain standards of training and performance be met by projectionists. In those days film was very brittle, flammable, and presented some hazard to the public safety. That's not the case today. Today we have projectors that are self loading, that are equipped with safety film which is extremely difficult to ignite and very flexible in nature. In the 1910s and '20s a projectionist dealt with a very primitive electrical technology. I can't state this from experience, Mr. Speaker. Although there may be some, I guess a person of my age really hasn't dealt with parallel

circuits. It's a different electrical problem. Basically, a projectionist in the 1910s, '20s, and '30s was virtually required to be an electrician. Clearly that's not the case today. So we're repealing Section 2, which sets out those licensing provisions, the testing provisions, the administrative mechanisms. We're doing away with a section of the legislation that, quite frankly, is redundant and out of place.

Mr. Speaker, in Sections 3 and 4, in the earlier part of the Bill, we're also simplifying some of the verbiage. I'm sure that will reach the ears of the hon. Member for Medicine Hat with some musical tones. I know that he introduced a resolution to simplify legislation. We are attempting to do that in this sense.

With those preliminary comments, I'd be very pleased to try to answer questions hon. members might have with regard to Bill 52, recognizing that we are not going to proceed with the section dealing with scalping because of our democratic and open government.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'll try to resist that provocation and deal with the legislation before us, although it's nice to see that the government at least has beat a retreat on the question of scalping. I suspect that it has as much to do with a reading of public opinion as any conversion on the road to Damascus in terms of the issue.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to deal with the two or three questions to the hon. member. The first really relates to this issue of safety. I think this is an important matter that members should consider for a few moments. It has been brought to my attention — and like the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry, I certainly don't pretend to be any expert when it comes to either scalping or the projectionist industry — but I would say that I have met with people in the union who are quite concerned about the impact on safety. While the hon. member assures us that safety film has been developed to the point where there is no danger at all, it's my understanding there is at least some opinion to the contrary. Films used to have a nitrate base which was highly combustible. According to projectionists, new safety film is also highly combustible. Recently an underwriter's laboratory study showed that not only did the film burn, it generated 992 degrees Fahrenheit within three minutes. Mr. Speaker, I've also been told that the lights now used on projection machines are dangerous and require skilled and careful handling. The control lights are in the projectionist's booth, and you need someone who knows what they're doing in this particular area as well.

Mr. Speaker, we did a little checking on this question of fires. In reviewing other jurisdictions, I find in the report of the fire commissioner of the province of Ontario in 1978 that there was one projection room fire, at \$10,000 damage. Similarly, in British Columbia a projection room fire caused a fair amount of damage.

In summarizing my concerns on this matter — and I'd welcome a response from the hon. member introducing the Bill — I would just relate an article that was brought to my attention by the union, by Mr. Ed Maloy who was an inspector for the Board of Examiners in the city of Calgary. This wasn't during the 1910s, '20s, and '30s. It started in the '30s and has carried on at the present time. I won't read the entire article, but this particular gentleman makes the point very deliberately: "Require the licensing of projectionists with high standards of booth safety [both as to] knowledge and . . . proficiency". Mr. Speaker, that being the case, while I know the assurances of the hon. member on the safety question are made in

good faith and very sincerely, I really think there is some question at this stage and that the jury is out.

With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I would question whether we should proceed with this particular Bill. As I understand the differences between the union and the theatre operators, the theatre operators quite naturally would like to do away with licensing. Licensing is one method of not only ensuring standards but frankly, maintaining a level of service and remuneration for that service. If we do away with the standards and licensing, then of course almost anyone could run a projector. While that may make it somewhat less costly to operate a theatre, it doesn't necessarily mean that theatre is going to be operated safely or in the public interest.

Mr. Speaker, for those reasons, I don't raise this matter in jest. Before the Assembly passes second reading of Bill 52, I would like the member to take some considerable time in dealing with what evaluation this government has given to the issue of safety, who they have consulted, what discussions have taken place with the unions as well as the theatre operators, what assessment has been made of other jurisdictions, and what review the government has made of fires in other jurisdictions. All one has to do is look at the reports of fire commissioners, and you find that there have been projection room fires. It seems to me that if we had that kind of information, Mr. Speaker, we'd be in a better position to deal with the principle of Bill 52.

On some of the other aspects, I really think whether one looks at videotape or normal film — that's fair enough. But who operates projection room machines and their qualifications are not matters to be looked on lightly. I know that formerly, people who have gotten their licence have had to go to some considerable trouble to acquire the expertise in order to operate a projection machine. Mr. Speaker, with that in mind, it seems to me we need perhaps a little more elaboration from the hon. member as to how he can assure this Assembly that in fact we've eliminated all the problems, when the people in the field who are dealing with it every day are saying very bluntly, to me at least and perhaps to the hon. member, that there are still some problems and that we had better travel very lightly.

While the hon. member has indicated that the government is prepared to modify its position on scalping — and I applaud the decision of the government; it's an open, democratic government — I'm sure the government wouldn't want to be caught in the position where they are not as equally amenable to modifying their position in the interests of safety. So either we need a very detailed explanation of how the government has reached its conclusion, or it seems to me we have to have a readiness on the part of this government to say, all right, we're prepared to leave this matter in abeyance as well.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I didn't really have that much intention of getting into the debate on second reading, but after the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry baited this side of the House, talking about open government, I thought it was only right to get up and give the hon. member sponsoring the Bill a bit of advice. The hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry probably reads the party doctrine every night, or listens to a recording the Premier has given him to put him to sleep, saying, you must say 25 times before you go to sleep: this is an open government, this is an open government, this is an open government; so that the Tory backbenchers can believe they're really an open government.

Mr. Speaker, the only reason the government withdrew the section on ticket scalping was not because they're an open government, but they never went to the care of finding out from the people it affects what would have happened.

MR. NOTLEY: Exactly.

DR. BUCK: So now that they are withdrawing that section, I would like to know what consultation they had with the people affected. I hope the member knew what was in his Bill before he presented it, otherwise I would accuse him of spending so much time learning about the latest campaign techniques down in Boston, rather than finding out what he has in his own Bill.

MR. NOTLEY: Jimmy Carter needs him now; he's behind Reagan.

DR. BUCK: The section that concerns me, the three portions of course: the abolition of the provincial regulations on qualifications and certification of projectionists, plus the safety factors involved, as the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview mentioned. I think it is a concern, and the concerns have been expressed to us. So I would like to have the member sponsoring the Bill give us some indication that passing the legislation will remove that problem. He will have to convince us of that.

Also in Section 1, the licensing, the regulations now covering the classification of projectionists from apprenticeship to the first, second, and third class operators — from the information we've received I feel that this is still important. By scrapping the examinations and the qualifications of projectionists, I think we may end up with some problems.

The hon. member sponsoring the Bill mentioned that things have changed. Well, that's true. But when we're looking at the safety of people in movie theatres, we have to be sure those safety features are still there. I know the hon. Minister of Labour and I have had some problems trying to solve the ramifications of some of the building standards that have been passed. It's another issue, so I won't bring it to the floor of the House because we're making progress. I say to the Minister of Labour: I think he's a lot smarter than some of the people who drafted some of the regulations. So I'm glad the minister understands what we're trying to accomplish.

But getting back to the thing about the safety feature. We must be clear in our minds, and the Assembly must be clear, that the changes we're making are for the better and would not cause concerns.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say to the hon. member sponsoring the Bill that some of the principles involved here may be valid, but the member and possibly some of the ministers are going to have to give us a little bit more grounds for passing this legislation than we've received before.

On the question of scalping, I guess the Attorney General has listened to the pitch by some of the professional sports promoters that maybe that was a bad move. I would just like to summarize to the hon. member: don't give us that line about open government. If the member believes so much in open government, he can show a little jam and support my Bill when it comes back, because it'll keep coming back until this government's changed. Then the new government, I am sure, will bring a little daylight to truly open government.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks I welcome the remarks of the member sponsoring the Bill.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, because some question of a technical nature was raised, perhaps it should be responded to, especially inasmuch as it was raised in a way that suggests a very serious situation, which I can't really believe exists. I speak to the issue, which the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview raised, of the experiment in which he talks about the number of degrees of heat generated by burning film. Indeed an experiment was conducted by Underwriter Laboratories Inc. in the United States about four years ago. They managed to unspool, by hand, 9,000 feet of film in a pile. They then placed under it a pan of alcohol and set the alcohol alight so it would generate enough heat to set the film alight. Now, Mr. Speaker, if they'd had the hon. Member for Clover Bar there, they might have saved the use of the pan of alcohol. [laughter] In fact, the only way it's possible to get that much loose film would be to unspool, I believe, the equivalent of a very large commercial spool. And to put it loosely in a pile and put a pan of alcohol underneath it to see if a fire could get started, is really a situation which shouldn't be contemplated in the ordinary course of events in our projection booths. Even if it did occur, Mr. Speaker, most of them are sprinklered, and the walls around them wouldn't allow the fire to escape from the projection booth in any event.

So it was an experiment. It is widely reported, within the circle of film projectionists in particular, and it illustrates the difficulty of generating any kind of fire with the safety film that's now available. In a single strip, most film will extinguish itself; it just shrinks away.

Mr. Speaker, public safety really rests in the number of exits in the theatre and the marking of those exits. The hon. Member for Clover Bar and I realize full well just how concerned for public safety the Department of Labour officials are in building standards and in the fire commissioner's office. I can assure all hon. members that both groups of specialists are convinced that they have adequate regulations and standards in place without this kind of legislation or regulation. Mr. Speaker, it really is an attempt for this government to try to remove some of the stack of regulations under which our society operates. While we must keep adding to it, from time to time let's try to keep removing some from it. I want to assure all hon. members that indeed there is every satisfaction on the part of the department that this will not lead to any problem with respect to public safety.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I appreciated the comments coming from the other side, especially the remarks from the hon. Member for Clover Bar relating to scalping. I thought it was very appropriate, given his hairline, that he would make some very pertinent remarks about scalping. [interjections] I'm not going to respond.

However, some concerns were raised. I think the hon. Minister of Labour dealt with the concern about combustible film. There were another couple of concerns about public safety. The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview dealt with light switches being in the projection booth and not available to the management, for example, out-

side the projection booth. If there were a fire in a theatre, Mr. Speaker, the projectionist's job would not be to put out the fire in order to contain the crowd but, rather, basically to turn up the lights. Those light switches are available in other parts of the theatres as well. So the projectionist can do that in another part of the theatre or another individual can perform that function.

The process was raised as a cause of concern by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. He asked, quite sincerely and legitimately, I thought, what evaluation this government has done to make sure that the steps we're taking are not going to be dangerous to public safety. Let me go through that very briefly. We as a government have been dealing with this question for the last 10 years. In fact, I've seen files going back to 1949 and 1941. I guess this is a perennial question. But we have been going back since 1971.

On December 1, 1971, the then minister Dr. Hohol presented his views on building standards and regulations. He formed a committee with members of the Department of Labour and interested groups, including the union, the inspection services division, and representatives of the general safety services division. The committee met and in 1973 submitted their report. Their conclusion was that The Amusements Act and regulations pertaining to public safety and many of the activities performed are no longer appropriate to today's needs. They went on to make recommendations with regard to licensing and certification, consolidating fire safety regulations, and construction requirements. They also recommended that the existing staff in administration for licensing be shifted. In 1976, the theatre inspection branch was integrated with the fire prevention branch. I might add that this branch has competent electrical experts to safeguard the public safety with regard to projection equipment.

Again, another process was embarked upon in 1975. Members of the union, along with the motion picture theatre association of Alberta, met with departmental officials and discussed those regulations and recommendations from the earlier committee. In 1976 some regulations were redrafted. In 1977 the regulations were adopted with regard to The Fire Prevention Act.

In short, in 1974 a similar process was undertaken with regard to projectionists' licensing requirements. In 1976 there were meetings with regard to licensing. Members of the union, the fire commissioner, Mr. McKay, members of the Department of Labour were there. Recommendations were made, again to simplify and shift the licensing procedures. These recommendations, I might add, were fully acceptable to the fire commissioner and to the general safety services division staff.

So if we're going to look at the processes the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview asked us to, I don't think public safety was forgotten. I think it was uppermost in the minds of the department, of their officials, and of the industry. Quite sincerely, I think that's very proper. I think this move this evening, as the Minister of Labour has already suggested, is basically to simplify regulations, to make life a little more understandable. Government is involved in most areas of activity, and it's great when we can try to clear away some of the deadwood.

The process has emphasized safety and, as the Minister of Labour has pointed out, the film is not that combustible unless you allow 9,000 feet to collect in a loose pile on top of a pan of alcohol, which is then ignited by a match. I find those conditions difficult to find in most theatres in Alberta. Finally, I might add that there's a fire wall

around the projection booth, so even if there were such an unfortunate event as 9,000 feet of film and a pan of alcohol ignited by a match, the fire would be contained. The job of the projectionist or other staff in the building would be to turn up the lights, direct the crowd in the theatre to the exits, and do it in an orderly way. Mr. Speaker, I think that's all that can be fairly expected of them.

If there are no other questions, I gather members are anxious to have the vote taken. I would move that this House give second reading to Bill 52, The Amusements Amendment Act, 1980.

[Motion carried; Bill 52 read a second time]

**Bill S3**  
**The Mines and Minerals**  
**Amendment Act, 1980 (No. 2)**

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 53, The Mines and Minerals Amendment Act, 1980 (No. 2).

This Bill proposes a number of changes to The Mines and Minerals Act, and I propose to mention the ones that strike me as being the more important proposals. They first provide for the minister, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, to enter into development contracts relating to mines and minerals. Mr. Speaker, I really doubt that this needs to be in the legislation because, in my view, that authority probably rests with Her Majesty as owner of the mines and minerals. But it is of assistance to have it defined and spelled out in the legislation. For one thing, when we enter into these development agreements, they will involve dealing with lawyers for the other parties. When they ask the authority of the minister to enter into the agreement, they need to go into a search of Canadian constitutional law to find that authority in the representatives of the Queen. That will shorten the search, Mr. Speaker, by having it spelled out precisely in the legislation.

The Bill also proposes some changes with respect to the provisions now in the Act dealing with the payment of interest on overdue accounts. In particular, it now specifies the due date for such payments so we can fix with somewhat more precision the date from which interest on overdue accounts would begin to run.

Further, Mr. Speaker, it expands the provision now in the Act relating to banks taking leases and documents of that nature as security and registering their security with the department. Those provisions have been significantly expanded by way of adding other financial institutions. As the legislation now stands, that privilege rests only with the banks. Under the proposed amendment, it would be expanded to include other financial institutions.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of amendments which really arise out of the growing interest in what might be described as the lesser known minerals in the province. I suspect they're lesser known because there is not so much of them. There are now provisions authorizing the making of regulations, the granting of leases and permits, et cetera, with respect to metallic minerals. Those regulations specifically authorize the making of regulations, including the defining of gold as a metallic mineral. That's one of the minerals that has given rise to this amendment, because significant interest has been shown in gold mining in the province of Alberta recently, arising out of the rapid increase in the price of gold.

Mr. Speaker, I think I've touched on the major pro-

posed amendments to the Act in Bill 53, and simply conclude by moving that it now be given second reading.

[Motion carried; Bill 53 read a second time]

**Bill 56**  
**The Individual's Rights Protection**  
**Amendment Act, 1980**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from Clover Bar adjourning the debate so I'm able to take part in the debate on second reading of the Bill. My colleague from Little Bow will be making some comments later on.

On this occasion, I'd like to make four points as far as The Individual's Rights Protection Amendment Act, 1980, is concerned. Number one, and the basic concern that I have with regard to this legislation, is that when it was initially introduced the first reaction one had was that what was being presented to us was a rather positive step forward as far as the government's commitment to The Individual's Rights Protection Act, 1980, is concerned. In reflecting upon the legislation, Mr. Speaker, and having an opportunity to discuss the amendments with a number of individuals who are vitally concerned and actively interested in this field, I come to the conclusion that the most serious criticism of this legislation is that after several years' experience with the Human Rights Commission, and with Dr. Wyman now having left as the chairman of the commission, even though this legislation is portrayed as giving the Human Rights Commission a great deal more authority, in my judgment the commission becomes subject to considerably more influence by Executive Council.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that after seven or eight years of experience with the legislation, we're now in a situation where we're being asked in this legislation — and there are some positive aspects to the piece of legislation before the House. But basically I see an undermining or eating away of the independence and, really, the ability of the Human Rights Commission to come to grips with the task it is charged with by this Legislature.

When the hon. minister introduced the amendments on Friday, I think he talked in terms of this as flagship legislation of this government when it first came to office. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most charitable thing I could say is that when one has a chance to reflect on this legislation, one finds that the flag is flying less than full out these days, as far as individual's rights protection legislation is concerned. I say this to the hon. minister because, in speaking to individuals who are concerned with this area of government activity, they acknowledge the minister consulted with many people. That's typical of the minister. But the problem is that after the minister did all the consulting, I read this legislation to see the commission not having the same degree of independence it had before this legislation was introduced in the House. My submission to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the minister, is that in my judgment this is a step backward, not a great advance. This is a step somewhat back, certainly from where I had been led to believe we were going, as far as The Individual's Rights Protection Act was concerned.

There are three areas of concern that I'd like to touch on very briefly. It's our position that coverage should have been extended to mentally as well as physically handicapped people. Eighty-eight per cent of mentally retarded are only mildly retarded and can perform many jobs very well. It seems to me that that would have been a

step forward the government could have taken in introducing this particular piece of legislation.

The second point I want to make really deals with the question of preventing the Human Rights Commission from initiating investigation of a complaint where it believes a contravention of the Act exists. This goes against Recommendation No. 5, that the Human Rights Commission made to the government in, I believe, February this year, when the commission made its submission to the government on needed changes. Surely, as an agent responsible for forwarding the principle that all Albertans are equal in dignity and rights, the Human Rights Commission should have the power to initiate a complaint. The minister has already indicated the commission isn't going to have the right to initiate the complaint, but the commission can do something else. It seems to me fundamental in this legislation, when it started in this province, that the commission would have the right to initiate a complaint.

If I could use an example — a very touchy example, because the last time I raised this particular issue, I got letters from the insurance industry in the province of Alberta, which was really saying in a very nice way: thanks, but no thanks; keep out of our business. But it was basically the work of the Human Rights Commission that raised this whole question of discrimination with regard to age and sex as far as insurance rates are concerned. If we had this kind of legislation in place today, that investigation wouldn't have taken place. That's a rather nifty way of getting around a somewhat difficult situation of the government. But from the advice we've received from individuals I've spoken to, that investigation would have been able to go ahead without the commission first of all coming to the minister and saying, Mr. Minister, please can we investigate this particular area? That's putting the commission in a totally different situation than it is today, and that's why I make the point that in my judgment, that is a step backward rather than a step ahead.

Once again, I want to emphasize that I see the commission becoming far more dependent upon the good will of the Minister of Labour, who basically is a very congenial individual. But from the standpoint of furtherance of human rights in the province, that isn't the way the commission should have to go about its work on a day to day basis; on virtually every occasion, to have to be assured that what it is doing isn't going to have a bad influence or give a bad impression, so that the next time they go back to the Minister of Labour, whoever he may be, they have to have the good will of the minister so they can get the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor to take a step they feel is necessary.

My colleague from Little Bow will be talking about the question of affirmative action. I can see it's a mild step in the right direction as far as that particular area is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, this afternoon in the House I asked if, in light of the concerns that have been raised by many people, the government was considering letting this legislation sit on the Order Paper and committing themselves to redraft it over the summer and bring it back in the fall. On balance, I really think that would be a wiser move for the government to follow. I know that because of some of the amendments in the Act, that would discourage some people. But on balance, I think we would be strengthening human rights legislation in the province if we were to do that, rather than, in my judgment, undermining it as far as this particular piece of legislation is concerned.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak on Bill 56, at the outset I would have to acknowledge that there are certain good features of the Bill. For example, I'm certainly pleased to see the recognition of physical characteristics, that we will not allow discrimination on the basis of physical characteristics. Certainly the ability to deal now with third-party complaints is a step in the right direction; the boards of inquiry having the authority of court orders, although they can be appealed on the basis of law and in some cases on the basis of fact, is nevertheless a step in the right direction, and a proposal the Human Rights Commission has made over the years. Mr. Speaker, as I view the Act, it seems to me that the investigative powers of the commission have been strengthened.

Those are the favorable features of the legislation before us, but quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, a number of provisions in the Act cause me concern. I want to deal with those features tonight. May I just say that I would agree with the proposal made by the Leader of the Opposition, and others as well, that it might be worth consideration by the government to delay this matter until the fall session, and to consider the public response on some of the major criticisms that have been levelled. I read the minister's introductory remarks very carefully. It was clearly a fair and honorable statement of the government's position. But frankly, I strongly disagree on some of these issues.

I want to deal with three or four specific matters, then take a little more time to review my position on both the question of affirmative action and the issue of the grounds for anti-discrimination legislation in this province. Of course, the underlying concern that has been expressed outside the House, Mr. Speaker, and I want to take perhaps even a little more time to deal with it, is the question of the ability of the cabinet to provide exemptions from the individual's protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, dealing with some of the specifics, I notice that while there is provision for equal pay for work of equal value, as I read the Act I see that that is basically limited to a single establishment. Because this basically relates to the principle of the matter, I would specifically ask the minister to respond in closing debate: what does that mean when it comes to a concern like Safeway, for example? Are we talking about equal pay for equal work in a particular store, or are we talking about a particular chain? What does that mean? There is a difference.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that what the amendments do is tend to confine the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. I raise that deliberately because I notice that in the House of Commons, the Leader of the Official Opposition, the hon. Member for Yellowhead, I believe, has argued that there should be a full commitment to equal pay for equal work, and has urged the government to give priority to develop a master job evaluation plan that could be used to give male and female employees equal pay for work of equal value. It seems to me that what we have in Bill 56 is a rather modified version of that, a carefully defined version. As I read it — perhaps I'm wrong, and if I'm wrong I'd certainly welcome a response from the minister — we're really saying that we are linking it to a single establishment. I question how valid that is.

The second area that concerns me is this question of the commission not being able to initiate complaints. I notice in the response by the Human Rights Commission itself, Mr. Speaker, that they too single out that as an area of concern. I would say quite frankly to the minister:

who is better qualified to initiate complaints than the staff of the commission, who are dealing with the problems of human rights every day of the week? One of the observations that I believe Dr. Wyman made was that in certain target groups there were very few complaints to the Human Rights Commission. There's no mystery in that; among many of the less privileged groups in our society there isn't the knowledge of what route to take to issue a complaint to the Human Rights Commission.

I would have to say quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that if the Human Rights Commission is to play a full role, then I at least am persuaded that the commission should be able not just to investigate but in fact to initiate complaints. What I see the government doing in this piece of legislation is attempting to put the commission in a sort of semi-judicial impartial role, when, in my submission at least, The Individual's Rights Protection Act will be hollow protection indeed unless we have a commission that is prepared in fact to take an activist position. I know that's not going down too well with some of the hon. members of the government; nevertheless I feel quite strongly that that is the role the commission should take. It's fine to talk about the educational role of the commission. The commission has done an excellent job in the educational perspective. But a Human Rights Commission must be much more than a simple educational organization.

Mr. Speaker, I noticed in reading over the minister's remarks on Friday that he argued that there should be no contract compliance provision. Again, if we are making funds available to other levels of government, I submit that we can insist on contract compliance which recognizes the primacy of The Individual's Rights Protection Act. In his observations, the minister essentially dismissed this as social engineering and had all sorts of unflattering things to say about social engineering. I can say unflattering things about social engineering too. But the fact of the matter is that, in my judgment, we are never really going to move effectively to overcome discrimination unless we embark upon a much more dramatic and, I think, affirmative position.

I remember well the debates that took place the United States. My wife was one of the first freedom riders to go down into southern United States in the early 1960s when the move to desegregate took place in that part of the United States. All sorts of people were arguing that that kind of activist position was counterproductive and created hard feelings. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, because the United States moved on the issue of civil rights and brought in legislation that is quite inconsistent with the observations made by the minister — and the minister well knows that in the United States there are very definitely contract compliance provisions. I don't necessarily want to use Ontario as a model, but to my understanding even Ontario has that kind of legislation.

But the net result, Mr. Speaker, is that because of that kind of activist philosophy, progress has been made in the United States that would not have been made otherwise. While I know we would all be happier if attitudes could change, we don't need to go through the catharsis and the controversy of an activist position on civil rights. What we're really talking about, Mr. Speaker, are some pretty basic human rights and, in my judgment at least, we can't be quite as neutral as the amendments to Bill 56 would leave us in terms of the role of the commission. I don't think that we can have a neutral commission and really be solidly committed to the principles of The Individual's Rights Protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, I now want to deal with what I consider to be the three most important areas of this legislation. The first is the question of affirmative action. I noticed in the minister's remarks that he suggested that somehow the Athabasca tribal council position would discriminate in favor of treaty Indian people and, as I read his words the implication was, at the expense of the Metis and those white people who live in the area. Mr. Speaker, to be fair to the Athabasca tribal council, it is my understanding at least that they talk about native people and that would specifically include both treaty Indian and Metis people. I believe there was even a letter to Premier Lougheed to that effect, I think on November 16, 1979, which very clearly indicated that, "We would request that Alsands establish a Native recruitment program in which they would hire native people from each of the Native communities." In discussing the matter specifically with a consultant to the Athabasca tribal council, there was absolutely no doubt that that included Metis people as well as treaty Indian people. The minister argues otherwise. But having had an opportunity to discuss this matter with both the chairman of the Athabasca tribal council and the consultant, I don't think there's much doubt on where they stand on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I think we need provision for voluntary affirmative action programs. The issue is how we do that. What the government has done is give the cabinet the power of exemption in order to bring in affirmative action programs. What we are doing, Mr. Speaker, is linking the concept of affirmative action, which is supported by almost every person knowledgeable in the area of human rights on the continent, with a precedent that in my view is very unsatisfactory; that is, the cabinet's power to exempt. Far better that we deal with a specific proposal contained in The Individual's Rights Protection Act that would handle this question of affirmative action.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that by linking the two together we are in fact using the qualified approach of affirmative action to be a Trojan horse, if you like, to allow more cabinet control than is wise or judicious of the process of what is and what isn't covered by The Individual's Rights Protection Act. I want to come back to that, because this question of legislative control of The Individual's Rights Protection Act, in my view, is the most important single deficiency in the Act. I say to the government that I certainly support affirmative action, and there should be a provision for affirmative action in The Individual's Rights Protection Act. But it should deal specifically with that question and should not be linked to the cabinet's ability to exempt individuals or classes of individuals from the provisions of the Act.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal now with the question of new grounds. The minister raised a number of arguments on the question of what constitutes a ground for protection under the Act. He basically argues that there is a difference between those situations which are physical conditions, over which a person has no control, and those questions that may in fact be a matter of life style. But then he makes the exception: except, says the minister, for religion. And of course as soon as the minister makes that exception, we have his definition severely strained, because religion is very much a matter of personal choice. So it should be. That is one of the basic rights under The Human Rights Act. So clearly, if we're talking about immutable laws we have to include religion. But religion is a matter of choice, and so we've gone beyond the question of physical characteristics over which the individual has no control.

Mr. Speaker, as I read the minister's remarks, it seemed to me he was saying that eight or nine different groups were at his doorstep saying, we want protection for our particular group: people under the age of 45, people who argue on the basis of marital status, people who argue on the basis of other suggestions. The minister then goes on to say that, were we to grant these people the right to be considered under The Individual's Rights Protection Act, the next time we open the Act we may have another eight or nine groups at our doorstep. Well, Mr. Speaker, I say to the hon. minister with the greatest respect, it seems to me that the way in which to judge whether a ground is valid is on the basis of looking at each instance individually and using the test of whether it meets a right. If it doesn't, it doesn't go in; if it does, whether it involves a large or a small number of people, it should be included. Whether it means eight or nine new grounds this time and eight or nine grounds down the road, so be it; that's the kind of thing we have to face. I doubt that it would, but it seems to me the test must not be: will it clutter the Act? The test must be: is it in fact a legitimate ground on which we will not permit discrimination?

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that at this time we have to consider sometimes taking stands that are quite unpopular. I read the remarks of the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, and I agree with his observation about the question of native people working on oil rigs. Thirty years ago that probably wouldn't have happened. Society changes, and the views of what is proper change as society changes. It seems to me in many respects that if we have to err, it is better to err in favor of more rather than fewer rights; it is better to be too soon than too late. Perhaps that's a philosophical difference between the government and me. But if we have to err at all, I think it is better to err in being too soon rather than too late.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, that involves taking positions that may be highly unpopular. The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs talked about the fact that 30 years ago, a native person wouldn't be employed on an oil rig. Thirty years ago, Mr. Speaker, there was very little commitment to the concept of freedom of religion, or of religion as the basis for discrimination. We had an Act in this Legislature, passed in good faith — it wasn't passed as a result of bigotry; it was passed in good faith — The Communal Property Act, which discriminated on the basis of the Hutterian faith. I don't say, in criticism of the legislators of that time, that they were a group of hard-boiled reactionaries who were bigoted or prejudiced. No, they weren't. Because over the last 30 years, from the time The Communal Property Act was passed, society's attitude on what constitutes a legitimate ground to prohibit discrimination has changed. So today everybody would agree there shouldn't be discrimination on the basis of religion.

Mr. Speaker, I would say it's probably up to government to show the moral courage to be a leader. In the almost nine years I've been a member, the most effective speech I've heard in this Legislature was in the fall of 1972, I believe, when this Assembly decided to repeal The Communal Property Act. It was a highly contentious issue, because it was fraught with tremendous emotionalism. Mr. Speaker, I could stand in my place, as did most members, and happily vote for the repeal of The Communal Property Act, because it wouldn't affect my position in my constituency by one vote. So could the Premier, and so could most of the members sitting in this Assembly. But I still remember the Member for Macleod

who, I think, gave the most eloquent speech I've ever heard in this Assembly. It was an eloquent speech not only because it was well put together, not only because what he said made sense, but because he was taking a position which every single person in this House knew was extremely unpopular in his own constituency. He recognized there shouldn't be discrimination on the basis of religion, and he was prepared to stand in his place in this House and take the position that the majority of his own constituents wouldn't agree with. Governments have to do those things from time to time. We cannot look at the grounds for what is or isn't an individual right on the basis of a Gallup poll, or the weather vane. From time to time we have to be leaders, Mr. Speaker.

The final point I would make is the question on Bill 56 that has probably concerned more Albertans than anything else. I read the minister's comments, hoping to get some indication of why this exemption clause, which allows the cabinet to exempt any category, was necessary. We had the linking with the affirmative action provision. I say again to the minister: let us put in a separate provision for affirmative action.

Mr. Speaker, when Bill No. 1 and Bill No. 2 were passed in the House, a good deal of comment was made, and I think that some of the comments made by the Premier . . . This is not dealing with Bill 2; it's dealing with Bill No. 1. But since they're both paramount pieces of legislation, the comments the Premier made with respect to Bill No. 1 are just as applicable with respect to No. 2. On page 50 of *Hansard*, May 15, 1972, the Premier, talking about the need for a "notwithstanding" clause, says:

The government can still do anything that it wants to do. It has the legislative power, with the concurrence of the Legislature, and it's supreme in that sense, that the Legislature is supreme. But what it must do if it's contrary to The Bill of Rights, is bring in, in its future legislation, or its amending legislation, a provision that a particular bill operates, notwithstanding — notwithstanding — The Alberta Bill of Rights.

He goes on to say:

I'm sure the Official Opposition, in this or any future Legislatures, would feel very, very much on their toes, in terms of assuring that when that 'notwithstanding' provision is there that it is clearly there for a valid reason.

I think that such a provision is going to make government very cautious and very careful in the future, before they bring in a provision that states 'notwithstanding The Alberta Bill of Rights'.

Mr. Speaker, in reviewing the debate on Friday last week, the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry made a very constructive speech, but as I recall, the basic argument of that speech was that no government is going to use this power carelessly; to use it irresponsibly and carelessly would run the risk of political retaliation by people. But the fact of the matter is that we are talking about legislation which — whatever — allows certain power. If we separate the affirmative action issue from the other questions of exemptions — and I think we have to do that, and that's why I've mentioned over and over again that I think we have to have a separate clause dealing with affirmative action — then I say to the minister: why is there any need in legislation that is paramount legislation, what the minister calls flagship legislation, why is there any need to give the cabinet the power to exempt?

What is going to happen is that groups of people in our society — and none of us are so naive, Mr. Speaker, that

we aren't aware of the fact that all sorts of people want exemptions from The Individual's Rights Protection Act. Notwithstanding my position as not exactly the most stalwart supporter of the insurance industry, they've even lobbied me as to why The Individual's Rights Protection Act shouldn't force them to do X, Y, and Z. They're going to lobby, and other groups are going to lobby as well.

But the point is: if a group wants exemption from The Individual's Rights Protection Act, they have an obligation to sell that to the minister, who then has an obligation to sell it to the Legislature and say, notwithstanding Bill No. 1 or Bill No. 2, we're going to allow you to discriminate anyway. That's the way it has to be with paramount legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we had a debate in this House a week ago over Bill 50, and whether the Legislature should be in a position to determine whether we curtail the amount of oil production. Even though I thought the Legislature should have the final determination on what the oil production should be, I would readily admit that the government could make a much better case for letting the cabinet determine the oil production than they can to exempt the provisions of Bill No. 2. You're talking about paramount legislation. We can't say, in a never, never land, that we consider this flagship legislation, that all other legislation must meet the conditions of The Individual's Rights Protection Act and The Alberta Bill of Rights, and then say in the next breath: because of affirmative action we're going to allow the cabinet to exempt right, left, and centre.

Mr. Speaker, I've had enough experience in viewing other legislation. Surely there are routes that would have allowed the minister to have brought in the affirmative action option without a provision that is wide enough to have a truckload of exemptions swept past the cabinet. That's why the Human Rights Commission is a little concerned; that's why Ms Richardson resigned. When we pass a provision of this consequence, we really erode not only the basic role of the commission, as the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, but the validity and effectiveness of The Individual's Rights Protection Act itself.

So, Mr. Speaker, while I would be the first to applaud the positive features in this Act — there are a number, and it would only be fair to acknowledge them — in my judgment, there are some very grave deficiencies which seriously set back the whole question of individual rights and the protection of those rights in the province of Alberta.

I conclude my remarks where I began. The government need not push this through in almost the last hours of this legislative session. Hold the thing over. I know the minister has had all sorts of discussions with various groups. That's fair enough, but the feedback that has come in in the last few days since the tabling of this legislation should, in my view, lead the government to a second look if the legislation we passed in the House in 1972 with such pride and, as I recall, unanimously is to still remain not only the flagship of Alberta legislation, but the leader as far as this type of legislation is concerned across Canada.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make one or two comments about Bill 56 as well. First of all, I'd like to say to the minister that the principle with regard to affirmative action that has been placed in the Bill is certainly a good intent. But one of the concerns we have on this side of the House is the fact that the

Lieutenant Governor in Council will make the regulations and has control with regard to affirmative action. We feel that this type of thing certainly brings it into the political realm. It brings it to where a certain partisan bias is placed on the whole concept of affirmative action. If that concept were left either with the commission itself or with this Legislative Assembly, we would certainly have more objectivity placed on the utilization or placement of the concept, and Albertans as a whole would benefit more by that type of authority. When I mentioned the Legislative Assembly, I think that I would even place that in a secondary position to the Human Rights Commission. I feel that a number of the people on the Human Rights Commission are professionals. They're objective about presentations made to them, and certainly could do an adequate job in that particular area.

The other area where I have concern, and would certainly have liked to see it as an amendment in the legislation, is with regard to mental handicaps. I've placed legislation before the Assembly with regard to this concept and still feel that that amendment in the legislation would be a great asset at this time. If we recognize that 88 per cent of mentally handicapped persons are only mildly retarded and certainly can carry on a lot of functions and a lot of jobs in the work place, there are places they could be placed. At the present time, because of certain circumstances, they're not. I think more concern, a certain amount of protection in that area, an amendment in this legislation would add a lot to their involvement in normal society.

Mr. Speaker, those are basically the two primary areas I have concern about. Hopefully, the government will look at those areas again.

I would also add my comments with regard to the concerns that have been placed about this legislation. Many people in general society are pleased that the government introduced the amendments, but I believe would like to place a number of arguments before government before we finalize the Act. In that light, I'd certainly want to urge the government to reconsider finalizing the Act in this spring session. Possibly we should consider it over the summer, and in the fall bring in the final amendments and have the final vote at that time.

MR. WOO: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak to Bill 56, I've listened with a great deal of interest to remarks made by hon. members in this House on this particular subject, in particular remarks made by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. I think his intent is well taken, but one thing bothers me to a great degree. As in all things that are complex in nature, we seem to be able to come up with a solution without really knowing what the problem is.

In my participation in this debate, Mr. Speaker, first I would wish to set two definitions. Discrimination, as I will use it for purposes of my part in this debate, is defined as making a difference in favor of or against. For the word prejudice I will use the given definition of a judgment or opinion formed before the facts are known; a preconceived idea, more usually in a negative or unfavorable sense; a judgment usually based on suspicion, fear, intolerance, and hatred directed to race, creed, and color. In the use of these definitions, I must acknowledge my good friend Mr. Webster.

As to the dimension, Mr. Speaker, I think I can best do that by drawing from history and personal experience. In this regard, I must acknowledge my parents and those first Chinese immigrants who came to this Canada, the

land of hope and opportunity, in the first quarter of their 140-year history in this country. Because the description "Chinese" can be interchanged with the name of any other group, people, or class for that matter, I've chosen the term "minority group". Drawing from the Chinese experience, I've come to the conclusion that structural changes of minority groups can only be achieved through greater access to the wider opportunity spectrum of the Canadian structure. I accept that greater access to opportunities reduces the stress on minority group solidarity and cultural traditions, the type of solidarity and tradition which may tend to be incompatible or inhibit the advancement of individual rights or group equality. If this form of accommodation was not available, minority groups relied inwardly on their own to cope with the problems of life. In doing so, it tended to reinforce internal reliance and communal solidarity. That in turn served to remove that particular group further from the Canadian mainstream.

However, Mr. Speaker, if the opposite were true, if minority groups were given equal political, economic, educational, and social advantages, those groups would tend to shift towards integration with society. For the first 60-odd years of their presence here in Canada, the Chinese communities as such were denied that access to opportunities, either as a group or class, or as individuals.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it might interest hon. members to know that two important events in Canadian history triggered the coming of the Chinese to Canada: firstly, the discovery of gold in the Fraser valley from 1858 to 1880 and, secondly, the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which spanned 1880 to 1885. With the coming of the first Chinese came prejudice. You will recall the definition I gave earlier. Editors of the day ran a general theme that Chinese were, and I quote: filthy, stupid, insensitive, and immoral heathens. That is prejudice. In 1875, the B.C. Legislature passed a bill which denied provincial voting rights to the Chinese. That was legalized discrimination. In 1878, that same government passed a bill preventing Chinese from employment on provincial works. That was legalized discrimination against Chinese and for non-Chinese. When the Supreme Court of B.C. declared the bill *ultra vires*, it restored a right given under Acts dealing with immigration and naturalization of aliens.

Mr. Speaker, from 1884 to 1947 the government of Canada engaged in a number of Bills and orders in council which were clear examples of legal discrimination. They not only addressed the question of social and political considerations but through insertion of specific clauses successfully denied the Chinese employment opportunities. The provinces of B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario abetted the federal government in many ways. In the area of employment, the trade unions were the most vocal. Needless to say, those trade unions of the day represented majority groups and majority class.

It is also interesting to note that during the Second World War, hundreds of Chinese, Japanese, and East Indian persons serving in the three Canadian military forces were informed that upon their return to Canada after the cessation of hostilities, they would in all probability be given the right to vote, provided of course that they ever came back.

The Dominion Elections Act of 1938, Chapter 46, specified that all persons who were denied the vote by provincial statute were also denied the federal franchise. It wasn't until June 30, 1948, Mr. Speaker, that amend-

ments to the Dominion Elections Act removed the clause pertaining to race.

What does all this lead to, and how is this relevant to certain amendments to Bill 56 now under consideration? Mr. Speaker, my responses may appear overly simplistic, but I do believe they are basic to the debate in this Assembly today.

Firstly, it is my view that discrimination follows prejudice, not the other way around. Secondly, prejudice, because it is practised on an individual basis and therefore touches more people, is of greater concern to our society today than those practices of discrimination. Thirdly, prejudice is the root cause of, and gives rise to, the practice of discrimination. If you reduce prejudice, Mr. Speaker, you reduce discrimination. Fourthly, we have observed over a period of years not only the enactment of discrimination by way of provincial and federal statutes but also its systematic removal. Surely there is a message there somewhere.

My fifth observation, Mr. Speaker, and the one that I think is the most significant, is that when any government legislates for someone, it invariably takes away from someone else. Conversely, if a government legislates against someone, it usually provides benefits to someone else.

Mr. Speaker, it is my view that perhaps we are taking an overly simplistic approach in trying to solve the whole question of equality of opportunity for minority or disadvantaged groups. I recognize that solutions for the handicapped will not be easy to arrive at, but at the same time I say that we must begin working towards those solutions. I think it is important to realize that when the forces and desires for a better quality of life are stronger than the appeal to maintain the old ways and cultures, a minority group will then begin to transform itself to meet the challenge of an open society. The inner struggle to do this can be evidenced by our native communities today.

Mr. Speaker, the question here is: how can this be done? How can the desire and will be fostered? More importantly, what tools are required by the minorities and the disadvantaged which will put them on an even footing where they can begin to compete? Amongst the number of requirements by such minority or disadvantaged groups, the two most basic and important needs are the establishment of some form of internal power structure, and essential community resources to direct that particular type of advancement. Changes, and the desire to change, must come from within. That, Mr. Speaker, is something that cannot be legislated.

As to the amendments before us today, I hope the initial amendments dealing with the commission and with the handicapped will begin to bring a degree of relief and benefit in terms of both the Human Rights Commission and that particular group. As to the amendment concerning affirmative action, Mr. Speaker, I have some very ambivalent feelings. On the one hand, affirmative action programs would appear to provide for discrimination on the basis of sex and skin color. What happens to the person who is neither female nor a member of a minority group, who objects on the basis that his acquired skills and knowledge will not be recognized because of a reverse discrimination policy? What happens to the tradition that employers have the right to hire the best individual for the job, regardless of who or what he or she is? Does this government's responsibility lie with the individual citizen or with a set of statistics that indicate percentages?

What is the role of the commission? I think it is quite

clear that discrimination and prejudice are very difficult to pass judgment upon. The process of discrimination evolved and became refined over a great number of years. I expect frustration on the part of commission members. But I think they must remember one thing: you cannot right overnight a process that has been developed to a science in certain areas, over a long period of time. I think there's a need for patience, determination, wisdom, good judgment, and fairness in how the commission handles cases that may come before it.

Mr. Speaker, when we attempt to legislate so-called affirmative action programs in the area of hiring practices — and perhaps the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview can answer this — we run the risk of creating more problems than we solve. An example is the placing of quotas or percentages of a work force as a precondition. Does the quota tell you that 20 positions of a total work force of 500 will go to a specific minority group, or that the company concerned need hire only 20 people of that specific group? That is an answer I'm searching for. Mr. Speaker, what happens if I come along and don't fit either criterion, yet I am qualified for a job? Does that make me a third-class citizen? So much for the negative. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, I suppose I'm the eternal optimist, although, I think, a very pragmatic one.

Mr. Speaker, I've listened with great interest to the remarks of hon. members during the course of this debate, and I find myself sympathetic, if not in general agreement, to much of what has been said. I look forward with greater interest to the role I might play in helping determine a policy that will afford greater opportunities to all Albertans.

In concluding my remarks at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make reference to the statement of the hon. Minister of Labour, wherein he cited Bills 1 and 2 as the flagship legislation of this government. In moving with these amendments, let us not sink those flagships. I believe that I, more than any other member in this House, fully appreciate what he said and recognize the true worth of the initiatives of the hon. Premier in spearheading these two important Bills back in 1972. In this regard, and as a member of this Assembly, I recognize that we are now striking out in new directions. If we are to do so, I hope we will move with firmness, intelligence, empathy, and certainly with a large degree of generosity. Above all, Mr. Speaker, we must resolve to safeguard the intent, spirit, and integrity of The Human Rights Act and The Individual's Rights Protection Act.

Thank you.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is with some sense of history that I rise to speak briefly to the amendments, so ably put forward by the Minister of Labour, concerning The Individual's Rights Protection Act. With the comments the hon. Member for Edmonton Sherwood Park has made in his excellent fashion, I must say that many of my comments would be redundant.

First, I'd like to bring to you a perspective, that I know no one else in this House can bring, as a retired human rights commissioner. I'd like to tell you, from my own feelings, what it's like to be a commissioner, and to work with the very, very dedicated staff people on that commission. Many comments have been made. The hon. Member for Edmonton Sherwood Park has certainly touched on the other side of the coin, in terms of affirmative action and so on.

When you're a staff person on the commission and are faced on a day to day basis with people who come in who

feel they've been discriminated against, in my view it puts you in a position of having a great deal of difficulty in terms of being completely objective, and I certainly had. As a result of my experience, I believe that many thousands of people out there in the public feel that the Human Rights Commission is going to cure all ailments, and they look to the commission to do that. A very dedicated staff does that not only on a day to day basis, but my observation has been that many of those people are involved in the groups who advocate changes on behalf of their own people, and so you might say they're embroiled in the issues of human rights on a 24-hour basis, 365 days of the year. When I left the commission, I remember saying to my colleagues that I would hope that I could continue to look through human rights glasses at all things that came before me and that I might be challenged to comment on. Indeed that is what I'm attempting to do.

I believe one word hasn't been stressed enough this evening, Mr. Speaker, and that is responsibility. I wish there were a way that everytime we enunciate rights in this province, we could also enunciate the corresponding responsibilities. I have been a very rigorous advocate of changes to The Individual's Rights Protection Act, both before and after I got elected. I'm sure there is no member in this House who doesn't feel that some changes are necessary, and that they would be very pleased if they could find the panacea for changing the attitudes of some of the people in our society, certainly not all. But that's not possible. One of the things I get from listening to the debate is that I believe we all strive for the same end, but we believe there are different and faster routes to achieve that end.

I would just like to comment briefly from my experience on some comments made by both the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. First of all, when I was on the commission, we very carefully and jealously guarded our role as a conciliatory body. Indeed, some feel that we and they should take an advocacy position. I believe that groups are out there who are well qualified and, with the educational assistance of the commission, will indeed take that advocacy position. Because the other side of the coin, the respondent's, is not represented to any great degree in this discussion, I believe we must be very careful in making sure that we as a government and hopefully, the commission retain their objectivity. No one is to say they shouldn't be the focal point of all the groups who wish to make representations; not at all. In fact, I believe that is their role. Not only is that their role, but as a result of the experience they gain in the human rights field, they must constantly be at our doorsteps, working with us to keep saying, these are the changes that should be made, and so on. But it's up to the legislators eventually to make those changes in light of our experience in the broader scheme of things, because indeed a lot of other people are out there. And that's not to take away from the role of the commission at all, but as legislators we also have a duty.

Speaking to the primacy of this legislation, I really and truly think it upon the government, in the very least instance we have chosen, to have the Lieutenant Governor in Council make any exemptions to that Act. The very primacy of it would dictate that that would be the very least one should do, that some legislators should look at the seriousness and the implications of actually making an exemption to The Individual's Rights Protection Act.

The Leader of the Opposition made one comment — I

believe I understood him correctly — that he was very concerned with the commission's inability to lay complaints. He used an example. If I understood him correctly, as a commissioner at that time I would correct the Leader of the Opposition. Indeed, the commission did not lay the complaints that were brought forward regarding the auto insurance industry and other complaints laid with regard to insurance. Certainly at the board of inquiry stage, in many instances the commission has assisted in that regard.

I believe I should at least comment and congratulate the minister on his comments regarding the individual, because certainly we have to some degree been talking about groups, to the extent that even as commissioners, I believe some of us may have lost sight of the individual. Looking at the very broad range in which the commission will now have to operate in terms of assisting us with possible regulations and programs that indeed should fit within the parameters of the Act, some people, before this came about and the changes came about — certainly the legal opinions differed — might have called it affirmative action and therefore, they felt, might have contravened the Act. I don't believe this is so. I think the minister has made a very good case in that regard.

I think we should continue, and I would hope the commission would continue, to make strong representation on behalf of those individuals. With the board of inquiry now being able to file its findings with the Court of Queen's Bench as an order enforceable by the court, if my understanding is correct, I'm sure that will save us a step. It will look after some cases that I have been concerned about where, say, the monetary loss was very small but the principle at stake was very large. In terms of convincing the taxpayers of this province as to the principle that was at stake, I must be convinced at this point that if we were to sit in this Assembly right now with the knowledge we have of The Individual's Rights Protection Act and the Human Rights Commission's operations, we would still have a difficult time out there in the public convincing the average citizen that there should be programs that would in fact take their rights away. I believe the hon. Member for Edmonton Sherwood Park certainly made that case.

But I think all of us will agree that first of all, the enforcement of the board of inquiry is an attention-getting device. We do in fact have respondents out there whom we could classify as recalcitrant. In other words, even though we've gotten their attention, unfortunately they're not about to listen. So we do have to have those measures, and I believe that's very unfortunate. But I do believe the major number of cases that have come before the commission, certainly while I was there, were solved. Just the fact that we could investigate was the major attention-getting device. Most people don't want to discriminate, but they do have to have certain attitudes that they hold brought to their attention.

I very vigorously support these amendments, as I would very vigorously suggest more amendments if, after they have been in effect for some length of time, the commission would come forward along with other people and say there is some difficulty with some of the areas. There may be areas we haven't even looked at until this point in time. The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview made the case that society is constantly changing, and I certainly believe that.

Once again, I very vigorously support these amendments, and I urge all hon. members to do likewise.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, my comments will be few with regard to Bill 56. I've been very interested in the debate. I've also been very interested to find the Member for Spirit River-Fairview making his comments with regard to freedom on a religious basis. I'd like to share some of his biblical comments earlier tonight with him afterward, because they have certain theological difficulties.

He mentioned the imagery of the Trojan horse. My understanding is that there was a 10 years' war, where in the end the Greeks were able to gain access to Troy by the device of the wooden horse. My comments should be seen with respect to native Indian people within this province in particular. I know that their struggle to try to gain access to this so-called city of Troy, this so-called white man's society, has been going on a lot longer than 10 years. When members on the opposition benches make the plea that this legislation should be held over to the fall, I really find that that argument is not convincing. The sheer fact alone of the provision of Section 11 to allow exemptions at the moment will allow the government to go forward, to give approval to affirmative action programs which are already in place or mooted to be in place by various corporations within this province of Alberta.

The whole matter of public debate over the last number of months has been for the most part constructive, I think. But at the same time, I think it has heightened expectations, especially on behalf of native Indian people within this province, whether they be treaty, non-treaty, or Metis; whether they be resident in rural areas, on reserves, or in some of the less desirable aspects of white man's society, the so-called inner cities. There are heightened expectations that these programs will not be held up any further. This amendment puts in place that kind of encouragement so that various organizations, such as Alberta Gas Trunk Line, for example, will be able to proceed with their affirmative action type of program, especially with the hiring of native persons, and especially within this year when there is some great hope that the Alaska Highway gas pipeline will proceed and certain additional employment opportunities will result. In my mind, that is a very cogent reason for the enactment of this legislation now.

In my contact with native people over the years, whether in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, southeast B.C., or the Yukon, I've found that there very definitely is this need for, if you will, the extra kind of opportunity for them to gain, especially in the area of education. We know that those other aspects are there, aspects which have been raised in this debate with regard to housing or availability of work, as well as the aspects of education and the encouragement of these native people in particular to stay in the educational system so they might be able to gain the additional tools with which to survive within white society.

I find a great deal to regret in some of the recent court action within the province of Alberta, whereby the educational program as put forward in co-operation with the University of Calgary was, in effect, brought to a halt. It's very difficult to conceive — no, it isn't difficult to conceive of the idea that people want to prevent those kinds of positive programs, but it is entirely frustrating and difficult to have to deal with it on a one-to-one basis. In terms of Alberta's exploding growth, we have to realize that in the years that lie ahead, with the influx and in-migration to this province, the diversity of cultures that have already come and the additional ones that will

come to us from around this world, more and more The Individual's Rights Protection Act will be matter of focus in terms of the life of this Assembly and of the everyday life of individuals within the interesting cultural mosaic of Alberta.

There are students of social change who believe that the only way you can change attitudes is to have people removed bodily and placed in new circumstances, new situations, where they are able to cope, where they are able to be challenged by new sets of circumstances. One would hope one doesn't have to uproot people like that. One would hope that within the educational framework of this province, and within this nation, we are able to change attitudes, in the whole, especially because of the circumstances where people are willing to accept responsibility for their own so-called destiny within their lifetime; that people will be confronted by educational experiences where they will be able to grow; in effect, that all people will have equal job opportunities as well as educational opportunities and the whole list of other rights that you and I could quickly list.

In terms of my experience with native people, I believe the expectations are high. A week ago, when I was working with some native people in southeast B.C., I found that in spite of all the assurances from a company that has been noted for its involvement with native people, in spite of all the assurances of face-to-face relationship, of being there and saying, yes, we will carry out that program, there was a high degree of scepticism on the part of those Kootenay Indians. As I sat in those negotiations, I knew exactly what they were feeling. All too often we have cloaked ourselves in Bills, in moral, self-righteous positions, and have not come through with appropriate action. Mr. Speaker and members of this Assembly, I believe that while Bill 56 may not be Utopia, while Bill 56 may not bring into reality the promised land, in actual fact we should move now, so that we might meet the heightened expectations of Indian people in this province, so that we might go forward now.

My final comment, Mr. Speaker, is to underline what the Member for Three Hills took pains to outline: that we should not see this Act as just The Individual's Rights Protection Act. All too often, too many of us get hung up on what my right is. Instead we should do as mentioned by the Member for Three Hills: we should deal more in terms of our individual responsibility as citizens of Alberta, in terms of making the whole climate that much more positive for all people, whether or not they be within a minority group.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, in rising to conclude the debate, I'd first of all like to express my appreciation to the large number of hon. members who have contributed to this debate. I think it has been a most useful exercise, that I hope has assisted all of us to a greater understanding of the rather challenging and difficult concepts which are before us in these amendments.

I'd like to begin my comments by referring to the question raised first by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, the matter of equal pay for equal work. As proposed, the amendment is not an attempt to change the principle which already existed in the former legislation, or under The Alberta Labour Act before it had been

placed in The Individual's Rights Protection Act. Rather, it is an attempt to avoid what we anticipate could shortly be a collision between, as an illustration, the collective bargaining ability of different unions that have a portion of employees of a single employer within their respective bargaining units. There are some illustrations of that. It is not intended that this should enable differential rates of pay based on sex, but rather that if a bargaining agent has organized a portion of the employees of an employer, to use an illustration, in one city or one area, the Act would mean that males and females would have to be paid equally for the same type of work. On the other hand, if a different bargaining agent were representative of a portion of the employees of that same company in a different location, they could effectively negotiate different rates without having a collision between the two.

Mr. Speaker, some mention has been made of the question of initiation of complaints. I don't wish to repeat the rather extended remarks I made on this matter when I opened the debate, but just to summarize by saying again that the intention was to assure that in every way we have the commission in a neutral position between the parties, the respondent and the complainant, at the early stages of processing the complaint. It seemed to us that that would be very difficult to do if, in fact, the commission could initiate a complaint, and then proceed to conciliate or negotiate the complaint. It would seem that the commission could in no wise be considered to be in an objective, fair, even-handed position. We felt this a most important consideration, given the very considerable added authority the commission now has.

With respect to the question of additional grounds, I could go on at some length about the exception I made. Suffice it to say that, in my view, religion has been well recognized as being a matter of conscience which must be respected, not just for the last 30 years. This is where I part company with the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, and perhaps my colleague did as well on this point, because I really believe the recognition began in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. I'm not aware of any real problems of this nature in North America for quite some time.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, there are some very great problems. In concerning himself with the addition of grounds and why more new grounds weren't added, the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview chose to overlook some of what I think to be the weightier considerations of my remarks at moving stage. I'd simply refer to those without elaborating on them further at this time.

The one new ground which perhaps does deserve a passing comment inasmuch as it was raised twice or three times is the question of why mental capacity or mental ability was not added as a protected category or new grounds. Our problem in dealing with that is that there simply are some very major and difficult questions as to how one judges mental capacity. We will shortly get to a different Bill before us, if I don't talk too long this evening, which will indicate some of the very major problems which we encounter in trying to making that evaluation. In the present situation I think it realistic that we attempt first to deal with physical characteristics. From some of the legal advice I've been getting since the Bill was introduced, it would seem that that particular grounds will involve us in a great deal of discussion and not be without a considerable amount of difficulty, worry, and challenge to try to be fair and reasonable. I think we should first walk before we try to run. As I indicated on first reading, I think that that grounds alone

will involve us in a couple of years of work just to try to fathom completely how far we can go.

Another question raised had to do with affirmative action. On the matter of affirmative action I would like to make only a few comments, most of which I made earlier as well. When we talk about affirmative action we must recognize, and those who mentioned it have done so, that what we are talking about are actions, albeit positive and supportive to some generally recognized individuals or group — but be careful about who does the recognizing — who are recognized on the basis of a prohibition under the existing legislation. Surely, if the one court case and the two boards of inquiry have taught us anything in the last while, they've shown us that problem. They brought it home to us in a way which we surely cannot blink at and say, we'll have the easy part but we'll hide away the difficult part. We must face up to the fact that affirmative action programs, as defined by anybody who has advanced the notion in this Assembly or to me, were based on actions which presumably require an exemption from the pure and absolute simplicity of the existing legislation. That's a fact. We can't have it both ways. If we're going to permit affirmative action, we then permit exemptions. We have rolled the whole question of affirmative action special programs in this legislation into an exempting provision.

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, who has chosen a lot of authorities to reference his comments to, didn't see fit to reference himself to the decision made in Saskatchewan by the leader of a very successful wing of his party, the premier of that province. The premier's government brought in affirmative action in Saskatchewan. That is Section 47 of their code, if memory serves me. Section 46 is a major exempting provision, and with Section 46 indeed they do not need Section 47. It provides all the exemptions they need, but presumably it may have satisfied some of the people who wanted only the good, wanted to see it in only a positive way and not see some of the negative connotations. But if he examines that legislation, it's all there.

Mr. Speaker, I looked long and hard, and I questioned very closely the groups that came to see me on this. There is no way to have access to special programs without having the exempting authority. I regret that it must be so, because we've moved from an Act which was absolute, which was pristinely pure, if you will. But we've moved that way to accord, to recognize the demands and the requests that have been made by many groups for affirmative action for special programs.

So we now have an Act which has, if one looks at it in negative terms, that defect. To buttress and to protect ourselves from that defect, the authority is given to the Executive Council; the authority not only to exempt but to delegate the exemption to the commission. I made the commitment on introducing this debate, and I'll make it again tonight, that I wouldn't presume we will ever use that authority without having consultation with the commission. I would hope that the commission and Executive Council will be foursquare and in total agreement on the use of that authority. To me, that gives it a double-check.

Mr. Speaker, I fear I can't go much further on this point in providing the assurances that hon. members would like to have. I can simply tell them I would be confident that if the commission detects abuse of this section by Executive Council, it will certainly make that known. I would hope that they do make that known.

There have been a large number of comments about

our objectives. I indicated earlier that it was my objective to arrive at a policy of meaningful participation. It should be our goal that every citizen in Alberta should be able to participate in a meaningful way in our society. That's what this legislation really means.

In conclusion, I should say that I feel very strongly that it is a responsibility of each one of us and of every citizen in society to learn how to relate fairly and properly to other citizens. We can legislate; we can put in place a legislated code. It will never be complete, it will never be adequate, and if we get into detail it will have to be ridden through with exemptions. It can never, ever, replace a moral code, a philosophical basis, or an intellectual understanding of how we should be able and how we should expect to treat our fellow Albertans. More than that, it is my concern that if we go in the direction of legislating everything, we remove or may be seen to be removing the necessity for our citizens to think through for themselves what their conduct ought to be. You know, we put in place that simple, easy expression. Well, it isn't that simple, and it isn't that easy. It's up to every citizen to accept that responsibility, as I know they will, and as it has been illustrated by the great work of the commission to date, by the effort of many groups in making representations to me, and by the interests that all hon. members have shown.

[Motion carried; Bill 56 read a second time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would ask now that the House agree to revert to Introduction of Bills.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

#### head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS (reversion)

#### Bill 47 The Appropriation Act, 1980

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 47, The Appropriation Act, 1980. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

In a word, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is the means by which the Legislature provides the government with operating moneys for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1981.

[Leave granted; Bill 47 read a first time]

#### Bill 40 The Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 1980

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 40, The Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 1980. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

This Bill provides supplementary moneys of \$61,689 million, covering five aspects of the housing package announced in this Assembly on April 30.

[Leave granted; Bill 40 read a first time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow it is proposed to complete second readings on the Order Paper; there would be four of them. I've indicated before that Bill No. 6 and Bill No. 34 are not intended to be passed in the spring sitting. Bills 5, 8, and 33, in Committee of the

Whole, are in the same class; it's not proposed to deal with those in the spring sitting. Subject to that, second readings and committee study of bills, in order, would be the business for tomorrow.

[At 10:17 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]

