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Official Report of
DEBATES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
(Hansard)

FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1975

Morning Sitting

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FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1975

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

MR. D.F. LOCKSTEAD (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in welcoming 35 students accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Williams, from Brooks Junior Secondary School in Powell River.

Orders of the day.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON (Victoria): A point of order, Mr. Speaker. You took a question of privilege raised by me on notice, and I wonder whether you could indicate to the House when you will report back to us on this particular matter.

MR. SPEAKER: I understood that the Hon. Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson) was going to provide some more information to us. I was waiting yesterday. I presume that when he gets to the House I shall be able to find that out. I pointed out to you on the occasion that you raised the matter that he was not in the House. He came the next day and he indicated he would try to provide papers that would deal with the issues that you have raised. Now I don't know if that is complete, and he is not in the House at the moment.

I will certainly take it under advisement, and I hope to have my opinion on the matter on Monday.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I note from the Minister's statement yesterday that he said: "I might take the opportunity at this time, in order to enable you to consider the question of privilege the other

day, to ask leave to file a document." The document in no way really relates to the question of privilege, and I can understand your desire to have him elaborate further on that matter.

MR. SPEAKER: I want both sides to tell me their position on the matter so that at least both sides have been considered.

ON THE BUDGET

HON. G.R. LEA (Minister of Highways): Mr. Speaker, I'm going to surprise the opposition this morning and stand and support this budget. I know they didn't expect that.

I don't believe it is good enough to stand up as a Member of government or as a Member of the government back bench and say, "I support the budget," without putting forward some reason of why you support that budget. That is what I intend to do this morning.

I know that when I sit down, the opposition Members will be calling for the question and voting with us to pass this budget and give the people of British Columbia a break so that they can enjoy some of the social services that this great province can afford to give them.

Mr. Speaker, it's been two and a half years since this government's been in office and it's been two and a half years of controversy and criticism, not only from opposition Members, but also from some members of the press.

Interjections.

HON. MR. LEA: And I think it's understandable that this kind of criticism should come towards the government.

MR. A.V. FRASER (Cariboo): All justified.

HON. MR. LEA: It's a government that is bringing change to this province, Mr. Speaker, because you get no criticism at all if you do nothing.

MR. D.M. PHILLIPS (South Peace River): Short change.

HON. MR. LEA: You can take two courses of action as government: you can begin to bring much-needed change to the province, or you can do nothing.

I can remember when I worked for the federal Department of Public Works, an old civil servant who was going to retire in about two months called me in and said: "Listen, Graham, if you want to get along in the civil service, do nothing — you'll get promoted. If you do something you're going to make a mistake and if you don't want to make a mistake, do nothing."

This government has made mistakes, Mr. Speaker, because we have brought great changes to this province, and you're bound to make mistakes when you bring a lot of change. We have made them; there's no doubt about it.

Some of the areas where we did not make mistakes were in bringing in bills like the Land Commission Act to save farmland in this province. But did we get criticized? Yes, and it's understandable because it was change — change for the better, but people are not always willing to accept change, even when it's for the better. We brought in Pharmacare. There was criticism about Pharmacare, and there was criticism about Mincome. They were changes for the better, but it's understandable that there was criticism.

MR. PHILLIPS: You'll knock the press right out

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Speaker, when you bring about change you risk getting criticism from certain segments of our society, no matter what change. I was reading not too long ago where a Liberal Member for Nanaimo brought a bill into this House in 1918 to try and get the eight-hour work day. And the criticism — the business community came over to these buildings and lobbied and said: "If you bring in the eight-hour day, you will break the province." Two years later or three years later it was passed, and guess what? We're still here and we're doing well. The same kind of criticism came from across the floor when we put the minimum wage up. They said: "You'll break the small businessman." They're still here and they're doing well.

HON. W.L. HARTLEY (Minister of Public Works): The opposition isn't.

HON. MR. LEA: When we were running for election in 1972, we said we were going to bring a new deal to the people of British Columbia, and the people of British Columbia on election day said: "We have been getting, in our opinion, a bad deal from the former government." You know, new governments are not elected, everyone in this House knows that; old governments are thrown out. That's the way it is. The official opposition can't get it through their heads that we didn't get elected — they got thrown out. They got thrown out for the policies that they had for 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if they're going to learn. Or are they going to be like the dinosaur that wouldn't adapt to new things and new environments, and become extinct? I believe that they are incapable of adapting to 1975-1976, and at the next election they are going to be extinct.

It seems that the opposition — at least the official opposition — has a new tactic this year. That's good, great.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: They have tactics.

HON. MR. LEA: Yes, they have tactics this year — that's a change. But you know they're taking one Minister at a time and trying to do him in, and this session so far they seem to have centred on — the Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson). Oh, I think you could have picked any Minister — you just want to oppose. They said: "What has the Minister of Housing done?" Well I can tell you from personal experience in my own riding what his department and what that Minister has done. It's a pretty impressive list of the projects that are on line in my riding in the City of Prince Rupert and the Village of Port Edward.

I'd just like to relate one story to the House, because not all municipalities are against the Minister of Housing. As a matter of fact most of them are for what he's doing, wherever he's gone in with that department to do work.

Just before going over the very impressive list of the projects that are on line in Prince Rupert, let me relate to you one instance where there were 63 lots. It was city land, and it had been purchased by the Department of Housing to subdivide for housing. The city was quite concerned. It was a new idea to lease, so the city got in touch with me and asked for a meeting with the Minister of Housing and his staff and they put forward a proposal. They said: "Look, it's new, maybe people will not accept it and we're a little leery of it. Why not go half and half — half fee simple title and half lease?" The Minister of Housing agreed and it was done.

The lowest bid was \$12,000 a serviced lot in the City of Prince Rupert. I then received a phone call from the city administrator asking whether I would see the Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson) and see whether all of those lots couldn't go to leasehold. He is a pretty bright guy; he said that the working person cannot afford \$12,000.

I would like to read part of a letter to the Minister of Housing from the city administrator.

MR. G.S. WALLACE (Oak Bay): You did give them a choice. That's an improvement.

HON. MR. LEA: We gave them a choice, and they came back.

He said:

"I have examined your circulars LM 100 and L 100, and if I may be permitted a personal observation, I feel that the total lease plan and leasehold mortgage plan will prove to be very effective in assisting residents of British Columbia to establish their own homes. The cooperation of the Department of Housing in this whole matter is appreciated by the Prince Rupert city council."

I might add that it is a city council that is very interested in taking an active role in trying to help this government to provide housing. And I appreciate it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LEA: Even though I do have the odd misunderstanding with the mayor of Prince Rupert, he has been behind the Department of Housing all the way, and I appreciate that.

What is happening in Prince Rupert in terms of the Housing department? The first phase of an eventual 120-unit mobile home park is now under development and will be ready by late spring. Sixty units by late spring at a cost of \$80,000 is being paid

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for by the Department of Housing.

At the request of the city, work is proceeding on the development of the 63 residential lots that I talked about — I explained that story.

The province is participating with the federal government, which is a new thing for this province, in the construction of approximately 140 rental units under the federal/provincial cost-sharing agreement. There will be 140 rental units, and 25 per cent of these units will be available to lower income families on a rent-to-income basis. The cost will be approximately \$4.5 million.

The province is participating in a federal/ provincial land assembly programme which will provide up to 60 acres of serviced land at a cost in excess of \$3 million. This will be capable of sustaining the following type of developments: 192 single-family dwellings, 60 semi-detached units, 58 row houses, 30 zero-lot lying units and 4 apartment units for a potential population of approximately 1,300 people. Right now there is a shortage of housing in Prince Rupert because of the new activity that is going on in Prince Rupert in economic terms. There are 425 units needed. It's felt, after projecting the growth rate, the economic growth rate and population growth rate, that 148 for the next few years are going to be needed after these 425 units are in place to take care of that projected growth rate. These units are on line, and hopefully all of them will be in at least by the spring of 1977 and most in by this year.

That's going to take care of from four to five years of projected growth rate in the City of Prince Rupert in terms of housing done through the Minister of Housing and his department. That's a pretty impressive record. When you look at the record over the past 13 years in Prince Rupert in terms of what private industry did for housing there, it isn't very staggering. The only housing that's really been developed, except for one or two apartment units by private industry, was the housing development by Columbia Cellulose around 1965 and 1966.

When we start examining the facts, we find that what is being said across the way is not really true and it's not really fair. There is an impressive list in my community. Other MLAs can get up and talk about impressive lists in their communities, including opposition MLAs.

MR. G.F. GIBSON (North Vancouver–Capilano): Not in mine.

HON. MR. LEA: Well, in your community I am sure they would not want low-cost housing. There is also another proposal by Dunhill totalling about \$3 million. The whole total for this work that is going to be done within the next two years in Prince Rupert is \$14.1 million — a pretty impressive figure for a community of 17,000 people.

One of the areas of criticism of this government because we have brought around change is that of Autoplan.

MR. R.H. McCLELLAND (Langley): The \$25 car insurance.

HON. MR. LEA: Car insurance at \$25, the Member from Langley says. He's always throwing that around. If I remember correctly, the opposition Members were criticizing the provincial government for the break they gave themselves at that time that they wouldn't give the people of British Columbia. The truth of the matter is that in the paper of May 22, 1972, during the election campaign, the headline: "B.C. Drivers Would Save 20 Per Cent" — quoting Barrett.

AN HON. MEMBER: Twenty per cent.

HON. MR. LEA: Twenty per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER: Not \$25.

HON. MR. LEA: That's right, and they have saved 20 per cent more. There's what the Premier said when he was campaigning as Leader of the Opposition. They'd like to ignore that, Mr. Speaker, but there it is in black and white. I'm reading from the paper what the Premier said when he was Leader of the Opposition.

MR. J.R. CHABOT (Columbia River): Read the rest.

HON. MR. LEA: It was not in my ad.

MR. CHABOT: Now you are supporting him. Make up your mind where you stand.

HON. MR. LEA: I stand behind what the Premier said, and he's delivered it through this Minister.

Now where is the criticism coming from on Autoplan? Basically from the benches of the opposition. What do other people in this country feel about Autoplan? What do the people who are receiving the benefits feel? They like it.

The opposition has now said: "We wouldn't take it away." They said they wouldn't take it away.

Now this Autoplan is being examined by people throughout Canada, because governments in this country know that the writing is on the wall. People all over this country, no matter what label the government, are going to demand their own Autoplan. When the Liberals got in in Saskatchewan, they didn't take it away. And if we are put out of office, they will not take it away, you will not take it away, and the Conservatives will not take it away.

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Oh, they might let the private industry get in for a little bit of the cream, and they'll keep the bad ones. They may do that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, let private industry cream. They've been doing it for years.

HON. MR. LEA: Not too long ago a Quebec cabinet Minister was out here looking at Autoplan — Hon. William Tetley, Quebec Minister of Financial Institutions, Companies and cooperatives. Do you know what he had to say, Mr. Speaker? The Liberal government down there knows that sooner or later they're going to have to give their people the same great deal that this government is giving the people of British Columbia.

What did he say? He was referring to B.C.'s very good and efficient claims centres, and the way they quickly fix damage and reach settlements, and the system of issuing auto insurance through one agency at the same time as licence plates are issued; and it's all good. He said: "It would appear that they (B.C.) are returning a bigger portion of the premium dollar to the insured than in the provinces where private insurance companies operate." That's a Quebec Liberal cabinet Minister, who I wish would come out and talk to the Liberal Members out here. He's from your party, a cabinet Minister, and that is what he said.

MR. CHABOT: Did he have a bow tie on?

HON. MR. LEA: It doesn't matter, Mr. Member, whether he wears a bow tie; it's what he thinks with above the bow tie. You have a necktie that isn't a bow tie, and I think about that. (Laughter.)

MR. CHABOT: Lester will get you. (Laughter.)

HON. MR. LEA: Well, it's going to remain to be seen.

MR. FRASER: Well, we'll know on May 26. (Laughter.)

HON. MR. LEA: I would like to congratulate the Minister in charge of Autoplan, because for the first time in this province northern residents are starting to get the break they deserve in terms of taking the disparity, the inequity, out of the cost.

In Prince George or in Prince Rupert or in Cariboo, Mr. Member, whether you were a good driver or not under the old scheme didn't matter. If you'd never had an accident, you paid more for your insurance than a person in Victoria who could possibly have had one or two, and that is not fair.

MR. CHABOT: Now you buy it by the gallon.

HON. MR. LEA: This government said that that is not fair, and we've taken the first major step this year to make sure that you pay because of your driving habits and not because of where you live in this province. That is good, and I don't think the opposition could afford to take it away and hand it back to those private operators to bring inequity into the prices of insurance again in this province.

I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Speaker: my constituents are happy. Even though the mayor doesn't drive a car, I'm sure he's happy.

Now I would like to deal a little bit with something that affects me very personally because it has meant a great deal to the workers in my riding. That is the old company of Columbia Cellulose and the new company of Canadian Cellulose.

It wasn't too long ago that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bennett) was in Prince Rupert. He said: "You know, those jobs weren't at stake." He said that those jobs weren't at stake. He told the press that. "That government in Victoria, they just wanted it." I guess he thought that Bob Williams (Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources) was driving by one day and said, "Gee, we haven't got one of those. Let's buy it."

Now the fact of the matter is that if the Leader of the Opposition had only taken the time to check and see what the former Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources had said, he wouldn't have made that terrible blunder in Prince Rupert, because anyone who was interested and had knowledge of the forest industry in this province knew that those two pulp mills in Prince Rupert, and Eurocan in Kitimat, were in serious trouble. I'm sure the Member for Boundary-Similkameen (Mr. Richter) knows; he was in the cabinet at that time. They were in terrible trouble.

Before we even came to office there was in the Vancouver *Province* an article by Bob McMurray, August 18, 1972: "Col-Cel Not Out of the Woods Yet." What was happening, according to this article? It says that Weyerhaeuser Canada is negotiating to try and purchase Columbia Cellulose. It says the present talks involve only the money-making interior operations of Col-Cel and not its two pulp mills at Prince Rupert, which are known to be losing heavily.

We knew. As a matter of fact, let me tell you how we knew. The present Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams) already knew what was going on, but what really brought it to his attention forcibly was not politicians, not business people, but the workers represented through their union from that pulp mill in Prince Rupert who got in touch with me the day after the election and said: "Would you please talk to Mr. Barrett and tell him that we're going down the tube? Our jobs are going." Quite frankly, I didn't understand that it was as imminent a situation as it was.

So I arranged a meeting. I phoned the present Premier and said: "The workers here are very upset. They feel their jobs are going down the tube. Could we arrange a meeting?" He arranged the meeting with the now Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources.

But do you know how those workers really knew that they were in trouble? A consultant by the name of Fox, who had been a consultant to Mr. Williston, the former Minister, had contacted the union right after the election and said: "I would like to let you in on what is happening, what the former government planned to do about it — nothing. You're in trouble." He was a consultant to that former Minister, and he said: "They're selling you out. They're going to let Weyerhaeuser have the Castlegar operation. You'd better step in and step in quickly."

What did this government do? It stepped in quickly and saved all of those jobs in the northwestern part of this province.

Another article was headlined: "Can Rail Lines Bail Out The Mills?" before the election. What about the cost of chips? This article, again in *The Province*, before the election, by Bob McMurray, said: "If those chip costs are not adjusted, Eurocan, the two mills at Prince Rupert are going down the economic tube." One of the first actions this government did was to negotiate a new freight rate for those chips. Not only did we say it was a good deal, but the managers of Eurocan said: "If this deal had not been negotiated, we would not have been able to survive." They are not socialists. They knew that they were in trouble, and unless this government stepped in and did what we did, they would be in real trouble.

What was said during the debate, when we were debating the bill on Can-Cel? The Liberal leader (Mr. D.A. Anderson) said: "You didn't have to take it over." He said: "What you do is you take public money, you build sawmills, which you eventually turn over to private industry, you put money into rail lines under the public purse, you build that whole infrastructure in transportation to give those mills life, you spend great wads of the public's money, and then they can make it. They can make it then, Mr. Speaker. They can really make a lot of profit then if you just spend all that public money to back them up.

AN HON. MEMBER: Good old free enterprise.

HON. MR. LEA: That seemed to us to be stupid. If we're going to put the public money in, then let's let the public reap the benefits.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LEA: What do the cost sheets show now? They show a lot of profit- about \$50 million this year — coining to the people of British Columbia instead of to Weyerhaeuser.

Thinking back, Weyerhaeuser said they didn't want that part of the operation up there anyway, just the profitable part, so I guess Weyerhaeuser wouldn't have needed it.

What about mines? "Craigmont Mines Earnings Down." Isn't that too bad?

MR. GIBSON: What about Granduc?

HON. MR. LEA: When was that? This was on August 22, 1972.

HON. MR. HARTLEY: Who was government then?

HON. MR. LEA: I think it was Social Credit that was government then.

The company president at that time, R.G. Duthie, said they were faced with low copper prices and increased smelting costs but he said they were in a fairly strong financial position even though the earnings were down. Now when the earnings are down they say: "We're through, and that government did it."

The mining industry, as the opposition has pointed out over and over again, is a cyclical business — it thrives or doesn't thrive on the world markets. The world market now isn't that great so they're not doing that well.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Gold is worth nothing. What's it used for?

AN HON. MEMBER: Your teeth.

HON. MR. LEA: Yes. Even the economy isn't based on it any more.

MR. WALLACE: I wish I had some. (Laughter.)

HON. MR. LEA: You're a doctor, not a dentist. (Laughter.)

MR. WALLACE: I'm not even a doctor any more, unfortunately — one of these dumb politicians.

HON. MR. LEA: I'd like to deal for a little while with Highways, my portfolio, and what we're doing that's different.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Careful, Bob.

You know, times change and the methods of

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trying to run the Highways department have to change with those times. It is becoming much, much more complex these days to talk about new routings and even trying to straighten out and improve the routings we already have. We are talking now about an integral land-use transportation policy of involving more thoroughly than ever before the local communities when we talk about highways and transportation, of getting our staff together with the city staff or the regional district to talk about routings and how that will not only affect the right-of-way itself but the social impact on that community, the economic impact on that community and the environmental impact on that community.

Interjection:.

HON. MR. LEA: I'll sing it for you, Mr. Member.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LEA: Later! (Laughter.)

AN HON. MEMBER: Right now!

HON. MR. LEA: I was in Sacramento, California, not too long ago, talking with the transportation department there. The time now for a highway plan from conception to the time it can be fully implemented is something like five years because of the different groups that they have to deal with in order to co-ordinate with local groups on the environmental studies. No longer can you just say, "Well, it looks good. Go out and survey it and away we go." You can't do it. The length of time for planning, negotiations and communicating is really becoming longer and longer and longer. I think it is only just.

We were going to show you one thing that we are doing, and we will be doing more of it. There is a road just outside of Nelson, British Columbia, called Sproule Creek Road. We were going ahead the old way, without consultation. We did that, and the people got up in arms and said: "Look. This is our community; we would like to

have some say." That is right; they should have some say. So we went down there and held a public hearing right in the community. Now, people from that community, chosen by that community, are working with the district highway engineers in planning the highway through their community. It takes longer but I believe that is the correct way to go. I believe that is the kind of programme the people are demanding and should get now.

By the way, I would like to inform the House that, in order to do that, it does take a bit more staff. But I think people are demanding it and it is our job to supply the people's demands, not to lay out the rules on our own.

We haven't stopped building highways. We have changed the emphasis. There is no doubt about that. We have taken the budget and we are running it a little bit differently than in previous years. We are putting more emphasis on the maintenance of the roads we already have. In a comparison, in the 1971-72 fiscal year, 25 per cent of the budget went into maintenance. This year it is going to be 42 per cent. That is something, by the way, that is going on all over this country in every jurisdiction. The emphasis is moving away from building all of these new routings and concentrating on keeping the old routings in good shape and looking to another form of transport, such as the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Hon. Mr. Lorimer) is doing in this province, not only in the City of Vancouver and the lower mainland but throughout the whole of the province. That is the way we have to go.

I must say at this time that I would like to commend the Minister of Municipal Affairs and his staff for the cooperation that my department is getting in order that we can work together in negotiating and planning along with the regional districts and municipalities involved. It is the only way we can go, and we are going in that direction.

MR. WALLACE: What are you doing for the people in Tahsis?

HON. MR. LEA: I met with the mayor yesterday, Mr. Member, and discussed his problems. I will be visiting Tahsis as soon as I can get up there.

MR. WALLACE: They need more than consultation though.

HON. MR. LEA: That is right, but that comes first. As a doctor, you should know that. (Laughter.) Do you operate before you diagnose? No.

[Mr. Liden in the chair.]

We are also putting a lot of emphasis on safety, again because we feel people are demanding it. We feel that they should. We agree. For the first time, the Highways department has a highway safety engineer whose total job is to look at the safety aspects of highways.

One of the first major moves we have made is to lower the speed limit. I would like to share with you a report from the RCMP who have done checks without stopping people by just checking them on the radar. They say that 85 per cent of the people are law-abiding, as I think the House predicted, and are driving at the new speed limit. About 10 per cent are in the warning stage, according to the RCMP. The same old group who broke the laws before blatantly

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are breaking them now. When I put the new speed limits into effect, I said that I thought those same people would break the law.

MR. FRASER: Have you asked the Attorney-General?

HON. MR. LEA: Yes, I have spoken to the Attorney-General. We are looking at ways now of taking that small percentage of people who are blatantly breaking the laws and putting other people's lives in danger as well as their own, and are trying to come in with some more stringent measures of controlling these people.

Another step this government has taken through the Department of Education, in cooperation with my department and the Transport and Communications department, is to look at the school children and the kind of

problems they are having as pedestrians in this province, by making money available for adult guards at the crossings, which I think is long overdue. It's not that the children haven't done a good job; they have, but in some cases and at some intersections they just don't have the maturity to handle the kinds of situations they are asked to handle. So making that money available is good.

We are also looking at more underpasses and overpasses. Underpasses are a lot less expensive, but there are some social problems in some areas around underpasses — having children walking through underpasses where they are not within easy sight of adults. They are less expensive but we are looking at lighting, and are really using judgment in each specific case as to whether we should go for an underpass or an overpass.

I have also spoken with school boards to try and impress upon them that when they are looking for property on which to put a new school, they should also look at the transportation end of it, and that hasn't been done too much in the past. They have to take a look at where they are going to put that school and decide where all those children are going to be coming from in order to get to the school — what intersections they are going to have to cross, what kind of problems they envision. Maybe it will cost a little more for another site to build a school on, but in terms of safety for children it may be the best way to go. I don't know of any school board.... I know they would all spend a little extra money to ensure a greater degree of safety for school children.

One of the areas which has been criticized also is what this government is doing for municipalities. More than any government ever before.

Now the opposition likes to point to the per capita grant as if it were the end-all; but it isn't the be-all, Mr. Member. As a matter of fact, coming from a smaller community, I look at that per capita grant as benefiting the larger areas much more than it benefits the smaller areas in this province. I know that the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Hon. Mr. Lorimer) is looking at a different method of getting dollars to people through municipalities and through regional districts so there can be a more equitable sharing of that dollar that does go out to communities from the provincial government.

MR. G.B. GARDOM (Vancouver–Point Grey): Taxing the property.

HON. MR. LEA: The one-third recreational grant involved millions of dollars going out to the municipalities in this province for recreational facilities — that they would have to build anyway — that we are helping.

Now what are the transit programmes being worked on by the Minister of Municipal Affairs? What's that going to cost? A lot of money. Who is paying for it?

MR. McCLELLAND: How much?

HON. MR. LEA: The provincial government is picking up the lion's share. If you were to figure out all of these programmes — the sewerage bill — figure out all of the programmes this government is going into, add up the dollars and add it to the per capita grant, it would be pretty impressive. The only thing is that if you did it in the per capita grant formula, the kind of communities — the small communities — in this province who really need help wouldn't be getting it. We can do it through the kind of legislation that that Minister has brought in.

The administration of justice through the Attorney-General's (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) department is further taking the cost from the municipality and bringing it to the provincial government.

AN HON. MEMBER: Peanuts!

MR. D.E. LEWIS (Shuswap): I'd like some of those peanuts.

HON. MR. LEA: Yesterday the Member for Langley (Mr. McClelland) said — and it's been said a number of times in this House — that the ideology of this government is giving us hang-ups, that we are basing our decisions on the ideology we have. Right, that's true. We're guilty. We're guilty, Mr. Member, because that kind of philosophy

has brought in Pharmacare and Medicare to this country, Mincome to this province, social services that people want. And what about the ideology of that party? What did it bring the people of this province? What has that kind of ideology brought to the people of this world? It

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brought us Viet Nam — that kind of ideology, the old Nixon kind of ideology.

Interjections.

HON. MR. LEA: It brought us a policy of splitting this province up into five different sections and giving the forest industry away to the corporate giants; that's what that ideology brought this province. Compare that to Pharmacare.

AN HON. MEMBER: Give-away gang!

HON. MR. LEA: They worked hand in hand with the corporate giants to split the resources of this province up and give it away. And do you know what? In 1972 the people said: "I think we have had enough of them." And there they are.

AN HON. MEMBER: Enough's enough.

HON. MR. LEA: Now they say: "They didn't really vote us out; they liked us all the time." Then why are you over there and us over here? Except, of course, for the Member for Saanich and the Island (Mr. Curtis)...

HON. P.F. YOUNG (Minister of Consumer Services): We don't know where he is.

HON. MR. LEA: He may be over there, I don't know.

Now when you accuse us of being governed by our philosophy, every time you say it I am proud of you, if you understand the kind of programme we bring because of our philosophy. But take a look at your own and what kind of things you have done to this province, and what kind of things your philosophy has done to the world.

MR. FRASER: The light's on.

HON. MR. LEA: I would really like to ask the people of this province to forgive the Social Credit Party for what they have done to this province. I'd like to ask them to because, really, they don't know what they do. They really don't. Out of the opposition parties here, they really believe what they say. They really believe it, and that's a shame.

The Liberal Party, they know. They know that what they put forward isn't good for the people, but they do it anyway. What the Social Credit Party has done is really unforgivable, but what the Liberal Party has done is inexcusable in this country because they know and they continue to do it.

HON. D.G. COCKE (Minister of Health): Sell out.

HON. MR. LEA: I think the people in this province, when it comes to election time, are going to say: "Do we like the programmes that this government has brought in because of their philosophy?" Are the old age pensioners going to say: "We don't like it"? Are the people on Mincome going to say that? Are the people over 65, who for the first time can go down without fear of having to eat dog food because they don't have to pay for their drugs, going to say: "We don't like the philosophy of this government"? No, they're not.

When the people go down to buy their auto insurance, are they going to say: "We don't like the philosophy of this government"? No, they are not saying that, Mr. Member. If you believe they are, you've been too long out in Saanich and not long enough out there.

MR. WALLACE: You're just too modest, Graham.

HON. MR. LEA: I know I'm being a little modest today, but I think it's about time that we talked about the kinds of programmes that this government has brought in. What are they going to say about the philosophy this government has brought in to save farmland? They're going to say: "We like it."

Interjection:.

HON. MR. LEA: Well, I believe that on that great day when the election is called by Grace McCarthy (laughter) — because the opposition still thinks they're government — we're going to go to the people and they're going to say: "We like your philosophy and we like what you've done."

MRS. P.J. JORDAN (North Okanagan): Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether that Minister has trouble with his philosophy but it's quite evident after that speech that he has an identity problem. One can hardly wonder that he wears a beard because he made it clearly evident that he has some idea that he's someone other than he is. That Big Brother government and Big Brother Ministers know what is best for the people of British Columbia, whether they want it or not or whether they think it's right.

I'm glad there's a doctor in the House, although he's just left and he's probably gone to treat the Minister of Highways. After that speech, no doubt he has a sore arm from all the back patting that he did. He studiously involved himself in government step-ins but studiously neglected to talk about the government step-ons and the record in this province of government step-ons.

HON. HARTLEY: Whine, whine, whine.

MRS. JORDAN: NDP step-ons of little people in

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this province is earth-shaking.

We had from that Minister of Highways, the vital link of transportation in this province — and it is a problem — 35 minutes of defence and five minutes of philosophy on highways, and not one word about what he is going to do for the highways of this province or how he is going to help loggers, farmers and people who have to drive miles to go to work by winding their way through the pothole jungles that are developing in this province because of that government's inactivity.

Mr. Minister, you can talk a lot about philosophy, but you have one heck of a time feeding your family on it. It takes money; it takes work; it takes incentive for those loggers and those farmers and the working people of this province to be able to have enough money to meet their commitments to their families.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak just for a moment about the Minister of Economic Development's (Hon. Mr. Lauk) statements last night. I'm sorry he's not in the House to make them clear. There is an article in the newspaper this morning that doesn't conform to what he said on the air last night when he announced that he and this government are intending to bring in a statistics Act.

If, as this Minister is reported to have said, it is for the protection of citizens, we must ask if the government's track record for the protection of citizens isn't to be questioned. It's becoming legendary how this government is revealing vital and confidential information about many areas of its jurisdiction. We would be sure to caution this government that if it intends to bring in such an Act to protect the citizens, it remembers who the citizens of British Columbia are. All citizens, whether they are in business or whether they are in a union or whether they are a member of a marketing board, have the same rights, and should not be subjected to the monopolistic and business-abusing patterns of ICBC under this new Act.

The Minister said that it was important how statistics and information are used, and we would agree. Our

concern about the Minister's suggestion is how this government would use that information that it would seek to receive from private individuals and small and large companies in this province. If one takes as an example some of the information this government is now trying to glean from people under pressure, we have great reason to be concerned.

Just for example, the rentalsman, in an application for a rental increase for homeowners or apartment owners or for mobile-home parks, requires information which has no relationship to the rent increase, on a form obviously designed to garner as much information as possible for the government, information that should be considered legitimate and confidential in the interests of a person's personal privacy.

In agriculture — another new adventure of this government is in leasing land to farmers — the concern of the agricultural people is that this form requires far beyond the normal information needed to ascertain whether an individual is responsible and capable of handling that agricultural unit to the best of the land's productive capabilities. Again, that's another form being put out by this government which the producers say is a violation of their personal privacy and, in fact, of the Human Rights Act.

We would be concerned with the statistics Act as outlined on the air by the Minister last night, because this government has a proven bias towards private business, whether it is small or large. Just last night the Minister of Transport and Communications (Hon. Mr. Strachan) slandered business with innuendoes that they were not honest, innuendoes that they were out, in fact, to destroy British Columbia, when in fact they are tax-paying, responsible citizens and a Canadian company, a legitimate business.

Interjection.

MRS. JORDAN: I stand corrected, Mr. Member, and appreciate your comment. He did say it, in fact, and it should be an embarrassment to this government, who say it is the people's government. But this government slanders many people in this province who are legitimate, honest, tax-paying citizens and in business. We would be concerned about this bias.

We would be concerned by the fact that the Minister of Finance has proven, and shown so obviously, that he has a personal vendetta against certain segments of this society, and it is not just the so-called big business rip-off artist that he likes to slander. We think it would be important that this sort of information should in fact protect the rights of the citizens.

It also must be borne in mind that this government, by its own statements, is committed more and more to its entry into the private business sector. The Minister said last night that the Act would cover all attitudes and forms of private business, their expansion plans, their internal accounting, their cost allocations — and we know what this government does with cost allocations — every area beyond what is now available in a legitimate sense.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker: if you were a small businessman in this country, if you were a citizen, would you want to give your personal information to that man? No way, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MR. COCKE: Have you ever had a picture like that taken, Pat?

MRS. JORDAN: Mr. Speaker, we would like to know, what is to prevent this information from

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filtering down to government enterprises? What is to prevent this information being used by government in business in direct competition to the little man down the street?

We have seen this happen in ICBC, where this government showed no concern for small, independent agents — who literally wiped out their operations, their life savings. An insurance agent now who wants to retire has nothing to sell in the way of his lifetime investment or the investment in his business because he can't get a contract with this government, and this government won't give him one unless he becomes a formal, unionized man.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen it. The concern is that this government has stated through the Minister of Transport and Communications that they intend to go into the body repair business. And what is to prevent this Minister of Economic Development (Hon. Mr. Lauk) getting and giving this information to the ICBC people and letting them use one man's body shop information for the government to go into competition against him just down the street, and with that man's own tax dollars?

Mr. Speaker, the responsibility of government is to be a third party to protect the rights of all the citizens. How can it do that if it has a direct, committed involvement, is in direct competition with those it is supposed to protect? It has a direct vested interest.

This government has made it clear that it intends to go into the motel and hotel business. It's already in the poultry business, the hatchery business. Mr. Speaker, there is a hatchery business in our area, owned by a lady who has worked most diligently to build up her business, and it is a good business. How is she going to know that this government isn't going to use her business information in its own hatchery business and work against her?

They are into the golf course business. There is the thought that they will go into the wholesale food business. We would like to be sure that this government puts itself in the same position as the people voted for it — and that is as the protector of the people's rights, not the abuser of the people's rights, and not the violator of personal privacy.

One example where this government doesn't consider itself subject to its own rules is ICBC, whose business practices have come under serious question. I won't review them because of time, but this government exempts ICBC — its own baby — from the authority of the Minister of Consumer Services (Hon. Ms. Young). It doesn't come under the Trade Practices Act. It doesn't come under her jurisdiction, and the citizens of this province find themselves captivated by a monopoly situation that they are paying for and that is not subject to any of the public scrutiny that any other business is.

In addressing myself to the budget, I would like to restate the words of the leader of our party, which I believe are the best statements about this budget. That is: "When your outgo exceeds your income, your upkeep becomes your downfall." This budget clearly shows that the huge cost of the upkeep of this government is going to be its downfall. One can only hope — and I certainly hope — that this government does not take the people of British Columbia down with it.

The waste and extravagance of this budget has set a new record, not only for British Columbia but for a government anywhere in Canada, including fellow NDP governments across the provinces. To pay for the \$600 million in public service salaries, the special consultants and the fancy offices, this budget asks the people of British Columbia to take more out of their pockets than ever before. In return, they will be getting less than ever before — less for services to people, less for education...

HON. MR. COCKE: Nonsense!

MR. JORDAN: ... less in all those areas of government which can be called the people services. There is more for salaries, more for office rents, more for consultants, and more to keep this government of big numbers in big business. It is a budget which depends on the continued existence of excessive inflation, which reminds me of the statement of the Montreal economist, Diane Cohen, who said: "Having a little inflation is like being just a little bit pregnant. We all know what happens to little bits of pregnancy, and like that, inflation feeds on itself and quickly passes the little mark."

Nowhere in this budget is there any indication that this government and this Minister of Finance would have it any other way. This budget has hopped the inflation train, Mr. Speaker; it is on a runaway track heading down to ruination unless it is brought to a halt and unless it is brought into a station of responsibility.

The self-centred expenditures of this government for its upkeep show that the bureaucracy is now feeding on itself at the expense of every single taxpayer in this province. Perhaps it is because the spending habits of this government have become so excessive that it has no other choice but to marry itself to continued double-digit inflation in order to achieve a balanced budget. We have seen it this year. What of next year?

There should be no confusion in the minds of British Columbians about the distinction between a balanced budget and a responsible budget. This budget is irresponsible and balanced, thanks to the supposition contained that inflation must go on.

Inflation makes misery unanimous. It creates universal poverty, and I might add that that statement was made by Arthur Meighan in Vancouver

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in 1943, speaking of socialism. I wonder if he knew just how prophetic his words would be, as British Columbians now realize this government cares not and will not take the leadership to dampen inflation which is robbing every citizen of this province every day.

HON. MR. HARTLEY: You're as far out of date as your 1923 quote. You're 50 years out of date.

MRS. JORDAN: I think it's interesting to note that that Minister heckles rather than back the Minister of Consumer Services, and that this government is truly proud and continually talks of the role of the Minister of Consumer Services. But I wonder if that Minister, who is a proponent of truth in advertising, was consulted on the Dunsky documents which appeared in a British Columbia newspaper two days ago, purporting to be a description of this government's budget.

I won't go into the details, Mr. Speaker, but if ever there was a case of misleading advertising in the Province of British Columbia, that full-page ad, paid for by the taxpayers of this province, had to be it. Perhaps the only true implication is at the bottom, "Our wealth is found in the skills of our people." That's where the tax revenue and the revenues in this budget are coming from largely — the people.

I look forward very much, because I am an admirer of hers, to the time when the Minister of Consumer Services will explain her position on that ad to the people of British Columbia and the people of Vancouver—Little Mountain. If she needs any assistance with her explanation I would refer her to an article which appeared in the *Vancouver Province* of Thursday's date, March 6. It did a very good job of outlining this government's policy in truth in advertising.

I wonder as well if the Minister of Consumer Services was ever consulted for her opinion on the inflationary forces which will be rekindled as the consequence of this budget.

The Minister has a very important role to play for consumers. She must represent them and take action in the marketplace, and it is sad that she has left it to the Minister of Finance (Hon. Mr. Barrett) to take action in the marketplace by laying before British Columbians this highly inflationary budget, which will do more to ensure continued rampant inflation in this province than any other single action.

This Minister has been quick to attack the producers of this province through their marketing boards, and they control about 0.5 per cent of the spending of the consumers of this province. But there's no attack, no words of caution to the Minister of Finance regarding this budget, and this government's action, which can only be described as greedy, because this budget is the work of a greedy government whose inflation tax, the cruelest tax of all, and whose direct tax increases will dip hungrily into the pockets of every citizen in this province every time they go to the store.

Whether it's to buy baby things, whether it's to buy cleaning utensils, whether it's to buy shoes or clothes, go to a show, a hockey stick for their children, or build a house, this government, in everything these consumers will do, will have its hungry fingers reaching, reaching for the bottom of the people's pockets, and growing fat on people's taxes.

Why isn't the Minister of Consumer Affairs aware that the inflationary psychology runs through every department of government, and that it is the watchword of every programme and policy which this government produces? What is more clear statement of this fact than the almost 40 per cent that this government anticipates as an

increase in its share of revenues coming from personal income tax? I hope that the Minister of Consumer Affairs will take a serious second look at the thrust of this budget when it comes time to vote. I hope that she, of all the cabinet Ministers, will be responsible and get to her feet and make her concerns known, because I can't believe that she, of all the people in this cabinet, has grown comfortable in her new-found luxury.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also, at this time, mention that the Minister of Highways (Hon. Mr. Lea) in his last presentation just 10 minutes ago called us the "giveaway boys" who gave away the resources. He and the Minister of Labour (Hon. Mr. King) say that they husband the resources. Well, it appears to us in the budget that as husbands they're turning out to be wife beaters of the resources. Why, when Social Credit were called the giveaway boys and were supposed to be giving away the resources of this province, were we in fact enjoying a higher percentage of revenues from those industries than this government is today? Under those circumstances, our government brought in balanced budgets with services to people, and this government, supposedly husbanding the resources, has to garner its tax revenues largely from the people's backs and, in fact, has to borrow to bring in a balanced budget.

HON. MR. COCKE: Was your budget balanced? Not one budget was ever balanced.

MRS. JORDAN: I'd like to refer for a moment to the producers of this province and ask some questions regarding how they feel.

What they want to know is whether this budget really reflects the position of agriculture as a free and equitable partner in society, a promise of this government. Or does the budget suggest that agriculture is to be, as the Minister said at the B.C. Federation of Agriculture convention in November,

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when he indicated that producers would be a social experiment designed to make the producer of British Columbia the greatest socialist of them all, supported by government on government's terms, controlled by government on government's terms?

Are the producers to be free? Are they to be free to adjust and design reasonable policies for their marketing boards as they, the producers, see fit? Are the marketing boards to be capable of acting as a collective voice for the producers in the best interest of the producers in British Columbia society and agriculture? Is the super board to be, as the producers believe, an avenue of legitimate appeal for both consumers and producers alike? With an estimate of \$100,000 I would suggest the Minister is expecting a lot of appeals. Or are the boards to be used as a vehicle in combination with income assurance for manipulating the producers into a Position that the government desires?

Mr. Speaker, the producers of this province have already seen the type of action in the other arenas in which this government is involved. Municipal financing in this budget, and it's been discussed by other Members, shows a form of municipal blackmail. We've seen it in education and in other areas. Certainly the agricultural budget must go along with the other budgets as being described as "iffy," particularly as to income assurance, because the budget says "if this happens" and "if that happens" income assurance will have adequate funds for 1975. But the producers want to know: "if not," what then? They want to know if there's some evidence of blackmail here.

The "ifs" in this budget in agriculture zero in on the crux of the whole income assurance plan and what it is all about and what the producers' concerns are. One of the most serious concerns of the producers of British Columbia today is that the income assurance plan is becoming cloudy. Is the plan to be income assurance which will reflect the realistic costs of production to efficient producers? Is the income assurance plan to have sufficient funds to provide the necessary returns to the producer when the marketplace, for its various reasons, fails to return the responsible producer a fair share on an equitable basis.

Is there to be an equitable share for all sections of society in British Columbia today in which agriculture has its share and its position? Those were the principles of the original agreement between the producers and the government. They want to know if the income assurance programme is really designed to be equitable to all participating commodity groups.

What happens to those commodity groups which are currently not within the framework of the income assurance plan? Many of these producers will have to come under the plan to survive, not only because of rising cost squeezes but also because of the fact that some of these cost squeezes can be attributed to the plan itself. I cite for examples the onion producers and the broiler producers.

There is growing concern that the government didn't reveal all in the beginning. There is concern that there is a philosophical difference between the producer and the government in income assurance. The producers believe and say that income assurance has to be open-ended and responsive to the marketing situation if it is to be assurance for shortfall returns. The plan must be equitable in itself. The producers say the programme must be sufficiently funded and equitable to all commodity groups if it is to unite the agricultural industry and if agriculture is to be able to stand on a fair footing with other industries at this time.

What is shaking the producers at this moment is that the government is now indicating that this is not the design of the plan at all. The government is indicating that there is, in fact, a limit on funds. If the plan is to treat producers alike and equitably, then the producers must take a pot that the government gives them and divide it among themselves. The Minister indicates that this is a plausible plan. But the producers suggest that there are very grave dangers here.

This change in attitude, first, is in violation of the original agreement of the concept of the plan made between the Minister and the industry. The overall pot will not be adequate to meet the original commitment of the government and thereby will not assure the producers a fair return, as originally designed. They fear that by bringing this attitude in now in the middle of the game, there is a grave danger of setting one commodity group against another. Instead of uniting the producers in this province, the government's attitude could factionalize the producers and pit one commodity group against another.

The producers fear that the income insurance programme will have been the carrot designed to lure them into a trap of heavy government control. I must say that the producers' suspicion is reinforced by the government's attitude and its budgeting in other sectors such as welfare and education in municipalities. In these areas, the government attitude appears to downgrade dignity and independence and to stress centralized state control and dependency on government. This attitude serves to reinforce the producers' concern and fears.

They would like to take into account the fact that the milk producers, the first into the plan and possibly the carrot, negotiated a separate agreement with the government with added benefits not available to other commodity groups. The producers want to know whatever happened to these benefits. Was this part of the carrot plan to attract other commodity groups into the programme and then have

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the rules of the game changed?

The producers' concern is also reinforced by the fact that the Minister, though failing to appear at various commodity conventions this year such as the fruit growers' convention, made his presence felt by innuendo through his staff. That innuendo was that there could be budgetary problems and that the pot system might have to apply.

Then, last week, near the conclusion of the negotiations between the cattle producers' negotiating committee and the government's negotiating team, when everyone thought there was only one point of disagreement — that was whether the plan was to be based on pounds or heads — the government suddenly whipped the rug out from under both teams and cried: "Shortage of funds!" While doing this, the government admitted that the cattle producers will have to take less than other commodity groups for 1973. Hardly the equitable treatment that this government talked about.

One wonders how much this government is backing this Minister. Are they backing the Minister of Consumer Services (Hon. Ms. Young) who has been attacking producers or are they attacking the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Stupich) who has been trying to do something for the producers? They are concerned because, when they discuss programmes with the Minister of Agriculture and they ask him if they are sustaining, he says:

"Well, I hope they will be as long as I am Minister." This leaves doubt in their minds as to really where the Minister of Finance and this government stand.

In referring to this budget specifically, Mr. Speaker, there are 11 commodity groups either in the plan, or negotiating to come into the plan, and to the best of everyone's knowledge it will take approximately \$30 million to meet this commitment. This is where the ifs come in, because the government says, in its budget, that if a world inflation continues and higher world prices for some commodities — such as milk, eggs and fruit — continue, and if the federal government enters into agreements with the province to cost-share in income assurance through their bill — then a budgetary figure of not \$30 million, but \$27 million for income assurance could be adequate.

These are the government ifs, and, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that they are very big ifs. But we must suggest that reality may enter the picture and the situation, and more ifs could come into play. If the downturn in the economy continues as predicted, and commodity prices and consumer buying slump, if the federal/provincial negotiations break down or fad to mature this year, or if the cattle market proceeds as predicted and doesn't make sufficient recovery to return at least a reasonable amount to the producer, then there is going to be a heavy draw on this plan.

Then there are the deficits that are existing in some of the plans now. Then the Minister is going to be left with a deficit, and he'll have but two choices. First, he can apply for a special warrant to get money for income assurance. But where is this money to come from in this budget? There is only a buffer of \$500,000. There could well be a shortfall of several million dollars in income assurance, and no buffer for this in the overall budget, unless salary contingencies are a hidden buffer. The government has said that this is not so, and we accept their word. Then the government must either take money from other budgets, such as Health and Education, to meet these commitments to the producers, or it must enter into deficit financing.

The second choice could be that the government will do exactly what it has been dropping hints of doing and has done with the cattle producers, and that is cut back, break the principle of the original agreement, and to get off the hook say to them: "All right, boys and girls, this is the pot. You go and divide it among yourselves."

The last concern that was expressed in relation to income assurance was that there is no provision for new groups coming in, and it is quite common knowledge that there are others, such as the broiler producers, who would like to enter the programme this year.

Mr. Speaker, a commitment is a commitment is a commitment, and this government, through its Minister of Agriculture, made a commitment and agreed to principles of an income assurance programme for the producers of this province together. The producers have put their cards on the table, and I call on the government to do the same. Put your cards on the table. Allay the concerns of the producers.

I'm sure the Minister of Agriculture doesn't want any double dealings from the bottom of the deck. This budget leaves the government open to the concern that this is exactly what they have in mind.

The Minister of Agriculture and the government must make it quite clear that income assurance will be carried out as originally agreed and that their commitment made will be their commitment kept. They must assure the producers that this budget is sufficient to cover the agreed commitment on an agreed and equitable basis.

I would like to turn from agriculture for a moment and talk about ICBC. We hear a lot of talk from this government, and we see a lot of advertising about discrimination and their stand against discrimination. It is ironic that in the area of women's rights and human rights, while so vocal, the government has failed to recognize these practices even within their own government services and their own Crown Corporations — areas that are directly under the control of this cabinet.

An excellent example to measure some of these

inequities is to look at the pay scale for upper echelon jobs in this government, order-in-council jobs where the government has taken free reign when it comes to qualifications and salaries — some as high as \$39,000 a year and more for males.

Why is it, for example, that the Department of Consumer Services and the Department of Education, both traditionally areas of women's pursuits, have in their service executive assistants who are women, and who earn \$19,464 a year, while departments such as Finance, and the do-nothing Department of Highways, traditionally more masculine areas, have in their employ three male executive assistants each earning \$23,710 annually?

How can this government maintain that it seeks equal opportunities for all when, within its own system, it is practising discrimination? Why, for example, did the Education department find it necessary to offer \$24,000 a year to its new research adviser, recently hired....?

AN HON. MEMBER: Soon to be fired.

MRS. JORDAN: Soon to be fired — it well may be...while two female executive assistants, one in the Department of Education and one in the Department of Consumer Services, get \$4,000 a year less. They've been working for the Department of Education ever since the Minister was there. Is it because the position was filled by a man, Mr. Speaker?

ICBC, the NDP major claim to fame, is really rampant with discrimination, and we know many of the areas. But I would like to suggest that there are two areas of discrimination that need immediate attention and are a blot on this government's long-winded discussions of its efforts to bring in equality. I point out that a wage earner, whether it be a male or a female, is covered if they have an accident to a maximum of \$50 a week for 104 weeks with the right to review after this time. That's the same for a married woman and for a housewife, whether she's a homemaker or whether she works out. This is regardless of their outside income, Mr. Speaker.

But if a handicapped person or a pensioner or someone receiving any type of pension under the Canada Assistance Act or for service to this country or from Workers' Compensation has an accident, even though they pay the same premiums as the others, their compensation payment is reduced by the amount of their pension. Now, really, how discriminatory can a practice be? There's no appeal from this because the Attorney-General won't listen — he has proved that — and the Minister of Finance and the Premier won't let ICBC come under the auspices of the Minister of Consumer Services. Disgraceful! The people who can least afford to have an accident — senior citizens, handicapped, people on pensions — are discriminated against by the ICBC in the payments that they receive.

There's also discrimination in the area of death benefits. If the head of the house is killed then there is a benefit of \$5,000 to the surviving spouse. But if the spouse is killed, then there is only a payment of \$2,500 to the surviving spouse. I would suggest that this is discriminatory in that it weights in a family who is more valuable to the family. It's quite common knowledge that the majority of the heads of the houses, so-called, in society today are classed as males because of income earning ability or because of the fact that a mother may wish to stay home and undertake voluntary pursuits. This in itself is discriminatory.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest that this budget is concrete proof that under the Williams-Barrett government the people of British Columbia are paying more and more to get less and less from the government. They're paying more and more for bureaucracy, for salaries and for all the other frills and ideologies that they are building up.

Nowhere in this budget is there any programme for housing to meet the needs of our people. The Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson), who was so staunchly defended by the Minister of Highways (Hon. Mr. Lea), seems to have little time to worry about his department, less time to talk about his department and no time to build homes in this province. Now we see him involved and spending his time with a new dance that they call the "Casa Loma." We need 50,000 housing units in British Columbia today for people, not change of ownership of existing units, which is the main thrust of this government and with which they pad their budget. New units for people.

Nowhere in this budget is there any statement which will help local governments out of the financial jackpot

that they're in today. Blame it on Ottawa. Hang it on an "if," a big "if." Today I read an article where there is a suggestion that the oil prices in the world are going to decrease, and yet the municipalities have to look at that "if" for any form of security and assistance.

I would urge the government, in closing, Mr. Speaker — and I know you'll give me the same privilege as you gave the Minister of Highways — to trim the fat of self-indulgence out of this inflationary budget: a 48 per cent increase in spending; most of the revenues from the backs of people. Stop mining the people's pockets and extracting excess profits from people just to feed a socialist machine which is blind to its responsibility and leadership and public accountability.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, the people of this province want truth in government; they want responsible management to help dampen inflation. They want housing at reasonable cost, job opportunities and

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individual, responsible freedom. Because the budget fails in its commitments to the people, I regret to say I cannot support it.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

MR. E.O. BARNES (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my colleagues for that resounding round of applause.

I now take my place for the first time this session with great exuberance. I hope that everyone will give me their undivided attention as I bring forth these words of wisdom.

First, I'd like to express my sorrow for the loss of our former Clerk of the House, Mr. Ned DeBeck. I'd also like to congratulate my successor, who is now in the hot seat as the government Whip, Mr. Colin Gabelmann. I can see, Colin, that you've got a lot of support out there. (Laughter.) All my followers are now ready to go behind you.

This is a time for congratulations. In fact, the Attorney-General (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) should be congratulated, too, on...

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. BARNES: Hear, hear! ...on his efforts last October 24, when he took a very important step toward raising the public conscience to some of the inequities throughout the world by removing South African products from the provincial government liquor shelves. Alex, I feel we've got to have more examples of that kind of leadership where legislation isn't going to solve all the problems. Part of the text of my comments today will deal with those things that have to do with cooperation.

We're also doing a lot of things that we shouldn't have to do, but it's a good sign. We have International Women's Year, In all of my years as a social worker, I've had great dissatisfaction for such events because I feel it points out the faults of our society when we have to have special days and special years for things that should be common occurrence.

MR. D.T. KELLY (Omineca): That's right.

MR. BARNES: When I frown upon things like brotherhood week, and father and son day, and so forth, it's really because I feel that we're just playing with things that we should get on with resolving. I hope the time will come when we don't have the need for International Women's Year.

One other point too, Mr. Speaker, in connection with some of the hypocritical things that many of us have been guilty of in the past, was the remarks by the former speaker, the Member for North Okanagan (Mrs. Jordan), who was most unfair in talking about the faults of our government in not bringing down legislation to protect women and other groups in the community. In fact, we brought down the only legislation that exists in this province.

I recall, before being elected, having great difficulty in getting any kind of legal justice for people who were complaining about various forms of discrimination. This ex-Minister of the past government stands before this House and accuses this government of not providing the means whereby justice can be achieved for the various people in the community when she herself sat in the cabinet with the previous government and none of these things were done. I would like to ask just what they were doing that these things have now become so important, when for 20 years no action was taken.

I think we've brought into force some very important legislation that we will be building upon and experimenting with. Hopefully, it too will just become part of the old, dusty statutes and will no longer be necessary when we get on with the real problem of living in this community.

This is one of the questions I want to pose today. I feel, after listening to the debate and, before that, to the throne debate, and from the comments people have made to me, that they think everything can be done in the Legislature. We've had a lot of accusations going back and forth about whose fault it is for not having enough money allocated for this event or other projects. But I would like to pose a question to all of the sitting Members and for those people who are outside: just what does the Legislature stand for? What is its goal? What are the purposes we all come for?

I would like to feel that it is to do with making a better place for the most important resource, those citizens out there — the people. We certainly shouldn't be here to build empires for the sake of building them, or institutions or establishments or organizations for the sake of putting them up.

One of the most important ones, the schools, the educational institutions, has been bantered about quite a bit in this Legislature for one reason or the other, usually for political reasons, unfortunately. It is one of the most vital and it is the core of the whole system in which we live. I feel that it needs to be defended and I think that it has to be defended. I think it has to be done by all the people concerned, not by the legislators.

I would like to suggest that elected officials on school boards and those who have found themselves in the profession of teaching and those of us who have propagated the subjects that are being taught in the schools and the children and the taxpayers who may support — and who are not perhaps parents — all have a role to play in the operation of the institutions of learning.

The problem is to keep the learning institutions in step with the needs of the times and not to let them

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become large gargantuan monstrosities that enslave us so that we become subject to their uncontrollable dictates, as is quite often what is happening throughout the province where we have so much difficulty in trying to keep up with what are quasi-requirements in the various schools in terms of more money for more buildings, more instructors, more facilities, et cetera. It just doesn't make sense to me that we can continue to use old formulae for new and changing times and concepts. I realize that any formula worth its salt, if it is to be relevant, has to have a change component in it whereby it can be applicable from time to time. There has to be a continuum of change and new ideas and means and ways by which new ideas can be injected into that system.

I have listened to a number of delegations, here at the Legislature and also in the community, by sincere people. Some are educators. Some are parents belonging to various organizations who are concerned about the quality of education, who are concerned about the various special needs of students being met in the educational institutions. They are wondering whether we are considering all of the variety of characteristics that distinguish one school district from another and one individual from another. We espouse ideas of understanding in talking about the psychological differences, the cultural differences, the ethnological differences, and so forth — economic, socio-economic, differences within the mosaic we call British Columbia and Canada. But when it comes to dealing practically with the problem within our most important institution, it never matters. Somewhere along the line we need to rediscover, if we ever did know at all, how to really relate to the needs of the community.

We complain about technological influence on people, about the industrialized society in which we live and

how it influences our lives adversely. We know that this influence can be a burden unless it is kept in check. Yet, at the same time, our educational institutions quite often relate directly with this system, which suggests to me that at that very basic, fundamental level we are failing to alter the environment in which we live by giving the variety of experiences and the kind of input at the beginning level of learning that is needed to make the change.

As a parent I suppose my views are different than what they would be as a politician. Politically, the things that I really feel would not be all that popular among the people who supposedly control the vote. I think that this is probably one of the faults. We began to tread lightly because of fear of making changes in established institutions in hierarchical structures where people have built themselves their own empires and have begun to feel a sense of fear or threat when change sticks its unexciting face through the door. They naturally want to make sure that they are going to be secure before any change takes place. This, I think, is a fundamental characteristic of human nature, at least in North America — perhaps not in some other cultures.

But in our culture it seems fairly consistent that you can expect reaction when you talk about change. So, as a politician, you find yourself trying to slip in some suggestions without getting anyone riled up and thinking unkindly of you. But as a parent with four children, watching them grow from birth to as old as 20 years of age now, and some others as teenagers, I really think that it is about time that we took a look at the realities of our system and that we prepared ourselves for the change, no matter what the consequences personally, because the future depends on it.

Some of the parents and concerned teachers who have talked to me about special needs and special difficulties that students are having are making a very valid observation. I think that the government can go just so far without sincere leadership and cooperation on the part of every interested level in the community. School boards, principals, instructors in the classroom, parents, and so forth, all have a role to play. It can't be that nothing will move out there but everything has to move here.

It can't just be input of dollars; it has to be input of dollars where relevant. There has to be some distinction made at the various levels as far as the differences are concerned. There has to be flexibility. There has to be an opportunity to evaluate and assess on the local levels. In fact, that opportunity exists in many respects in the school districts. I think the school districts are going to have to impose upon themselves this responsibility in a realistic way and make the changes where they should be made, and also redeploy staff when necessary. It may even mean a principal or two going into the classroom. I don't want to suggest that we don't need principals, but I think that we have to take a look at what the most important thing is. We have to take a look at the realities of the dollar, where they come from, and how many we can afford to keep putting in without getting results.

Also, we have to keep quality. Quality does not always equate with small numbers on a student/teacher ratio. In other words, a smaller number of students per teacher does not necessarily mean that the quality goes up, although there are other factors, obviously, that are improved by that method.

I think that it is not good enough for us to simply say that because we have a mechanical formula of figures we have resolved the problem. We are going to have to be flexible enough to not only allow school districts to make decisions on the spot as related to their own particular problems, but we are going to have to consider alternative environmental studies —

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physical settings, changes as far as the whole concept of how people learn and where they learn and what is learning and what is important in learning, Surely the formal classroom setting is not the only way for a person to receive an academic education. Surely it is not the only way for a person to be inspired and to contribute in the community in a constructive way.

Mind you, I realize that we like to feel that in this society we are going to receive some document, some form of recognition for our efforts. We would like to be congratulated for in in the "achievement of merit" or whatever you call it. But these are superficial things that we have imposed upon ourselves and our people because of a way of life. It doesn't necessarily mean a thing, as we all must know by now.

I can tell you there a lot of people walking the streets with a lot of these documents in their pockets. I know several fellows who have come to me and said: "I have all of these qualifications, but I've got too much, and I'm overqualified. I can no longer get a job. If I had no education I would be able to get a job." I can give you cases of people who tell me this all the time. There is something wrong with the system where we overeducate the people, or educate them in a way that is irrelevant or totally me on sequential as far as the needs of the community are concerned. In many cases — I say this even with my own two or three pieces of paper — people achieve these things because it gives them a certain amount of status in the community, acceptance, or what you might call a ticket to work, a meal ticket, a union card. It is a form of recognition, a form of acceptance.

I think that we have to begin to make these changes. I don't know if the educational profession is prepared to make these kinds of changes. What would it do to the institutions if we were to say we are no longer going to have formal teaching, we are going to put everybody out in the streets and they are all going to go to work, including the teachers? What would happen? Well, I will tell you, I would probably not get re-elected if I pushed that too far. But I may feel that it is worth it. If I thought it could happen, I might be willing to go out and work myself. (Laughter.)

I say this because I think these are the kinds of things that we have dilly-dallied around with and just haven't been prepared to seriously attack.

Let's face it, all of us must know what I am saying. It doesn't really matter what- your profession is. It doesn't matter whether it's the medical profession or legal profession or the physical sciences. We all like our empires and we like to make sure that we are not going to be disturbed. We've put a lot of years in getting where we are, and we don't really want the kind of change that is going to upset our particular domain. I can understand that. In fact, I have tried to break into a few domains in the past and I have had great difficulty. (Laughter.)

I went all the way through my professional career as a football player from the back door, in fact, and I realized what politics were all about, because you don't have to have skill or ability; it's who you know. Ask any guy who's been cut. You say: "I was better than that guy but I didn't know the right people, so I am on the bench and other guy's playing, and he's nothing but a burn." Any ex-athlete can tell you that, especially those who didn't make it. (Laughter.) But do they not have a right to make it? I think so. We all have a right to make it.

I don't think we should be accepting these percentages of anywhere from 3 to 5 per cent unemployment as being normal. We let it go up to 10 and 15 per cent and say: "Well, things are getting a little out of hand." But how come it can't be zero? Why do people have to be unemployed? Why do we have to have a system where we accept as normal 5 per cent unemployment?

Now we have inherited the problem this government has, and I don't suppose we are going to be able to change it in isolation. It is a universal problem. It is one that affects us all. I wonder if we really have to have it that way. Or is it that if we change it it means that we have to change the system? We are not prepared to do that. No way! We'll talk forever, but change — no.

I think the message is made, though, that change is the challenge and we are not prepared to do that. I know it. We are prepared to do what we can but, as politicians, we can only suggest. We aren't going to be able to change the system. You have to change the system, the people out there. Politicians have never been able to change a thing, especially people's attitudes — you know, mores, the cultural habits and what not: these aren't things you change through legislation. If you want to have a war, sure, you can go ahead and declare it by making some regulations that people don't want to abide by; you can do that.

But I am talking about change that involves your sincere desire to see things differently than the way they were, have things differently. This is what it's all about, this Legislature, when you listen to people talk about who is at fault and what is going on. Well, we are playing games. Let's go out and make the changes ourselves.

I haven't had anyone come and demand of me that I recommend that they don't get their raise next year. Not one has come to say: "Would you insist that I be not allowed to have a raise?" — you know, that we hold the line on this and hold the line on that. That's the kind of thing that I am talking about. There is no point in labouring these points. We all know.

MR. McCLELLAND: Is this your resignation speech?

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MR. BARNES: No, maybe it's a suggestion that you walk across the floor. You guys know it when you are playing games, Mr. Member. We all do that. That's how we got here; we know how to play the games on the street. But some of us get here and realize that we should be doing something besides playing games.

Let me just close by asking a favour of two or three Ministers. These are just minor things. I'll start off with the Minister of Health (Hon. Mr. Cocke), who has worked very hard in trying to raise people's awareness and concern for good health and so forth, and ask him if he would not revitalize the concept of cycling. I know that people are doing it. When I came back from China I was impressed with the number of people on bicycles. In fact, everybody seemed to be on bicycles.

I realize that that is another situation, but I think the bicycle thing should be encouraged. I would like to ride my bike, Mr. Minister, but I have a problem. I don't have any place to change when I get here; I can't take a shower. Now if you and the Minister of Public Works (Hon. Mr. Hartley) were to get together and agree on a few things, we may end up with a shower here for the Members of the House who, I am sure, would like to ride their bikes as well — including the Speaker and all the other people. You can make it a public situation. Now that's not asking too much but it's beginning at home in doing something about what we want everybody else to do. I would like to be on my bike all the time. Okay, now that's one renovation to the building that I am sure wouldn't get too much adverse criticism from the opposition as they probably would like to participate, too; they're well-intentioned people.

The other Minister I had in mind was the Minister of Highways (Hon. Mr. Lea). I have a problem. This is still relating to myself, but I am sure there are others who can benefit from this particular problem.

I like to ride my bike from home sometimes, not just while I'm here. I live in Port Moody and I've had to go all the way around Pattullo Bridge and come in through Surrey, Delta and around that way. Now, how come I can't come under the Massey Tunnel? If I could come that way, I could save myself about 10 miles. It's about a 70 mile ride here from Port Moody.

I know that you're not going to stop the traffic. When that tunnel was put in, it was designed for cars and not for people. The name Massey ties in, I think, with the Socreds. It's all tied together; that's what they were thinking. But if you were putting it up, I'm sure you would have a nice way there for bicycles to go underneath that tunnel. There's nothing you can do about that.

But you may be able to do something that will facilitate those of us who would like to get through that tunnel on our bicycles by maybe putting up a little shuttle system every hour, five minutes on the hour. We could all get on this truck, go through the tunnel and then get out. It would be a nice public gesture and I'm sure a lot of people would be pleased with that. If you couldn't do that, then stop the traffic. (Laughter.)

Interjections.

MR. BARNES: Yes.

Because of the long-windedness of the previous speakers, I know that I have two more following me. They should have at least half-an-hour to express themselves.

Most of you by now know how I feel. I would like to see us continue to take the leadership in areas that are practical, as we have done, and not to be dissuaded or discouraged by the games the opposition is playing. They like to do that and it gets pretty boring over there. We won't let them make any decisions and they've got to raise the roof. (Laughter.) I know a little about that myself, being in the in-the-between. (Laughter.)

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take my seat and congratulate....

MR. N.R. MORRISON (Victoria): You've still got it, eh?

MR. BARNES: I think I still have it. I'd like to congratulate the government on bringing down a budget that is incredibly beautiful. I'm sure it will go down in history as being one of the most outstanding budgets this province has known.

MR. G.H. ANDERSON (Kamloops): Before I make a few comments on this budget, I too would like to join the rest of the Members in the tributes that have been paid to Ned DeBeck, the Clerk Consultant for so long in this House. I think, as newcomers coming here, we will always remember his gentle humour, his particularly bright blue eyes and piercing look when you were getting slightly out of line, and the advice and time that was always there, particularly for new people coming into the Legislature who needed it most. I think we're all poorer for having lost him but certainly richer for having known him.

It's certainly a pleasure to stand and speak in support of this budget that is before the House now. If we were in the old times in Europe, the storytellers would talk about it and the singers would sing about it for years, when they didn't have the type of media we have now. I sometimes wish that we were back in those times.

The opposition has criticized us for two things in particular: (1) because we're contributing to the fires of inflation with our reckless spending, and (2)

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because we're not doing any investment in the province to stimulate employment. It seems that there is a bit of a problem there in bringing these two situations together in their mind. But they have a term that they call a split personality, and I somehow think that this is what they're invoking — one opinion on one side, one on the other, and they can make it compatible in their own mind.

Wasting money. Taxing the taxpayer too high. We should reduce taxes. I wonder if the opposition have ever taken the time to look at reports that have been filed in this House or statements made by Ministers of income from some of the fields traditionally reserved for private enterprise that this government has ventured into.

It seems, according to the opposition — and the official opposition particularly — that the only time government should ever go into a venture of any kind that supplies employment or maintains a community is when it loses money. This has been their record in the past and federally, and they believe it should be carried on in this province. It should be typically reserved and government should only go into ventures that lose money.

The record has been stated many times on northern Can-Cel. I worked in the Celanese Corp. In 1952 for one winter when it was losing money, and it lost money continually until the government purchased it from their private-enterprise owners. The record is unexcelled for the terms of purchase and the return that it has brought to the Treasury of this province and the people of this province to be returned to them in services that they require. It's my understanding that there was \$50 million brought to this government by Can-Cel alone.

When I worked for them up north, they still hadn't added the sulphite plants; they weren't using any waste whatsoever to make celanese pulp. We were putting 60-foot Sitka spruce trees through the chipper. If they were too big to go through the chipper, they were butchered up small enough to go in. There wasn't any lumber, any plywood or anything made from one of the finest kinds of timber that is grown in this province, and this was one of the free-enterprise corporations to which the whole future of this province should be entrusted.

The record, of course, bears out that it isn't necessary to have a private owner to make money, and that it can be done by the provincial government.

Employment was being created some months ago, is still being created, and will be created on an accelerating basis in the Burns Lake area, where there probably would not be a sawmill had it not been for the policies of the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams) and this government. There is just no way that any politician will be able to go to the Burns Lake area and say this should all be turned over to private enterprise. It

is now on a compassionate basis that allows the people of the area to take part in it. There is a spinoff from this type of development that is creating and will create further employment in the side industries and supply industries for this development.

We are told that we are spending too much money. We are also told by the Minister of Transport and Communications (Hon. Mr. Strachan) that the three ferries are ordered from the B.C. shipyards — one in each of the major shipyards on this coast. Maybe we should cut that out and save a little money. We'd be left with a poor ferry service, but we'll get along somehow. The people in the shipyards — a lot will be laid off and lose their jobs and contribute to the unemployment, but we would be fighting inflation. This seems to be the traditional way of free enterprise government and business to fight inflation.

One thing stands out in the difference in the ordering of these ferries by the government and their being ordered by private enterprise. How many of the shipping companies in Canada — owned by Canadians, or partly by foreigners or totally by foreigners — place their orders in Canada for ships? They never do. They're built in Japan, or they're built in Sweden, or they're built in East or West Germany, wherever they can get the best price. They're not worried about Canadian employees whatsoever at any time, only about how much money can be taken out of the Canadian economy for their particular bank account.

Maybe we shouldn't bother spending the money on the Peace River dam or the new dam that is proposed near Trail — dams that have had complete and total environmental studies and will have more to make sure that the area is protected and that the area is cleared so that we won't be faced with the logjams and the dead game that tries to swim the lake at their traditional crossing points, such as we have in the lakes behind the dams built in the past.

Perhaps we shouldn't build them. Then the time will come, 10 years from now, when there won't be enough energy to supply the increase in manufacturing industry, so they won't start up and the unemployment will increase. But if we build them, maybe we are contributing to inflation. Now I can't reconcile the two in my mind — that we must close down these projects, not operate them to fight inflation and yet do absolutely nothing towards employment.

We've been criticized both in the throne speech and the budget debate for almost everything you can think of. Most of it, of course, is nit-picking. I haven't heard any very serious criticism or constructive alternative suggestions.

It has been said by the Attorney-General (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) and others that this is a government with a heart, a government with a thought and a feeling for people. I would just like to read a letter to

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the editor from people, not from any of the large owners or the large corporate heads. It is to the *Similkameen Spotlight*, Wednesday, February 26, 1975, and this is a person who is attacking this particular newspaper for a statement that was in an editorial. He says:

"Dear Editor:

"Recently your Christmas message in the December 18 *Spotlight* came to my attention, and part of the editorial stated: "This government has lost the confidence of the investor and the consensus is that the people in Victoria, running our government, cannot be trusted."

Obviously he has been listening to the opposition, because that is one of the most destructive statements that anyone corresponding with the public, or in the public eye, can make — one of the greatest leads toward the lack of confidence in the province by the people here, and absolutely untrue. He goes on to say:

"Mr. Editor, may I tell you that in 1967 I invested \$1,800 in 100 shares in Columbia Cellulose. When this company decided to go bankrupt I felt that I should be in the same position as those people who had invested in Commonwealth Trust. The government of that day, Social Credit, stood by and allowed the shareholders to lose their investments. I thought the same thing would happen to the investors in Columbia Cellulose.

"Imagine, then, how I felt when the present government stepped in and said in effect to Columbia Cellulose: 'You can sell your company to us and we will protect the jobs of the workers and the savings of the small investors.' This is what they did. Further, they doubled my holdings..."

He only had \$1,800 in, but they doubled his holdings.

"...so that I now have 200 shares in Can-Cel and the prospects of increasing dividends as years go by."

He goes on further to say, and I think it's important.... This is one of the small people, the little people that the opposition always talks about, the people they were going to let go down the drain at Ocean Falls, the people they were going to let go down the drain at Prince Rupert and Watson Island and anywhere else, the same as they did with Commonwealth Trust. It goes on to say:

"We know, of course, that \$1,800 means little to the wealthy investor, but to the small person such as I, dividends on such an investment represent a welcome addition to the annual income. The NDP government claim to be a people's government. Such cases as this instance prove to me that this is no idle claim. You will understand then that I cannot agree with your remarks in the editorial in question. Further, it's my considered opinion that many of the citizens of B.C. have, like me, confidence in the people who are presently running our government."

We have the man's name and address here, from Mission, B.C., who wrote that letter. That is only an example of some of the small people who have confidence in this government, in spite of the wrecking job being attempted by the opposition.

You know, we have heard the Health department criticized, Mr. Speaker. The club is really being laid on to the Minister of Health (Hon. Mr. Cocke) by the Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace), particularly on intermediate care, but on all types of hospital care. The Member for Oak Bay seems to think that in a matter of 30 months you can wave the magic wand and hospitals just spring out of the ground. Well, I've mentioned before how the hospital board in Kamloops tried to get an addition to Royal Inland for four years from the previous government and never managed it. I also mentioned how the people of the small community of Clearwater only got one by having a tape recorder at the election meeting there when the previous Minister of Health was in the area and promised them a hospital — then later denied it. I doubt if they'd have a hospital yet if that tape hadn't been played back to the government of the day.

But last fall a new four-story intermediate-care hospital was opened in Kamloops. It has accepted almost 200 patients at the present time and will be accepting more in the very near future. It is within a half-block of the Royal Inland Hospital, so attention can be received quickly for someone who gets seriously ill there. And to complement the addition to the Royal Inland that is now completed and this intermediate-care hospital, construction will begin this spring on a 100-bed extended-care hospital for which the sod was turned by the Minister of Health late last fall, when it was too late to begin construction. The designs had to be done but we fully expect that construction will begin this spring.

Now maybe we shouldn't build that hospital either, because that will contribute to inflation. You're going to put money into the system and you can't do that, apparently, without contributing to the fires of inflation.

I'd like to talk about another section of the budget that will effect the whole province in some way — but in a very strong way is affecting the Kamloops constituency. That's the Department of the Provincial Secretary, a department that's often ignored, a department that was ignored in the past very badly. But the budget says that he is now to have \$21 million more. I'd just like to talk about one way that the increases in this budget last year helped my area, will continue to help my area on the expansion of the

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Thompson-Nicola Regional District Library System, and will be a model — in fact, it is a model already — for every regional district in the province who are without decent library services, and need it and want it.

The provincial library commission and the regional district got together and passed a plebiscite to see

whether the people of the district wanted library service or not because they only had one small bookmobile travelling around an area 300 miles by 100 miles. The people voted over 80 per cent to have this system installed. They set up a local library board and each community set up a small library board, and they entered into negotiations with the Provincial Library Development Commission.

After a year and a half of consultation, suggestions and different proposals, we now have one of the finest library systems in the province in the Thompson-Nicola Regional District. It's a model for the rest of the province, and other areas of the province are looking at it. Some as far away as Squamish have asked to be included in ours. There's a main book centre in Kamloops. I should also mention, Mr. Speaker, that this is not only going to be books. There will be videotapes, there will be records and there will be art work along with the book system.

'Me grants this year in the Provincial Secretary's department for district libraries is \$2,570,000. That's quite a step up from the previous administration, who were not the least bit interested in libraries unless they happened to be a part of one large building as a monument that they considered to themselves.

There is a large central depot in Kamloops that is staffed with people, contributing to employment. The sharing of the costs is done by 1.5 mills from the people in the district and the balance by the provincial government, So far has been approximately a 50-50 sharing.

We have now at least 10 branch libraries funneling off from this main central one. We have one in Blue River, in Clearwater, in Barriere, North Kamloops, Valleyview, Logan Lake, Ashcroft and a few others that I haven't listed here.

The little bookmobile is still in use but there is also a new one, a tractor trailer. The trailer must be 30 feet long, converted into a travelling library, that goes into communities such as Walhachin, which only has 32 families, on a scheduled basis once a week. Anyone in the district can pick up a book at any of the libraries, turn it in at any of the libraries where they happen to be, or turn it into the bookmobile, or get it from the bookmobile and turn it in at the library.

There has never been a system like it in the Thompson-Nicola Regional District, in the small towns that I have mentioned up Highway 5. Without this government they would still be without it, and they know it. They know they would not have it without this provincial government.

I want to take this opportunity, certainly, to commend the provincial library commission and also the Thompson-Nicola Regional District library board and the local library boards who participated so well for a year and a half that has resulted in this model programme.

Perhaps one of the things we should cut back on would be the extension of the B.C. Railway. That isn't finished yet to Dease Lake and, certainly, if we ended construction and laid the construction workers off, we could save money. Then we wouldn't be contributing to inflation. But what would the people up in that area say? They're looking to that rail for transportation because transportation means development. They want not so much the passenger service as that freight service in there so that the area which has been ignored for so long and has had so little development will be able to develop, and develop in a planned and proper way under our new department of northern affairs.

Once a railroad or transportation goes into an area such as that, it is bound to attract industry; it is bound to attract investment; it is bound to create employment. But they're saying we should save money to fight inflation, so maybe we shouldn't extend the railroad. Let the north and that area stay asleep for another 10 years. I don't think anyone in this House would suggest such a thing. Nevertheless the negative nit-picking will continue: "You're spending too much money. You're wasting too much money"

With the fabrication yards in Squamish in a very short while now we will not be relying on the east to supply us with box cars and supplying the orders as they see fit and putting ours off, possibly, to supply someone else. We'll be able to build our own cars and, once we've built our own fleet of cars on this railroad up to what is needed, then we will be able to put it into production to sell to other railroads and other uses. That, once again, will be returning

money to the province, as Can-Cel has done, and create employment for the people of British Columbia.

These fabrication yards at Squamish are not only the yards and buildings themselves. There are going to have to be serviced lots out there. Homes and roads and schools are going to have to be built for the employees of this shop. This is going to contribute to the tax base of Squamish; it is going to enlarge their population; it is going to create employment for all the building trades that work on the construction of those homes.

I would like to touch also on the homeowner grants. The renters' grants are up; the senior citizens' grants are up; the homeowner grants are up. I wonder just what the opposition thinks that the average person and the senior citizens do with this increase in

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grants. Do they think they put it in the bank and save it? I can tell you right now that these grants have to be increased to fight inflation. Every dollar that is put into the hands of these citizens is going to be put back into circulation in the economy. They're not going to sit on it. That's going to be spent for goods and services in their own neighbourhood, from the small garages to the small grocery stores and the supermarkets. They're going to spend it for clothing and shoes. All of it is going to have a spin-out effect that will create employment and keep the province on a much more steady basis.

Coming from an area like Kamloops, so dependent on forestry, I was pleased to see that there was a \$40 million increase in the budget for Lands, Forests and Water Resources. In the past we have not had enough reforestation done. There has never been enough replanting to take care of the areas that have been cut. This is going to provide employment and it is going to provide new forests for the future for our children and the industry, It's going to provide employment in the nurseries. They'll have to be enlarged and there will have to be more employees there to keep up with the greater reforestation of the logged-off areas.

Interjection.

MR. G.H. ANDERSON: "How many?" Let's pin it down. Once again we are back to the nit-picking. How many? Is it going to be 1,000 or 800? Therefore, we can zero in on the difference.

I think the public should be aware of this and this House should be aware that a lot of the money that is in this budget to be spent has come from the investment of the government in the traditional areas kept for private enterprise: Can-Cel, Plateau Mills and the petroleum corporation have all returned money to the Treasury of this province to be used to keep the province buoyant.

On top of the \$40 million, of course, for forestry, there was an extra \$15 million separate from that to create employment in this department in much-needed work. I'm sure that when the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams) speaks he will have more information on how that extra money will be used and the employment it will create, on top of the greater reforestation, road building, and nursery work.

We have heard a lot of criticism about education in spite of the fact that the Minister circulated to all members of this House the number of schools built, the number of gymnasiums built, the number of libraries built last year, which was at an all-time record high. Yet we are not doing the right things in education.

Cariboo College sat there in Kamloops with the academic and vocational wings sharing one building. They had a cafeteria. That was all. They have had approval now for a library and a gym. Last week I was talking to one of the deans from the college who was down to see the Department of Education for the next project when the contract had just been let for the library and gym. They want a science building and one other building. They certainly have every hope of getting it.

One of the greatest benefits, I think, to the educational system in this province when this government came to power was the ability of school boards to now acquire sites for future building. Now they can plan on the past five years' increase in population. They can have a very good idea of how much it will increase in the next five years and

be able to acquire sites at a reasonable price, rather than waiting for the higher costs later on.

I have a document here with regard to School District 26 in the North Thompson in my riding. They are a small community scattered all along Highway 5 there for a length of 100 miles. In this approved budget for School District 26 is \$47,600 for site acquisition, \$511,000 for buildings and additions, and \$53,700, I believe, for equipment. Then there is fire loss, risk reductions, renovations — coming to a total of \$732,300, approved for sharing on a 50-50 basis with those small communities by the provincial government.

I think, once again, the complaints about the Education department are nit-picking simply following a few of the headlines that have come out in the press.

I wish to touch on two other items, Mr. Speaker, before I sit down and yield to the Member for Skeena (Mr. Dent). This government gets criticized so often in the press that you begin to wonder that maybe some of it is true. But fortunately a well-known writer in Victoria came out in praise of this government on December 19, 1974. That is Mr. Jack Scott writing in the *Victoria Times*. I think most of us have read Jack's writings over the years. For many, many years he was writing for *The Vancouver Sun*. He said:

"It interested me recently when the most influential of the open-line commentators had an interview with the Premier on a circuit of B.C. commercial radio stations. This man never resists the chance to shaft the NDP government in his day-to-day broadcasts, as do all the highly paid men who work for the vested interests of the millionaire owners.

"There is hardly a morning when he doesn't speak of the arrogance or the patronage of the government, with the willing help of a regular stable of phoners-in. But on this morning, to introduce Barrett, he elected to recite the accomplishments of the government in the last two and a half years. It was an impressive —

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indeed, a shining — record of achievement that dwarfs into insignificance the everyday barbs of the best-informed critics."

"It is worthwhile exercise to go back over the legislation that has been enacted by this government since they took office. Barrett himself has said more has been done for the ordinary citizen of British Columbia in these past two and a half years than was done in 22 years of Social Credit dominance, It is a statement that cannot be faulted."

I do like finding these things by press people who apparently can get by the barbs and the small criticisms that come from the opposition in the House simply because there is nothing left on them in this budget that they can really get hold of.

One of the most important items in the budget for the interior ridings, mine included, is the increase to the budget of the Department of Recreation and Conservation. I know the Minister will probably be talking about the whole department. I would just like to zero in on what has happened in two and a half years to the fish and wildlife branch. As most of you know, Kamloops is one of the centres for fishing and recreation in the province.

Let's look at the budgets first. In 1971, there was a budget for the fish and wildlife branch of \$2.7 million; in 1974, \$7.1 million; and this year there was almost a \$3 million increase. The fish and wildlife has finally got to their goal of a \$10 million budget.

One thing that this is going to mean, and is meaning now, is that you're not going to have people going around jack-lighting deer and catching over their limit in trout, emptying out lakes that the taxpayer spends money stocking, when you have enough conservation officers.

It also means that instead of simply putting on a conservation officer, as has been done in the past, they'll be able to get a bit of decent equipment with a budget like this. They already have received a few four-wheel-d rive vehicles and I'm sure they'll be getting more. No longer, as under the previous government, will they be issued with a pair of second-hand snowshoes and have to borrow a car from the forestry department.

In 1972, there were 58 conservation officers in the field. Last year in 1974 there were 135. I don't think 13 5

is enough yet for the size of the province and for the game and fish and the number of tourists we have, It will probably have to be increased. But 58 conservation officers in 1972 to cover a province of this size was a disgrace. Everyone in the fish and game clubs knew it, the hiking clubs, the riding clubs and the naturalists all knew it wasn't enough.

Putting these extra conservation officers on, adding to the swelling bureaucracy of the civil service, had the result of a 43 per cent increase in convictions last year for violators, almost double the number of convictions.

The department has acquired 6,000 acres of land in the Kootenays and other areas for interior game management, and this includes waterfowl areas. There have been 2,000 elk fed in the East Kootenays on an experimental basis. This is quite a difference than in the past when their feeding ground was flooded by the previous government, and the feeding ground of thousands of deer was flooded.

I won't go into the recreational facilities fund Act, but in British Columbia over 30 fish and game clubs have been granted over \$1 million for various projects such as buildings and range management.

The public conservation fund, Mr. Minister, should be increased. This is a \$50,000 fund to assist in conservation projects in areas where club members supply the labour and material. There, once again, you have public involvement, but quite often they're short of the necessary money.

In Kamloops, there was one grant made for a youth project on a lake called McConnell Lake, not too far from Kamloops. The other out of this fund was to help reclaim a lake that continually freezes off. They will be able to erect a windmill now, aerate that lake all winter, and obviate restocking it every summer.

I see that the Hon. Member for Skeena (Mr. Dent) has a half-hour of our time left. I had a lot more that I could say about a lot more departments, Mr. Speaker, but perhaps we'll save them for estimates. It gives me great pleasure to know that when the vote comes on this budget, I will be able to stand up and vote for it and talk about it all over my riding.

MR. H.D. DENT (Skeena): It seems to be, first of all, a little bit quieter here than the last time I spoke. I guess everybody is already a bit wearier than they were then.

I'd like to begin with two items of good news for our constituency. I always hate making these announcements but I have to make them every couple of weeks. It just has to be done.

The first one is that I was informed today that there's a contract just been awarded for \$2,792,792 to Edco Construction Ltd. for a project to put some rock fill on a stretch of highway west of Terrace to widen it. This will mean going out about 100 feet, I think, into the Skeena River. This is part of a continuing series of projects that are going on for highway construction. I'm always interested in the opposition saying that nothing is happening. This is fascinating. They've just never been up there to see, that's all.

The second one that is of interest, I think, to the House is this one: the Department of Housing has acquired a 40-foot subdivision at Alexander Avenue and Bartholomew Street in the north end of Kitimat. The serviced lots on an 8.2-acre site were purchased for

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\$264,000 through Central Mortgage and Housing Corp. This is through the Department of Housing. Negotiations are now under way to accelerate the construction of homes in this subdivision. Very good news for the people of Kitimat.

As I said, these things drop on my desk every week or so and I have to have the unpleasant task of announcing them to the people in the constituency. Many things are happening up there.

I would just like to review a few things. Before I do, though, I'm very interested in what's happening in the

other political parties at the present time, particularly now that the date has been set by the Highways Minister (Hon. Mr. Lea) for the next election on May 26. I understand there's a great flurry of nomination contests in the Social Credit Party. Living up to the expectations of the leader of the Social Credit Party (Mr. Bennett), there is a whole new crop of young promising candidates coming on-stream to fill these candidacies. I'll just mention a few names that I've read about recently or heard about.

One of them is a young, new chap who is new to the political scene named Mr. Dan Campbell, who has offered his name for nomination in Comox. Another one is a young, new, promising, coming person who has offered his name in Skeena, Mr. Cyril Shelford. Then I understand that there are a few others who are waiting to make their announcements, promising new candidates — Grace McCarthy and many others....

HON. R.M. STRACHAN (Minister of Transport and Communications): Same old gang!

MR. DENT: Actually I was really worried for a while.... I wasn't really worried, but I was kind of pondering for a minute and I thought that maybe Mr. Shelford was worried, because I've seen a lot of Mr. Gaglardi in my riding recently; he's building a motel complex out there, and he's been around town. I run into him in the grocery store quite a lot and I thought: "Well, maybe he is planning to make his home here." We'll have a nomination contest between Cyril Shelford and P.A. Gaglardi for the Social Credit nomination. This is going to be quite a new crop, and it will be fascinating to see all these new faces coming to run in the various parties.

The \$3,223 million budget will have quite an impact in my riding, Skeena, where we are — I won't say embarrassed by riches, but you could safely say that things have never been better. Certainly they've never been better in Skeena constituency than they are and have been during the last two and a half years. There is a high rate of unemployment at the present time, that's true. However the government is taking many measures to alleviate this unemployment, of which I will mention a few. I might point out that the unemployment rate existing at the present time is not the result of this government's actions, but rather a failure of the private sector on a world-wide basis.

I just want to say a few words about the world situation. I think we really haven't discussed it enough in this Legislature. Really we are involved in two or three major — well, you could almost call them — world wars, or world conflicts. One conflict, of course, is the ongoing conflict between the communist world and the capitalist world, and for social democratic countries that are caught in the middle it is a very unpleasant experience. It is having a devastating effect on the world economy in many respects and has had an impact on our economy in B.C.

The other conflict is the Arab/Israeli conflict — which has almost become a world-wide thing — through the various measures taken by Arab countries, OPEC countries. This is having an impact on our economy as well.

So we have these world events that are impinging upon our economy, and it takes a very ignorant person to really say that this has been the result of the NDP. Are we responsible for the Arab/Israeli conflict here in B.C.? Are we responsible for the world-wide conflict between the communists and the capitalists? We can do a great deal to alleviate the situation, but we certainly can't really solve the world problem here in British Columbia, although we can certainly offer our advice; and we have, I think, some good advice to offer.

In the department of northern affairs the allocation was \$402,000, I believe, for the Minister's office. Now some people might say, well, that's quite a lot of money for the Minister of northern affairs to have. But really he is working extremely hard. He holds meetings, and when he comes into any community such as Hazelton or Smithers, he doesn't come in and meet for three or four hours. They start their meetings in the morning, and they go right through until the last person is heard in the evening, and sometimes that is late at night. As far as I'm concerned, he's one of the hardest working Members of this House.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. DENT: Certainly the hardest working Minister. It doesn't matter whether it is a cold, freezing hall they are in, or whether it is a hotel or whatever. In order that the people might be heard, this Minister, the Minister of northern affairs, Alf Nunweiler, is letting them have their hearing.

It is very important that there are staff with him from some of the various departments, working in a cooperative manner. This is new, I believe. I don't think that the people in the north have ever had that experience, before we came to power, of having the various departments of government on a regular basis

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sitting down together to listen to people's problems and discussing in a cooperative way a proper approach to these problems.

For example, on Tuesday night coming up I'm going to be attending a meeting, God willing, in the Kispiox Valley. Now this is a little valley in the middle of British Columbia, hardly important to people in Victoria. But the people in the Kispiox Valley are, in my judgment, very important people, just like everybody else in this province. At this meeting to discuss the planning for forest development in that area there will be a senior officer from the district forester's office, a senior man from the new regional office in Smithers from the fish and wildlife branch, a senior man from the new regional office for the parks branch in Smithers, and they are going to be sitting down and discussing these plans together with the people of the Kispiox Valley.

Now, to me that is a wonderful thing. It's a wonderful thing to have that kind of cooperation among the government departments and that kind of consultation with the local people. This is the kind of work that this Minister of northern affairs is seeking to encourage and promote. I say that every dollar that is going to be spent in that department will be of great benefit to the people of the north and to the people of this province.

For the Minister of Agriculture's office, I notice the budget allocation increased from \$26 million to \$60 million. Again, this seems like a massive increase, but there's a very simple reason for this. The farmers of this province were the most neglected group of people in the whole economy of this province until the NDP came to power. The difference between the last budget in 1972 under Social Credit and this budget this year is unbelievable — the difference in the amount of money that's allocated. I hope that every farmer in this province realizes that they are finally getting the first-class attention that they've always deserved as being the basic food-producing people in this province. The shabby treatment that they used to get was just not fair and reasonable.

The farm income assurance plans are proving to be very popular and for the first time many farmers will be able to take a holiday, because of the provisions of this plan. Many farmers have worked for years and never been able to take time off for longer than maybe half a day or a day. So now some of them for the very first time will be able to enjoy a little bit of security and maybe have a week or two of holidays in the summer, or whenever they can get away.

In my constituency the dairy farmers are presently benefiting from this plan, and I have no doubt that it won't be too long before the beef ranchers will also be benefiting from this plan.

In the Attorney-General's department there's been already an improvement in probation services. Instead of one probation officer for Terrace, we now have two probation officers for Terrace. You think: "Well, what's that?" Well, for those kids who we're trying to rescue, you might say, from their sins or from their crimes, this is an extremely important move. Those kids are important to us.

Just the other day, I had the very unpleasant experience of having a talk to somebody whose 21-year-old son had committed suicide. This was an extremely unpleasant experience in some ways, but then I began to think: how much do we really care about the kids of our province? I was listening to an open-line programme of Mr. Gerry Bannerman yesterday morning as I was driving along the highway. He had people on there and they were being asked their opinions about various individual cases of juvenile offences. By the end of the programme, when they realized who these kids were and the kind of problems they had to cope with and the fact that they were real human beings, everybody on the phone line was on their side and wanted to fight for them. Part of the trouble with this problem in the past is that nobody really saw them as human beings, as people with a name and a mother and a father, brothers and sisters and so on. They saw them strictly as troublemakers, juvenile delinquents. "Throw them in jail — lock them up" — that sort of approach.

Finally, through the Minister of Human Resources (Hon. Mr. Levi) and the Attorney-General's (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) department, these people are starting to be treated as real human beings and maybe their lives can be saved. In some cases, they might not be able to, but at least I think a much greater number of these individual human beings, children of our communities, will be saved. I like the idea of a challenge to the communities to do something about the problems rather than sending them off to a distant institution where they're almost certain to come back as hardened criminals, or well educated in crime.

The community has that responsibility. They can't just go and live their life watching TV and going to the pub and doing all of these things and failing to accept the responsibility for kids who are getting into trouble in their own community. They have to accept those responsibilities, accept the challenge and really try to do something about them. Certainly there'll be a requirement for locking up the dangerous ones or the ones who need protecting from themselves, but that's not the solution. The solution is to see them as a human being, as a child of our community.

In the old days, under the tribal society, the tribe looked on the children as belonging to everybody. If a child was in any kind of trouble, the whole tribe considered it their duty to help get that kid straightened out. Everybody considered it their duty to get him straightened out. In our modern nuclear family situation, compartmentalized society, people do not accept that kind of responsibility collectively

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as they should. Therefore I'm very pleased with the developments that have taken place in probation services and in the Human Resources department. Once you see them as real people, then the whole situation changes.

I might point out that there is more than one kid who has committed suicide after getting into trouble with the law and being faced with the possibility of a court action. Had some efforts been made with them previously or something been done previously they might never have come to that point. If they'd had proper probation services, they might not have got into that state of mind.

The Department of Economic Development is going to be very important in our future in our part of the world. There is an expansion of services being developed, and pamphlets are now being printed and made available for small businessmen and so on. There will really be three kinds of service, as far as I can see.

First, there will be loans through the B.C. Development Corp., and some of those have already been granted. This will increase. Secondly, there is availability of research information on economic matters for small businessmen who often can't afford to do their own. Thirdly, there will be business counselling. Again, for a small businessman or somebody who is contemplating going into business it's very important that they should know in advance how they should conduct their business and whether it is an economically viable possibility.

So I welcome the increased amount of money there. Like some of the opposition Members, I wish there had been a little more money put into that area, but if it would mean taking it out of education or health, then I say, well, you know, we have to be really careful about that. But I would like to see an increased amount over the next two or three years for the Department of Economic Development.

Education: I just learned yesterday that the government had approved the proposal by the Skeena-Cassiar School District for their expenditures — and also in Smithers a few days ago — and it will amount to a couple of million dollars for a new secondary school in Smithers and for extensions to schools at Kitwanga, Hazelton, and Uplands school in Terrace. So, again, we are very pleased by the fact that they are not holding back on the money for the needed school construction at this time. Rather, the money is being released and the construction is going ahead and the needs of education are being met.

Similarly, with the Department of Health, we have a new hospital they are going to start building it next month in Hazelton. This hospital was established by the United Church of Canada and now has a board representative of the church and of the region. I had the privilege of attending their hospital meeting where Mr. Glenwright announced to them that the project would soon be proceeding. Again, his was a very happy moment for the community. It serves a large native population in the area. This new hospital will cost in excess of \$3 million and

will take approximately two years to build and will commence in April.

We are optimistic that work can commence soon also on the extension to the Terrace hospital. This could be a considerable amount, possibly even up to \$6 million or \$6.5 million — or some figure between \$2 million and \$6 million. Again, we are optimistic that this should soon be underway. Part of the project will be the provision for psychiatric beds, the first psychiatric beds in northwestern B.C., and I, for one, want to see those beds built as soon as possible and made available.

MR. WALLACE: Not in Kitimat, eh?

MR. DENT: Well, it has to be a regional facility and I think we may be able to consider Kitimat afterwards, but there has to be something put in the region first to serve the entire region. When you consider that Terrace is obviously the most central to Stewart, to Hazelton, to Prince Rupert and so on, that would be the best location at the present time. But I would hope that psychiatric services would be made available very shortly to Kitimat, arising out of the construction of this project.

I don't think I can overestimate the value of the new ambulance service to people in my riding. It used to be a very expensive proposition for a person to go to a hospital by ambulance. Many people would be taken in the backs of station wagons or even sitting up in a car when they were badly injured just so they wouldn't have to pay that ambulance fee. Well, now, with the new expanded ambulance service and the \$5 trip for surface transportation, for surface ambulance trips, this is a great benefit to the people of the Skeena constituency. I hope the day will come before too long — I realize that everything can't be done overnight — when people who need to be transferred from Terrace or from that area down to Vancouver will also have a considerably reduced ambulance fee.

Interjection.

MR. DENT: Yes, I would like it done right now but, as I said, there are lots of things we would like to do right now.

HON. MR. COCKE: It's not in the Liberal budget.

MR. DENT: Highways department. Now I mentioned one new project, but I would like to just refer to two or three others. Providing they get the centre pier done in the Skeena River before high water...

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MR. WALLACE: Yea! I never thought they'd do it.

MR. DENT: ...the word is that this bridge will be finished by late 1975 or early 1976.

MR. WALLACE: The Romans didn't take that long.

MR. DENT: The Hudson Street bridge and many other bridges have taken a long time to build, too. There is nothing simple about building a bridge, especially when it's very difficult putting the piers in.

The bridge at Kitwanga is now well under construction, the piers have been built, the steel will soon be put in place, and that bridge will be finished by the end of this year as well. The Socreds couldn't even build one new bridge across the Skeena River; we are building two. I think that's fantastic. Also, we have built so many bridges they are popping up like mushrooms all up and down the highway and roads.

Interjection.

MR. DENT: I am just thinking that if they hold off the election too long we won't have anything left to build — they are building it all now.

MR. LEWIS: Build some in my riding.

MR. WALLACE: We want a bridge in Tahsis.

MR. DENT: There is also work continuing on the highway project in Mr. Calder's riding, but people in Terrace think it is in mine so I will mention it. It's between Kitwanga and Meziadin Lake, the section between Meziadin Lake and Cranberry Junction. There will be at least one 10-mile construction project there this summer and possibly a second one. The second one is not certain yet. Again, each new development there is important.

I just want to say a word about the change. Mr. Phillips and Mr. Smith are not here, so please don't tell them. This new road that is being built is now, for the first time, marked on the road maps of British Columbia.

AN HON. MEMBER: Point of order.

MR. DENT: I'm sorry. It is the Hon. Members for North Peace River and South Peace River.

MR. LEWIS: They thought it was in Alaska.

MR. WALLACE: Picky, picky.

MR. DENT: At any rate, I want to say that this new road route connecting Highway 16 to the Stewart-Cassiar Highway appears for the first time on the road maps of British Columbia. Furthermore, the trucking companies have discovered it and so there is an increasing amount of Alaska traffic that is beginning to flow over that road. In fact, it is escalating very rapidly. On weekends the traffic on that road is bumper-to-bumper going up the Stewart-Cassiar. I am sorry to say that it is taking traffic off the road to Fort St. John and the Alaska Highway. As the road is gradually improved and people get to know about it, I have no doubt that in not too many years from now, probably two or three years, most of the traffic going to Alaska will go that way because it is a much shorter route.

The Housing department has mentioned one new project just announced today. There is also a land assembly project going on in Terrace. Land assembly has been done in Smithers. You might say that this department is right on the ball. I am very pleased with the Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson). He is right there; he is taking advantage of every situation. In fact, he is remarkably wide awake and alert. He is right on the bit. I appreciate the work he is doing in my constituency. In fact, I don't know how, in such a short time, he has managed to acquaint himself with the situation throughout the whole province so quickly and can relate himself to the needs of the province so quickly.

MR. LEWIS: He is a good Minister.

MR. DENT: Human Resources. We just received word that Terrace was one of the 15 centres in British Columbia that is going to have an election for a community resources board. We are very pleased about that. That will allow, again, for more local decision-making. There are some very good people in our part of the country involved with the community resources council, which was the interim board. They undoubtedly will be taking an active part and interest in this new community resources board.

I would mention one person in particular, Mrs. Margaret Langley, who has done an outstanding job. There have been others as well. We are confident that this board will be a success in turn. It does depend on the cooperation of the community groups and the leadership in the community generally. I think it will succeed very well in Terrace.

There is, of course, the Labour department. I just had the privilege of participating in the official opening of the new regional office of the Workers' Compensation Board in Terrace. This again will enable claims to be adjudicated right in Terrace instead of having to be done in Vancouver. The colonialism is gradually ending; regional decision-making is taking over. I am very pleased, generally, with the attitude of the entire cabinet in this respect. They have moved very quickly to bring

regional decision-making into a reality in every department and in every area.

We are also going to get a new occupational environment inspector, formerly known as a factories inspector. Maybe you think that that is just a little thing again, like getting another probation officer. It is not a little thing when it means the difference between safe working conditions and unsafe working conditions because of inadequate inspection that existed in the past under the former government. The inspections were just not done frequently enough or regularly enough. Now they will be done much more quickly.

I could go on and on. I could talk for hours about...

MR. WALLACE: I'd rather you didn't.

AN HON. MEMBER: I want to get out of here.

MR. DENT: ...all of the things that will be done in our constituency arising from this budget.

I am going to stop here with a smile on my face and a joy of content in my heart, knowing that the people of my riding are in safe hands under this government. I hope the day won't come that they will ever have to go back to a government that doesn't care about the northwest part of British Columbia.

Mr. Calder moves adjournment of debate.

Motion approved.

HON. L.T. NIMSICK (Minister of Mines and Petroleum Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a former MLA for Burnaby-Edmonds sitting in the gallery, Cedric Cox.

Hon. Mr. Strachan moves adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

The House adjourned at 12:59 p.m.

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