

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: Tuesday, March 9, 1982 2:30 p.m.

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

**PRAYERS**

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 11****Health Services Continuation Act**

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to introduce a Bill without notice, being Bill 11, the Health Services Continuation Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. minister have unanimous consent?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: There is not unanimous consent.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous leave of the Assembly to revert to Notices of Motions.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. minister have the consent requested?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

head: **NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to give oral notice of a motion to be moved tomorrow, that pursuant to Standing Order 63(2), notwithstanding the *Standing Orders* and notwithstanding the normal adjournment hour, Bill No. 11, the Health Services Continuation Act, be proceeded with in all its stages in one day.

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I would like to file with the Legislative Assembly an important letter I received the past weekend, dated March 5, 1982, from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and welcome any questions on the letter.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to other members of the Assembly a class of 27 grade 6 students from Brightview school in the constituency of Edmonton Jasper Place, accompanied by their teacher Mr. Graham Walker. I ask that they rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, today we have eight recreation students from the Kelsey Institute in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. They're touring the province from Edmonton to Hinton, Jasper, and Banff. I ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

**Health Services Continuation Bill**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my first question to the Minister of Labour. It's with regard to the proposed introduction of Bill 11 and its relationship to Section 146 of the Labour Act. Could the minister indicate why the back-to-work order could not have been given under Section 146, and that the Bill to be presented to the Legislature was required?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that this particular dispute is the third involving the same parties in a matter of six years. It was the judgment of my colleagues and myself that the more appropriate means of terminating this particular dispute would be by legislation, as opposed to the section referred to by the hon. leader.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in terms of other principles, could the hon. minister indicate why the directive given to the employees to be back to work would be given by their own trade union, rather than the employer or the government?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I confess to some concern. I can respond to the question, but in fact I would be getting into what would become a debate if and when the Bill does proceed.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order [not recorded] have a little latitude in the question period. We've had oral notice from the Government House Leader that the Bill will go through all stages tomorrow. Because it is perhaps one of the most important pieces of legislation this House is going to deal with for some time, it would seem to me that if there are questions in the question period, so that we can be better prepared for the debate tomorrow it would be in everybody's interest that they be asked.

MR. SPEAKER: I would have to agree with the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. Of course, it would have to be within reason. We couldn't get down to phrases and things like that in the Bill, but certainly information of a substantial nature that might prepare hon. members better to debate the Bill tomorrow would seem to be, under the present circumstances at least, eminently in order.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the decision of the Chair. I felt some new principles were being established in labor legislation, and it would be good to have that information for tomorrow's debate. Thank you.

I would like to redirect that question to the Minister of Labour for his response. It was with regard to the trade union being requested to direct its membership back to work following the passage of this legislation. That seems to be a new precedent. In most cases, the employer or the government would direct the employees back to work.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the answer is very simple in this case. Last week it was acknowledged to me by both presidents that they have a responsibility for the leadership of their respective memberships. This particular provision acknowledges that responsibility and, in terms of the objective of the Bill, asks them to act upon that responsibility.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question in terms of another principle that seems to be different: the concept of acquiescence, where persons belonging to a respective trade union may be charged because they have acquiesced. Could the hon. minister indicate why that is introduced into the legislation, and its purposes?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the provision relates to the enforcement of the legislation. The onus is on the respective parties to see that the legislation is followed through. It is considered that there should be a clear expression of the responsibility of an individual. If that individual — if a member of a board, or whatever capacity; in some instances, a director of a board — disagrees with the majority decision, that individual has a responsibility to record the disagreement.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question with regard to decertification of a respective trade union. In this case, it would be the United Nurses association. Could the minister indicate one or two basic reasons for the harshness in the legislation, whereby the trade union could be decertified if, as I recall the legislation, persons do not respond to the order that will follow this legislation. Mr. Speaker, could the minister comment on the harshness of that act of decertification?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, this particular dispute is a most serious one, in terms of its effect upon the provision of adequate medical care. It is considered that there is a great urgency in the province to have that returned. Accordingly, in keeping with the fact that this is the highest body in the province of Alberta in relation to the governance of our society, it is felt that a decision of this House should be clear, unequivocal, and accepted at face value.

[Two members rose]

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary question by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Mill Woods.

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of the rather sweeping nature of the points alluded to by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, i.e. decertification, people being penalized for acquiescence, as well as the enforcement of the Act by the union as opposed to normal enforcement procedures, could the Minister of Labour advise the Assembly whether the government is prepared to meet with officials of either the United Nurses of Alberta or the Alberta Hospital Association prior to the committee stage study of this legislation, to consider some of the concerns already expressed by at least one of these organizations?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I anticipate that that's a judgment that could only be taken based upon a written communication from whatever party interested in having

a meeting, expressing the purpose and objective of such a meeting. At that time a judgment would be taken, keeping in mind the time parameters involved in this particular situation and the urgency of the matter before us.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question, if I may, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly of the reason no discussion took place with the United Nurses of Alberta, as suggested in a February 23 letter from the deputy minister, I believe, indicating that should emergency action be required he could see no reason a meeting could not take place.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, without having at hand the particular communication to which the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview refers, I believe it contemplated the Public Emergency Tribunal process. In any event, I advise all hon. members that my meeting last Thursday, which commenced at 9:30 a.m., between Mrs. Ethier and three other members of the executive of the United Nurses of Alberta and Mr. Pals and one other member of the executive of the Alberta Hospital Association, discussed very fully the respective responsibilities of the party, the nature of the dispute, and the urgency of the matter at hand. I believe that to a large degree, that meeting alone would have acquitted any responsibility which would be communicated in the letter.

Additionally, a deputy minister and a mediator met with the parties as recently as yesterday, again underlined the urgency of the matter, and made positive proposals to both parties as to how they could conclude the remaining items in dispute. Those proposals were found to be unacceptable by both parties. In that respect, the responsibility which both presidents undertook and accepted in the meeting of March 4, I believe, does not seem to have been completely fulfilled.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question, if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: Followed by a supplementary by the hon. Member for Edmonton Mill Woods — I'm not suggesting only one; I think he should have the same latitude as others — then a supplementary or so by the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

MR. PAHL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary question to the ...

MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member for Edmonton Mill Woods misunderstood me. It was my thought that the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview would now be concluding his supplementaries, then we would go to Mill Woods.

MR. PAHL: I thought I was acknowledged two supplementaries ago, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: That's so, but it would seem to be rather unduly rigid and perhaps too restrictive if when a member gets a turn at supplementaries, he's allowed only one. If a train of thought or line of questioning is being pursued, it might be more orderly and effective if it were given a reasonable run, shall we say.

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So we have this information prior to our debate tomorrow, is the hon. Minister of Labour or the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care able to confirm that in fact the United

Nurses of Alberta did send a letter, I believe to both hon. gentlemen, indicating that should the government foresee an emergency arising, discussions could begin immediately to increase the emergency service provided by the union?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I can confirm correspondence from the United Nurses of Alberta, to the effect that in certain situations they would undertake and wish to have discussions toward the solution to the particular emergency situation. But as well, I confirm that I have in my possession correspondence from locals of the United Nurses of Alberta, in one case to the effect that 25 hours from the date of issuance of the letter they were withdrawing all support staff in a particular unit of a hospital.

In view of that sort of situation, regrettably the rather broader undertaking was taken before a meeting chaired by the director of the College of Physicians and Surgeons — I don't recall the exact date, Mr. Speaker, but I do recall that that meeting was held on a Sunday afternoon — with representatives of the United Nurses of Alberta, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Alberta Hospital Association, officials of the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care, and officials of the Department of Labour, which explored that question in some detail. A satisfactory resolution to the undertaking was not achieved.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary to the first question of the hon. Leader of the Opposition related to the concern that I, in part, share with him for the severity of noncompliance to the proposed legislation. Could the Minister of Labour indicate to this Assembly whether there is a *quid pro quo*, or what is the other side in terms of compliance by all parties affected by the proposed legislation?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the legislation does contain enforcement provisions applicable to individuals, whether they be individuals acting on behalf of or representing the employer or individuals acting on behalf of or representing the bargaining agent or agents. As well as the decertification with respect to the locals of the United Nurses of Alberta, there is in fact a provision in other legislation which provides for the removal of hospital boards in the event that that should be necessary.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to either the Premier or the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. This has to do with what mechanism was in place to balance the presentation made by the United Nurses of Alberta, saying that if there was an emergency situation they would gladly help out by providing nursing services, and the letter the hon. Premier received from Dr. Cameron. What mechanism was there in place to weigh the concerns of the medical doctors and the pledge that the United Nurses would help out? What mechanism did the Premier use to balance this out to make the decision to bring in emergency powers?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to respond to that important question. The balance the hon. Member for Clover Bar is referring to is of course the balance with regard to emergency care discussed and responded to in the previous answer given by the Minister of Labour, as between the hospitals, on one hand, being one party to this dispute and the United Nurses of Alberta. The responsibility of the government is to be as

even-handed as it possibly can in a dispute of this nature, as between the parties.

But the government of the province of Alberta and this Legislature have a further responsibility that deals with the whole matter of health care of our citizens, not just emergency care. For that reason it was my view, in assessing the matter and the communication we'd received with regard to the concern of the restricted level of services, to request a meeting to receive the best professional medical advice we could get, in addition to the medical advice we receive in a number of other ways.

So last Tuesday I requested a meeting with the board of the College of Physicians and Surgeons. I suggested it be held on Sunday. The president of the association, Dr. Cameron, suggested that the meeting should be accelerated and held on Friday. The meeting was held on Friday with Mr. Russell, the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, and his deputy minister, Dr. Lloyd Grisdale, in attendance. We received a report, then asked the board of directors of the college to provide us with a letter. The letter is now filed with the Legislature and, I believe, in the hands of all hon. members.

I should just point out that within the letter, it isn't a matter of the termination or balance between the capacity of a hospital to provide emergency and limited medical treatment on one hand, or nurses to respond to what it is they are prepared to do in such emergency. Our concern, and our concern with regard to this matter, is the medical concern that faces the citizens arising from the restricted level of services. The restricted level of services available — and those are services overall — as our professional advice has provided to us, jeopardizes the quality and availability of essential medical care.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question on a related topic. Has either the Premier or the Minister of Labour received communication from the College of Family Practice in this province, regarding the urgency to settle this particular matter?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I refer that question to the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, several days ago I received a telegram sent on behalf of the college, expressing their concern. That telegram was dated March 2.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care also indicate whether the monitoring he's been carrying out so effectively has changed in the past 24 hours.

MR. RUSSELL: There's been no substantial change in the situation, Mr. Speaker, other than the concern expressed — and I alluded to it yesterday — about the signs of developing fatigue among some elements of working people at some of the hospitals, primarily the University of Alberta hospital in Edmonton.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition has agreed to forego his second question.

#### **Beef Cattle and Sheep Support Program**

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Could he indicate to the House the response to the beef and sheep support program announced last fall?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the response and acceptance of the program has been right across the total segment of the livestock industry. The hon. member is alluding to the submission of applications. They have been coming in and are being processed at the rate of between 1,200 and 1,500 a day. The turnaround time is approximately 14 to 15 days.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate if there have been requests for additional help from district agriculturalists who are handling these applications, or has the minister provided any extra help to the district ags. as far as processing the applications is concerned?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that where the workload has been extremely heavy, extra staff have been provided for taking the applications.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate the government has any intention to extend the March 31 deadline, to take care of some of the backlog of applications still in the district ags.' hands?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, there has been no review of the extension of the time covered by the program. We would certainly remain willing to be flexible if applications were still relatively backlogged at the close of the application time, which was set as of the end of March.

#### **Single Men's Hostels**

DR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. The number of transients in Calgary appears to be increasing. Is the minister considering changes to the policy concerning the two-week stay at the Single Men's Hostel?

MR. BOGLE: No, Mr. Speaker, we're not.

DR. CARTER: A supplementary. Is the department policy whereby, hard-to-house elderly males are being given the option to move to either Gunn or Youngstown, still in effect?

MR. BOGLE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Individuals who do not qualify for a stay in the single men's hostels in both Calgary and Edmonton are given the opportunity to go to both Youngstown and Gunn.

MR. LITTLE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister advise the House what action he has taken with respect to the severe pressures on the Calgary Welcome Recreation Centre?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the Calgary Welcome Recreation Centre is one of a number of agencies providing care and services to individuals in one of our two large urban centers. The province has provided funding to that agency in the past. During the current fiscal year, that totals \$14,000. I believe there's \$25,000 from the cities' United Way fund.

During a recent meeting arranged by the MLA for Calgary Millican, I met with the mayor of Calgary, Alderwoman Scott, and the director of the center, Reverend Billington and, at the suggestion of the MLA for Calgary Millican, offered to increase the provincial sup-

port to the Calgary Welcome Recreation Centre on a matching basis with the city of Calgary, whereby the city would use part of its family and community support service funding for this project.

#### **Health Services Continuation Bill** (continued)

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to come back to the question of the Bill to be presented tomorrow and, for clarification, ask the hon. Premier or the Minister of Labour whether the decision to proceed with the preparation of this legislation came on Friday, as a consequence of this meeting of March 5. Or when was the decision made to introduce the legislation?

MR. LOUGHEED: The decision to introduce the legislation was made this morning. Obviously the government was preparing for that possibility, and preparations were then in order.

The letter that caused me, and I'm sure all Albertans, great concern about the situation of the present level of medical service in Alberta being no longer acceptable, was received by me on the weekend. I discussed the matter with my colleagues yesterday. They suggested it would perhaps be all right to wait one day to see if, in the negotiations the mediator created yesterday between the parties, there was any possibility for a negotiated settlement and therefore take the risk for one period of 24 hours, which we did.

We considered this matter this morning, and we considered that the risk to our citizens was too great for further delay, particularly when we were advised by the Minister of Labour that the mediator reported the negotiations had collapsed and a negotiated settlement was a remote possibility.

MR. NOTLEY: Supplementary question to either gentleman. When did the actual preparation of the legislation commence?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I would hope the hon. member, who frequently asks in this Legislature for us to prepare contingency plans, would recognize that we prepare contingency plans in a number of ways for a number of different events. Obviously that occurred and had been discussed as one of a number of options. But the decision to proceed with the legislation was made this morning.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Labour. During the preparation of the contingency plan, which is obviously legislation we'll be dealing with tomorrow, was there any consultation with organizations outside the Department of Labour, or consulting firms, with respect to the preparation of the legislation? Or was the legislation essentially in-house and presented to the cabinet and the caucus?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, this legislation and other variations considered by way of alternative planning were all done in-house.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In the in-house review of the options, was any review undertaken by the Department of Labour of other labor legislation in the country? I ask this question in view of the issues raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition in the first series of questions.

What review was made of other legislation, in the preparation of this legislation?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, at least two if not three departments were involved in reviewing alternatives and legislation which may exist elsewhere, as well as approaches which could be taken to this particular impasse. Beyond that I can't give, in terms of numbers of Bills looked at — although I do know that all legislation pertaining to hospital and medical services in Canada was reviewed.

MR. NOTLEY: One further supplementary question. In response to a question, the minister indicated that it may be possible to have a meeting with either the UNA or the Alberta Hospital Association concerning some of their concerns, now that this legislation has been made public. At this time, would the minister personally undertake one final effort to reach a settlement before the Legislature commences with this legislation tomorrow?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I have made a number of initiatives, indirectly and directly. I mentioned last Thursday morning when, prior to the opening of this Legislature, I had the opportunity to meet with both presidents. At that time, I was assured by both presidents that they did not wish my involvement, other than through the mediation capacity of the staff of the Department of Labour.

I appreciate that view and was reassured when I was given the undertaking, equally by those presidents, that they considered themselves the two persons most responsible to resolve this dispute in the province of Alberta. If that responsibility and undertaking still stand, I am sure they can resolve it. However, if they believe I may assist in some way and are prepared to demonstrate to me, in writing, what proposal they would like me to participate in to assist in the resolution of the dispute, then I would certainly take it under advisement.

I can assure the hon. member that I as much as anyone else would very much appreciate having this very severe problem resolved for our society, because it has caused a great deal of apprehension by many people as to whether or not they can get the level of service which they feel they need and which medical advice suggests would be timely indeed for them to have.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Government House Leader. Should progress take place, hopefully as a result of talks between the two sides, would the government consider reviewing the timetable announced by the hon. Government House Leader in the notice of motion?

MR. SPEAKER: The question is hypothetical, but I suppose under the circumstances the minister may wish to answer.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, it is hypothetical. Perhaps I could respond to such a matter under the heading of proposed government business.

To be resolved in the way the legislation proposes, any developments directed toward resolving the matter which would be before the House would of course be very important developments, and a decision would have to be made at that time. However, I would point out that even after Royal Assent to the legislation, when that occurs,

the parties still have the opportunity to resolve their differences before final arbitration.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government, I have one added comment with regard to that important question, and refer hon. members to the second final paragraph in the letter from the College of Physicians and Surgeons:

It is our considered opinion that this situation must not be allowed to continue through one more weekend, when services are strained to breaking point subjecting the citizens of our Province to unnecessary risk.

We are advised by the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care that, from information he receives, it will take some considerable period of time — perhaps at least two days — to gear up the hospitals in this province to ensure that the concern or the unnecessary risk referred to by the College of Physicians and Surgeons is not there this weekend. Although we would respond as the Minister of Labour and Government House Leader have responded to that question, I thought that that important point of urgency should be underlined.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour. I'm sure the United Nurses of Alberta and all members of the profession would like to know the government's intention. Is this government considering taking the right to strike away from the nurses of this province by placing them under essential services legislation?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the Bill which might have been before us and about which the questions flow today deals with this one dispute only. However, I must mention that the privilege which is a part of collective bargaining as we know it, the privilege of denying or stopping service, carries with it certain responsibilities. Obviously in this case, the opportunity given by the ability to have a stoppage of service has not been balanced by an equal measure of responsibility to prevent a stoppage of service, which is an obligation of this House and of both parties involved in this particular situation. In view of that failure, there will of course be some consideration. I cannot predict, and do not undertake to predict, the outcome of that consideration.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the two notices of motion stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

## head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

201. Moved by Mr. D. Anderson:

Be it resolved that the Assembly urge the government to consider establishing a committee or commission consisting of labor, business, and government leaders to investigate alternatives to strikes and lockouts. This body would consider labor courts, co-determination models, final-

offer arbitration, or any other means by which strikes and lockouts might become an obsolete way of resolving differences.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy today to propose Motion 201 to the Legislature. I suppose the first question that has to arise from the presentation of this particular motion is: why is it necessary? I imagine most members would find it easier to answer that question today than perhaps at other times, when labor negotiations have been at a more peaceful level in our province. I think it is important to look at this motion in the context of its future importance to the province. Obviously it is not a solution to any of the difficulties at this point in time. But in my opinion, we now have to assess in total the collective bargaining approach that has taken place in past years in this government and seriously consider options which might exist.

The reason is clear: the current process has not worked. We in Canada now have one of the worst labor records in the world. In fact it is second to none in the western world, except that of Italy. According to the last statistics available, the 1980 statistics, in that one year we lost well over 9 million person-days to strikes and lockouts in this country. In the province of Alberta, we lost well over 500,000 man-days to strikes.

Mr. Speaker, it is my opinion that our country is particularly negative, in terms of the results of its labor/management negotiations. The results are negative because of the system that has evolved over the years. In our society, we have a very intricate, legal way to ensure that the two warring parties, labor and management, have some very strict rules by which to operate at any given time. But in our country, we have not attempted in an in-depth way to find ways of resolving that conflict before they reach that stage of war. In fact, we have legalized a system of conflict, rather than trying to deal with the root cause of that conflict. I now think that this Legislature should take the initiative in moving toward resolution of the difficulties by evolving a new system of communication, rather than a system that indeed encourages difficulties.

Of course, any alternatives must be better than what exists now. I think that any alternatives this Assembly or our general public must consider have to have three principles as a base. First, any change to our labor relations system must be fair and just to all involved. Second, the changes must break down rather than create conflict between labor and management. And third, the changes should not interfere with, but add to, the progress of business concerns and government operations.

The question we must then ask is, what options are there to consider? Frankly, they are as limitless as the imagination of the community. But I think we have to consider what has taken place in other countries as a starting point, a place where we can begin our search for objective alternatives to the system that now exists. For example, labor strife is little known to people in Japan. It happens infrequently that a conflict reaches a point of striking, or where workers feel so dissatisfied that they have to withdraw their services.

They have a completely different system of operation than we have in this country. One might say that companies are paternalistic in their approach. They look after all the needs of individual workers, not just those in the work place: involve them in extra-curricular activities, provide pension plans of great significance, day care, recreational and travel opportunities, and indeed involve

themselves, as companies, in the worker's life to a very great extent.

It is my opinion that it is unlikely that that system could evolve here in any short period of time. We now have a situation where labor unions represent employees, and businesses operate apart from those. I would think that the Japanese model, where the Japanese employee is well looked after but does not have a say in the operation of a company, might not be as easily accepted here as other options. However, it is one we should consider and investigate and, I believe, look at seriously.

The other area we can take a look at is with respect to various bargaining techniques and approaches that might be taken to resolve differences as they develop. One that has lately come into vogue in many parts of the United States is something called final-offer arbitration. Rather than going to an arbitrator, who makes up his mind as to what approach should be taken and sets apart a package of salaries, guidelines, and benefits independent of the positions of the labor or business group negotiating, in final-offer arbitration that arbitrator is required to accept one of those two positions. The theory is that this thereby brings together individuals to such a point that their differences may be resolved before they reach that point. If not, the positions are so close, because they don't want the arbitrator to reject either the management or labor position, that they reach the most equitable settlement possible.

There are a number of other bargaining techniques and methods that I think we can look at to augment, change, or perhaps in some cases ratify our current system. But I suspect that we have to look further at more drastic changes before the system we are now in can change significantly enough to be of benefit to labor and management in our country.

Labor courts have been used very successfully in parts of Europe. They are a variation on some parts of our collective bargaining process but indeed are part of their judicial system. Most labor courts in Europe are tripartite; in other words, it has equal numbers of business and management representatives and an individual chairing it who is a member of the government or appointed by the government or the court. They sit and try to resolve various disputes. I have often wondered: if we have to reach the point — and I emphasize if we "have" to reach the point — where there is conflict between the parties to such an extent that strikes are possible, cannot two parties just agree to pick a jury of 12 people like we do in any trial, agree to those jurors, and have them decide on a package under this final-offer arbitration system?

My preference would be that we resolve those difficulties before they reach that stage. In that regard, I think we could consider a couple of options in this country. One, which I won't dwell on in depth but that I'd like to mention today, is the possibility of involving employees to a greater extent in the profit picture of companies, particularly through employee stock ownership. I believe that if you encourage an employee to become part of a company — give him a piece of the action, if you wish — he will be more dedicated to the goals of that company. He will be more motivated. This has indeed been borne out by a number of companies which have successfully done this in Canada and have very innovatively tried to involve their employees.

I think we as government could potentially do more in that regard through tax incentives and other ways through which we could encourage that move. We could also encourage companies to begin appointing employees

to their boards of directors, so those employees understand the problems of the company and how it operates. As well, the company will begin to understand the difficulties faced by the employees in negotiating what they desire and feel is fair and just. I think those are systems we could look at. Mr. Speaker, I now have on the Order Paper two Bills which speak to that particular option, so I won't dwell any further in that regard.

Perhaps the most publicized and, in many regards, obviously successful labor management system in the world has been that in Germany, called co-determination by many. It's a most interesting system, in that as early as 1848 the German people began to evolve a position where employees were very involved in the operation of the companies. Interestingly enough, though, the system did not evolve to a great extent until after the war, when occupation forces decided they did not want to put business totally in the control of management in Germany, because the business group in general had supported the rise of the Nazis in Germany. They insisted that workers be involved in councils.

At this point in Germany, companies really have two-tier board systems: a supervisory board, which generally looks after the company's concerns, and an implementation board. In the coal and steel industry in Germany, it's required that labor and management have equal numbers of board members on that supervisory board, with the one other person, the chairman, being chosen jointly by the two of them. In other areas, it's required that there be a labor representative for every two shareholders on the board.

Interestingly enough, that system has seemed to work quite well, at least in terms of strikes. The last statistics available from Germany show that only 23 man-days were lost per 1,000 workers, compared with other European countries like Italy and indeed Ireland, where well over 1,000 man-days a year are lost per 1,000 workers. Canada, as well, fits into that category.

The questions raised are with respect to the productivity of companies, and whether or not the in-depth involvement of employees holds back decision-making and progress. The German government appointed the Biedenkopf commission to look into that not too long ago. Interestingly enough, it found that co-determination seldom prevented the implementation of management proposals and that unanimous votes were the rule, rather than the exception, on supervisory boards. Further, any moves toward positions that might usually be thought to harm workers, like mergers and acquisitions, to a very great extent were in fact agreed to by the employee directors, rather than opposed.

One would still have to consider a number of concerns with respect to that system if we seriously looked at the option of bringing that kind of system into Alberta. One, of course, is that the unions negotiate on a national basis in Germany, and they've evolved a system where they don't feel that that strike mechanism is an essential part of their process. Like every other problem we have in our nation, the attitude of workers and businessmen is the important aspect of trying to implement this or any other system we try in Alberta.

My personal background with respect to labor and management has been mixed, and I think that might be the case with many of us. My family is basically labor-oriented. In fact, my mother is an Alberta Union of Provincial Employees shop steward, my father has been a member of the plumbers' and pipefitters' union all his life, my wife even is a member of the Canadian Union of

Public Employees, and at one time I was a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. On the other hand, I've been a small business man and have seen the difficulties that evolve from that basis, and have worked in a large corporation in a management position, realizing the difficulties from that end.

But from looking at it from business and labor perspectives and now having had the opportunity over the last three years to look at it from a government perspective, it's my contention that people are not different regardless of what category you place them in. A businessman, a laborer, a government employee, or politician all have the same goals. They all want security, a vibrant economy, some way of feeling of worth and value. They want reasonable compensation for the time they spend, and they want to be able to know they're going to have a job and be able to work in the near future.

Mr. Speaker, I think we in Canada today have a situation where those kinds of goals and objectives are not necessarily seen by people as being automatic, because we don't know when a strike is going to occur. If you're an employee, you don't know if that's going to mean lost wages day after day. If you're a businessman, you don't know if that's going to allow your company to operate. In fact, if you're government, you don't know what position that's going to put you in with respect to planning for the future of the population you represent.

Mr. Speaker, I know that people in Calgary Currie very much want an end to these ridiculous strikes and lockouts. They want an end to the conflict situation that exists in the country today. We now have to consider options. I hope this Legislature will consider passage of this motion as a first step to solving this problem that has now plagued Canada for a couple of centuries.

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to participate in the debate on this motion. I think it's a timely motion, and I'd like to congratulate the hon. Member for Calgary Currie for bringing it before us. When you consider the fact that in Alberta we are engaged in a number of difficult strike situations, it's apparent that the issue is very relevant today.

It's important to note that Alberta is becoming increasingly industrialized, and the problem is likely to grow with that industrialization. There have to be alternatives to the confrontation approach we have in our country today. Under the BNA Act, the Alberta Legislature has some responsibility for labor relations. Strikes and lockouts are becoming more numerous and, increasingly, a problem.

The other day I was reading Peter Drucker, books called *Management* and *Industrial Man*. Peter Drucker notes that alienation is increasingly becoming a problem in our way of life as our society becomes more complex. As larger organizations act in our daily lives, it becomes more and more difficult to have any impact on what those organizations say or do for us or to us.

That is the case in industrial settings as well. In a large company, where management is often removed from the day-to-day activities of the person working on the shop floor, in the office, or in the plant, people feel alienated. They feel they have no capacity to have any influence on management decisions taken by the company or organization. That feeling of helplessness is translated into issues like hours of work, holiday time, working conditions on the plant floor, safety provisions of the plant, and methods of work producing a product. Of course they relate to things like salary and job security and the actual

organization of the company. Employees in a large firm feel they don't really have much influence on those questions, and either shrug their shoulders and accept what comes or become increasingly militant and demand a greater say.

There are alternatives. I was fortunate enough to accompany the Minister responsible for Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation on a select committee visit to western Europe. One of the most striking impressions left with me was to walk into the Bayer chemical plant, with 35,000 workers, and be told by the senior manager — maybe the minister could tell me what his title was — that co-determination was one of the best things that ever happened to that company. Co-determination is the phenomenon the hon. Member for Calgary Currie discussed, where workers are actually represented on the board of directors and have a say in the day-to-day management of the company.

Initially, management in that company vigorously fought the proposal. They thought it was akin to socialism. But a funny thing happened. The workers elected members to the board from the shop floor. Those workers became highly involved in the day-to-day management of the company and began to appreciate the worldwide problems the company had in the preparation and marketing of its products. They began to take an approach that forced them to the middle. Instead of taking extreme positions and a confrontation attitude in trying to extract the best deal from management, there was an approach that basically forced both management and labor to come to the middle and try to work out an equitable sharing of the profits of the plant, and also work out day-to-day routine problems like safety conditions, productivity, or job security. Both sides began to understand one another and work together.

I think that's the goal of the motion the hon. Member for Calgary Currie has brought before the House today. We are experiencing difficulty in a confrontation approach to labor relations. The experience in this province in the last few months, with a very difficult nurses' strike and a very difficult bus or rapid transit strike in Edmonton, points to the need to find some approach other than confrontation to solve our problems in the public service. That's also true in the private sector.

As the hon. member pointed out, in Germany, after the Second World War, the Allies imposed a co-determination model, where they involved workers in management. It was originally the development of an idea that existed in Germany much earlier, but was crystallized after the Second World War as a need to try to get more democracy into that country.

It had a strange effect. The German economy was very productive, and strikes were at an all-time low. If you think back to 1974-75 in Canada, Mr. Speaker, we had some very difficult situations. We're still having them today. But in those days, with the imposition of wage and price controls — the period just before that and during it — we had some very difficult industrial relations disputes in this country. Canada's track record worldwide is appalling.

It seems reasonable to look at some of those West German and west European experiments which tend to force management and labor to the middle instead of taking extreme positions and trying to beat each other and wrestle over who's going to get the biggest slice of the pie. As Bryce Mackasey said a few years ago, it's important that both sides have a share in the baking of the pie rather than just trying to carve it up or prevent the pie

from being baked.

The hon. Member for Calgary Currie has brought before the Assembly a motion which basically asks us to consider: are there some alternatives to what we're doing today, and are those alternatives worth looking at? I think it's a very reasonable question to ask, and something the Assembly should seriously consider. I support the adoption of the motion. At this point in Alberta's economic history, before we become rapidly industrialized, I think it's worth while to stop, look, and think before we go charging down the same road that the rest of North America has, and not very successfully either.

The hon. member has put before us a number of alternatives by way of suggestion. Labor courts: having some impartial group examine labor issues and make a decision binding both management and labor. That's worth looking at. Co-determination: involving the workers in the day-to-day management of the company, both on the shop floor and in the most senior management bodies of a company. That's worth looking at. It's worked well in Germany. Final-offer arbitration: last night I spoke to a constituent about this motion and was told that in a company he'd worked for, management and labor would both provide offers. An arbitrator had no choice but to accept one or the other offer, whichever was most reasonable. It meant that you're forcing both sides to the middle instead of pushing them to extremes. If management makes a ridiculous offer and labor's is very reasonable but slanted to their point of view, management runs the risk of having that offer accepted. So they can't afford to be unreasonable. Of course the same is true on the other side.

Mr. Speaker, before Alberta really becomes the industrial province we hope it will be — because we are running out of some of our scarce natural resources — before we really go down that road, let's set an environment or an attitude among Albertans which is a little more conducive to trying to work our problems out amicably, rather than beating each other over the head until the one who's still standing and can stagger out of the ring, wins. It's not a very mature process to go through. We've all gone through schoolyard fights. It's something we grow out of, hopefully. Maybe in labor relations, this country, and this province in particular, can grow out of those schoolyard fights into something a little more mature, where we try reasonably to work our problems out together to the mutual benefit of both.

I'd like to close by saying that the events of this week seem well timed for this motion. In fact I sometimes wonder if the hon. member hasn't conspired to have all these problems created just to make this motion more timely. It certainly couldn't have happened at a better time, in the sense that it focusses our attention on the problem. We have to appreciate that there has to be a better way of solving our disputes.

I congratulate the member for the motion. If he has conspired to have these events arranged, he's certainly very effective at that. I hope the Minister of Labour has a chance to consider this. If the motion is approved, I hope he would work and set up a body to consider these questions. If it's not approved, I still hope that he takes this motion very seriously, and considers the motivation of the hon. member and the general support of the Assembly for it. With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to close my remarks.

MR. MACK: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity this afternoon to participate in the debate on Motion 201.



I certainly concur in and echo the sentiments already expressed of the timeliness of the motion, particularly in view of the atmosphere in the labor relations area in our province this past number of days.

Collective bargaining in labor relations is extremely complex at best, and I think it's quite often misunderstood because of its complexity. People don't address the issues as they really are, or at least attempt to appreciate them in order to be able to understand why we have disruptions in the work place. For example, we have gone through a year of intense negotiations in the area of energy. We had some pretty short strokes in those negotiations. Had they broken down, they would have had a tremendous impact both now, but more importantly, in months and years to come. The best efforts were put forward to ensure they did not break down. Finally an energy agreement was concluded and signed, and there is peace in that area, at least temporarily.

We had another major bargaining session which would have had a tremendous impact — and in fact did — had those negotiations broken down. Many elements, precedents, and conventions assisted the various parties — the provinces and the federal government — to enhance that particular set of negotiations. Finally an agreement was successfully reached, without confrontation, on the constitution resolution. I fear to even think of what may have occurred had those negotiations broken down without having strong majority support from participating provinces within Confederation when those negotiations took place.

Perhaps you may ask: Mack, how do you equate that with Motion 201? It's collective bargaining; it's negotiations. Although it may be on a different plane, none the less the participants in that set of negotiations have as fervent a desire to ensure that those principles which the people they represent would like to see enshrined or retained in a collective agreement are in fact in place. That's the issue. However, as a rule those parties don't have the kinds of mechanisms and precedents that they can fall on, which would provide them the kind of strength at the collective bargaining table.

The purpose of Motion 201 is basically to attempt to identify an alternative to the current system which, it would appear, generates confrontation rather than co-operation or consultation. But I hasten to say that although it's perceived to generate a lot of confrontation, if we took all the agreements currently in place and negotiated on a year-to-year basis, our percentage of work interruption is not nearly as profound as would appear when we have a province-wide work disruption such as in our health care or in our teaching. For example, when we have a disruption in the professionals in that particular area, or even more localized — when we have an interruption in the bus service in an urban centre such as Edmonton, where such a large population depends on it and that's their only means of getting to and from work and of being able to go to their doctor, or to see their relatives or friends, or whatever. Such a large percentage of our people are totally dependent on that.

However, I think it's important to place in perspective what we are actually facing in terms of labor unrest as opposed to the number of contracts, and the number of employees and employers involved in those contracts, which are resolved satisfactorily, amicably, without service withdrawals or strikes. But we never hear of these, because they are done at the collective bargaining table. The only time we hear of a service disruption is when one occurs. Then many people, not least the media, have a lot

of fun with it.

Negotiations never go too well when they're being negotiated through the press, because then more bricks are flying from one party to the other and very few substantive issues are resolved other than ducking the bricks. That's basically been my experience insofar as negotiations being done through the media. I have always felt that the less media involvement in negotiations, the more productive those negotiations would be. This is not a reflection on the media. They're doing an excellent job. It's a reflection basically on the parties involved in the negotiations. Very often it's difficult to project through the media the cogent issues that have to be resolved. Therefore the wrong information goes out, mostly misinformation, and the public is confused. In fact as a rule, the membership and the management people, other than the people who sit at the bargaining table, are equally confused.

I support the concept of the principles of alternatives. Anything that would provide stability and remove the kinds of disruptions we are experiencing today is better than what we have. But I would suggest that it takes a lot more than just to devise a scheme or plan of how we might be able to derail a process we currently have. Much of it is attitudinal; we have to change attitudes. We have to be able to lead people into unknown waters. By nature, human beings have concerns and would not adopt an unknown, simply because they really don't know the side effects and what it may ultimately bring them. So I think a tremendous amount of work has to be done attitudinally if an alternative to strikes or service withdrawal is to occur.

I think it's been well brought out that in Germany, for example, it wasn't by their own design that they entered a participatory management type of co-optive labor relations. It was legislated. They grew up with it when they started to rebuild the country, and it's working well. Whether we can introduce a similar kind of situation in our province is not going to be quite as simple, in that we have to sell the concept.

Unless we have the participating groups doing the study — and I support the study. I support the passing of this motion. I think it's positive, providing we have the kind of participation in the study and that its terms of reference are broad enough that the group attempting to find an alternative would have available to them the kind of resources to be able to see first hand some of the systems in place in Germany, Japan, and other very, very highly mechanized industrialized countries where employees are participating in the management of large companies.

I think that's positive, because it would not only have most disruptions — and I think we have learned recently that the strikes we're experiencing today are not of a wage issue; they are issues of working conditions. It's not always monetary. Perhaps some of those conditions translate into a monetary cost, but if we had employees participating — and I've always advocated this. Over a number of years, I have been involved in the consultation process at the municipal level. I've found that many of the irritants, many of the burrs under the saddle, if you will, were never allowed to remain there very long. Through the consultation process, chaired by the chief commissioner and myself, we were able to address those issues. It's the small issues that tend to demoralize employees and create unrest in the work place. That unrest translates into low productivity, massive absenteeism, and into many of the other areas which basically do not

produce the kinds of services, particularly if they're in a service oriented area, expected by the taxpayer and those who pay the wages and salaries to those employees.

There's another dimension that I certainly think would be worthy, and maybe that could be introduced much more quickly than an alternative to strikes. I believe I've made reference to this before in this Legislative Assembly. When a strike occurs, I think the salaries of all players or parties who belong to the negotiations, including management, should cease on the day of lockout or strike. If we had that kind of balance, Mr. Speaker, I think we would find that right from the first day, negotiations would take an entirely different complexion than when there is basically no penalty to the other side. The employee pays a tremendous price, and I have some empathy for those who are out on the street, not necessarily entirely for their leadership.

I can speak with some authority, because for a number of years I was in leadership in the area of labor. We're not always perfect; we make mistakes. Perhaps at times we make bad judgments. Our report card has to be based on our total performance rather than on one or two decisions. There is tremendous hardship and cost to the average employee who goes out on the street or is locked out of the work place and suddenly there is no salary.

A study of this nature, to try to find an alternative to what we currently use as a crutch — and quite often, as a nation and a province industrializes, it seems that crutch is put to use a lot more than it might. I suggest there are many parameters to being able to sell or get the employee groups and management to adopt, because to adopt what seems like the final offer or position doesn't always work either. Binding arbitration doesn't even work, and I've experienced that. We do not have the kind of training within our system in the area of arbitrators. We do not have the kind of arbitrators who would have the expertise and courage to make the types of decisions that would have to be made and able to roll with those decisions and punches. Basically, it is: where would I get the most heat from? If it's going to be from the management side, then we've got to favor that side. If it's going to be from the employee side, then perhaps we have to favor that side.

So along with this kind of motion, Mr. Speaker and the hon. Member for Calgary Currie, who proposed the motion, it would be important that we very carefully identify and define the parameters we would look for in order to be able to come up with the best type of proposal to serve our province, and ultimately our nation, most effectively, as opposed to the current collective bargaining process. In defence of the current collective bargaining process, by and large, 90 per cent of the time, I think it works well. But the system does have weaknesses, in that it allows the parties to the collective bargaining process to take advantage. There's basically nothing to motivate them to rise above a petty or personal disagreement they may have with the people who sit across the table. They would allow the collective bargaining process to deteriorate to a degree that ends up in a service withdrawal.

For example, I think of our transit situation today, where a time limit was put on. It was an untimely time limit. They boxed themselves in and were not able to deal with the number of issues in adequate time. Therefore a service withdrawal was generated. But I'm not totally disillusioned with the system. Because unless you have a well-balanced system in the collective bargaining process, one would have an advantage over the other. There are many ways of settling disputes, and I've mentioned this

before. There's the legal way, and there's the illegal way. Around the world today I think we're finding different issues, some of national significance, others just in the work place. Issues are being fought by the population, because they are convinced they are not getting their fair due as citizens of a country or province.

So I wouldn't discount the current system as antiquated or ineffective. There are many good parts to it. I think we can build on it. However, I'm interested in alternatives, because a thing I loathe is a period of strike. It just seems to go against my grain. Yet much to my chagrin, I was involved in it. The issues were such that there was no alternative. Positions were taken, and there was no alternative but to use the ultimate, which no one wanted to use.

I say this because I think it's important for us to understand that there are always two sides. It doesn't always centre on the period that the service is withdrawn and many people are hurt, particularly those who are on strike. They believe in a cause, so they make that investment in that cause. Suggestions are being made that they will never recoup the percentages they have lost; they'll never regain them. But it's not viewed in that context. It's not viewed in the context of, am I going to gain or not? It's viewed in the context of a principle, where people genuinely feel they are being denied basic rights that others in society are receiving. When those basic rights within their system — and they cannot make a change, or they do not see the kinds of changes that would enhance and be in keeping with societal changes, mechanization, and so on, and they themselves do not see their particular situation changing, be it at the professional level or in the day-to-day mundane area, they begin to rebel.

So I think that all the areas being considered would have to be addressed. We couldn't do it in isolation. If we just look for a panacea type of situation, where we would be able to turn on a switch and we'd have a settlement, I think we're dreamers. I like to dream once in a while, but not in this way. I just don't think this would provide us the kind of labor stabilization in the province and the kind of high-morale situation in the industrial areas of our province that would be adequate.

In fact, if we went about it without clearly identifying the terms of reference, what it is we are going to attempt to do, rather than saying we want to replace this with a strike, I think it would be borne in the wrong context. People would fight the issue on that basis alone and would not want to participate in the search for an alternative. We can't just say that because it works in Germany it's going to work here, because it would be virtually impossible for us to transfer here all the situations in Germany. We have to tailor it for Alberta. In order to do that, I think we have to be able to address all these issues.

I support the motion and its timeliness. I commend the Member for Calgary Currie. I suppose if he were to respond to it, he would say it's more by accident than design that it happened to come up today; none the less, very timely. I recommend that we support the motion, but that we also define the terms of reference of what we are going to be searching for, so that we can relate it to Alberta, to Albertans, and utilize much of the expertise in our province from the various sectors: professional, academic, labor, government. If we approach it from that point of view and on that basis, if that is the foundation on which we attempt to build and find an alternative, I'm sure we would find the answers to some of the areas that have been eluding us for many, many years, to the labor

unrest in our province, because it translates into a tremendous amount of demoralization. As I've indicated before, it affects productivity. It generates absenteeism and a host of other areas. Individuals, as individuals, do not find in the work place the fulfilment, the reward of wanting to go because they feel they are making a contribution. They feel they're just one additional person there and not really that important.

So to that extent, as well as the strikes, I would want to see the entire area covered, as opposed to zeroing in only on how we eliminate strikes. I don't believe that that in itself would find any answer. It would give us nothing more than an exercise in futility. I personally don't like exercises in futility. I like to see something tangible produced as a result of putting some energy and effort into it. In that respect, Mr. Speaker, I support it.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it gives me considerable pleasure to rise and take part in the debate this afternoon on the motion put forward by the hon. Member for Calgary Currie. He and I have had a lot of time together. It was more to do with the constitution than with labor matters and industrial relations, but we did discuss it on occasion, travelling around Canada last year. I don't like to criticize the motion, which I think is excellent. It's a matter that gives concern to all of us, on both sides of the House, and has recently been causing more concern because of the increasing number of disputes in the public sector across Canada that have gone to the level of strike.

The one criticism I have of the motion was mentioned towards the end of the remarks made by the preceding speaker; that is, the motion would tend to give the impression that the hon. member is involved and concerned only about the matter of strikes and lockouts. Of course, as was well established by the hon. Member for Edmonton Belmont, there is much more to it than just the strike and lockout. Indeed, the strike or lockout is the ultimate weapon — if we can use that word; I don't like to, because it even aggravates the sense of confrontation that exists in some recent labor negotiations — in the collective bargaining process and system we currently have.

I think one has to put the strike situation in Canada, and particularly in Alberta, into some form of perspective. It may be true that we have a record second only to that of Italy. But if one looks at the picture in Canada as a whole, some 10 million lost days of work per year are not a very large number related to the total number of working days, man-days per year. Nowadays I suppose we should say person-days. I seem to remember getting into trouble on that expression once before, with the hon. Member for St. Albert. In Alberta the number has been approximately half a million working days lost per year. When one looks at Alberta's work force being currently in the vicinity of a million people, that means that the average person in Alberta loses half a working day per year to industrial disputes. On that basis, Alberta's record is somewhat better than the average for Canada. Of course I am referring only to averages, and we know how deceptive statistics can be. With approximately a tenth of the population of Canada, we have approximately a twentieth of the work stoppage loss days.

If one looks at the figures, most of those lost days are related to what might be called major strikes, which go on for more than two or three weeks. Even in the worst of industries, on an industry-wide basis there is usually not more than one lost working week, some five working days per year. So on that basis, one has to assume that

the present collective bargaining process and system has worked reasonably well; obviously not to everybody's satisfaction, or there would be no strikes or lockouts. The other thing is that a very significant percentage of collective bargaining discussions are concluded successfully, without resort to strike or lockout.

Mr. Speaker, I think the problem is really with the major strike, where the work force in that industry or that particular location is out of work for a period of time that causes significant economic distress to the worker, his family, and on occasion to the employer. But another group of strikes is also causing concern, and that is those strikes where not only the parties to the dispute are inconvenienced or made uncomfortable by the dispute, but also third parties. In particular, this affects strikes in the public sector, where the ordinary person is put to some considerable discomfort and distress by a labor dispute over which he has little or no control, being neither employer nor employee.

Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to represent in this Assembly a constituency that has a large number of unionized workers; it may well be the most heavily unionized constituency in the province. That has happened because it's rather unusual for a so-called rural constituency to have very few farmers but a considerable number of major economic industrial units. In fact, all four of the major communities in the constituency have a significant union representation in their make-up.

I've lived in that constituency for 25 years and, over that quarter century, a considerable number of industrial disputes have gone to strike or lockout. I only need to think of the railroad unions in Edson and Jasper, the pulp mill at Hinton — Northwestern Pulp and Power, nowadays St. Regis Canada — and, more recently, the United Mine Workers union at Cardinal River Coals. Indeed during the last election, a strike in progress at Cardinal River Coals was not settled until after the election was completed. In 1981, a strike at Cardinal River went on for some six months, probably the major strike in the province last year. So when I speak about strikes and their effects upon people and communities, I do so with some experience.

I'd like to look particularly at the 1981 strike at Cardinal River Coals. This strike was not only over wages but, as has been mentioned by other speakers, to a very large extent was over working conditions, safety, and occupational health matters. The effects of that strike were felt to a considerable extent by members of the families of those who were on strike.

It was not necessarily economic effects, because a number of those workers are highly skilled people — heavy equipment operators, heavy-duty mechanics, diesel mechanics, industrial electricians — who are in short supply all over western Canada, even at this time in our economic history. Most of those people could go and get a job on a temporary basis anywhere from Newfoundland to the Yukon Territory, and many of them indeed did. But because of the distances they had to travel in order to find employment during that strike, the families were broken up, in many cases for a month at a time, and these were not families who were used to that kind of home environment. It had considerable effects on the social well-being of those families and, because of that, on the social structure of the town.

For that reason, most union units do not go on strike lightly. As I said before, it is the ultimate weapon in the collective bargaining process. Any worker who votes to go on strike is always aware of the fact that that vote may

indeed lead to a strike. For that reason, they usually do it not on the spur of the moment but because of a longer term problem. As I said, those problems that lead to the strike vote are often related much more to working conditions than to economic conditions, especially in Canada and Alberta.

Working conditions lead us to compare different societies and the attitudes in other societies. I would like briefly to compare three countries and their systems: Germany, Great Britain or the United Kingdom, and Canada. They're three very different societies. Germany was a country which, in 1945, was in economic ruin. They had a new constitution, which to some extent was imposed upon them by the victors in the war, and they had to build their industry from scratch within their new constitution. Their new constitution had been devised to attempt to avoid the centralization that had resulted in two world wars.

The state system in Germany is much stronger now than it ever was historically from the time of Bismarck. Within those states and within that structure of the federal state governments, a system of co-operation between management and employees was also imposed. I say "imposed" because having been in Germany with the hon. Minister responsible for Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation some two years ago, we were not only interested in the compensation Act but we looked at other aspects of the German economy and society. We found that this co-operation is on a much broader basis than only in relation to industrial relations and the collective bargaining system.

Employee groups, whether they are unionized or non-unionized, have to take part in the management of the company. They are involved to the level of prior discussions on all new occupational health and safety regulations before they are promulgated in the state and federal legislatures. So by the time a new regulation comes into force, it has been discussed from the level of the worker at the mine face or the automobile factory right up to the politicians in the state legislatures. That's a very, very different system from what we have in Canada.

In Germany there is also a very even distribution of economic benefits of their very successful industrial system. In fact we were told, somewhat laughingly, by a senior executive at the same Bayer factory at Leverkusen that was mentioned by the Member for Edmonton Glenarry, that they had a visit from a Russian delegation that had seen the car park. One of the Russian delegation, a senior administrative person, looking at the car park full of Mercedes and Audis, said to the people at Bayer: this company must have a very large board of directors. What he didn't realize was that most of those cars were owned by people working in that chemical complex and operating the machinery. They were not owned by the board of directors. So in actual fact, in Germany the result has been a very even distribution of the economic benefits of their system.

Let us now look at Great Britain. Since World War II, Great Britain has a strike record that is not the envy of any other industrialized society. But historically, Britain has continued to have a very stratified society, where there has been the proverbial them and us. Who is the "them" and who is the "us" depends on which side of society you are. But one just needs to look at the famous British phrase "the working classes". The philosophy of British society is right there in that phrase. The working classes are those who work, and one has to presume therefore that nobody else works. When one refers to the

working classes, one is not referring to management — either senior, middle, or even junior-level management — but essentially to that segment of the work force in Britain that is usually unionized.

It's a society that has become increasingly confrontative. That is shown even in their political system, where recently the classic division between the conservative and the labor parties has been found to be unacceptable to such a percentage of British society that there has been the most rapid rise of a new political party that has ever occurred in the long history of democracy in Great Britain. In other words, even in Britain, with its system that has a long history, there is discontent with the present system as it works or does not work. Also in Britain, there is a tremendous spread between a small number of people in the society who hold a very large percentage of the wealth and a much larger percentage of the society with a much smaller percentage of the wealth.

I have compared those two societies in order to now look at the Canadian society as it exists. Alberta is a reasonably typical example. The economic spread in Canada is much more similar to the German economic spread. But the labor negotiation system and the collective bargaining system is much more similar to Great Britain's. In other words, we have one system amalgamated with the other.

It is always tempting to try to imitate success, and the German system would appear to be successful in both the spread of the benefits of the system across a broad base in society and in the peace of their labor system. If one is going to import the German process for collective bargaining, of necessity one is going to have to import other aspects of the German labor system. Indeed we looked at it on the tour of the Select Committee on Workers' Compensation. We looked at their devising of regulations under occupational health and safety. I could see many benefits from it. Again, one could not import that system without importing other parts of the system, such as the collective bargaining process.

I am not going to suggest that we try to import all of the German system, because we have a different society. I don't think everybody in Canada or Alberta would suggest that we also import the German system of *gastarbeiter*, or guest workers, when there is full employment, so that when employment levels fall, one can literally throw them out of the country and send them back whence they came. That is a part of the German system and indeed has been an essential part of their economic growth since World War II.

As I said at the beginning, Mr. Speaker, I represent a constituency with a large number of unionized workers, working mostly in large economic units. Looking at those people, one has to realize that labor — if I may use that term — has fought for a long time in Canada to obtain the collective bargaining system we have. I think many people in the labor movement, in both the union organization and the membership, would look with some suspicion at any proposal to make major changes in our collective bargaining system unless there were safeguards for hard-won rights obtained over many decades. One has to look at the other side of the picture; that is, the management part of our system would also look with considerable suspicion at any proposal that diluted management prerogatives and responsibility without there being a similar *quid pro quo* in stability in the work force and the commitment of the work force to a reasonable level of productivity.

Mr. Speaker, in spite of those reservations, I feel that

the motion put forward by the hon. Member for Calgary Currie has considerable benefits. What it does is make us look at the status quo in Alberta. It has even made me consider the system in other countries. As I said, I think the status quo has worked better in many ways than it has the reputation of doing. But I think the aspect of the motion put forward by the hon. member, suggesting that some committee or commission be set up to have a more formalized investigation of alternatives than is possible during a debate in this Legislative Assembly, has considerable merit. I would certainly commend the member for bringing it in front of us. It is a motion I feel I can support, in spite of the reservations I have expressed on behalf of both labor and management. But I think both labor and management, along with government, would probably be very willing to have a look at systems elsewhere and some alternative in order to avoid the economic and social effects of the strike and lockout.

I would end with the comment once more that I feel that the resolution may be somewhat narrow in referring only to strikes and lockouts. I would like to see it broadened somewhat to involve other aspects of industrial relations.

Thank you.

MR. OMAN: Mr. Speaker, I hadn't intended to get into this debate . . .

MR. MUSGREAVE: Then sit down.

MR. OMAN: Later on. Whose side are you on?

MR. MUSGREAVE: The right side.

MR. OMAN: Is that right wing?

Mr. Speaker, I want to comment very briefly not on the statistics, which I think have been very well brought forward, or the various methods that might be used, but rather on the mood of society with regard to the implementation of this kind of motion. I think the Member for Calgary Currie brings in a motion which suits the mood of the country right now. Politics has been described as the art of the possible. My feeling of the pulse of the nation and the general populace is that it is tired of the kind of continual warfare on the streets, if you will, that we are experiencing in our country, cities, province, or whatever the case may be.

I think the time is right for this kind of investigation, and out of it hopefully would come recommendations that would be helpful and constructive. I think there are some things that can be done. I have heard where the final-offer arbitration has been working. I realize that labor would respond with furor if the right to strike was to be taken away altogether. Yet perhaps the percentage of the vote in a union could be up to 80 or 90 per cent — or rather that a union could not strike unless it had an 80 or 90 per cent majority. These are possibilities.

I think the fact that strikes have been misused — and one can easily see why it takes place. When the head of the Catholic Church indicates concern, saying that the strike must certainly be seen as a right but as an ultimate weapon and not to be misused, that indicates it is being misused not only in Canada but worldwide. One can also see that because of the way things are set up, where you have labor leaders who, in order to preserve their position or advance themselves as far as their personal positions are concerned, sometimes have to try to strike unreasonable positions. The same would be the case with man-

agement. So you get personality conflicts, which really don't have the good of either the worker or society at heart, as the motivating forces behind some of these things. It is little wonder, therefore, that you don't get reasonable agreement.

Last August, I believe, I sent a questionnaire around my constituency. Some 10,000 were distributed, and I got a 10 per cent return, which is not bad, all things considered. One of the questions on that survey was: do you think the government should introduce legislation to prohibit the right to strike in essential services? It limited it to that area. Of the replies, 716 said yes, 116 said no, and I think some 25 or so said they were of no opinion. That indicates that there is a high degree of frustration with the present system. Again getting back to the mood, I think the mood in society is right. I don't know as we can come up with any new ideas. Perhaps we can. But in drawing from the various parts of the world which have been mentioned today, I think there has to be a better way to settle some of these disputes than we are doing today. Again, I come back to the area of essential services, whether it be police, fire, public service, medical, teachers. Obviously there is a mood in Alberta today that says, I don't think we should allow these things to happen, particularly where our children or the sick are being used as pawns. We would rather see another way being used. Surely it's the time. I commend the Member for Calgary Currie for bringing the motion; I support it.

Thank you, sir.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased to have the opportunity to speak to this motion. I believe it's important that we look to an alternative to strikes. I don't believe any single weapon or tool in our society is so devastating and self-destructive to its members. If the gains in wages and benefits are weighed against the losses to the individual workers and the employer, I don't believe there is an ultimate gain in a strike. Certainly no one wins.

I'd just like to outline a few of the costs, Mr. Speaker. One strike I recall relates to a snow removal crew at Toronto airport. That crew voted for a strike because of working conditions at the Toronto airport, but 12 members of that union were also in Vancouver. They manned a drawbridge over which all the western grain flows to the port of Vancouver. For six weeks, the grain all across western Canada was tied up because of a strike which bore absolutely no relationship to the agricultural industry but which cost the country, and western Canada in particular, millions and millions of dollars in lost sales, and certainly was detrimental to our reliability and capability as a supplier in the export market.

I remember a strike in the forest industry. You'll note that there aren't many strikes in the forest industry today, because times are a little tough in the forest industry. It's likely that if a strike occurred, the mill would have to shut down, and no one would have a job. If the end result of a strike is no jobs at all for the workers, I'm not sure in whose best interest a union is recommending a strike vote.

The union management often requests a strike vote mandate in order to use it as leverage in their negotiations. Even though there may have been a real desire to negotiate a settlement on the part of both the union and management, once a strike mandate is given, confrontation becomes a part of that negotiation, with both sides working under a serious handicap. I've known cases where workers have said, we only wanted to use it as a

negotiating tool. But it's not a good tool, because it causes strife.

Mr. Speaker, many of the strikes today are in the civil service sector. It must be remembered that there are unique circumstances, such as almost total job security, which must be considered. In this year's negotiations, it is apparent that there is a vast difference in negotiations and certainly in the demands between the private and public sectors. For example, we have salary requests as high as 40 per cent over 18 months, yet in my area and in areas throughout the province, we have people actually settling for less wages.

I'd like to give you a couple of examples. The other day I was talking to a friend who said that a garage had called its workers in and said: once a year we usually have steak sandwiches when we discuss wages; this year we're having soup and sandwiches, and when you leave, you'll go out with less wages not more; if you choose not to take that, if you don't feel you can work for less, that's fine; you have the option of leaving. Nobody left; everyone took less wages.

A neighbor who lives two miles from me is a trucker. The other night over coffee, he was telling me that their trucking business is reduced considerably, due to the present situation in the province. He said that last week he called his truckers in and said, we've got a problem, and we're going to have to settle it together. He said, we can weather the storm together, or we can lay off some workers; we have a choice. He said, I have three drivers too many; now it's a decision that's up to you; it'll cost you each \$200 in order to keep those three drivers on, and we'll hope that the trucking picks up. Or, he said, I can lay off three drivers. They decided they'd work together. Each one would take \$200 less, and the whole staff would remain employed.

For the past 18 months in the service industry, crews have been working anywhere from two to five days, a minimum 40 per cent reduction from pre-national energy program. These are salary negotiations too; not necessarily salary negotiations but certainly labor negotiations. It has been necessary. The employers are doing everything in their power to keep the employees working; maybe not full-time and maybe not as much as they expected or hoped, but in an attempt to help each other.

In the public sector, job security is a given, except for just cause, while in today's recession, private-sector job security is questionable to say the least. In a lot of requests I've seen, a percentage request seems to be made. It would sometimes appear reasonable to negotiate on a percentage basis, but this is unreasonable when you take into account the differences in salaries to start with. Ten per cent across the board: if you start at \$50,000, that's a \$5,000 increase; whereas if you start at a \$15,000 salary, you're only looking at a \$1,500 increase. Yet the increased cost of living in both cases is exactly the same dollar-wise; maybe not percentage-wise based on salary. The basic necessities cost each worker exactly the same, regardless of which brackets the employees are in. In most union negotiations, it appears that there isn't the desire — maybe there's the desire but not the will to increase those wages to catch up with the top end of the scale.

There needs to be some protection for the worker to ensure that he does indeed have guaranteed secrecy and security when voting on decisions regarding collective bargaining. Individual members need to be protected from coercion or undue pressure. It would also seem to be unfair for an employee to be able to take advantage of strike pressure on an employer, yet be able to go out and

get another job. It would seem that as soon as other employment is taken, the employee would no longer be deemed to be part of the bargaining unit. It is inconceivable that the public and the employer can be held to ransom, yet the strikers can immediately become part of a work force.

Once a strike has been called, conflict and confrontation make collective bargaining almost impossible. The cost to productivity, personal esteem, and innocent third parties is incalculable. If we go back to the statistics mentioned at the beginning of this debate, almost 9,000 person-days were lost in 1980. At \$50 a day — and most people work for more than that — that works out to \$450 million in lost productivity and in lost wages actually. If you take the snowball effect of those wages, you're looking at over \$2 billion in losses to the economy of this country; over 500,000 person-days lost in Alberta.

The right to strike is a privilege. With a privilege comes a responsibility. Mr. Speaker, there has to be a better way than a strike to settle wage and labor disputes. I believe the onus is on each and every one of us — public sector, private sector, and individual employees — to search diligently for that method.

Thank you.

MR. COOK: Let's hear from the left wing.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in the debate, I'd like to point out that I think my hon. colleague from Calgary Currie continues to put forward motions which I can support. I'm beginning to think he's becoming more right wing as the days go by.

AN HON. MEMBER: He's moving to the left.

MR. MUSGREAVE: I support this motion for two reasons. First of all, we lose a lot of time through strikes. Our productivity as a nation isn't that good. A day lost in striking is a day lost forever. Also bitter relations develop during a strike. If the strike is long, relationships become very strained, and it takes years to heal these wounds. If there's anything we can do to prevent that condition arising, we should do it.

I would like to take a different approach than most of my colleagues. I feel we should concern ourselves with that area of responsibility over which we have control of the purse strings; that is, those people who work for provincial or municipal government agencies. After we've resolved that problem, perhaps we can move into the industrial sector. I'm thinking particularly of teachers, nurses, and the protective services. My hon. colleague from Calgary North Hill mentioned that the firemen and policemen shouldn't have the right to strike. I'll have to try and educate him a little: they don't have the right to strike now. Their wages are settled by binding arbitration, and it seems to be working reasonably well.

I too conducted a survey in the latter part of 1981. Of 14,000 brochures mailed out in my constituency, I received back approximately 600. I found it interesting: 75 per cent of those who returned the reply considered that teachers should be an essential service and not have the right to strike. Some teachers who replied objected to the method in which I phrased the question. I said: those people engaged in essential services, and didn't identify teachers. But I obviously meant teachers.

Unfortunately, if this commission, agency, or whatever is set up, it is going to be fraught with great difficulties. The right to strike is a hard-won right of the labor

movement. If you think of some of the difficulties faced in the American labor movements at the turn of the century or in the '80s — the Pinkerton police forces which were hired, particularly by the copper companies, to go out and break up strikes; they killed labor leaders. All they were working for was to get away from 12- and 14-hour days in mines. They were struggling for five-day work weeks. They were looking for better working conditions for their fellow employees. It's very difficult to suggest to labor people that they give up this right which was won over such great adversities.

If we don't get this motion passed today, I hope we get it passed if it comes up for debate again this spring. I hope that the task force would be established, that it would be representative of all parties, and that it would be chaired by a person considered by both labor and management as an independent member. I would suggest that the labor groups should select their own members on this commission, so we can convey to them that we are serious about their involvement in developing new strategies.

We should all be concerned about government spending. We all say we are. Unfortunately you don't have the discipline of profit and loss in government agencies. Governments are getting deeper and deeper in debt. Before disaster hits our economy — such as happened in New York City, where it almost took the federal government to bail them out — we've got to develop some ways of settling strikes without just issuing bigger and bigger cheques.

Two years ago this government was faced with a strike of our nurses. At that time, I believe it was the hon. Member for Calgary McCall who urged the government to consider setting up a commission such as the hon. Member for Calgary Currie is suggesting now. I appreciate that the government has been very concerned and involved with the constitutional and energy debates, but we now have the opportunity to address this issue once more.

We don't have to go abroad. We've got good people right here in the province of Alberta or in Canada. With the right attitude, we could develop our own method of coming out with new legislation that would help our labor forces and management groups, for the benefit of all. I urge the government to form the commission, to take this one small step forward, to take the lead in improving our relations with the several thousands directly or indirectly on government payrolls. If we are successful in this, we can move forward into the industrial sector of our province with some amended legislation, again working with the labor unions and management groups in the particular industries concerned.

Today some of my colleagues have mentioned the bad things of strikes and how people work together. I will give you a quick personal example. For 25 years, I worked for a company where you got two years' free sick leave after 10 years' service. We had a 35-hour work week. We had free university education for our children who achieved marks over 75 per cent. We had accident benefits, group insurance, and dental plans that were heavily subsidized by the company. We had matching thrift plans of up to 6 per cent of our gross salary. Our pension was paid for by the company. With 30 years service, we could retire on full pension at age 55 with no penalty. We had flex-time.

ANHON. MEMBER: What made you go into politics?

MR. MUSGREAVE: That's a good question.

This company had several thousand employees working all across Canada, and it does not have a union, except in one small refinery on the west coast.

It's obvious that these kinds of achievements can be made in our nation, but the attitude of management has to be different than it perhaps has been in the past. If we are going to make this commission successful, we have to convey to union people in our province that we mean business, that we mean to try to develop a new system where labor will be seen as a partner and where management will be seen as an agent responsible for the whole system. The two together can develop stewardship for better welfare of the workers, better use of our tax dollars, and better service to our citizens.

I think it's important that the issue that faces us today is considered in light of this motion. Obviously our nurses don't want to strike. Our hospitals want to operate, and our patients, who are not at the bargaining table, are suffering and should not have to. People need care.

I agree with the hon. Member for Edmonton Belmont, who made an excellent suggestion when he said that we have to develop a change of attitude; I think he's so right. As I mentioned earlier, profit-making companies in our province are already doing many things mentioned that are being carried out in Germany. Our police and firemen in this province have binding arbitration, which is working. I agree it may be expensive, but it's working. Nobody has ever been able to calculate the cost of strikes such as we're going through with the nurses right now.

I urge the members of the Legislature to support the motion to form this commission with labor as a first component. I hope we would not let this opportunity die.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to get into the debate this afternoon. I'm certainly prompted to by listening to the number of my colleagues who have spoken so very positively about this motion, and I congratulate the hon. Member for Calgary Currie for bringing it forward.

Believe it or not, it's certainly been an area of intense interest in the agricultural community, because of the kind of effect labor disputes have had on that community. I also mention to him, somewhat in jest, that possibly the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight has mellowed somewhat. Last year he traversed this province with a lot of farmers on the surface rights committee, and it may have had very beneficial effects. So we shouldn't wonder too much at his change of attitude.

Mr. Speaker, today there have been some excellent comments by various members, and I'd briefly highlight some of those. It was interesting to listen to the Member for Edmonton Belmont. Certainly that learned member has years and years of experience in the labor field. It's very important that we as members in the Assembly listen carefully when a member with that kind of experience speaks to us, because I don't think we've had members like the Member for Edmonton Belmont, who have brought that kind of experience to this Assembly.

When he talks about a change in attitude, one wonders where that attitude began. You can sit and look at this Assembly and the way we operate at times, and it seems as if our system, including our parliamentary system, is sometimes predicated on confrontation. It's not always a working together, if you will. In looking at models from other countries, I'm not sure whether we can overlay a system from another jurisdiction onto our system. But certainly the impact of labor — the strikes, the uncertain-

ties created — is so great on our society now when so many things are in a state of flux.

It is so timely to address this problem. It seems it's true that necessity is the mother of invention. If we believe that to be true with the economic situation we have now — I know there have been a number of examples. The Member for Drayton Valley cited the kind of co-operative effort in her constituency when the stress and strains of our economic woes are upon us. The member also alluded to the kinds of percentage changes and the growing gap that causes some distress to people who are part of that percentage increase. It goes right across the board. The highest and the lowest are treated alike, and the impact of that percentage increase is not equal. It's equal in that the percentage is the same, but in the end result there is an unequal effect on people.

Two members talked about surveys they did and their results. I'm very surprised, pleased I guess, at the kind of return they have. Looking at it, though, it makes me ask: who were the people who answered those questions? Were they members of labor unions? If you were to ask that question in another area of this province that is more heavily into union membership, as with the hon. Member for Edson, you might well get a completely different answer. That may be one situation we're faced with. Because of our very diverse province, if we don't take care to involve all those people, we may have a disproportionate view brought forward and, though we may be well meaning, put forward proposals that really don't have the effect of correcting a situation that's adverse as far as our union people are concerned.

I think it's right for me to say that when I was campaigning three years ago, one particular complaint that was registered as much as anything, besides capital punishment and metrication, was the labor situation. We'd gone through a number of disputes involving people handling grain, for instance. Farmers feel absolutely helpless. What they do in that situation, because the dispute is far away from them and completely out of their hands — earlier on, there was a time when I wondered if some locals of a farm organization in my constituency would actually organize and go to the west coast and decide on a confrontation to move their own grain. They were that incensed at a situation they had absolutely no control over. Yet I'm sure if they were to study closely the kinds of things in dispute, it could be said that there was equal responsibility on both sides, in terms of either the responsibility, or lack of it, for a settlement in the dispute.

I hope the members of the Assembly will, first of all, take careful notice of this motion. We're very fortunate that it's up at this time. We'll be in a position to have it come back for debate. I realize there are probably a number of members who are really interested and weren't prepared to participate in the debate today. I'm sure they will. If today's participation is any indication, it's very positive. The Member for Calgary Currie should be heartened and possibly look forward to a passing of this motion the next time it comes up.

Given the caveats the hon. Member for Edson put on, in terms of some of the verbiage and the implications, I for one would give it my very strongest support. Again, I congratulate the hon. member and look forward to more debate.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Calgary Currie has put forward a most timely motion. I think it's perhaps even timely that we should ask ourselves what the role of government should be in industrial disputes.

With respect to the health care delivery system, I think we've seen a tragic situation where, even when government takes a move to try to fulfil its role, one member of this Assembly can add another 24 hours of hazard to the people of Alberta. There is indeed a tragedy there, and it may well be addressed in this issue or at further times.

I think it would be a mistake to suggest that labor/management problems or labor/employee problems could be solved easily. There is a fundamental conflict in this. There is an employee/employer relationship. And to some extent, the interests of one party are generally at the expense of the other. We shouldn't kid ourselves that there is not a fundamental conflict relationship within part of it, and I support the discussions which say it doesn't need to be entirely that.

I've studied a little about strikes and their impact. As a graduate student, I reviewed one year of labor disputes in Canada. My calculations indicated that there are few if any winners in the case of a work stoppage that results from an industrial dispute. Certainly from the point of view of the employees, my calculations indicated that any time a strike was extended more than a day and a half, the average worker never regained the wages lost, even if he worked to infinity. That sounds strange as to why people would go out on strike, but I think it comes back to that conflict situation and complex emotions in situations and personalities. So I don't suggest our task would be easy.

It's tragic that the strike is still used, because of the costs. I'd refer to the strike or work stoppage carried to its extreme as an 18th-century weapon in a 20th-century world. It was certainly appropriate to use that strike mechanism when there were truly serious abuses to human rights with respect to conditions in the work force. We certainly have come a long way from that.

The hon. Member for Calgary McKnight mentioned his company. I had the privilege to work for that company, which we called the Every Saturday Sunday Off company. Certainly the conditions within that company indicated it was possible to be very productive, treat employees well, and not have a confrontation with respect to the way people were organized.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about finding a way out of these very troublesome labor disputes, I think it's also important that we recognize the cost to the employer, the company, or the employing organization. Certainly that becomes even more important in the international arena, where it does little good for us to have a very productive farm community that can provide a good harvest, and perhaps even hopefully or wishfully, a well-organized and efficient grain handling system that puts the product into the right grades. We have a nice transportation system that gets it to tidewater, and then the stevedores go on strike. So the cost is not only the cost of the dispute between the stevedores and the dock, their employer, but it moves all the way back through the system for tremendous cost.

When and if we consider this motion — and I would say that because the task is difficult is no reason not to address it — I feel that certainly there should be some thought to moving that solution to a broader forum than simply one province. As members well know, we are interdependent across our country. A strike at the airport in Vancouver can literally paralyse the whole air transportation system. There has to be some recognition that problems of industrial disputes move across provincial borders across Canada, and certainly the impact on our reputation in the international community is very much



affected by our ability to be a productive nation all year round, or at least to be able to supply customers in the time and in the manner that they would wish.

I would like to remark, and I had earlier, that this is not a new area of study or research. A great body of labor economics, of industrial relations in our universities has tried to address the problem of how to deal with the power struggle that exists in the work place, in a way that will minimize the losses of those conflicts.

Of course, the losses to the worker are fairly direct; it's wages lost. To the employer, it's loss of productivity, loss of reputation in terms of being able to deliver your product. To say that sometimes strikes are not in everybody's interest — sometimes I'd question that. For the people who are highly paid and want a short strike, all of a sudden it's a welcome opportunity to take that three-week holiday, fix up the rumpus room, or whatever. When they're in an oversupply or a high-inventory position, sometimes employers' incentives to avoid the work stoppage has been reduced somewhat. It isn't always logical to say that a work stoppage is not in everyone's interest.

I think we have to be a little careful in setting the parameters to the study. There have been a variety of methods, and the member who introduced Motion 201 referred to some of them. There are others, such as the Rand formula, the idea of the one-day strike to have that release of tensions and problems. Then the employers dedicate a certain amount of money that would otherwise have been profit and a certain amount of funds that would have gone into normal wages into a neutral fund, and perhaps you avoid that disastrous work stoppage.

I would like to sum up my comments by saying that although I support the motion, I think there's room to expand it in the sense of, as I first indicated, asking the question: how do we as legislators avoid the tragedy I mentioned today? And I pray to God, Mr. Speaker, that it's not a tragedy, that there won't be a disastrous result of a further extension of one day to the nurses' strike. I think we have to look at that as part of bringing the motion forward.

The other point is that it's not a new situation. We have to recognize that a great body of knowledge is dedicated to labor peace and, I guess, labor unrest. Finally, the point made particularly by the Member for Edmonton Belmont: there has to be a new attitude. I think that new attitude has to recognize that when we're involved in that margin of profit, there is a true competition by labor and management at the margin for that profit. The worker may quite legitimately feel: I would like my share of that profit increased, because my efforts helped to produce that. The employer might quite as legitimately say: I contributed to that profit with good planning, with my capital, and I should share in that profit. I think we have to recognize that essential element of competition between labor and management, if you will. But the change in attitude has to be that we recognize that although there's competition at the margin, there has to be co-operation in the overall for the betterment of the whole organization, in fact for the betterment of our provincial and national economy.

With those remarks I'd like to compliment the mover and hope it will be brought forward with some of those changes and other very worth while suggestions made by other colleagues incorporated.

Thank you.

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Speaker, I would add just a few comments to this debate this afternoon. I would also like to congratulate the Member for Calgary Currie who has had the courage to bring forth an issue that troubles so many Albertans and so many persons within Canada. Perhaps the commission would not resolve all issues related to labor, but I think the member is taking an extremely important step today, bringing forward this issue so that we may discuss it and try to look at some new directions.

I'm sure that all members of the Legislature agree with the important rights that workers have gained over the last century since the Industrial Revolution: the rights of workers to organize, to collective bargaining, to be protected, to work in a safe work place, and many other benefits workers have acquired by the fact that they have been able to organize and work together. But sometimes I feel that we are to the point where centrifugal force has taken over, and we seem to be spinning further and further away from the basic rights and objectives for which these rights were put in place.

I think some of our labor problems within this country started with settlements after the beginning of the St. Lawrence Seaway project, when extremely large wage settlements were imposed, that workers in western Canada certainly never even envisioned meeting. For a long time, workers in western Canada were a long way behind the mood, that centrifugal force that began in eastern Canada. We have examples within the North American auto industry, where there has been reference by a number of different members to patterns set in other countries. But in the economics of the auto industry, I think we can show where the Japanese market has certainly moved in and taken over a large percentage of car sales within North America. A good portion of the reasons can be attributed to the wages paid in Japan compared to the wages received by the North American worker. In Japan there is a situation whereby if the market cannot bear the cost, the wages are decreased. The worker receives approximately two per cent higher than the actual basic cost, but only what the market will bear. In North America, because of the large number of workers and the influence they have had, they have priced themselves out of the market in many ways. As a consequence, we see this tremendous shift to imported vehicles.

Who is really penalized when something like this happens? This afternoon the Member for Edson and the Member for Edmonton Glengarry mentioned that in touring several countries during the workers' compensation select committee, some of the benefits we saw were outside the direct subject area we were studying. In London, while watching the news one evening, I recall there was a documentary comment on a strike in Scotland that had just ended after eight months. It didn't end successfully for the employer, and it didn't end successfully for the worker. It ended in the company going into receivership. So who was the beneficiary in the process? Neither. The investors lost; the workers lost. There was more unemployment for the taxpayers within the country. We talk about attitudinal change. That type of attitude certainly had no benefit for anyone within the country.

Often, certain groups of organized workers can apply greater pressure to the public than other groups. For example, if the postal workers go on strike, they can penalize a great number of people across the entire country. They can penalize some small businesses to a much greater extent. Some of us would say, well, we never even

noticed there wasn't a postal service, because we came to rely on other means of communication. But for certain people, it's a great penalty.

When the grain handlers go on strike, it doesn't directly affect some of us sitting in this Assembly. But it very directly affects some of our constituents in a very negative way, in an economic way that is unfair to a small percentage of our population. What happens in the situation we're in now, with a very emotional situation for certain people who require health services?

Not all of us are affected in the same way. I agree with the Member for Edmonton Mill Woods, who said there are some benefits to work stoppages. I would agree that for a period of time there is a benefit in allowing two parties to cool down, to come together with their points of view. It allows time for workers who are aggrieved to put forward their position. We recognize that workers face some extremely legitimate situations, some work conditions that must be improved, and it is a process by which this can happen. But where is the moderation? What happens over a period of time when that cooling down is no longer effective, and the public as a whole is affected so adversely that it becomes unfair?

I think the attitude change within our society has not been one to say that we have to find solutions, as much as a total frustration on the part of many Canadians who are saying, we cannot continue the same pattern, this same route. For those who have very directly experienced the results, whether it is a worker who has lost wages over a period of time, an employer or investors who have lost investments or their profits, or the general public that is harmed as the result of a loss of service over a period of time, there has to be moderation.

I believe it's high time that we reviewed our labor legislation across the country. I think we have to look at federal labor legislation, and various provinces should co-operate to look at the legislation because, as I said, in times past we have seen how settlements in one area have led settlements across the country. We all know what happens with trying to establish parity with one province, playing one province against the other, and so on. As I say, using the example of the seaway project, we know how it started a whole centrifugal force, a whole roller coaster across the rest of the country. I don't know how we're going to get off unless we as Canadians take the bull by the horns and review our legislation with an intent to improve the situation; not to penalize the workers, not to penalize the employer, but to improve the entire situa-

tion that would make a positive benefit for the economy of our country, provide increased jobs because people will be working, and provide an improved country as a whole.

I conclude, Mr. Speaker, by again congratulating the member for bringing forward this very important subject. I certainly give my support to the sentiment of the motion and to the motion when it comes to a vote.

Thank you.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, this is a most important motion. In order to give the members who may not have noticed it on the order paper sufficient time to prepare this afternoon, particularly members of the opposition, who have not yet participated in the debate, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the Assembly agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous leave of the Assembly to revert to Notices of Motions.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there unanimous leave for the hon. Deputy Government House Leader to revert to Notices of Motions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

#### head: **NOTICES OF MOTIONS** (*reversion*)

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I wish to give oral notice that tomorrow it will be my intention to move first reading of Bill No. 11, the Health Services Continuation Act.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's not proposed that the Assembly sit this evening.

[At 5:17 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]