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Official Report of
DEBATES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
(Hansard)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 1975

Afternoon Sitting

[[Page 2777](#)]

CONTENTS

Routine Business

Free Public Toilets Act (Bill 90). Hon. Mr. Cocke.

Introduction and first reading — [2777](#)

Oral Questions

B.C. Tel takeover. Mr. Bennett — [2777](#)

Kamloops school district court case. Mr. Wallace — [2778](#)

Meeting of the Premier with Hudson's Bay Oil president. Mr. Morrison — [2778](#)

Gabriola ferry terminal. Mr. Curtis — [2778](#)

Operations of motor vehicle agents. Hon. Mr. Strachan answers — [2779](#)

Racial origin question on Alcohol and Drug Commission form. Mr. D.A. Anderson — [2779](#)

Involvement of D.A. Scrivener in out-of-province adjustments. Mr. McClelland — [2779](#)

B.C. Involvement in uranium reconnaissance programme. Mr. Gibson — [2780](#)

Proper Ministerial title for Minister Without Portfolio. Mr. Fraser — [2780](#)

Ceding of provincial land to City of Vancouver. Mr. McGeer — [2780](#)

Labour Education Centre of British Columbia, Act (Bill 85).

Second reading. Hon. Mr. King — [2780](#)

Trade Practices Amendment Act, 1975 (Bill 88).

Second reading. Hon. Ms. Young — [2789](#)

Hospital Amendment Act, 1975 (Bill 91).

Second reading. Hon. Mr. Cocke — [2793](#)

Assessment Authority of British Columbia Amendment Act, 1975 (Bill 28).

Committee stage.

Division on motion that the committee rise and report — [2795](#)

Division on third reading — [2796](#)

Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 1975 (Bill 29).

Committee stage.

On section 1. Mr. Gibson — [2796](#)

On section 2. Mr. Gibson — [2796](#)

Gasoline Tax (1958) Amendment Act, 1975 (Bill 30).

Committee stage.

Division on third reading — [2798](#)

Gasoline Tax (1948) Amendment Act, 1975 (Bill 31).

Committee stage.

On section 1. Mr. Gibson — [2798](#)

Report stage — [2798](#)

Motive-fuel Use Tax Amendment Act, 1975 (Bill 32).

Committee stage.

On section 1. Mr. Gibson — [2798](#)

Report stage — [2799](#)

Coloured Gasoline Tax Amendment Act, 1975 (Bill 33).

Committee stage.

On section 1. Mr. Gibson — [2799](#)

Report stage — [2799](#)

School Tax Removal and Resource Grant Act (Bill 73).

Committee stage.

On section 1. Mr. Gibson — [2799](#)

Report stage — [2799](#)

Committee of Supply: Department of Health estimates.

On vote 65. Mr. Smith — [2799](#)

On vote 66. Mr. Wallace — [2800](#)

On vote 67. Mrs. Jordan — [2800](#)

On vote 69. Mr. Wallace — [2800](#)

On vote 70. Mr. Morrison — [2801](#)

On vote 71. Mr. Wallace — [2802](#)

On vote 72. Mr. Wallace — [2804](#)

On vote 73. Mrs. Jordan — [2804](#)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 1975

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers.

MR. H.D. DENT (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the other Members to join with me in welcoming some of the members of the Mount Elizabeth band from Kitimat together with their leader, Mr. Dave Kimball, and the other chaperones who are visiting Victoria and who will be playing a concert, I believe, in Reynolds Junior Senior Secondary this evening. I would strongly urge any Members who are free this evening and have nothing to do, if they want to hear some excellent music from an excellent band, to go and hear them.

HON. P.F. YOUNG (Minister of Consumer Services): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today that one of my constituents is with us in the Speaker's gallery. He is a very good member of my association. I would ask the House to welcome Mr. Grant Carson.

Introduction of bills.

FREE PUBLIC TOILETS ACT

On a motion by Hon. Mr. Cocke, Bill 90, Free Public Toilets Act, introduced, read a first time and ordered to be placed on orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

Oral questions.

B.C. TEL TAKEOVER

MR. W. R. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Transport and Communications: in regard to the Minister's announcement that it will no longer be necessary to expropriate or take over B.C. Telephone because of a transfer of authorities or regulations from the federal government, which has been denied by the Hon. Gérard Pelletier, would the Minister be prepared to table correspondence outlining these authorities with the House?

HON. R.M. STRACHAN (Minister of Transport and Communications): First of all, I'm not responsible for the interpretation that was put on my remarks. The statement is based on discussions with Mr. Pelletier and myself at federal-provincial meetings and in bilateral discussions, one with the other. We are not in disagreement and, of course, any prelude to any takeover would require the transference of jurisdiction back to the province, where it was until 1916. That's the first step in anything. It doesn't mean we have to take it over, but we can have control without that being necessary.

MR. BENNETT: Would you file it? Are you going to file the correspondence?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: To the best of my recollection, there is no correspondence, but I'll check. It was straight bilateral discussion.

MR. BENNETT: As a supplemental for further clarification: would the authority that the Minister is discussing, that he's going to have transferred from Ottawa, plus the provincial authorities, override the federal charter of B.C. Telephone, which is an Act of parliament?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: That's the discussion that is taking place: how you overcome the fact that there is a federal statute. That's the discussion that's taking place.

MR. R.H. McCLELLAND (Langley): Mr. Speaker, as a supplementary: did I understand the Minister correctly, that his remarks were misinterpreted by the paper and that first step is first of all transfer of jurisdiction, and the second step still is the takeover of B.C. Tel by the provincial government? Is that what you said?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: No, no. I didn't say that.

MR. D.M. PHILLIPS (South Peace River): I'd just like to ask the Minister if the government will now be selling their shares in the British Columbia Telephone Co. Will the government be selling the shares now that you're not going to take it over?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I don't expect so, but that will be a matter of government policy, and not subject to answer in question period.

MR. P.L. McGEER (Vancouver–Point Grey): Mr. Speaker, did I understand the Minister correctly in his first reply that the reason why the provincial government wished jurisdiction over the B.C. Telephone Co. is that constitutional difficulties in taking over the B.C. Telephone Co. would be removed? Is that the motive for the government asking for this jurisdictional change?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: No. I've said it previously, and I say it again: what the Province of British Columbia is asking for is exactly the same right as that enjoyed by this province until 1916, and the same rights enjoyed by other provinces of Canada to regulate public utilities operating within their own province.

HON. D. BARRETT (Premier): Hear, hear!

MR. D.A. ANDERSON (Victoria): Hear, hear! Right. To the Attorney-General....

Interjection.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Yes, I think that the B.C. Telephone Co. should be under provincial jurisdiction; I don't say it should necessarily be under provincial ownership.

To the Attorney-General: in view of the statement.... What's happened to him? He was here when I started off.

MR. SPEAKER: Could the Hon. Member save his question?

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: I'll wait. I did see the Minister earlier today, Mr. Speaker, and in the hopes that he will return to the chamber — he was here at the beginning — I'll just wait with my question.

KAMLOOPS SCHOOL DISTRICT COURT CASE

MR. G.S. WALLACE (Oak Bay): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, with regard to Kamloops school district's lengthy civil suit which involves the school superintendent, the supervisor of elementary education, school principals and board members: has the Minister arranged for a replacement superintendent to supervise the school district activities in Kamloops while the superintendent is occupied in the court? Can the Minister assure the parents of the Kamloops area that satisfactory services will continue to be provided while six principals, the director and the supervisors, as well as members of the school board, are all in court defending themselves?

HON. E.E. DAILLY (Minister of Education): Mr. Member, I will take that question as notice.

MR. WALLACE: A supplementary that is very important is that the Kamloops school board, I understand, has agreed to pay for the legal costs involved by the school board members and parents to the tune of \$25,000. I wonder if the Minister has been informed of this and whether, in fact, the Public Schools Act extends this autonomy to the Kamloops school board to pay the defence costs of school board members and parents giving evidence on behalf of the school board.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: I am not prepared to answer that question here today, so I will take it as notice.

MEETING OF THE PREMIER WITH HUDSON'S BAY OIL PRESIDENT

MR. N.R. MORRISON (Victoria): My question is addressed to the Premier and Minister of Finance. Is it true that yesterday the chairman of the board of Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas, who is also the president of Continental Oil, spent some time with you in your office?

HON. MR. BARRETT: Is it true that the president of Hudson's Bay Oil...and what else?

MR. MORRISON: And gas. He is also the president of Continental Oil.

HON. MR. BARRETT: What's his name?

MR. MORRISON: Mr. Glenn.

HON. MR. BARRETT: He was not in my office.

MR. MORRISON: Did you meet someone else from his department then, yesterday? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I think the Hon. Member must check his accuracy before asking that sort of

question. He should station himself at the door.

HON. MR. BARRETT: What was the someone else's name?

MR. MORRISON: That's what I was going to ask you, Mr. Premier. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKER: I don't think we can run question period that way, surely.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Can you explain to me how come they haven't got...?

MR. H.A. CURTIS (Saanich and the Islands): They're in such great demand that we're in short supply at the moment. That's the only problem.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

GABRIOLA FERRY TERMINAL

MR. CURTIS: I would like the Minister of Transport and Communications to hear the question. On the subject of the proposed Gabriola Island B.C. ferry terminal, in view of the fact that the Nanaimo Regional District Board has unanimously indicated that it does not favour a new terminal at that location, has the Minister now given instructions to

[[Page 2779](#)]

his department or officials to abandon any further study of such a site?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: As you know, I had a meeting with the Nanaimo city council just last week, and this submission from the regional board will be given very careful consideration before any decision is made.

MR. CURTIS: Supplementary. It is on precisely the same subject.

Is the Minister or any member of his staff for B.C. Ferries examining one alternative which has been suggested, and that is harbour commission land in downtown Nanaimo?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Everything is being examined, Mr. Member. I can assure you of that.

OPERATIONS OF MOTOR VEHICLE AGENTS

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Cariboo (Mr. Fraser) asked me a question the other day relative to the issuing of certain permits to travel agencies in the northern areas of the province.

Interjection.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: You mentioned one in Mackenzie and one somewhere else. There are 43 motor vehicle sub-offices, some of them agencies, some of them village council clerks and municipal clerks who are authorized to do the work of the motor vehicle branch. All of these agencies are continuing to fulfil their normal functions.

In addition, I would like to say that the original statement which I made was based on an assessment of the situation by members of the government employees union and the Public Service Commission. I am informed that since that time the further examination of that order has been made by the Public Service Commission and by the B.C. Government Employees Union, with the result that both of those groups are of the opinion that any operation that is and has been handled solely and only by the motor vehicle branch or its agencies should be continued.

These cover temporary operation permits, temporary demonstration and testing permits, the restricted route permits, farm tractor "F" licence plates, farm truck "A" licence plates, quarterly (T) licence plates, industrial (X) licence plates, registration and licensing of imported vehicles from other jurisdictions, pro-rate licence plates, transporter licence plates, manufacturer licence plates, trailer floater licence plates, repairer licence plates, dealer licence plates, original driver licence certificates, renewal driver certificates and substitution driver certificates. All of these are recommended, after these discussions between the Public Service Commission and the B.C. Government Employees Union, to be continued. I will so order that procedure to take place.

MR. SPEAKER: May I point out that the purpose of question period is to give information to the public about matters not otherwise available?

RACIAL ORIGIN QUESTION ON ALCOHOL AND DRUG COMMISSION FORM

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: In an attempt to get information not otherwise available to the public, may I ask the Minister of Human Resources (Hon. Mr. Levi) why the Alcohol and Drug Commission intake and discharge form requires identification of racial origin?

HON. N. LEVI (Minister of Human Resources): I'll take that question as notice, Mr. Speaker.

INVOLVEMENT OF D.A. SCRIVENER IN OUT-OF-PROVINCE ADJUSTMENTS

MR. McCLELLAND: A question to the Minister of Transport and Communications. I refer to the names of independent insurance claims adjusters that are being used in out-of-province adjustment of ICBC claims. I note in Calgary a company called Scrivener Countrymen Western Ltd., and a company in Regina, D.A. Scrivener Co. Ltd., 300 Gordon Building in Regina. I'd like to ask the Transport Minister whether the Scrivener listed in those two companies is the same D.A. Scrivener who is a vice-president of claims of ICBC. If he is, does he still have an active interest in those companies? If he does, does that not constitute some kind of conflict of interest?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I suppose the Member checked out his facts before he made that accusatory statement. But I would suggest....

Interjection.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Now, now. There are ways of finding out who has ownership of companies. I'll certainly check it, but it's an accusatory statement.

MR. McCLELLAND: It's a question.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Ahhh, your questions are accusatory. I'll check it out, but I suggest that you should have checked it out before you asked the question.

[[Page 2780](#)]

AN HON. MEMBER: Maybe he did.

B.C. INVOLVEMENT IN URANIUM RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAMME

MR. G.F. GIBSON (North Vancouver-Capilano): Question to the Minister of Mines and Petroleum Resources. Since approximately 50 per cent of the province is considered favourable for uranium prospecting, and since the Premier has expressed a concern about the supply of that mineral, I would ask him why our province is the only one that has opted out of a federal-provincial reconnaissance programme with the Geological Survey of Canada

for uranium.

HON. L.T. NIMSICK (Minister of Mines and Petroleum Resources): I will take that as notice.

PROPER MINISTERIAL TITLE FOR MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO

MR. A.V. FRASER (Cariboo): Mr. Speaker, I asked the Premier a question yesterday. He asked me to have the document in writing — I gave it to him — with reference to the Minister Without Portfolio (Hon. Mr. Nunweiler) using the name "Minister for Northern Affairs." I'd like to ask the Premier what authority he has to use that.

HON. MR. BARRETT: I didn't think the Member wanted me to bring this up again, Mr. Speaker. But now that he mentions it, I have the document in front of me, and it says clearly across the top — the document he sent me — "Minister Without Portfolio (Northern Affairs)." The Member is confused.

Interjections.

HON. MR. BARRETT: In the body of the announcement — that's where the Member is confused. So it depends on where you want to read on this sheet, Mr. Member, but I will try and interpret your confusion.

Interjections.

HON. MR. BARRETT: It says that Langley did very well in the tax-sharing deal. (Laughter.)

CEDING OF PROVINCIAL LAND TO CITY OF VANCOUVER

MR. McGEER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Premier as Government Leader.

HON. MR. BARRETT: What party do you represent?

MR. McGEER: The independent party — the third party in the Legislature. I would have thought it would be easy for a three-man party to get recognized.

Mr. Speaker, the question I have for the Premier is whether or not he and his government as a policy intend to stand behind commitments made to the City of Vancouver with respect to turning over provincial government land to the City of Vancouver: specifically seven acres of land in Jericho, a commitment made by the former government, and approximately one acre in downtown Vancouver, a commitment made by the Member for Vancouver Centre — both government policy, both saying they would be turned over to the City of Vancouver, and both repudiated recently by the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams).

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Member to show me the written agreements. Would you send them over?

MR. McGEER: Yes, I'll do that.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Thank you.

MR. McGEER: I gather the Premier is saying he doesn't wish to stand behind those agreements.

HON. MR. BARRETT: I said, send me the written agreements.

MR. McGEER: You've got the correspondence in your office.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Any debate is out of order.

Orders of the day.

HON. E.E. DAILLY (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the House to proceed to public bills and orders.

Leave granted.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: We're going to proceed with second readings of Bill 85, Bill 88 and Bill 91; then we'll move to committee on the Minister of Finance's (Hon. Mr. Barrett's) bills.

Mr. Speaker, second reading of Bill 85.

LABOUR EDUCATION CENTRE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA ACT

HON. W.S. KING (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, this is a brief little bill which I have discussed on numerous occasions in the House and

[[Page 2781](#)]

elsewhere. It simply enables the government to set up a labour education centre in the Province of British Columbia, a centre that will be devoted to providing training in the field of industrial relations. It's not strictly for the trade union people to participate in; we expect that there will be management involvement in the courses that will flow from this centre also.

Many people in the public domain and certainly many people on the opposition side of this House, as well as on the government side, have called for more responsibility at the bargaining table, a more sophisticated approach to the many problems involved in bargaining and industrial relations. I think that that's a valid demand to make on the trade union movement and on management in this province.

But surely, if we are going to demand that kind of responsibility, we have an obligation, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that these people — these practitioners of industrial relations — have access to the kind of training and to the kind of information and knowledge that can serve to make collective bargaining a more responsible and a more sophisticated process, with the hopeful consequence that there will be fewer breakdowns in the process that result in work stoppages, be they lockouts or be they strike action by trade unions.

This bill is basically enabling legislation, as I indicated earlier, which allows the government to set up a board of governors, as it were, and to consider a perpetual fund of \$5 million so that there might be annual funding for such an institution in the Province of British Columbia.

It will allow for a good deal of autonomy in terms of the kind of curriculum that the people involved in industrial relations feel is most appropriate to their needs. It's my hope that through the use of existing facilities many worthwhile courses, both structured courses, correspondence courses, perhaps audiovisual material, lecture material and so on, will be able to flow to all parts of this province so that we might reach out to the rank-and-file trade-union member, to the individual who has been elected to public office, on city councils, police commissions and so on, or to the small businessman going into business and employing people for the first time so that they might benefit from the kind of instruction, the kind of science — and it is indeed a science — which goes into collective bargaining. I think this is something that is long overdue. I think in a number of years some positive association of this kind, by management and labour involving themselves in a process that teaches them something about playing their skills and facing their responsibilities more seriously, will achieve great benefit to the community of British Columbia.

I move second reading of the bill, Mr. Speaker.

MR. D.E. SMITH (North Peace River): In rising in my place to speak in second reading of this bill, I think

this is a measure that the official opposition will welcome along, I suppose, with all of the parties of the House, although I can't speak for them. I really think that if we were to try to distil the content of this bill into a couple of simple phrases, we would say that the first job of such a labour education centre will be to find out what labour and management have in common and agree on, not what they disagree about. From that base, I would hope that we would break ground in new directions and in directions where both labour and management hold certain fixed opinion, or have held certain fixed opinions in the past, which are not altogether relative to today's society and the place we are at in industrial relationships.

I believe that, more than anything else, this bill reflects a desire to become more conscious of public outcry that we hear more and more often today — that they are sick and tired of this continual confrontation between labour and management where it is often questionable who wins and who loses in the final outcome, except that the public are quite often and most often the ones who are inconvenienced by those actions.

When you take into consideration some of the problems we have had with lengthy strikes, then lockouts, walkouts, picketing and all the rest that is involved in labour strife with both labour and management, you often have to ask yourself, when they finally come to a settlement of a collective agreement, who has really won and who has lost when you take into consideration everything that is involved, including lost time, lost wages and all the rest of it.

I believe that this is a first step in trying to bring about some sort of recognition by both sides. I think that both labour and management today are really concerned about this whole matter. More and more I hear from people who are in the labour movement that they find boredom in the job they are involved in because it is repetitious day after day after day — a concern, more than anything else, that either semi-automated or fully automated plants have brought about a feeling of frustration. As individual people, they want to be heard, and they want their opinions to be heard. I hope they are getting this message through to the people who represent them at the bargaining table. I think they are.

By the same token, I think that management has to become more conscientious about the problems involved. This must be one of the first steps that we take, to provide a centre of education. As a Member of the official opposition, I would encourage both labour and management to seriously consider enrolment of some of their personnel in such an institution so that we get to a position in British Columbia where more and more of these potential

[[Page 2782](#)]

disputes are resolved around the bargaining table before a contract comes up for renewal. That way, we may experience a period of industrial peace in the Province of British Columbia. I don't think it is altogether possible, but I do think we can at least strive toward that goal.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in speaking to second reading on this bill, I find this an acceptable piece of legislation, and one which I hope both labour and management will receive without too many reservations to start with.

They'll give it a try and they'll lend some advice and suggestions as to what they would like to see in the matter of the development of that. Therefore I think the Minister is wise in leaving it fairly flexible.

There is going to have to be some flexibility in developing this sort of programme. We don't know altogether the problems of management or labour, because generally we're prone to listen to one side or the other, not to the exclusion of the other side but at least in a manner which gives sympathy to one side as compared to the other.

I would hope that we can progress beyond that point. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I think the only salvation for a province as highly industrialized as British Columbia is to have more mutual concern and respect for each other's problems, whether we be labelled as management or labour, and that in doing so we may be entering into a period where, instead of labour strife and strikes being commonplace in the order of the day, we enter into a period of relative ease and tranquility in labour-management relations. I know that this is what the public are asking for in increasing numbers throughout the Province of British Columbia.

Other than that I haven't much more to say in second reading, Mr. Speaker, except to say that we support the idea, and we hope that the Minister, in setting up this education centre, will solicit the help and the suggestions of labour, management and all those people that are not either labour or management but are certainly involved as third parties whenever labour or management come to an impasse.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON (Victoria): We, too, will be supporting this bill in second reading. There are, however, a number of questions that come up. It appears, to us, from what the Minister has said, that the bill is misleading as presently written, and Labour Relations Education Centre of British Columbia Act would be a more appropriate title.

I presume amendments will come in to reflect the fact that this really is not just a college for trade-union officials or trade-union rank and file but also for management and the small businessmen as well. I'm sure the Minister will welcome an amendment to that effect which will better reflect what he talked about in his introductory remarks, which, in actual fact, did give a somewhat different complexion to this bill than we could have got from reading it.

I would like to ask him also another question. The Premier has talked with some heat about the need for universities to get involved in novel and ambitious and exciting new programmes. I would ask the Minister why this particular bill comes up in this way, to set up a separate institution with very peculiar separate financing provisions, which you find back in section 10 and thereafter, when it strikes me that the universities themselves could well have got involved in this very effectively. Perhaps a little encouragement might have been given to them to do so, rather than throwing in the \$5 million talked about in section 9. It's a question which perhaps the Minister might look at when he comes to close the debate.

There is one thing I would like to say before we go any further. I would like to pay tribute to the mediators and the arbitrators in the Province of British Columbia who have one of the most onerous jobs that I think you can imagine. I don't know how they preserve their patience and sanity in that very, very difficult job they have. I presume that this will make their job easier, and that's a good thing. We have been very well served in this province by some very dedicated people. I think this Act will make their job easier because, of course, hopefully the areas of difference will be slightly fewer and the distance between positions will be slightly less.

So I thank the mediators and arbitrators working in this province, under the Minister's department as well as elsewhere, who have done such a good job.

This appears to be a college which will duplicate the services of some of the training programmes of the larger unions, and of course of the larger companies as well. Again, perhaps the Minister would like to indicate how this will merge in with the training programmes of the larger unions which are very highly organized and very effective as well.

Perhaps also in closing the debate the Minister would indicate to the House how the division between himself and the Minister of Education (Hon. Mrs. Dailly) on the question of education, technical education, apprenticeship, labour education of this nature, has been settled. I hear odd stories back and forth about the pushing and the pulling on the question of technical education and apprenticeship programmes and qualifying programmes. It is about time we had a clear statement in this House as to what precisely the line of division is.

I don't know whether my eyes deceive me, but I believe that the two Ministers concerned have both nodded their heads very, very slightly. Perhaps they.... Oh, the Minister of Education has made it very clear she would like to have this clear distinction made for all time as well. The Minister of Labour has also indicated that he has some sympathy towards

[[Page 2783](#)]

this point of view.

We have all been involved in discussions with people very, very concerned about this difficulty. Where does

technical training come into the purview of the Minister of Labour? Where does it come into the purview of the Minister of Education? My own feelings are irrelevant one way or another. I think a statement, however, from a government Minister on this aspect at this time would certainly not be amiss.

Mr. Speaker, we certainly will be voting for the bill.

MR. G.S. WALLACE (Oak Bay): Mr. Speaker, we certainly appreciate the intent of this bill. Indeed, anything that holds out the hope of improving the labour-management situation in the province when we have had so many disruptions in the past is to be welcomed.

I am a little disappointed, however, that the word "management" doesn't appear anywhere in the bill. The people who are clearly defined in the bill are trade-union employees, staff and officers and so on. Nowhere in the bill can I find the work "employer" or "management", or any definition or reference to the other half of the equation. We all know that the importance of making the equation work in the labour-management field is a balance of power. It seems to me very strong that a bill which from an educational point of view is intended to prevent problems doesn't have the word "management" anywhere in it. I know that it refers to "others involved in the collective bargaining process", but having defined members of trade unions and others so clearly in the bill, I think it is a little unfortunate that the phrase used to cover the other side of the bargaining equation is just referred to as "others involved in the collective bargaining process."

As the Liberal leader said, I expect the Minister will probably have an amendment that might clarify the overall intent of the bill. When he introduced the bill, the Minister made it very plain this afternoon that it is just non union people and union employees for whom the centre is intended. I think the bill could clarify that with some amendments.

The basic purpose of educating people involved in the bargaining process is excellent, I think. The Minister of Education would certainly agree with this. The committee that we toured the province with last year, dealing with teacher-trustee bargaining, demonstrated in the most devastating way to me the degree to which bargaining between teachers and trustees is an absolute charade. Trustee after trustee came before our committee and either very directly or in a sort of an apologetic way made it plain that they would rather have nothing to do with the business of bargaining with teachers. They felt they did not have the expertise, they didn't have the time and they didn't have the supporting staff. They felt unequal in the battle — if I can call it a battle. Perhaps one should call it negotiation. They felt very unequally equipped to deal with the bargaining for teacher salaries, which as we all know is a very high fraction of the total bill for education. We have all been debating that at great length on recent bills in this House.

So if we had to pick, to be brief, just one specific example where the provision of this kind of education training and facility would be most valuable, I would have to say that it is in the realm of trustee-teacher bargaining. If I might look down the road a little way, I think it would be very interesting, since the trustees want to bargain centrally through one agency, whether in the light of this centre and hopefully its success the trustees will finish up wanting to bargain locally because they might find that with the expertise and the ability to more effectively take part in the bargaining process, they might reverse their decision. This would certainly be a relief to all of us, including the Minister of Education (Hon. Mrs. Dailly), if both sides of that argument could decide on the best way to bargain.

We certainly support the principle of the bill, but I would just like to sound one or two notes of caution, which I suppose is what many people think the Conservative Party always does. Some people think it does nothing else, but I am trying to dispel that image.

We are in favour of the principle of the bill but, first of all, I notice that the board will have up to 16 members, and that's a sizeable number. I just want to say to the Minister that I hope great caution and judgment will be used in not creating another large bureaucracy, however well intended, which in the course of time becomes almost an organization justifying its own existence rather than meeting the needs for which the Minister set up the centre.

In that regard, in thinking of my criticisms yesterday of the rentalsman's office where neutrality is not always in evidence, I would hope that the cabinet which appoints the members to the board of this institute would also be

most sensitive to the dangers of appointing persons with clear political identities.

The neutrality, as close as it is possible to be neutral, and the apolitical natural of the people serving on this board, I think, would be very important. I hope it won't boil down to eight union people and eight management people, for example, where however much the Minister would not want controversy to arise in deciding the curriculum.... The Minister made it very plain in introducing second reading that he hoped there would be great flexibility and autonomy in deciding what the curriculum of this educational centre should be. I think that is a good idea.

Obviously, with the rapidly changing times and

[[Page 2784](#)]

many of the new factors that become involved in bargaining.... I mean, just a few years ago nobody ever talked about COLA in agreements; it has just been in the last few years that it has become almost a very accepted thing that every employee will want a cost-of-living adjustment in an agreement. With the changing times there has to be flexibility in the curriculum.

On the other hand, as I say, if the board is constituted other than by people with neutrality and lack of active political identity and participation, then I think there could be real problems, both in the curriculum area and in the spending of funds.

I notice that it is possible for a person in the public service to be appointed to the board. I would just like to ask the Minister if, in winding up the debate, he would mention whether that includes MLAs. I think it would not be a good idea to have MLAs on this board. The general definition used in this bill is "individuals in the public service." Since we are all being paid by the public, I would consider myself to be included in that provision. That may not be the intent of the Minister. I hope it isn't, because I think to have active political individuals on that board would be very unwise. I would like the Minister to be congratulated for one phrase in the bill. I know we don't dissect a bill in second reading, but I think it is very interesting, Mr. Speaker, that this is the first bill I can recall which clarifies itself in that paragraph, so very vital in every bill, called "powers." This Minister is breaking new ground. Instead of saying "or otherwise acquire," leaving the opposition a field day to scream about expropriation, the Minister has said "or acquire otherwise than by expropriation."

That is a historic day in this House when we have a bill where the government not only argues as to what it means but it puts it in clear, plain, unmistakable English that this centre, in building its services and real property, will not expropriate. We may joke — and the Minister is enjoying the joke — but I think it is a very creditable effort on the Minister's part when he has heard debates in this House involving the Attorney-General in particular, who, with his legal training, said this amount of explanation was not necessary. But this Minister has put it in the bill. I think this is a tremendous step forward in that regard.

[Mr. Liden in the chair.]

When I talked about the fear of a large bureaucracy and a large board and a whole bunch of bureaucrats getting jobs for themselves.... I would just like to ask the Minister another question regarding funding. As I read the bill, \$5 million is going into a fund, the interest from which will finance the institute. But at a later section in another part of the bill it would appear, as I read it at least, that over and beyond that \$5 million the cabinet has the power from time to time to put additional sums in the pot. It seems to me there is not much point in saying it is up to \$5 million in one section and then just a few lines further down the bill.... I may be wrong in my reading of the bill, but it seems to me that the government actually says it will be putting up to \$5 million in the fund and then in the very next paragraph, I think, it gives the cabinet added powers from time to time to add more money to the fund.

Really, if my reading is correct, I would have to say that this part of the bill dealing with the financing of the centre needs to be amended, or take out the \$5 million figure. You might as well just say that the government from time to time shall put in such money as required. But to say that it is a limit of \$5 million in one paragraph and then to go on and give them unlimited capacity to fund it I think is a very dangerous provision.

The other question of financing is the terminology used to say that the board shall spend money as it consider appropriate. I wonder if the Minister means that this is complete autonomy in funding as well as in curriculum. The exact phrase is: "The board may use the income as it considers appropriate." I take that to mean that that is also complete autonomy, but I am still not certain. Perhaps the Minister can clear this up as to what limits there are on spending or what he envisages as the limit of spending and the capacity or authority of the board progressively to employ more staff.

As I say, one of the biggest concerns we've had on this side of the House from this government is the tendency to create various arms of government funded under different Ministers where we are concerned that there is a realistic and reasonable check on, first of all, the great increase in staff, and, secondly, the accompanying increase in expenditures.

So although I have raised these points, some of them in criticism and some of them, perhaps, in ignorance and not understanding all that the bill means to say, I do feel that the basic principle is sound. The bill has our strong support.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS (West Vancouver–Howe Sound): Mr. Speaker, the Member for Oak Bay in his remarks complimented the Minister for using clear language in the bill in regard to not having any power to expropriate. I do as well.

I listened carefully to what the Minister said in opening. I trust, therefore, that he will take care to make rather massive amendments in the clear wording in the operative section which is section 3. Section 3 makes it abundantly clear that the purpose of this education centre is for trade unions and their membership. I wonder why it would even be contemplated that such an educational centre would so limit the people who might take advantage of the

[[Page 2785](#)]

educational programmes offered.

Certainly we have to approve any move the government may make with regard to improving the quality of people who are involved in the collective bargaining process. That obviously means members of trade unions, officers of trade unions, members of employer groups, officers of employer groups. But also, in the world in which we live with labour relations playing such an important role, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there should now be the opportunity for people who are not members of trade unions or of employer groups to attend an educational facility and train themselves to take a part in the collective bargaining process.

There is no reason why a young man or woman, having completed their formal education, should not have the opportunity of making the decision to spend their lives or a part of their lives in the labour relations field. Therefore they should be trained for it before they embark upon it. There's no reason why they should get their training by some sort of an apprenticeship programme in either the field of management or labour. They might eventually feel that they should move into one or the other of those fields. But surely it would be an advantage to the whole process if they received some specialized training in advance.

Therefore if I am to understand the thrust that the Minister has for this particular idea, I hope that before the committee stage we will see rather extensive amendments to section 3 to remove the limits that are now placed upon the enrolment in such a centre.

It's true that the Minister of Finance is authorized to provide moneys without limit for this purpose, not only to establish the fund, which will be used for the perpetual operation of the centre, but also such other moneys as may be required to initiate this new venture. It's this part that gives me some concern, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know why, when we are in the midst of looking very carefully at the whole structure of education in British Columbia and of the institutions that we have providing education for all our people both young and old, we are now contemplating building another centre for a very specialized purpose. Perhaps the Minister can convince me

that we need to have a new institution with a new campus, new buildings, new grounds, new whatever may be required in order to make it function when we already have vocational schools, community colleges and universities.

I wonder why the government has not simply brought in legislation to establish an education centre foundation, authorizing that foundation with moneys made available for this special purpose to see that such facilities are provided in the province. Then they could be provided by way of contract with one of the existing educational institutions that we have. If necessary, it may have to go on its own and build its own facility. But if it could be found that within the community college structure, within the university structure, all of the facilities there available could be used for the building of proper courses and programmes, then why not take this opportunity and allow this board controlling the foundation to utilize moneys to ensure that the proper instructors are provided, the proper courses are provided and, indeed, to provide assistance to those people who would enrol in such a course to come for whatever period of time to that institution?

I appreciate that to make the centre available to people the length and breadth of the province will be a difficulty. But it will be a difficulty even if we establish a new centre with its own buildings — the same difficulty in locating that centre as there would be in choosing one of the existing universities.

I would commend the Minister to look at the legislation that was introduced yesterday by the Attorney-General with regard to the legal services commission. They have similar moneys; they have similar responsibilities with regard to the provision of facilities and services, but they do have, specifically, the authority to contract with existing organizations who can fill the role in that legislation. I suggest that the same should be available here, rather than the 16-member board with an executive director and all its own attendant staff in order to carry out its function.

I'm sure that the Minister of Education (Hon. Mrs. Dailly) would be delighted to have the opportunity of recommending to the Minister, or to the board once it is established, just where it would be appropriate to establish the training facilities that this Act envisages. I think what the Minister has done is a step forward. I think he's to be commended for taking this direction, but I would hope that in taking it, we don't have to establish another encumbering structure which becomes a burden itself to carry. If additional moneys are required, far better that we have more students going, and assisted by the government, than it is to build a framework of an organization with staff and people only to keep the centre going.

MRS. D. WEBSTER (Vancouver South): I, too, am very pleased to see this Act put forward, and will be very happy to support it. But there are one or two things I would like to mention.

I sincerely hope that when the Labour Education Centre is introduced there will be a considerable number of women on the board. I think that's most important because, as you are aware, Mr. Speaker, it has been said over and over again in this Legislature, it has been pointed out numerous times — and it really doesn't have to be pointed out to anyone — that women are still in the lower wage-scale bracket in

[[Page 2786](#)]

labour, as well as in the salaried fields. There has to be something to improve women's status in relation to labour management. Also, there are far fewer women in management. There are a great number of women who are very, very capable of it, and I think they should be encouraged to be able to get into positions where they can benefit from the Labour Education Centre, and where they can learn a little bit more about labour management in the process.

Secondly, I notice that in section 3 it states that the purpose is to engage in educational activities for numbers of trade unions, with the objective of fostering improved relations, et cetera. I sincerely hope that people who are outside the trade unions are also encouraged to be able to take full advantage of a labour education school of this type.

I would hope that there would be some type of liaison between the Labour Education Centre and the high schools, not just post-secondary education. I think it has to filter down into the high school. There are quite a number of young people who are taking technical, vocational and trades training in the high schools, and they have to have a little bit more than just the training for their particular trade. I think they have to have an understanding of what the

labour-management relationship is all about. That is something which I believe we fail to give them.

There are a great number of boys, particularly — I would say both boys and girls — who are between the ages of 15 and 17, have not completed their high school, but are ready to drop out. I know some of them have been transferred into some of the special type of programmes, but not all. Before they get into that position where they will drop out without having any understanding of what goes on in the trade union movement or what goes on as an intercourse between labour and management, I think they should be able to benefit from something of this kind.

Also, I would say that if people who are not in the trade union movement have an opportunity of benefiting from this, then it might encourage them to become members of trade unions. There will be a flow into this thinking in relation to good organizational work of the trade union movement. They will be able to understand bargaining processes better and be able to understand what is required in negotiation without going too intensively into the adversary system.

But mainly, as I said at the beginning, I certainly hope that women will be encouraged to take advantage of this labour education school, as well as men.

MR. G.F. GIBSON (North Vancouver-Capilano): Mr. Speaker, I think this bill embodies a good principle, and I intend to support it, along with my party.

Interjection.

MR. GIBSON: You never know with the Minister of Health (Hon. Mr. Cocke), Mr. Speaker. Things are going well, and then he says something he doesn't have to say. But I'm going to ignore that.

AN HON. MEMBER: He's the Minister for free toilets today.

MR. GIBSON: The principle is right because a lot of the problems in this field arise from a lack of dialogue. When you turn on your radio or read the newspapers, labour disputes are always in the news. To a certain extent that is unavoidable because it is such a basic part of the fabric of our society. But to some extent we can get it out of the news by people better understanding what they are doing.

The Hon. Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) remarked on the fact that when the education committee was holding hearings on the collective bargaining process in the school system, the school trustees time after time showed a tremendous lack of confidence in their ability to take part in the collective bargaining process. That is one of the reasons they were trying to devolve it off into a central collective bargaining organization. I think it is better done at the local level, and I think that this kind of institution can make it more feasible at the local level. That applies, of course, not only to school trustees, but to others in a management or quasi-management position. Small businesses just organized, and so on, should be able to benefit considerably from this.

I share the concern expressed by several Members with respect to the language of the Act, which doesn't seem to coincide exactly with the Minister's thoughts on who should be a part of this institution. I would say it should cover all elements of the collective bargaining process in British Columbia that can properly benefit from this kind of institution. I would hope that the language of the bill might be somewhat modified to bring it more into line with the Minister's own expressed thoughts.

I would ask him if, in closing second reading, he might give the House some indication of — obviously not the names — the kinds of people that might be on the board of directors. Does he have in mind, for example, that various elements of society would be represented, some management, some labour, some academic, some government, and so on, or does he intend to proceed in different ways in choosing the directors?

Interjection.

MR. GIBSON: Well, it is not up to this House, but rather up to the directors appointed under this

legislation, if and when it passes, to determine the programme. I would want to go on record as hoping that the programme doesn't only include things such as labour law and bargaining, but that it includes as well such questions as economics and political science and sociology, because all of these things relate to the collective bargaining process in one way or another and can be useful to people, whether or not they are on the labour-management side of the table, in better communicating back to those they represent and in communicating to each other the salient features involved in the bargaining process.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I say again that I will be supporting this bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I recognize the Minister to close the debate.

HON. MR. KING: I will just try to respond as briefly as I can to some of the points made by the opposition speakers. I do want to express my gratitude at the support the opposition has expressed for the principle and the intent of the bill. I think it's an encouraging sign that we all recognize the need for improved expertise at the bargaining table, which is basically what this bill is all about.

The Member for North Peace River (Mr. Smith) made some points that I would just like to briefly comment on. He indicated that it was important that the parties identify areas upon which they can agree. Well, I think that's a good, sound principle of industrial relations, but I don't think it is really an appropriate kind of structure to develop in what is basically an educational exercise. I think this is a more conceptual kind of approach to industrial relations, one in which I do not feel it necessary to try and identify and isolate parties from one another, but rather, in the spirit of the Labour College of Canada, which I had the good fortune to attend, to study the kind of things that are of benefit to all parties at the bargaining table.

The course content of the Labour College of Canada certainly did include — and I have stated many times in this House and also publicly that it would be the intent here to provide similar course content which would include these — courses in sociology, economics and political science.

The right to lock out or the right to strike is very much the exercise of power, and there's a science to the exercise of power. I think people should have some knowledge of the implications of the use of that kind of power. Sociology, group relationships in society, the inter-relationships, the impact of one action by a trade union or by a management group on the total community — it's unquestionably inherent in the whole process.

The Member for North Peace River also mentioned the win-lose syndrome that we have moved into in collective bargaining in British Columbia, and I agree with that. I think too often it has been a win-lose syndrome, and while one party may win one year, there is usually a whipsaw or a backlash which detracts, against a balanced kind of industry — a balanced kind of relationship. The one-year-I-get-you, the-next-year-you-get-me concept really doesn't serve the best interests of a trade union membership, the industry or the economy in the long term. So I think if we can develop a more mature relationship, based on the kind of studies that we have experienced at the Labour College of Canada, based on, perhaps, a better understanding of labour law as it affects the practitioners in this province, and a variety of lectures — perhaps from some of the very, very eminent people in the field of industrial relations — this can be a direct benefit.

The leader of the Liberal Party talked about the probable need for amendment of the bill. I have one amendment that I do intend to bring in, but I think it would be regrettable if we got into a debate on the semantics of the title or what is meant by it. It is called the labour education bill and it is primarily directed at the trade union movement, because in sheer terms of volume the most people who must be reached are in that realm. I don't want to indicate that this should be just for the staff representatives or the full-time agents. It's becoming more and more crucial in industrial relations that the rank-and-file membership be better educated in terms of analyzing and understanding contract recommendations that are made to them.

One of the most severe problems in industrial relations today is the growing tendency for the membership to reject contract packages without any real deep analysis, based rather on a variety of other considerations which are

sometimes almost frivolous. I think that's an alarming thing.

Now, the greatest volume will be workers, undoubtedly. There will be staff representatives and rank-and-file people, but the bill makes it quite clear that it will involve all those participating in industrial relations. I have identified certain sections of management that will be particularly looked at — local elective boards, new businesses. But there is very little need in terms of a company like MacMillan Bloedel where they have access to, in fact have developed over the years, a quite sophisticated system of collective bargaining with expert negotiators at their disposal. Rather, this institution, it is hoped, will shore up that whole area of small business enterprises, newly certified units, rank-and-file workers, where there is a great need for improved knowledge and improved skills. I would not hope to see a debate over the semantics of the title of the bill. The intent is clear; I have espoused it very, very often. It is enabling legislation, generally, and that should be recognized and understood.

[[Page 2788](#)]

I hope that the board that is established — which, indeed, will be representative of management, of labour, of the Department of Education and the Department of Labour — will in fact have a lot of flexibility in establishing their own approaches. I think it would be quite improper and, perhaps, not even very acceptable if this Legislature sought to impose some blueprint on the people who can best identify their own needs in terms of what is required. So, by and large, this is enabling legislation. I think we should place our faith in the ability of the parties to identify their own needs and let it evolve and grow according to those needs, rather than trying to impose something on them arbitrarily through this Legislature.

Regarding duplication of training, it was pointed out that some unions do have training courses. That's true. I don't know of any, though, that are very comprehensive — most of them are quite sporadic. But that really doesn't answer the question. If a union is, indeed, content with its own processes, it has a choice to remain with that or to participate in the centre.

One of the problems with the Labour College of Canada was the simple fact that it didn't provide for the kind of volume of people from the Province of British Columbia that we need to expose to that kind of service. I attended the college in 1967, and that year there were nine people from British Columbia. I suggest that we have quite a dramatic need to expose a vastly higher number of people to the course curriculum than was possible through the Labour College of Canada.

I think I've dealt with most of the points the leader of the Conservative Party made. I do want to assure him that in terms of political neutrality on the board I view this as a purely educational exercise and not one of compounding any divisions or any biases that exist between labour and management. Certainly the opposite is the goal and the motivation. It's to break down those differences, to break down those prejudices and those, you know, built-in biases that create problems at the bargaining table.

MR. WALLACE: You don't want an MLA on the board.

HON. MR. KING: Certainly not, no MLA. There are some very well-qualified people in the House, but I think they're well involved in other pursuits, and I think they should remain that way.

Division of labour and management groups: I covered that.

Training opportunity for the public: well, that's something that may be considered eventually, but I think the main thrust has to go to those involved in the process. Now there are areas in some of our existing institutions which provide courses in industrial relations. It's not quite geared to the kind of bargaining system that we hope this will be geared to and tailored to meet. But that's a secondary consideration and one that might well develop in the future.

I want to agree completely with the Member for West Vancouver-Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams) — is that the right constituency? — when he talks about the fear of... I have trouble keeping track of you; I wasn't sure whether you'd changed your constituency or not. I agree with his concern about superimposing another structure of bureaucracy and facilities on what we have in the educational field now. It's my hope and intent that the board will

utilize existing regional colleges, even high schools, to mount these courses around the province.

The labour education centre? It may become a reality in terms of some kind of structure from which these courses flow. But I would resist some tightly structured course centred in one location which would mean that all the people from the province would have to come to that centralized location. I think it would be wasteful, and I think it would indeed be duplication. That is not the intent. I think I mentioned that in my opening remarks and perhaps the Member missed it.

The question of women on the board: well, there will be trade union people assigned to the board; there will be management people. I customarily ask the central labour groups and the central management groups to refer to me suggested names from which I may consider appointments to such panels and positions as this. It's my hope that both those parties will be sensitive to the point made by the Second Member for Vancouver South (Mrs. Webster).

There is a need for more women in the workforce. There is a need for more women in important positions and, quite frankly, I think industry and labour are starting to learn that the benefits that flow from that are certainly not just some self-gratification in the face of International Women's Year, but that there are hard and real benefits that flow from more women in the workforce. Certainly, we found, where there was an extremely high turnover of the workforce and women were introduced in large content, that there was a stabilizing factor and certainly a better social milieu. And that's important.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

Now I think there's one further point, the curriculum: I think the Member for North Vancouver-Capilano (Mr. Gibson) made the point that he would like to see a certain kind of course content. I agree with him. But basically the course content will be left up to the board. I hope that they're able to obtain the services of someone who's very outstanding and capable in terms of the more or

[[Page 2789](#)]

less academic field of industrial relations. I hope that they don't confine their search to too-narrow grounds in terms of obtaining someone of that stature.

So I think we're on track in terms of what the intent of the bill is, what the enabling aspects of it are and the various points of view that the opposition Members have put forth this afternoon. I think that it's something that's welcomed by all sections of the community, as well as this House.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of the bill.

Motion approved.

Bill 85, Labour Education Centre of British Columbia Act, read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole House for consideration at the next sitting after today.

HON. D. BARRETT (Premier): Second reading of Bill 88, Mr. Speaker.

TRADE PRACTICES AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

HON. P.F. YOUNG (Minister of Consumer Services): Mr. Speaker, we have lived almost a year now with the Trade Practices Act, and we have found that it has been very successful. Ontario brought in a very similar Act, which became effective May 1.

Alberta introduced a bill last year. However, it did not contain a provision in it for the assurance of voluntary compliance, which we have in our legislation. As a result, the business community requested this addition to the legislation. When it is reintroduced in Alberta, the bill will contain that particular alternative, which has been very

successful in this province.

To give some idea what the reaction has been, we find that the business community, for the most part, has discovered that the legislation does not apply to them, for the simple reason that they never did any of the things this legislation outlaws. It is only those few fast-buck artists, the ones who have been immoral, dishonest or unethical in the past, who have been caught by this legislation.

We have even had a case recently in which one business used it against another business. Radio NW Ltd. took an action against Belkraft Industries, alleging that Belkraft was claiming association with NW in the promotion of NW's bridal fair, when in fact Belkraft was not affiliated at all. As a result of taking this action, Radio NW was able to obtain an injunction prohibiting Belkraft from alleging to be associated with the bridal fair promotion of Radio NW. This is one area where the legislation has helped one business against another business which may have been unethical.

Working with the legislation over the year has been a very gratifying experience, Most of the amendments that have been drafted in this legislation have been suggested by consumers, by members of the business community, by law bodies such as law professors, and courts have made suggestions. Some of our own department staff have felt that there was a need for clarification of language, a smoothing-out of language. This is what this bill attempts to do.

There are a few changes which are of interest, aside from the mostly-language clarifications. One of these is the change wherein the media will now be responsible to some degree for the advertising they carry. They will have obligation to ascertain whether it is misleading and/or deceptive. Heretofore they were exempt from the legislation as long as they could show that they acted in good faith.

As pointed out by Mr. Ian McLeod, who did the study for our department, which has been released since, the analysis showed that frequently good faith was actually blind faith. The media made little or no attempt to vet their advertising before accepting it. He found that, on the whole, the electronic media were more responsible and more aware of federal and provincial legislation dealing with false and misleading advertising than were the print media, because the electronic media have something to lose. They have a licence to broadcast to lose, so they are substantially more responsible in this regard.

The print media, on the other hand, sometimes gave the decision-making power of whether or not an ad would be accepted to a very minor clerk in the organization. Inasmuch as the media must have some obligation to the community as far as libel goes, as far as good taste goes, we feel that they should assume some liability as far as deceptive and misleading advertising is concerned. We plan to work out guidelines for the media industry in this regard so that they have some idea of what they can be expected to look out for.

Another important feature that we're amending is that businesses will be given the right to plead circumstances beyond their control in any prosecution brought under the Trade Practices Act if they show that they took all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to avoid an offence under the Act. This makes it much simpler because, in the past, the way the Act is written now, they could be criminally liable, and that was not the intent of the legislation.

Quite obviously, where the supplier was not aware that the product was mislabeled or that it did not have the benefits claimed for it and he purchased the product in all good faith, he should not be criminally liable. Perhaps he should be civilly liable — that's for a court to ascertain — but not criminally liable.

I feel that we can speak better to this bill in committee stage because it is so detailed. The changes in language are very minute; however, they do have

[[Page 2790](#)]

significance. It can best be dealt with in committee stage.

I now move second reading.

MRS. P.J. JORDON (North Okanagan): Essentially we agree with the Minister. I think it is a bit of a bomb dressed up in a dress. There is a fair amount of impact in this bill, but it and the Minister's statements deal more in terms of different sections of the bill rather than principle. Therefore we would prefer to debate the bill in committee.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: We welcome this bill, in particular some of the changes outlined by the Minister with respect to printing of misleading advertising. We think she spoke rather eloquently and well. There's no question that the problem she described exists. We hope that proper enforcement of section 2 against newspapers who in a thoroughly irresponsible manner accept advertisements from the government on things like the budget, without any question as to whether it's true or not, could do a great deal to bring a little more truth in advertising. The government won't be able to continue to put misleading ads forward.

The test of advertising, of course, will become that important functionary that the Minister referred to, not some lowly clerk, as she described the person who it might be. This person will be responsible for keeping the government honest. We think if all newspapers in the province have a well-paid, highly positioned person to keep the government honest, under section 2, progress will come in the Province of British Columbia on the question of advertising.

A second general point I'd like to raise is that of misleading advertising, which I referred to the Minister before, and she agreed with me. Unfortunately, the federal Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs accepted what I think is highly misleading advertising. I've got this example here of the Safeway ad, as you can see. The grade B and utility, according to the law, should be the same size. Yet you see what they did: the "B" is there in great big bold letters, and "utility" is spelled vertically in itty-bitty little letters. Yet apparently that meets the federal Act even though, as I was informed by a law student at University of British Columbia who brought this first to my attention, in *The British Columbia Gazette*, April 2, 1964, section 802, it says: "In any advertisement pertaining to dressed or eviscerated poultry, wherein the price of such poultry appears, the grade name shall be stated in letters of at least equal size and prominence to the price." Now I wonder if the Minister would agree?

Back to my example here of *The Vancouver Sun* of Thursday, March 21, 1974. "Utility," written vertically that way, is stated in letters of at least equal size and prominence to the price. I think she'd agree with me — she's shaking her head side to side — it is not. And yet, according to Canada Safeway, their advertising manager, Mr. Madden, has had this checked out. He sent me a very civil letter pointing out that this is correct in accordance with the directive of Mr. S. Arnold of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

I think that's wrong; I think the B.C. regulations are right in this respect. The word "utility" should be spelled out big and bold, just as big as the 69 cents. I trust this type of thing will be affected by this new Act, because I'm sure the Minister would also like to have the utility grade spelled out in big bold letters.

The other funny thing in that ad, if I could just let you have a look at it again for a moment, is that apparently, where poultry is cut up in portions, you don't have to put the grade at all. That sounds very strange indeed. If you have a 5 lb. bag of portions to serve deep-fried, you don't have to put down the grade, which seems a very curious interpretation of regulation 8.02 of *The British Columbia Gazette*, April 2, 1964.

In Mr. Madden's letter again — just to quote him, so I can assure you that Safeway has not broken a law in this advertising — he tells me: "As to the second question why the cut-up fryers in the 5 lb. bag at 69 cents a pound included no mention of grade, again the ruling by Mr. Levy's department that the minute a poultry item, be it turkeys, fryers, roasting chicken or fowl, is segmented it no longer can carry a grade."

That's undoubtedly dead true because Mr. Madden, as I said, has checked this thing out carefully. But it certainly seems wrong that as soon as you slice the thing up there's no more question of grade of the meat. We've had very alarming stories in the press about the quality of meat that has been consumed in Canada over the last few years. There was a reference, indeed, to Expo.

HON. MS. YOUNG: What was the date of that ad?

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: The date of the advertisement? The Minister has called across the floor a perfectly

sensible request, namely the date of the ad. It's *The Vancouver Sun* of Thursday, March 21, 1974. Mr. G.C. Lane of 602-4676 Yew Street in Vancouver brought it to my attention, which I appreciate. We checked it out, and it turned out to be perfectly legal, but it's advertising which I think should be looked at and changes made so that the intent and spirit as well as the letter of the law are adhered to. That letter of the law is: "In any advertisement pertaining to dressed or eviscerated poultry wherein the price of such poultry appears, the grade name shall be stated in letters at least equal size and prominence to the price."

That's a question I raised with the Hon. Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Stupich) last year. But the

[[Page 2791](#)]

Minister of Consumer Services, now that she's well-versed in her department, will undoubtedly like to take up the question.

One other quick point before I take my seat, Mr. Chairman. I wonder whether the Minister could say a word about refunds under this particular Act — perhaps she can't, but I think she could. There are certain businesses which refuse to give refunds under a certain amount, even though they owe you the money. I wonder whether the Minister could put my mind at rest, and the minds of some constituents of mine, as to what's legal in the refund business.

If, for example, I go into a store and return an item, which was perhaps incorrectly packaged or something, or something I didn't actually think I was buying, or if I return an item which is defective and say: "No, I want my refund." They say: "Sorry, Mr. Anderson, anything under \$1 we can't refund," or, "Anything under \$5 we can't refund." Are they entitled to do that? The Minister has her excellent adviser behind her; perhaps a quick word or two on that would be possible when she closes debate on this particular bill which is called the Trade Practices Amendment Act, 1975. Certainly, if it isn't included in the Act, it should be. That's a trade practice which can hurt the consumer — namely, making an arbitrary figure that no refund will be given if the amount is below that certain level. Be it \$1, \$5, \$10, be it 25 cents, if you are owed the money, you should get it back.

MR. WALLACE: Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister's comment that we can do more to this bill in committee is very valid, because I would have to differ with her that the changes are minor. There is some real significance in some of the paragraphs that are amended. For example, I notice that instead of referring a certain matter to the court, she has inserted the word "a justice." I would like a lot of explanation as to what that means, because a justice isn't defined in the definition section at the start of the bill, whereas "court" is. Examples of this nature...we won't go into this until committee.

I certainly think it is a good idea to attempt to have advertising agents be responsible for what they put in the newspaper. I wonder if the Minister could give a little information to the House as to what the guidelines will be. I understand that *The Vancouver Sun* already has a system of guidelines. Newspapers never being backward at coming forward, it stated in a recent article that the Minister has been made aware of the guidelines presently practised by *The Vancouver Sun*. So that we can all get the absolute truth of the matter, I wonder if the Minister is, in fact, drawing up guidelines based on the practice based on *The Vancouver Sun*, or perhaps she is in a position to make these regulations even better.

But on this whole matter of consumer affairs and advertising and deception in the marketplace, I would just like to sound the note of caution I sounded when this bill was first introduced last year. It is that we can, as legislators, run the risk of trying to go too far to protect the individual consumer against just about every eventuality in the marketplace.

It is reassuring that the Minister pointed out that the early experience with this bill has been not to effect in any appreciable way the honest businessman but the small minority of people who are given to unethical practices. Nevertheless, I just think, as we see more and more amendments coming in under this Minister and more and more intervention in the marketplace, that there seems to be a real danger of two things: that this department can become a huge bureaucracy at great expense to the taxpayer.

I would like to know, as we go from year to year with experience with this bill and with the Department of

Consumer Services, what the kind of cost per item of service by the department turns out to be. I made some very tentative inquiries of the Better Business Bureau some months ago, and certainly their cost — of providing advice and intervention seemed to me to be very economical per item of service.

As we make more and more amendments and lay down more and more guidelines, for example in this bill, as to what newspapers may or may not do, I assume that this inevitably means more and more supervision by this department and more and more intervention in a variety of ways. Perhaps this is the afternoon for caution. I was cautioning the Minister of Labour (Hon. Mr. King) about his education centre becoming a big bureaucracy. But I don't think I am being paranoid on this point. I think one of the concerns of every taxpayer in Canada, certainly in relation to the federal government, is an absolute horror at the way the size of government continues to expand. What the taxpayer wonders is whether in the long run the cost-benefit analysis ends up in the favour of the taxpayer.

I can see that the Minister feels that newspapers should have some responsibility for their ads. But, again, I want to know what basically the guidelines will be and what it will cost in terms of money to the newspaper advertiser to carry out this investigation, because more cost means a higher price to the consumer. Newspapers can't just take it out of some source of government funding such as can be done by the Labour Education Centre.

So I think we shouldn't be too blasé or too motherhoodish about this whole idea that anything that helps the consumer is worth doing. It is worth doing only if in terms of economics we are not creating another great big department of government with more people pushing paper at a cost which means that the protection to that individual consumer is disproportionate to the benefits for the

[[Page 2792](#)]

whole of society.

Another point I wish to make quickly on this bill, along the same line of more and more government intervention, relates to another section which gives the director additional power to appoint a receiver when an investigation has been ordered. Where notice is given, the receiver can be given power to wind up the affairs or.... The Minister is shaking her head.

I am referring to section 13(a), and perhaps we can leave this to committee. But the section, as I read it, is that the receiver appointee part of the principle of this bill is that you can appoint a receiver and that receiver can go to court and get authority to wind up the affairs of the person who is being investigated. Then again, there may be some justification for this. But it is just one more very substantial extension of power to another arm of government.

There is just so much happening in our society today at all levels, federal, provincial and municipal, where more and more power of intervention into the life of the individual is being given to governments, arms of government, Crown corporations, board appointees, et cetera. I suppose it perhaps sounds like being against a good motherhood issue for me to suggest that maybe we should put the brakes on the intensity with which the affairs of the consumer are being looked after by governments. Nobody would deny that a few years ago matters were very much against the interests of the consumer in many areas, and the producer and the retailer frequently took unfair advantage.

All I am saying is: let not the pendulum swing so far in the other direction that we have so many bureaucrats all running around looking after the individual's interest, when in many cases the individual should be left in the responsible position of doing it for himself. This, I realize, is something a little more philosophical than the specifics in this bill. But I do feel that many people in our society today are becoming very concerned in a wide variety of fields at the way the government is taking on responsibilities for the individual which the individual might well handle for himself.

If we are not careful we will finish up somewhere down the road with governments feeling that they have just about every single responsibility for an individual the minute he steps into the marketplace. If it went that far I would think it would be a very unfortunate conclusion, even although your initial motivations as government were well intended.

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, we should leave it at that and discuss some of the specifics in committee.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: Just very briefly, while many of the amendments contained in this bill are obviously designed to make existing legislation more workable, I must express my opposition to the question of advertising — section 2 of the bill.

The Minister will know, Mr. Speaker, that she may have some power to control what happens with regard to the publication of advertisements within the province, but there are people who, by reason of their occupation, are obligated to distribute advertising material which comes from outside the province, the printing of which this Minister cannot in any way control. Yet they find themselves in breach of the legislation as it presently stands. I'm thinking particularly of that part of section 2 which deals with the distribution of advertising material.

The newsstand operator who receives periodicals from outside the province which are transmitted in the ordinary course of commerce leaves himself open for what may be a deceptive or misleading ad appearing in that periodical. He may never even read it himself or ever have the opportunity of determining whether or not the publication of that advertisement amounts to a contravention of the Act.

We had this situation, Mr. Speaker, back in 1971, when the government tried, with marked lack of success, to restrain the advertising of tobacco products. The consequences of that legislation are clear to all those who were present during the debates on legislation and saw what subsequently happened to it.

The Minister is creating a very difficult situation for many people who are completely powerless to comply with legislation. I think she should consider whether or not some appropriate amendment should be made to the proposed new section 1(a) before it comes to committee.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I recognize the Minister closing the debate.

HON. MS. YOUNG: In answer to the various questions, the Second Member for Victoria (Mr. D.A. Anderson) asked about laws regarding refunds. The general law is that there is no law, as I am advised. The amount or whether they would be given credit instead of a refund is at the discretion of the supplier unless the consumer can show loss or damages due to a deceptive practice. Then he would have an action under the Act.

He asked about *The Vancouver Sun* guidelines, that we would be using them as the basis of our suggested guidelines. No, they are not good enough. I regret to suggest this to *The Vancouver Sun*, but Mr. McLeod, who is the gentleman who has been in the advertising field for many, many years with a very reputable company, Woodward's, found some very good guidelines from the State of Florida. We will be suggesting these, but we will also be talking to the media and asking for their input and suggestions.

The Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) asked about the cost of providing our service to the consumer. He said that the Better Business Bureau

[[Page 2793](#)]

had a very low rate on an annual basis. Our figures indicate it costs about 90 cents per year per consumer in this province. I would also suggest that the Better Business Bureau refers a great many of their problems to our department for resolution.

I would also point out that our department includes the debtors' assistance division, so that in that 90 cents comes the cost of providing this service. The debtors' assistance division will be regaining or putting back into the business community of this province \$1 million this year that might otherwise not have gone back there. They might have gone into personal bankruptcy; they might have gone to other provinces and just left bad debts.

Our division will see that that much money will be going back into business in this province. In the first four months of the year, consumers received refunds, rebates and settlements in the amount of over \$100,000. That rate is keeping up.

As far as winding up companies, the courts will be the ones to decide on whether the trustee has the right to wind that up. That is a decision the court will make.

We always emphasize consumers. The Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) was concerned about whether we were overpampering the consumer. I suggest to him that we are not. Quite the contrary: we insist in all cases that the consumer approach the supplier first before he approaches the department. When they approach the department after they feel they haven't received satisfaction, we look at the case. We have a reputation among those in the business community of being extremely even-handed. We look at it and when, in our view, the consumer is really out of step, really asking for the moon — and we have many cases like that — we tell them so. We contact the supplier, get the other side of the story and make a judgment. If we feel that the consumer does not have a case, we so advise the consumer. I can show you countless letters where we have made that judgment and said: "In our opinion, you don't have a case. However, you have the legislation. If you want to proceed against the supplier, go ahead." It is then up to the consumer.

As far as the advertisers go, the Member for West Vancouver-Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams) was concerned about the vendors of, say, magazines and all that. Would they be liable? In my judgment, they would not because they can prove that they took these things in good faith under the legislation and they didn't have to check it all out. Possibly they couldn't check it all out. This is true for the advertisers also, that they can demonstrate that the advertising was given to them in a clear...and that they did not know and had no reason to suspect that its publication would amount to a contravention of the Act.

I now move second reading.

Motion approved.

Bill 88, Trade Practices Amendment Act, read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole House for consideration at the next sitting after today.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Second reading of Bill 91.

HOSPITAL AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

HON. D.G. COCKE (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the Hospital Amendment Act, 1975, has a number of principles within it as it is outlined. It's an amendment Act. I will briefly go through some of the areas I think of interest. A lot of the bill, of course, is general housekeeping, updating of a very large statute, or at least a reasonably large statute, which has to be updated from time to time by virtue of time.

One area of the amendment, Mr. Speaker, is restricting hospitals to some degree in exercising borrowing power. Really, what we are doing here is making into statute what has been a fact for some time. That would be that they may not exercise borrowing power without expressed approval from the Health Ministry.

Also in the Act we more clearly define personal care. As time goes on and other levels of care are defined, it is important that it also be defined in law.

There is another area on the whole question of transfer of ownership of private facilities or, for that matter, of transferring indebtedness. We think it important that these transfers not be made unless they are also clearly approved.

A further amendment is identifying the duties of the superintendent of a private facility and at the same time extending the probationary period. As you know, in the past the probationary period for a superintendent was three months. We felt that this was inadequate, so it has now been extended to six months.

Another area in the bill is the fact that confirmation of death by a medical practitioner must in fact be confirmed. It has been brought to our attention that in certainly one case, and maybe more, death had not been confirmed by a practitioner when an undertaker had been sought. We find that this must be something that cannot

happen.

Another area, Mr. Speaker, is establishing rules regarding the debts of private hospitals. As you know, at the present time private hospitals run by entrepreneurs oftentimes raise money by raising a mortgage on their private hospital so that they can invest that money elsewhere in another business, in a newspaper or some other kind of enterprise. And at the same time, Mr. Speaker, what happens is that the mortgage then on the hospital becomes a very large

[[Page 2794](#)]

factor in determining the per diem costs to the patient within the hospital. We feel that under those circumstances, it is only right that these kind of changes...which were in the old Act to a certain extent but now we must make very clear that the new Act makes sure that these changes are approved prior to them being effective. We have seen not only in our own jurisdiction but in a number of other jurisdictions where the per diem rates are forced up generally by an attitude of, well, let's borrow on the premises and use the money for something else. And we just don't go along with that.

The former government, Mr. Speaker, had a policy around ownership of private facilities, and that policy was that monopolies should not, would not — and, unfortunately, — they didn't carry it quite as far as "could not" — take over a number of private hospitals. You all remember the National System — Neil Cook and Associates, who incidentally control Sandringham. Don't let anybody fool anybody about that, despite Mr. Shepherd and other people who actually are in the forefront. While the old government in their policy did not like what was happening, and asked that it not happen, they didn't require that it not happen. So under this amendment we are requiring that this in fact not happen under law. It's important, if you can imagine what one group, taking over the private hospital system within this province, could do to the whole system by establishing that kind of monopoly. So therefore this, in fact, is clearly outlined in the new Act.

We also have put some teeth in the appeal board aspects. Recall in 1971 that an appeal board was set up. If a doctor was denied privileges in a hospital, he could appeal to that particular board and request that his privileges be reinstated in a particular hospital. The legislation was put forward and, unfortunately, lacked teeth in that the decision of the appeal board, while it could be made quite strong and clear, wasn't necessarily transferable. In other words, the decision of an appeal board could not be necessarily substituted for the decision that the hospital board had made originally. So therefore the appeal board could find that the doctor should be reinstated. So this, I believe, is corrected in this Act. Also at the same time we're providing some protection for that appeal board in order that they not bear the brunt of damage suits and so on, as you would normally do in cases like this.

Mr. Speaker, we've had some recent experience with public administration of a hospital in Fernie, and it's been a test of that particular section of the Act of a public trustee being put into a general hospital. We have found some areas of the Act that need more clear definition, which we've provided in this amendment. We've also found that there should be a transition time back to the board situation.

In other words, to go from the administrator directly back to a board of trustees we find a little bit unworkable. We feel that we should build in a transition period so that it allows the hospital society to be able to pick up the pieces, so to speak, in a much more co-ordinated way. Then the new board can work with the public trustees for a period of time so that they can put it all together and carry it on. You can imagine what would happen if, for instance, a brand-new board of trustees took over a hospital just like that, bang, at the snap of the fingers, with very little experience. It might be quite a devastating experience for them. On the other hand, however, if you allow for this transitional period, then it allows everybody to work everything out harmoniously. I feel this is definitely required.

With that, I'll turn Bill 91 over to the opposition to hear what they have to say about it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Aren't you going to move second reading?

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I take it as moved, second reading.

MR. R.H. McCLELLAND (Langley): Just working backwards, starting with the way the Minister ended and going back to the beginning, I agree, certainly, with the need for this transitional period with a new board of trustees. I wonder if the section isn't just a little harsh. Perhaps we should deal with this more completely in committee — I don't know — in saying that a board of trustees is automatically finished when a public administrator is appointed. Perhaps there shouldn't be a period of suspension in there in case the problems aren't as serious as might have been suspected, and that board of trustees could carry on at a later time. Perhaps the Minister agrees that that could happen; I don't know.

I'm a little confused about a couple of the definitions that the Minister gave in relation to the changes in this bill. The Minister said that the medical appeal board didn't have any right, really, to make its decisions binding, but the old Act certainly allowed them to make final and binding decisions. The only change that I can see in here is that it also extends those decisions to a doctor who has been refused, on an initial case, a permit to practise in a hospital. The rules were always there for a doctor who was refused a permit on a reapplication and in other areas, but this amendment to this bill extends that a little further and allows the medical appeal board to affirm and vary and reverse and substitute its own decision if an initial application is refused. Other than cleaning up the language quite a lot — the language is much better in the amendment than it was before — I don't see very much difference except for that significant change. It's a change the opposition would certainly agree with.

[[Page 2795](#)]

The other point that I was a little confused about was the change with respect to suits brought against the medical appeal board. Once again, I think that protection was always in the Act, but the new amendment now seems to extend that protection from suits to the board of management rather than the medical appeal board. The hospital trustees are now protected from the kind of suits in respect to evidence they might give in any kind of a case. I think there's a little confusion there, but the medical appeal board always had that protection under the old Act as well. It's an extension again into the board of management of the hospital.

I'd just like to say that I like many of the parts of this bill. It's some of the things that I've talked about with regard to private hospitals — the licensing of private hospitals and the need to get into further concern about the financing of private hospitals. It seems to be tightened up considerably in this bill. The opposition, I think, would have to applaud that move. I know that probably the Minister and myself could get into some kind of a philosophical debate about entrepreneurs in the business and everything else, but I think the Minister also has to recognize that it's not only the abuses of entrepreneurs that we have to worry about here and not only private hospitals but also hospitals which are publicly owned through various kinds of societies.

Those hospitals quite often in the past have found themselves in very serious difficulty because of the kind of mortgaging arrangements they've made. Not only do the per diem rates in many instances, as the Minister indicated, get forced up but, rather, services in the hospital get forced down. Perhaps that's even worse because then the patients who are confined to those institutions are going to suffer far more than they might just from a financial point of view. If the services get forced down, then patients really suffer from a medical point of view. I think that's a far more important danger than the per diem rates getting out of hand.

I think that the maintenance of tighter control over financial matters of private hospitals, society-owned hospitals, particularly this business of transferring not only the ownership, as was, under the old Act, but now transferring mortgages or deeds or leases or any use of property associated with the hospital, is a very important consideration to be made, in my opinion.

I know that we've found on a couple of occasions in my own constituency where hospitals have been transferred to new owners or mortgages have been transferred to someone else and there wasn't enough inspection done into the kind of business practice that was going on. People were getting into a rest home, for instance, for \$1,000 down and making mortgage payments that they couldn't possibly make, so they had to cut down the services again. That's the thing that concerns me most. It's not the per diem rate, although that's important, but the cutback in services that we have to be most concerned about.

I think that defining more strictly the powers of the medical appeal board will make the application of the Act

much easier.

Mr. Speaker, basically with those comments, the opposition supports the amendments to the medical Act, and will support it in second reading.

HON. MR. COCKE: Mr. Speaker, certainly we can have any discussion the Member likes in committee stage, and I am delighted that the opposition has taken this position. You are quite right about the medical appeal: both the board and the medical staff are not protected. So, Mr. Speaker, with that I would move second reading of Bill 91.

Motion approved.

Bill 91, Hospital Amendment Act, 1975, read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole House for consideration at the next sitting after today.

HON. MRS. DAILY: Committee on Bill 28, Mr. Speaker.

ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

The House in committee on Bill 28; Mr. Dent in the chair.

Section 1 approved.

Title approved.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved on the following division:

YEAS — 28

Hall	Barrett	Daily
Strachan	Nimsick	Stupich
Calder	Sanford	Cummings
Levi	Williams, R.A.	Cocke
King	Young	Radford
Lauk	Nicolson	Nunweiler
Skelly	Gabelmann	Lockstead
Rolston	Anderson, G.H.	Barnes
Kelly	Webster	Lewis
	Liden	

[[Page 2796](#)]

NAYS — 13

Jordan	Smith	Bennett
Phillips	Chabot	Richter
Curtis	Morrison	Schroeder

Gibson

Anderson, D.A.
Williams, L.A.

McGeer

Mr. Chabot requests that leave be asked to record the division in the *Journals* of the House.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the committee reports the bill complete without amendment and further reports that a division took place in committee and requests that this division be recorded in the *Journals* of the House.

Leave granted.

Bill 28, Assessment Authority of British Columbia Amendment Act, 1975, reported complete without amendment, read a third time and passed on the following division:

YEAS — 31

Levi	Williams, R.A.	Cocke
King	Young	Radford
Lauk	Nicolson	Nunweiler
Skelly	Gabelmann	Lockstead
Gorst	Hall	Barrett
Dailly	Strachan	Nimsick
Stupich	Hartley	Calder
Sanford	Cummings	Dent
Rolston	Anderson, G.H.	Barnes
Kelly	Webster	Lewis
	Liden	

NAYS — 13

Jordan	Smith	Bennett
Phillips	Chabot	Richter
Curtis	Morrison	Schroeder
Gibson	Anderson, D.A.	McGeer
	Williams, L.A.	

Division ordered to be recorded in the *Journals* of the House.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Committee on Bill 29, Mr. Speaker.

CORPORATION CAPITAL TAX
AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

The House in committee on Bill 29; Mr. Dent in the chair.

On section 1.

MR. GIBSON: I would like to ask the Minister of Finance how much money this will save small business.

HON. MR. BARRETT: I will take note of your question.

MR. GIBSON: Is the idea, then, Mr. Chairman, that we will revert to this section when somebody comes up?

HON. MR. BARRETT: No, I'll give you the answer before we are through with the bill. We can revert to this section if you wish.

The question is: How much will it save?

MR. GIBSON: The question is how much it will cost the Crown, in effect. How much tax revenue are we losing by this as compared to how much we would lose if the old limit were kept?

HON. MR. BARRETT: Actually, do you want the section to pass without the information? I'll get you the information. Will you allow it to pass without the information?

MR. GIBSON: It is agreeable to me, Mr. Chairman. I am just seeking it for information purposes, but I do hope we get there before we pass this bill.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Yes, I hope so. I've just sent for Mr. Ferguson in the Finance department.

Section 1 approved.

On section 2.

MR. GIBSON: The question I have with respect to sections 2 and 3 is identical, Mr. Chairman. If again the Minister of Finance is taking notes, I would like to know how much additional money this is going to raise. These would seem to me quite important aspects of a bill of this kind. I just thought I would ask.

Sections 2 to 5 inclusive approved.

MR. GIBSON: I'm just wondering, Mr. Chairman, when I get my information.

HON. MR. BARRETT: As soon as Mr. Ferguson appears, Mr. Member. I will be able to relate it to another bill.

[[Page 2797](#)]

MR. GIBSON: Perhaps we might hold this one back from third reading, then.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Certainly, whatever you wish. We'll let the committee rest for a moment until Mr. Ferguson arrives.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Agreed. Everybody at ease.

AN HON. MEMBER: Has he got roller skates?

HON. MR. BARRETT: Come on, Fergie.

MR. GIBSON: What if Mr. Ferguson doesn't know the answer?

HON. MR. BARRETT: If Mr. Ferguson doesn't know the answers, we'll shoot him and find another bureaucrat. That's one way of trimming the staff.

Interjections.

HON. MR. BARRETT: He may not be here.

MR. GIBSON: He's sure not here right now.

HON. MR. BARRETT: We're coasting right now. If you want to adjourn this third reading....

Oh, yes, Mr. Member, what we can do is complete third reading but ask for a report on another day. I will get the answers before the report.

MR. GIBSON: Just on that point of order, there is a chance for a good debate at that time if it seems necessary based on the answer.

HON. MR. BARRETT: On a report? "When shall the bill be read a third time?" I don't think there is. Limited debate on third reading. I will give you the answers at that time.

MR. GIBSON: Of course, as one of the Hon. Members points out, we might want to amend it at that time.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Well, if you want to amend the bill, I think you have to amend the government.

MR. GIBSON: Now you've got it.

HON. MR. BARRETT: And with three out of five, you are diminishing your ratio in terms of the opportunity.

MR. GIBSON: An alternative, I suppose, Mr. Chairman, might be to rise and report progress. Then we could go over this again.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Well, there's not much progress.

MR. GIBSON: Well, no, there hasn't been.

HON. MR. BARRETT: I don't want a false motion.

MR. GIBSON: It seems to me a reasonable question to ask in the House as to how much revenue a tax bill is going to raise and how much....

HON. MR. BARRETT: If you are agreed, Mr. Member, I will get you the information as soon as I can. That's my understanding. I can report on report.

MR. GIBSON: I would just as soon we reported progress and then if we came back to committee....

HON. MR. BARRETT: Certainly. You go ahead and make the motion.

MR. GIBSON: I move, Mr. Chairman, that the committee rise and report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The committee reports progress and asks leave to sit again.

Leave granted.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Committee on Bill 30, Mr. Speaker.

GASOLINE TAX (1958)
AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

The House in committee on Bill 30; Mr. Dent in the chair.

Sections 1 to 7 inclusive approved.

Title approved.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved.

[[Page 2798](#)]

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Bill 30, Gasoline Tax (1958) Amendment Act, 1975, reported complete without amendment, read a third time and passed on the following division:

YEAS — 31

Levi	Cocke	King
Young	Radford	Lauk
Nicolson	Nunweiler	Skelly
Gabelmann	Lockstead	Gorst
Hall	Barrett	Dailly
Strachan	Nimsick	Stupich
Hartley	Calder	Sanford
D'Arcy	Cummings	Dent
Rolston	Anderson, G.H.	Barnes
Kelly	Webster	Lewis
	Liden	

NAYS — 12

Jordan	Smith	Phillips
Chabot	Richter	Curtis
Morrison	Schroeder	Gibson
Anderson, D.A.	McGeer	Williams, L.A.

Division ordered to be recorded in the *Journals* of the House.

GASOLINE TAX (1948)
AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

The House in committee on Bill 31; Mr. Dent in the chair.

On section 1.

MR. GIBSON: Mr. Chairman, I didn't ask this question on the bill we just voted on because I understand it is not operational, but on this bill this would raise the gasoline tax by 2 cents a gallon. I would ask the Hon. Minister of Finance how much revenue that will raise for the province.

HON. MR. BARRETT: About \$18 million.

MR. GIBSON: That's about what I figured.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Approximately.

Section 1 approved.

Sections 2 to 5 inclusive approved.

Title approved.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Bill 31, Gasoline Tax (1948) Amendment Act, 1975, reported complete without amendment to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Speaker, committee on Bill 32.

MOTIVE-FUEL USE TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

The House in committee on Bill 32; Mr. Dent in the chair.

On section 1.

MR. GIBSON: Same question, Mr. Chairman.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Not as much.

MR. GIBSON: I appreciate that, but how much?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall section 1 pass?

MR. GIBSON: Hold on, Mr. Chairman. I honestly would like to know how much this section will raise if it is carried into law.

MR. CHABOT: The Premier doesn't know — no one has figured it out.

HON. MR. BARRETT: The note I have is "self-explanatory." (Laughter.)

MR. GIBSON: But could you explanatory yourself one? (Laughter.)

AN HON. MEMBER: Before it self-destructs, where's Jerry?

HON. MR. BARRETT: He's coming right in. How many dollars do we get on the...? Approximately \$5 million.

MR. GIBSON: Thank you.

Section 1 approved.

Section 2 approved.

Title approved.

[[Page 2799](#)]

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise, forthwith, and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Bill 32, Motive-Fuel Use Tax Amendment Act, 1975, reported complete without amendment for consideration at the next sitting of the House after today.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Committee on Bill 33, Mr. Speaker.

COLOURED GASOLINE TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

The House in committee on Bill 33; Mr. Dent in the chair.

On section 1.

MR. GIBSON: Mr. Chairman, the same question: sections 1 and 2 — the amount of revenue to be raised.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, without as much accuracy as the two previous answers, approximately \$1 million.

Sections 1 to 6 inclusive approved.

Title approved.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Bill 33, Coloured Gasoline Tax Amendment Act, 1975, reported complete without amendment to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Speaker, committee on Bill 73.

SCHOOL TAX REMOVAL AND RESOURCE GRANT ACT

The House in committee on Bill 73; Mr. Dent in the chair.

On section 1.

MR. GIBSON: Mr. Chairman, the amount set aside in the estimates for this kind of a grant is \$25 million. I would just appreciate confirmation from the Premier that that is his best estimate of what this section will cost.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Yes, that is the best estimate.

Sections 1 to 4 inclusive approved.

Title approved.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Bill 73, School Tax Removal and Resource Grant Act, reported complete without amendment to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask leave to call Committee of Supply.

Leave granted.

MR. SPEAKER: I take that to mean with debate.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: With debate.

The House in Committee of Supply; Mr. Dent in the chair.

ESTIMATES: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(continued)

Vote 64: Minister's office, \$96,345 — approved.

On vote 65: office of consultant to the Minister, \$61,455.

MR. SMITH: Just a short question to the Minister on this. This is a new vote of \$61,000 for office of consultant to the Minister. Would the Minister of Health inform the committee as to the personnel of this office and what their functions and their responsibilities are?

HON. MR. COCKE: Mr. Chairman, at the time the estimates were put together we had to set up a separate estimate as we were in the middle of

[[Page 2800](#)]

reorganizing at the time. We had to set up a separate estimate for my new Deputy who is now, incidentally, the Deputy. But because of the fact that he was not so entitled at that time, we set it up as a consultant and provided the financing in that way. This is the explanation.

MR. SMITH: You don't need it now.

HON. MR. COCKE: Yes, I need it for the Deputy, but it is just transferred to the Deputy's vote. In other words, this is the senior Deputy of the Department of Health, in the name of Jim Mainguy.

MRS. JORDAN: Further clarification on this point. I assume from your explanation that the staff to go with this vote is in another vote.

HON. MR. COCKE: Yes. His secretary is there. Actually he has very little staff, but his backup staff is in both hospital programmes and health services.

Vote 65 approved.

On vote 66: health advisory council, \$140,000.

MR. WALLACE: I wonder if the Minister could tell us just where his planning is at in regard to the health advisory council. As I recall, this was one of the recommendations of the B.C. Medical Association that there should be some liaison body composed of people in the health field so that there was some feeling of easy access or method of making recommendations to the Minister regarding a wide variety of health problems and ideas coming from the various personnel in the health field. Has it been set up, and could the Minister just tell us where it's at?

HON. MR. COCKE: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace), what we've done so far is written to a number of groups in the province — the medical association, the College of Dental Surgeons, the RNABC, even SPARC and groups like that which are either closely related or very interested in health care.

As you know, the health advisory council's suggested task will be long-range, thoughtful planning in health care. So, so far, what we've done is ask for nominees, and to date we've had a few. Hopefully, we'll be able to structure it within the next few months and get it off and running. It was as the Member for Oak Bay suggested, a suggestion of the medical association, SPARC and many other groups over the last few years. Hopefully, it will be put together shortly.

MRS. JORDAN: Could the Minister advise whether this health advisory council will be working with the health security projects, which I understand are under Dr. Foulkes, and will Dr. Foulkes have anything to do with this council?

HON. MR. COCKE: No, nothing to do with it at all.

Vote 66 approved.

On vote 67: accounting division, \$840,714.

MRS. JORDAN: I resist the temptation to say — and you know I would never say it — this looks like nothing but a bureaucratic increase and appears to be doing nothing to provide beds for health for people in this province. I wonder if the Minister would confirm that there is a \$300,000 increase in the accounting division, and how this is going to help in the health care for the people of British Columbia.

HON. MR. COCKE: I'm carrying the load here. The accounting division, of course, is a division for the Provincial Secretary, Human Resources and the Department of Health. Yes, there's an increase. There was a real need for an increase in this particular vote, as I think that Member, of all Members, knows. This is Harold Price's office, Madam Member. You know that office has been understaffed, and naturally, with the increasing responsibilities that that office has, he had to have an increased staff.

MRS. JORDAN: As a matter of clarification, could the Minister advise us whether this department has received a memo advising it to engage in a 10 per cent cutback?

HON. MR. COCKE: Yes.

Vote 67 approved.

Vote 68: general services, \$2,595,094 — approved.

On vote 69: home dialysis service, \$804,218.

MR. WALLACE: I wouldn't want to pass this vote without paying tribute to all the people who are involved in this province, in government and outside of government, in making the home dialysis programme available. This is the programme for individuals who, unfortunately, are suffering from kidney failure. In some cases, instead of the individual having to go to the hospital two days a week to be put on the kidney machine, there are machines that can be used in the home, and it's of immense value to the individuals concerned.

The last thing I would want is to leave the impression that I'm complaining about the cost. I'm not complaining about that at all, but I would like to

[[Page 2801](#)]

know to what extent the programme is increasing in terms of the number of individuals who can be managed at home rather than have to go to the kidney unit at one of the four or five hospitals in the province.

Could the Minister tell us if he's aware of any of the real progress that's being made toward the kidney machine that Dr. Price in Vancouver initiated? It's a miniaturized form that is smaller, less bulky and more convenient than the initial machines. To what degree has government been asked to put up more funds, or has it put up more funds for this capital expenditure rather than the operating cost of the dialysis service?

These may be all questions that are too specific, but this department and this Minister has taken a very commendable role in setting up the dialysis service, and I think this should be recognized.

It would also be most interesting if we could know just where the programme is headed and to what degree this government might be able to take pride in financially supporting the kind of further research and development of an improved kidney machine.

HON. MR. COCKE: I think probably one of the marks of success of the service is the real increase here that you see — from \$381,000 to \$804,000. That means that a great many more people will be treated, and are now being treated, in their homes, using portable equipment, vastly better, when it can be managed, than being treated in a hospital.

So, Mr. Chairman, I can't give you the precise number of people now who are being treated in their homes as opposed to those who are being treated in the hospitals. But it's a proportionately increasing number in the homes. And that's what we want to encourage. I certainly know that there are those who can never be treated in their homes for one reason or another — possibly psychological, or whatever.

Dr. Price's experiment with a new, lighter portable unit certainly has been supported and is being supported by this government, and it is being supported by a private corporation as well, Mr. Member. Dr. Price keeps my department and myself informed as to what stage they're at. I just received a letter from him, I think it was within the last three or four weeks, indicating that some experimentation with animals is now complete and was successful. He hopes now to, you know, move another step forward. If in fact his device will be utilizable — if that's the word — then this will be a real step forward in the area of service to people who require kidney dialysis.

MRS. JORDAN: I couldn't agree with the Minister and the Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) more. Any new advances in this area which allow the patient more freedom with a more compact type of equipment are a blessing. The programme in itself is an absolute godsend to people, particularly those in the non-metropolitan areas. Certainly there are some in the area I represent who, until they get on a machine, frequently have to travel hundreds of miles in order to have their treatment. It takes usually one to two days; so you can see, when they have to go every week, that their lives are spent travelling in all types of weather and under extremely dangerous conditions.

I was interested and somewhat amused by the Minister paying tribute to the private sector in the development of new machines. I endorse that, and I'm glad to hear him admit that the private sector, the enterprise sector, does play a very responsible part in delivering health care in many instances.

I would just bring to the Minister's attention the lingering problem for which I have fought for a long time in

this Legislature under this vote. It is the problem of those using dialysis machines at home when they are on irrigation systems for water supply. It may seem unbelievable for Members of this Legislature from the metropolitan areas to realize that there are many citizens in this province who have a common water system — common in terms of domestic use and common in terms of irrigation. Naturally such systems have a very high chlorine content. This means special filters for the equipment and frequently special attention. I would just urge the Minister to recommend to his staff that every consideration be given financially to those who have this extra cost in order that it is not a burden borne by the family on a basis that other families in the same circumstances wouldn't have to face.

Vote 69 approved.

On vote 70: division of occupational health, \$512,708.

MR. N.R. MORRISON (Victoria): I was going to ask the Minister, Mr. Chairman, on vote 70, item 031, employee fitness programme of \$50,000, if he could give us a little explanation on that particular programme.

HON. MR. COCKE: I beg your pardon?

MR. MORRISON: I was going to ask you if you would give: us an explanation on that employee fitness programme of \$50,000, item 031 in vote 70 — and also item 016, professional and technical equipment. Those are the two items on that one I'd like to....

HON. MR. COCKE: Mr. Chairman, the professional and technical equipment is a major increase, in that occupational health is being given a real push. We find, for instance, that we just haven't been doing the job for the employees of the

[[Page 2802](#)]

government. The programme that you asked about, the \$50,000 for employees, is a programme that's going on right now at the academy over here for all employees. All employees are welcome to go over, engage in supervised activities such as exercises and other programmes — dietary counselling and so on.

MR. MORRISON: Well, is that a wage bill, then?

HON. MR. COCKE: It's not a wage bill, Mr. Member. It's occupational health. In other words, we're doing what some major corporations have done. The government really hasn't given leadership until recently in this whole area. Remember last year I announced that we had Dr. Kulak and Dr. Chisholm working in this department; and that's part of their work. As a matter of fact, they've examined a number of MLAs in here, told them to quit smoking or do all sorts of things, and also told them what the state of their health was. That's all part of this.

MR. MORRISON: That's the outgrowth of that programme?

HON. MR. COCKE: Yes.

MR. MORRISON: That's not a wage item, then.

HON. MR. COCKE: It's not a wage item at all, no. It's just good sense.

MRS. JORDAN: Mr. Minister, there's rather a high expenditure here: \$21,300 for travel expenses. Is one to assume that this employee fitness programme is not centred solely in the parliament buildings in this precinct? Is the government now employing people to travel around the province, do physical exams, I assume, do radiological examinations, in view of the fact that you have radiological services and a technician on staff? In fact, the government is entering through this programme into the field, albeit in a small way, of medical practice for physical fitness within the government services all over the province.

HON. MR. COCKE: Well, if you add it up, there is very little money in this vote, considering a large civil service. Sure, there has been an increase in those areas. Travel expenses increased from \$7,000 to \$21,000. That

doesn't do a lot of travelling either, Madam Member, as you know. What that does is send the counsellors out into the other areas where there are civil servants besides just Vancouver and Victoria. They are there to carry the message, and I'm sure that the ones whom we have are carrying the message well. Many of you have had contact with these people.

MRS. JORDAN: I think I probably didn't explain it too well, although the Minister answered my question. The question I really wanted to know is where physical examinations are required, where the practice of medicine is required for treatment, is the Minister using an in-service programme or are you referring them to local physicians?

HON. MR. COCKE: Oh, if there is any need. For instance, let's say a person is found to have something wrong with them. Then he will be referred to his physician.

MRS. JORDAN: But in non-metropolitan areas — Pouce Coupe, Fort St. John, for example — the government itself is sponsoring its own physical examinations. Is that right?

HON. MR. COCKE: No, I can't say how far we are going with physical examinations. I'm saying we are counselling and making available physical examinations. such as we can, mostly so far in the senior staff area.

Vote 70 approved.

On vote 71: division for aid to handicapped, \$1,363,322.

MR. WALLACE: Mr. Chairman, I think this is a very important vote that we shouldn't slide over readily, even though the Minister of Labour (Hon. Mr. King) and myself are not handicapped — at least not physically, anyway.

HON. MR. BARRETT: There's a phone call.

MR. WALLACE: Oh, I got that call earlier on today and I told them: "Don't call me; I'll call you."

The handicapped had a meeting here in Victoria this week with the various Ministers concerned. First of all, I think I would like the Minister maybe to clarify the degree of integration and intermingling of efforts which he and Human Resources and Education have developed on this matter of aid to the handicapped. It is quite obvious that you cannot isolate the government policy to the handicapped strictly and purely within the health field. So much of real aid to the handicapped involves both social and educational support as well as sheer aid in terms of medications and prosthesis and so on.

In talking with the handicapped the other day at the reception, they certainly feel that progress is all too slow in aiding them and their various problems. They feel that they have communicated with the government now for over a year on certain areas where they claim it wouldn't cost the government any money. It isn't just a question of putting more money into the budget as we have in vote 71.

So first of all, I wonder if the Minister could tell us

[[Page 2803](#)]

the exact way in which the three departments are interacting and if he could respond to the criticism that many of the suggestions and proposals put forward by the organized association of the handicapped wouldn't cost the government money. Would the Minister care to talk about that? Maybe that isn't entirely a fair question, because some of it relates to physical facilities in buildings and the access of the handicapped to buildings.

More specifically and right within this Minister's department is the whole question of some help with prostheses such as artificial limbs and crutches and wheelchairs, and the person who has to undergo surgery and finish up with some kind of artificial opening in his body — colostomy or ileostomy or whatever. It seems to me that since the general philosophy of this government is to help, say, the senior citizen who requires medication through Pharmacare, the time is long gone when we should be assisting the handicapped person who has some real

difficulties financially in obtaining some of the equipment and some of the medications and so on that I have described.

The Minister the other day was very eager to quote Peter the Red to me from Alberta when he took over PWA. I would just like to quote Peter the Red back to the Minister. In Alberta they are really moving ahead in this whole business of providing prosthetic devices and similar forms of assistance to the handicapped.

Because the estimates have come up abruptly this afternoon, I don't have the actual pamphlet here in the chamber, but I recall that there is some patient participation in meeting the costs. It's not an open-ended scheme whereby every single cent's worth of equipment, medication or services is provided. But they've moved a long way towards looking after the person who, maybe from quite an early age sometimes, finishes up with having to wear various belts, equipment, plastic bags and so on, attached to their body. It all costs money. Because of their problems, these same people very often can't just tackle any kind of occupation or job, so they have economic problems enough through their disability without having the additional economic problem of dealing with the financing of their particular equipment.

Another area I would like to ask the Minister a little bit about, in terms of the handicapped, is how integrated are his efforts with the Minister of Labour. I've mentioned Human Resources and Education, but the Minister of Labour is another area.

For example, I had a man in my office the other day, who is a mining engineer around the age of 50, who can no longer get employed at his chosen profession in the mines because he has had a history of a lung problem which would predispose him to various complications if he worked in the continually dusty atmosphere of a mine. He was refused the necessary certificate to continue his work in that role by the Department of Mines. That certificate is in the man's best interests because he probably would go on to develop serious lung problems.

What I wonder is: in a case like that, what degree of combined effort is the Minister making through his department with the Minister of Labour either to provide that kind of person with some continuing medical help or at least integrate their efforts to find him an alternative job?

This man has been in this building for the last two or three days seeking desperately to find some help to either retrain him or give him some form of assistance because he desperately wants to work. He's a typical kind of person that we often find who does not want welfare. He wants to work, but he's got a physical disability — he's handicapped. The government is quite right in not subjecting him to further danger to his health for both economic and human reasons.

But I sometimes wonder just how well the four Ministers are working together to deal with this kind of problem.

This man was a pathetic spectacle in my office. He spent two or three days desperately trying to do what he wants to do — get a job. With no disrespect to any individual Minister, but he has been kind of pushed around from pillar to post these last few days. Really, he's no further forward in getting employment.

I don't mean that the answer is easy, but I wonder if the Minister could say to what degree this kind of problem is being recognized. Perhaps through vote 71 and other votes — even the next one, alternate care facilities, or some of the other votes — there might be some means under which both financial and counselling advice can be given to the handicapped to promote their well-being and perhaps keep them employed.

Finally, I'd like to know to what degree the Minister is considering extending or starting, even in part, some kind of coverage for the person under age 60 who does require a constant supply of medication. A person, again of a relatively young age, with something like asthma or Addison's disease or a variety of other conditions, may require a very substantial amount of money every month to pay for their medications. Again, I'm not asking the Minister to open the door wide and have an open-ended scheme like we had in Britain in 1948 where everybody and his brother could buy everything from aspirins to laxatives to shampoos, almost, just as long as they got a bit of paper from the doctor's office. I'm not asking for that at all. But I am saying that there is a substantial number of people in the

community, some of them children in fact, handicapped by a variety of diseases. Perhaps the worst example I could pick is the obstructive lung disease — the name slips my memory.

[[Page 2804](#)]

HON. MR. COCKE: Asbestosis?

MR. WALLACE: It shows how long I've been away from medicine when I can't remember it. Anyway, this dreadful condition that children get, with mucous plugging up their bronchial tree. Cystic fibrosis.

That has to be, perhaps, the best example of the kind of condition I am talking about. This isn't just a matter of a few pills every week or two, it's a constant, daily — in fact, day and night — problem of medication and cost. I wonder if the Minister is considering even a partial programme, perhaps even with an annual ceiling like we've had with other services — physiotherapy and out-patient services of various kinds. How far along the road are we to developing that kind of programme?

HON. MR. COCKE: Mr. Chairman, dealing, I think, with the last thing first, the whole question of chronic illness and the need for care, the need for essential drugs and so on, is a question that the Premier as Minister of Finance and my department and everybody else were very much involved in it.

As you know, we went a long way when we introduced the Pharmacare programme. Oftentimes, in introducing these great programmes, we are subject to some criticism by virtue of the fact that we are spending money.

We have the people who did the research for Pharmacare looking at not only that aspect but also looking at the whole question of prosthetic devices and how we can phase into that area. I would hope, Mr. Member, as it is certainly our direction — our policy is to head in that direction — we have gone major steps forward in this regard and will continue to go in that direction. I can't tell you specifically when the next step will be taken other than to say it surely will be taken.

One other thing. You were talking about the Public Works buildings and our attitude toward the disabled. All Public Works buildings, beginning about a year or so ago, were all being provided with railings, proper bathroom facilities and all the necessary adjuncts to assist those people who are disabled.

Vote 71 approved.

On vote 72: development of alternative-care facilities, \$350,000.

MR. WALLACE: Just briefly, Mr. Chairman, I would like the Minister to give us a little breakdown. First of all, was the \$350,000 spent in 1975? Looking back into the estimates of 1974, I notice it was \$600,000. I can't for the life of me understand, when we are trying to develop alternative levels of care and the facilities to provide that care, how we could in fact appear to be spending less as the years go by. But of course it depends exactly on what these alternative-care facilities are.

HON. MR. COCKE: Yes. I can very quickly answer that question, Mr. Member. At that time we were paying for home care through alternative care. Remember when we moved into the home-care programme? Now it is for development of new alternative programmes. Now, of course, home care is on its own.

MR. WALLACE: In the Human Resources budget?

HON. MR. COCKE: Oh, yes, and in my budget too. Home nursing is in here to the tune of \$6 million. It's gone up 10 times.

MR. WALLACE: Just very briefly, part of the question I asked a moment ago, which I think the Minister forgot about, is that I am still not clear in sorting out just where Human Resources and Health are overlapping or integrating, as the case may be, in regard to the financing of some of these alternative....

HON. MR. COCKE: What the Health department finances is any aspect of it that requires nursing, medical or paramedical services. The Department of Human Resources funds anything like homemaking, meals-on-wheels, boarding — that is the division. In other words, they are both services to people, but ours is the health or medically oriented service.

Vote 72 approved.

On vote 73: Hearing-aid Regulation Act, \$15,000.

MRS. JORDAN: This is a small amount of money in relation to the rest of the budget the Minister administers, but there are some serious questions surrounding vote 73. Mr. Minister, your policy right now is leaving a number of people absolutely in limbo in terms of their profession and their commitment in earning a living, and those are the hearing-aid dealers. It also is in danger of leaving just thousands and thousands of hearing-aid users, patients in this province, in limbo as to service.

I recognize quite clearly that among hearing-aid dealers who are registered there are gadflies, but there are also good guys. The former administration worked through the branch with the consumer, with the senior citizens and with some responsible dealers to bring in an Act which would upgrade those in the business, which would cut out very thoroughly those who were operating on a hanky-panky basis in the business and profiteering, and who weren't offering good service.

[[Page 2805](#)]

The Minister must be aware that there are those in the business, many of them good guys, who want to upgrade their service, who want to make the criteria for becoming a hearing-aid dealer one of education and the other of responsibility. They want to initiate advance educational programmes for those who are now dealers and they want to institute greater educational requirements for those who want to become hearing-aid dealers. But they are private-enterprisers; they do have an investment in their operation. With the no-answer attitude that has been adopted by the government, they simply don't know where to go. They are like insurance agents — they don't know whether they have a future. Therefore they are very loath to upgrade their own operational facilities. They have been concentrating on upgrading the educational requirements, but without response from the department.

The danger here is that the Minister's own policy for audiological services, as he is aware — we have discussed this — is on a regional, pilot-project basis around the province. So with the hearing-aid dealers out in limbo as to what role they have, if they have a role in the future, and this pilot-project regional service developing, there is a vast gap developing in the area of hearing aid services to senior citizens and other people who have hearing problems.

Mr. Minister, if the policy appears to be evolving which would establish regional audiological services with a physician in charge and various technical staff and then people would come from often many miles to be examined and fitted for their hearing aid equipment.... If this programme is continued, as it appears to be designed, there will be no private hearing aid operators in this province in another two years. The danger here is that no matter how competent the regional office is, they are not available to the individual user on an emergency basis or on a day-to-day basis.

I don't know whether the Minister is aware of this, but one of the major functions of the private hearing aid dealer is to offer reassurance and service to the individual user. This is a service that they don't charge for. Those who are dependent on hearing aids have a tremendous dependency. If they are going from Penticton to Vancouver, or from Fort St. John to Victoria, or across Canada, or on a much more extensive trip, one of the first things they think about after they have the money to buy their ticket is to have their hearing aid checked to see that it is in good operating form and to know where they can go in other countries to find parts for it and get the service.

In all frankness, the visit to the hearing aid dealer for many senior citizens is a very worthwhile and also social function for them. They go down regularly every three months, they are welcomed in the office and they have the hearing aid adjusted, whether it needs it or not. Often it does, because the diminishing service of the hearing aid

has happened very gradually. They are sometimes not aware that they are not getting as acute reception as they could be.

I would urge the Minister to make firm and make public his policy. Are there going to be reasonable opportunities for individual hearing aid operators to operate in the province? If so, will the Minister agree and offer guidance, and perhaps even some support, to upgrading the requirements to become a hearing aid operator and upgrade the in-practice post-educational opportunities so that we have not only a government programme on a regional basis which can be very useful and well operated but we have the back-up service which can only be given by the private operator on an economically sound basis that is needed for people to have the service they should have from a major outlay? Also, if you can't hear, 50 per cent of the enjoyment of life is gone.

HON. MR. COCKE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder why I would feel even the remotest bit defensive or the slightest bit defensive in this whole question of hearing aids. I went, for instance, about a year ago to Saskatchewan where they have a hearing aid programme. In Saskatchewan I found that the most expensive hearing aid — that's the two-ear hearing aid, similar to the \$700 and \$800 model that is sold by some of the major hearing aid companies across the world, the hearing aid that was used for that purpose, the most deeply-in-need — was \$150 in Saskatchewan as compared to \$800 elsewhere. I was really impressed.

Despite the fact that the hearing aid dealers provide a social function in that it's a nice place to go once every three months for your batteries and chat, we have felt that we really have to take a whole look at this hearing aid proposition. What we did was to say that there were five areas in this province where we would have a pilot project and provide proper audiometric testing and hearing aids at cost.

MRS. JORDAN: I didn't criticize that.

HON. MR. COCKE: If it works out and expands, then I suggest to the hearing-aid dealers that they come and work with us. They are serving a function in Saskatchewan. They are working with the system. But there's no way that we can go along with the system that really hurts the little guy; and there are so many more people who are deaf. I am sure the Member for North Okanagan knows about this. Just in the very short time we have had this programme going we have discovered so many more deaf people than were ever thought of. Like in Saskatchewan...they found that half the guys who used to drive tractors are deaf by virtue of this heavy, heavy noise pollution they are faced with every day. But I am not making a definitive position other than to say we are checking this out thoroughly in those

[[Page 2806](#)]

areas only at this time.

MRS. JORDAN: I am glad the Minister has calmed down, because he was getting a bit hot under the collar. He knows as well as I do, and I would resent him twisting it, that I am not defending hearing-aid dealers per se. I am defending the right of people in this province, whether they live in Timbuktu or Armpit, B.C., to have proper hearing aid service and to have a choice for that service. Mr. Minister, in view of your statements, I must bring to the attention of this House that in spite of your good statements on regional development, you are now denying the health units in this province the right to, even when they're rebuilding, put in provision to develop audiological services.

So that just doesn't jell with the statements you made in this House today. My concern is: let's not develop a state bureaucracy, which is the great habit of this government, in the area of audiology. Let's concentrate on the best service to people. That's what it's all about. There are some people who simply cannot adjust to certain types of hearing aids. Therefore they must have a variety to select from, and that right should be protected.

Because I see that the Minister of Finance wants to adjourn the debate, I would just say that in light of one of your other statements where you expressed extreme concern about those in many areas of life who are deaf or have a hard-of-hearing problem and don't know it, and this is very true, therefore I plead with you, as I plead with the Minister of Education (Hon. Mrs. Dailly), for just one small segment in our society who are tending to show and

display hearing difficulties through their occupation. In spite of a commitment by the former administration to investigate whether or not this was a fact, no one in your government will get off the pot and do anything about it.

You've opened the door, and I ask you to discuss with the B.C. Teachers Federation and with the school boards. Do it through the local health unit, do it with the most excellent consultant you have, Dr. Chisholm. Examine whether or not these teachers who are working with percussion instruments and high-tonal musical programmes in the new acoustically-sound music rooms of our schools, are not, in fact, suffering extreme difficulties in terms of progressive deafness.

Would the Minister give me this commitment? I've discussed it with Dr. Chisholm. He would be very anxious to take part. I know that the School District 22 school board would do anything they could to help. Other school boards in the province will cooperate. It needn't be an expensive programme, but it certainly can help the small group you were discussing.

MR. WALLACE: The Minister has left the implication — I hope it was a wrong implication — that the main concern he has is that the hearing-aid dealers are making a markup of somewhere between \$150 and \$700 per unit.

HON. MR. COCKE: I didn't say that.

MR. WALLACE: Well, you said that the same unit in Saskatchewan is \$150...

HON. MR. COCKE: They don't buy from Beltone.

MR. WALLACE: ...and people elsewhere are paying \$700. I have no particular knowledge of what a hearing-aid costs in this province at the present time, but I don't think it's going to be fair for us in this House to leave the implication that the hearing-aid dealers in this province are making some kind of financial bonanza by having a tremendous markup of the kind of scope between the two prices that the Minister mentioned.

Furthermore, I hope none of us are leaving the impression in this House that anybody who is deaf can get help from a hearing aid, because that's a disastrous conclusion to come to. I think we can't try too hard to make it very, very plain that there are some types of deafness which cannot be helped by a hearing aid. I wouldn't want the public to read, perhaps in the news media, that we're going into the hearing-aid business as a government, and that anybody who's deaf would get help.

The last point, and it's sort of transgressing on the next vote, but I know there's \$600,000 under a vote for hearing-aid equipment, under the public health service vote. I wonder if this \$15,000 is purely the administration of the Act.

HON. MR. COCKE: Just the Act.

Vote 73 approved.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the committee reports resolution.

Hon. Mr. Barrett moves adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

The House adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

