

[Chairman: Mr. Stiles]

[8:30 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll call the committee to order. We have one matter before us this morning, and that is to complete discussion of Bill Pr. 9, the Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton Act.

Mr. Walker, you have a new witness today. I'll ask Mr. Clegg to please swear your witness.

I assume your witnesses realize they are still under oath.

MR. PARKER: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

[Mr. Szezechina was sworn in]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. It's almost like one of these serialized programs on TV. Last week committee members were asking some questions, and I have the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking as the first member on the list whose question was not reached at the last meeting.

MR. LYSONS: I think I'll defer this morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Vegreville.

MR. BATIUK: No I didn't, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Calgary McCall.

MR. NELSON: I'll defer, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you have any questions at all that you want to put to these witnesses at this time?

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Chairman, I recall what I wanted to ask. Would the city representatives be able to tell me whether the club paid taxes prior to this, or were they exempt?

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the question could be repeated.

MR. BATIUK: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I was just wondering whether the Hillcrest club which owned the centre prior was tax exempt.

MR. SZECHECHINA: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I'm in no position to answer the question. I could make an educated guess, but I'm not positive whether they paid taxes or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the question was whether they were assessed taxes. Whether they paid them or not is maybe another matter.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, in the material we were sent yesterday, I notice that this matter came before the city council and the former mayor. My question is, has it come before the present council? Has the present council passed a motion or anything relating to it?

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, the material that was filed last time included a certified copy of a

resolution of the present council, tabling this matter pending a review by the cultural ad hoc committee. That was in November, and it was the current mayor and council.

MR. HYLAND: A supplementary, Mr. Chairman. I missed that in the material. I wasn't here for all of last week's meeting so I don't know if there was an alderman here or not. But I should say this. If the council feels very strongly about this issue and they're very opposed to it — and no offence meant to the gentlemen present — why is one of the aldermen not here?

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, it's customary to have legal representation and the member of the administration charged with the specific question before the House attend at the Private Bills Committee. This has been our practice on a number of private Bills incorporating the authorities, and quite frankly I suppose there was no need to send an alderman along.

MR. HYLAND: [Inaudible] but I can think of the convention authority and the research authority. I don't know if they were this time, but I do remember that when they were initiated there were alderman present. They felt strongly about those Bills, and the aldermen that were on the committee were present.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Chairman, I apologize for not having my thoughts completely in order this morning. I can't seem to find the papers where I made my notes.

In your last section it says:

shall be exempt from all municipal and school taxes of every nature whatsoever, with effect from January 1, 1984, for so long as the lands are registered in the name of the Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton and used for the fulfillment of its objects.

That's a very, very broad clause. It causes me a great deal of concern, because there's a great deal of land involved here and a great deal of room for changing the use of your land. I could see a situation where you could have a small section of your land fulfilling your objects and the balance of your land used for some other purpose. I don't know how you would change that to make it more compatible with the city, but it's certainly an awful lot to ask.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PARKER: I can respond to that, Mr. Chairman. The language is very similar to language used in the Calgary Jewish Centre Act, which was passed last year, and also very similar to some of the statutes involving the YMCA and their exemptions as recently as 1964. So the style of drafting is actually parallel to similar Acts that have been passed by the Legislature in the past.

Regarding the area of land, most of the land is on the hill on the north side of the river valley, so the majority of the land is really not usable. It's below the top of the bank and is really not practical for development, unless we were going to do an \$80 million convention centre, if one assumes that's a practical sort of development.

MR. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, if I could add a comment. I can certainly review the drafting of this. It is consistent with what's been done before. But the intention is that this limitation should mean that all the lands are being used for the purposes of the centre, and the exemption would expire if some of those lands were not used. If the committee feels, after consideration, that the wording should be tightened up, then I think we could look at that. But I think the intention, or what I read into this when I approved the wording as I received the petition, was that they would have to be using all those lands for their purposes. They couldn't just use one acre for those purposes and then develop the rest as a commercial development.

MRS. KOPER: I'm not sure who could answer this first question. First of all, I wonder if there are any other community centres in the vicinity of this centre?

MR. MILLER: The city does have city community centres. There is a small community centre, the Rio Terrace community centre, which is about five blocks away from this site. It is strictly sports oriented and has a skating rink, tennis courts, and a small clubhouse.

MRS. KOPER: A supplementary, Mr. Chairman. I notice in the notes we were given that in 1981 an appeal was handed down whereby it was judged that the mode of operating was like a private club. I wonder if you could refresh my memory about the membership again. I realize it is open. Do you have any statistics that perhaps say how much of the community is using it as opposed to the Jewish community using it? Have you collected anything on that line?

MR. MILLER: Madam, as I stated to you at the last session, I'm sorry, we don't ask people their religious backgrounds. We obviously know some of the people from our synagogues and parochial schools. I can advise you, though, that we just recently embarked on a very extensive advertising campaign to increase our membership. We budgeted close to \$10,000 to do this campaign. The advertising was done by television, radio, buses, and billboards. It was done throughout the city of Edmonton, primarily from 109 Street west to the river, and in fact was done on the other side of the river in the Riverbend area. We are trying to appeal to a very broad area of membership. This campaign, I might state, has increased our membership by 75 families.

MRS. KOPER: The last question is regarding the operation of the pool, Mr. Chairman. If the YWCA operates the pool, is that strictly an arrangement whereby they do the instruction and that sort of thing, or is there a fee charged by the YWCA for their management, I guess, and use of it?

MR. MILLER: That's a very good question, and I'm glad you brought it up. The arrangement we have with the YMCA, not the YWCA, Madam, is that we are sharing time with the YMCA. The YMCA staffs the facility, and at specific times they run structured class programs. At the other times, they have the facilities available to the people who are token

members of the centre, and it is primarily used for free swimming, some organized swimming, some sports games.

Our arrangement with the YMCA presently calls for us to pay them \$12,000 a year on top of our paying all utilities and costs and not getting anything back other than staffing. We are presently negotiating with the YMCA for an ongoing renewal of this contract, in which they are now asking us for an \$18,000 a year contribution in 1985. This is an item we're prepared to pay, because we feel the building is being used by a far greater number of citizens of the city of Edmonton through the combined programs of ourselves and the YMCA. However, it is disheartening that we have to pay more each year to keep them in there, but maybe with the tax relief it will help us.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might interject at this point and ask for an opportunity to respond to the hon. member from Calgary's first question about community clubs in the vicinity. Thank you. Go ahead.

MR. SZCZECZINA: Mr. Chairman, there is a difference, I think, between a community league and the kind of organization that is represented here by the Jewish Community Centre. A community league is a facility that is open to everyone. Every member has the same voice, vote, and opportunity to hold executive office. Every member has every right to do whatever is allowed under the constitution and bylaws of that community league. I'm not sure that's the case with the Jewish Community Centre. That difference exists.

In addition, the community league is a structured organization that has specific purposes under specific regulations of the Parks and Recreation Department. The community league cannot change those purposes or digress from those purposes to any great extent unless they get permission from the city to do so. If they change or digress from those purposes, they stand to lose their status as a community league. I'm not sure that that exists with the Jewish Community Centre. I think the Jewish Community Centre can change its purposes as it deems appropriate.

I think the point here is that you do not give a grant or a tax exemption to an organization because they own a facility. You give them a grant or a tax exemption because they are providing a worthy community purpose. Who investigates on a regular basis as to whether that purpose is continuing to be met if you do not have any kind of say over what kind of programming, et cetera, is going to be allowed?

This is another concern of the city. We also have a significant number of ethnocultural groups in the city of Edmonton, some of which own their own property — the Polish centre, the Ukrainian Youth Unity Centre — and all of which have varying kinds of recreational activities that could be compared to the YM or YWCA or some of the other organizations that receive relief for whatever reason from the city or receive grants from the city. It is the city's concern that all of these groups be treated equally. The process of the Legislature now becoming involved — and I submit, with respect, perhaps prematurely — creates a problem for the city in that you may be inviting applications of this kind from

numerous other groups. Your action doesn't directly affect your costs, but it could surely affect the city's costs.

We're simply looking not to deny this organization that which it seeks but to ensure that all organizations have an equal opportunity under some kind of a structured system wherein we can review their programs on an ongoing basis to see if their programs are meeting the needs of the citizens. It is the needs of the citizens that are paramount here, not the name of the organization or the fact that the organization purports to be a community organization. It is that program that is important, and if they go away from that program and it is the exclusive right of this organization and organizations like it to change their program, is it then necessary for the taxpayer to continue to give them subsidies or whatever in the way of aid or relief? That's the point the city is trying to make in this circumstance. We would like to ensure that there is an ongoing inspection of program, and we would like to ensure that all organizations are treated alike if they have a similar base in their beginnings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Highwood.

MR. HYLAND: Highwood?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Highwood asked to be recognized earlier.

MR. ALGER: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

To the committee: number one, could you quickly tell me what the taxes are presently? \$48,000 runs in my mind. Is that about right?

Mr. Chairman, as you're probably well aware, these societies in every village and town across the country do an awful lot of good for their communities. I find it hard to place a tax on their system, just as I would on a church, for instance. I think churches for the most part are exempt from taxation, municipal or otherwise.

I can't help but think that in a city with 600,000 people — the tax money has to come from somewhere to meet the budgets, but an increase of taxes on every soul in town would amount to 10 cents to subsidize, if that's the word, to relieve this tax burden on the Jewish Community Centre, which from what I read here is doing an awful lot of good for the community.

By the same token, as the man from the Edmonton system mentioned, the structured system of most cities and towns, particularly the ones I've been involved in — when there is a tax relief, if you like, it's usually charged by the city and then determined how much of it should be returned, as it were. In short, you pay the tax bill but then get a rebate. In many cases, the value to the community is assessed in this manner. Supposing the tax bill were \$48,000, it could be that they would be relieved of \$32,000 of it, depending on the appraisal or assessment of the good they are doing.

Who that assessor would be, would be some kind of genius. In short, in small towns and communities, it's usually done on a sort of half-and-half basis.

MR. HYLAND: Usually the mayor.

MR. ALGER: Generally the mayor is the assessor, as

the Member for Cypress indicates.

I had another question that would have some bearing on it. The actual ability to earn more money for taxation purposes could be involved in this membership fee, which in my estimation is beautifully low at \$105 to \$420 maximum a year. As you can appreciate, in many clubs that are running as clubs, where there is no tax relief and the value to the community isn't that great, the membership fees are far more exorbitant than these figures. I don't know whether they would consider overhauling the particular department of their membership fee. I hate to suggest they have to raise them; on the other hand, you just don't get nothing in this life for nothing. Somehow or other you have to assess that very carefully too.

I think the tax burden on the citizens of Edmonton is probably high enough now, albeit another 10 cents shouldn't worry anybody. Unfortunately that isn't the way it works. Somebody's going to be paying \$10, and a lot of people get away for nothing.

I'd just like to conclude on my opening remark. I hate to see them taxed if there's any possible way to get around it.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman and hon. members, the city did provide relief to the tune of waiver of \$48,525 in tax penalties under section 106 of the Municipal Taxation Act. In addition, the centre has applied for a cultural grant of \$100,000, which is currently under review by the ad hoc committee on culture.

MR. HYLAND: Firstly, on that last point, the \$100,000 cultural grant. Is that totally from city coffers, or is that a transfer from the MCR fund from the provincial government?

MR. SZCZECZINA: Mr. Chairman, the \$100,000 grant that has been applied for here is totally from city coffers. I should advise that the cash portions of the grants in aid are complete except for appeals, and most of the cultural funds have been expended. In the case of all of our cultural groups, most of whom were applying for cash for subsidy purposes, council tabled all of those applications, and there are sufficient funds set aside for subsidy purposes if and when a recommendation — I should rephrase that; when a recommendation. It will come down; we don't know what that recommendation will be. When the ad hoc committee on culture brings down its recommendation, it will then set some guidelines as to how we are going to look after subsidies, be they subsidies for taxes and/or subsidies for rent relief, whatever the case may be. So there are sufficient funds left aside to accommodate, if not entirely, a portion of the \$100,000 that the Jewish Community Centre is seeking.

In addition, the city council contingency fund has \$82,000 remaining in it, and that contingency fund is city dollars intended to look after appeals, et cetera. There are also significant dollars — although the figure doesn't come readily to mind — remaining in another fund called the Executive Committee regular fund, and those are city dollars as well.

What we're talking about here are city dollars. This is not an MCR program or anything of that nature. These are dollars set aside by the city for the purposes of assisting worthy organizations based

on their programs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Parker, did you want to comment on that point? Or was it something else?

MR. PARKER: It was on Mr. Walker's point and earlier points of Mr. Szczechina.

Mr. Walker indicated that there has been relief granted from penalties, but the ongoing annual municipal taxes continue to be charged against the property at the rate of approximately \$48,000 a year, and they continue to mount.

Regarding Mr. Szczechina's remarks that there are many other clubs that perhaps would also be interested in relief from municipal taxation, I refer to the memorandum dated August 9, 1983, from T. E. Adams to Mayor Purves, which Mr. Walker indicated would be filed with the committee. It indicates:

There are about 80 private bill exemptions in the City. The tax equivalent is about \$2.0 million.

Then the various organizations are listed, including the YM and the YWCA.

The memo goes on to say, "There are 33 private clubs in the City, taxable at about \$500,000". That's the smaller part that's left, and then a list is provided of these other clubs. They include such organizations as Edmonton Country Club Ltd., Oilfield Technical Society, Derrick Golf & Winter Club, Faculty Club, Big Time Investments Ltd., Edmonton Petroleum Club. Most of them are of a fundamentally different nature. It's our view that we are like the YMCA and YWCA and the Calgary Centre.

The floodgates argument is just not a valid one. Last year, the Calgary Jewish Centre came before the Legislature, asked for a private Bill, and it was granted. None of these 33 clubs in Edmonton — or in Calgary, as far as I know — has applied this year. There's been one application of this nature, and it's us. We're the same as the Calgary centre and the same as the Ys.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, the applicant is quite comparable to the Hindu cultural society of Alberta, the Sikh society of Alberta, the Dutch Canadian Club, the Italian Cultural Society, and the Ukrainian Youth Unity Centre, all of which have recreational and sports facilities and carry on more than ethnocultural programs, all of which have come to the city and asked for relief in the form of grants, all of which have been tabled pending a review by the same ad hoc committee on culture. What we're saying is merely that it's nice to consider that this is a worthy organization doing good works in Edmonton; we have no quarrel with that.

We have no quarrel with relief being granted. We have granted relief; \$50,000 in relief is still \$50,000 worth of relief, whether it's penalties or ongoing taxes. However, we have many other worthy organizations continually coming to the city for relief. Is it fair that one be singled out and given preferential treatment, particularly when a review has not been concluded and the city is merely trying to ensure an evenhanded, fair-treatment policy? It will assist the Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton, but not at the expense of other equally worthwhile organizations. That's our position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Clegg, do you have a supplementary on this?

MR. CLEGG: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask Mr. Walker — he has mentioned a number of other societies in the city which have an ethnocultural origin and have recreation facilities, that he feels might also seek exemption by legislation. From the presentation of the Jewish Community Centre, it appears that their application is based on two characteristics. One is that it is an ethnocultural centre with recreation facilities. But it seems that they have stressed the fact that as a general policy their facilities are open to the community at large, outside their ethnocultural group, not only on an exception basis but as a general policy. I wonder if you could tell us whether any of those 33 other societies of the city which are ethnoculturally centered have as a general policy the promotion of the use of their facilities by the community at large, without ethnocultural distinction?

MR. SZCZECCHINA: Yes, Mr. Chairman and members. As a condition of receiving a multicultural and recreational facility grant, every organization that receives a grant must guarantee that their facility is open for public use. I stand to be corrected. I believe the percentage is 50 percent of the time. Of those groups that were named by Mr. Walker, I believe four built their facilities with moneys granted by the provincial government, through its multicultural and recreation facility grant structure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Szczechina, I think the question would be, do those organizations have membership from the public at large? The fact that their facilities may be open to the public at some particular time is a different matter from whether they have encouraged membership by members of the public at large.

MR. SZCZECCHINA: Whether they have members from the public at large or not, Mr. Chairman, I can't answer. Perhaps the Jewish Community Centre could explain whether they have members from the public at large and whether those members are full, bona fide, voting, office-holding members or potentially office-holding members, or if those memberships are restricted. I would suspect — if I may not give direct evidence in this circumstance — that I could become an associate member of the Hindu cultural society if I chose to do so, but I would not have voting rights nor would I be in a position to hold office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe the hon. Member for Cypress has some supplementary questions.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Clegg asked one question about the membership of these other organizations that were mentioned. Another question I have is — I don't know how many indoor pools, for example, the city has, and I think it has a bearing on the issue. I note that the membership fees for the use of this facility are from \$106 to \$400 for a family, which includes a swimming pool for year-round use. In the small town where I come from, I think a family ticket for a pool for two months is something like \$50 or \$60. I wonder what the charge in similar city facilities

would be for family use for a whole year.

MR. SZCZECCHINA: Don't know, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MILLER: May I answer that please? I want to refer to a couple of things. One, I'd like the members here to understand what we call our membership policy, because it's a very difficult one and one that we have been battling with and attempting to resolve. We give our facilities, on an a la carte basis, to anyone in the city of Edmonton who wishes to use them. You can almost join up for any program by paying a program fee. We do have a differential between a member and a nonmember registration for these programs. Basically the program fee covers the cost of instruction and materials; it does not cover any other costs. The membership that we ask people to join and subscribe to is primarily for the recreational facilities of the centre. These recreation facilities are things like the free use of the swimming pool, gym, certain other facilities, et cetera. Unfortunately we do not make the swimming pool available for members on a seven-day, 24-hour-a-day basis. As I have described to you, we have an arrangement with the YMCA, where approximately one-third to 40 percent of the time they have exclusive use of the pool for running classes. Our membership will not allow a person into that class except as a preferred person to register within the class, if he so desires.

The other thing I'd like to table with you is that I do have a suggested program that was done for the winter of 1984 and the anticipated number of people that are going to be using this program. I hope this list will be circulated to the members. I think you will note on here that other than one item called Israeli folk dancing, none of them are of an ethnical nature. I'll table this for the people.

Regarding the city's control over our program, I wonder how much control they exercise over the YMCA and the YWCA. Hopefully our programs are designed for the needs of the community. Asking the question about how many members are non-Jewish — as I have said, there is no way we have an actual figure. To the best of our estimation, approximately 30 percent of our members — people who pay the membership — are not members of our faith.

At this stage of the game, when he asks whether he could join and pay his \$420 as a family member and become the president of our organization, I think that is possible. He could. We haven't held any elections; we've been operating with a steering committee for a number of years, strictly on the basis that we are a formulating club — not a club; I'm sorry, that's a bad word — a formulating organization that has a huge mortgage, has some tremendous financing to do and must try to get through this difficult problem. At the time we feel we can get ourselves out of any debt and that it can operate yearly on its ongoing income, we will be most pleased to open up voting. Many of us who are on the executive would love to give up our jobs, and we'd give it up much quicker if possible.

As to the size of the facility and the size of the acreage, I'd like the members here to realize that when the Hillcrest country club was formed, it was formed on land outside the city of Edmonton. At that time they were able to obtain title to the land down to the river and, as we said, a fair bit of the

property is below the hill line, the embankment, and is not usable other than the fact that you can view it and look over it for the beautiful scenery. When we acquired this site, we obviously had to acquire what was there. Certainly from time to time there have been ongoing discussions with the city of Edmonton about the city liking to take back the ravine area. That may someday come to fruition. But I don't see that being a major obstacle, because as I said, we have asked and tried to get some relief on taxes. Each year it has been postponed for various reasons and tabled by the city, and we're saying that we cannot afford to continue being tabled.

MR. HYLAND: About the review of programs, Mr. Chairman, one of the gentlemen from the city said that they are allowed to review the programs of other organizations, and that's partly why they receive some redemption from taxes. I wonder if he is saying it would be the city's position that if they could review the programs, they would need to have more review than do the YMCA and YWCA programs and those other organizations which are exempt. If they had this kind of review of the programs, is it the city's position that they would withdraw their objection to the removal of municipal taxes that's asked for in the Bill?

MR. SZCZECCHINA: Mr. Chairman, the purpose of giving grants, at least in the city's mind and under our grants policy, is to pay for worthy programs that are useful to as broad a spectrum of the city's citizens as possible.

The city has some degree of control over some organizations, such as the community leagues, which I mentioned earlier. Some organizations the city has no control over, such as the ethnocultural groups and the YMCA. I remind you that the YMCA received its exemption in 1909 or something like that. The city regrets that it is not able to review the program of the YMCA on an ongoing basis. It may be that the program of the YMCA has changed considerably in the interim and that for which they got their exemption initially is no longer being met. I'm not saying that's the case, but that may be the case. They have exclusive control on their program, as will the Jewish Community Centre. If the city were to be given some opportunity to look, on an ongoing basis — be it every year, every five years; whatever the case may be — at the program that is being purchased here, I'm sure there would be no problem.

However, the city must also be in a position — because it is city dollars we're talking about it, whether we give them cash or whether we relieve through not having to give cash, it is the city's prerogative not only to evaluate the worth but to evaluate the ability to pay of those people who are using the facility. I submit that that is basically our problem. That's what the cultural committee of the city of Edmonton is trying to grapple with now. Does that answer your question?

MR. HYLAND: My next question, Mr. Chairman: if the type of review could be done with their programs and proven, would you recommend to this group that their tax exemption be upheld?

MR. SZCZECCHINA: No we would not. We would submit, sir, that the city of Edmonton should have

some say with regard . . . We readily admit that it is within the purview of the Legislature to act in this respect, and you may choose to do so. But we would submit that the city of Edmonton should have some say in what is going to happen within the confines of the city with regard to the services that are being provided to the citizens of the city of Edmonton with regard to the amount of relief.

MR. HYLAND: That was my question. If this can be accomplished under some agreement, would you recommend to city council that the tax exemption be upheld?

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could be of assistance. You're talking about a tax exemption. We're talking about tax relief. There might be relief granted that is short of tax exemption; for example, 50 percent of the tax exemption, 30 percent, or no tax exemption but a cash grant. You see, this is an oversimplified solution to the problem when viewed within the sphere of the other competing cultural organizations. For that reason, the Bill is being opposed because it's not consistent with the city's cultural policy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think Mr. Levine wants to comment on this point.

MR. LEVINE: I want to assure you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of this committee that we fully intend to allow the city to review our programs, because we fully intend to apply for grant moneys from the city pursuant to their various policies. We have to go after and seek out funding for our various programs, some of which are consistent with the policies the city has. We certainly don't wish to suggest to you that in dealing with this particular Act, you're going to deny the city the opportunity to review our programs. We'll show them to the city with our application for a grant, as we did this year.

We consider these issues to be complementary in a sense. The tax exemption we're seeking and for which this Bill speaks does not limit us from going after grant moneys for specific programs whereby the city, in its wisdom, will be able to review our programs, compare them to those of other groups or societies, and decide amongst the various competing priorities those which will benefit from city funds. We don't want it to be interpreted that in pursuing an exemption from municipal taxation we're in any way afraid of having the city look at our programs, because we'll continue to go back to them for grant relief.

We'll be very happy to review the sense of control the city wants to exact over our programs, as we have in the form of the grant application we have made. We should point out, and I think it's only fair to point out, that the timing of the relief from the penalty on taxes which are in arrears by the centre is coincidentally consistent with the publication of the fact that the Jewish Community Centre Act was going to be dealt with by this committee. Secondly, we find ourselves in a position where we have a grant application in to the city, the whole matter has been tabled pending the city's definition of a policy, and quite possibly our grant, in whole or in part, may receive some funding.

Hopefully that clarifies the situation somewhat.

We will continue to apply for city grants, notwithstanding whether we are successful here today.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, with what's said then, I find myself in an awkward position, and maybe there's a responsibility to the Jewish Centre. We dealt with one Bill relating to the Calgary Jewish Centre, and obviously the city council saw for one reason or another . . . We have some of the former members on this committee, and they saw fit to recommend to the Legislature — I guess I should go back first. They had previously seen fit to exempt the community centre from taxes, and when the Bill came before the Legislature they saw fit to recommend, via the mayor, to the Legislature that we have a Bill to exempt them from taxation, for whatever reasons the community was able to illustrate to the council.

Here we now have paid staff from the city saying that if a review of the programs and a certain amount of control were exerted over the programs, maybe some exemption could be sought. When I asked indirectly, he didn't commit to whether he would recommend or not. So I think the quandary we're in here now is that the people who ultimately make the decisions on exemption or reduction of taxation are the elected officials in city council. So maybe you as a community centre and as all the members of the association — they're probably from all over the city — should go to every alderman. Maybe they should put some pressure on the aldermen. Let's see how each individual alderman feels. Bring that before the committee maybe, or make the aldermen bring it back before city council so you get a feeling of how everybody feels. We seem to have a contrary here for us to deal with. We have them saying that maybe we could review the programs, maybe we could look at sharing. The other side is telling us that part of that is done now, and we're quite willing to do that. We're sitting here and we're supposed to make a decision that's going to affect city dollars, city income.

We have before us a certified copy of the minutes of the council of Edmonton, but we don't have one person who sat in that meeting and voted on that certified copy to say how they feel now, with this other exchange of views. I don't know how other members feel, but maybe you could help us by your community getting to each alderman and seeing how he feels. That's the game of politics. Put some pressure on, find out how everybody feels, and see where you go from there. It would certainly be helpful to us with this Act.

MR. LEVINE: Mr. Chairman, to the hon. member. We have been there. We are not here before you without having tried to approach the city of Edmonton in the manner in which you refer. We've met with individual aldermen, and we've attended meetings. We have in fact done this with two councils. We had the situation with the first administration, and then the election came about and we returned to council. The Edmonton city council, for whatever reasons they have, have in a sense spoken. They have decided to table us.

We started with them on July 5 of last year. After giving appropriate explanations, we asked them for the same exact wording of a resolution that the city

of Calgary Jewish community centre requested of the Calgary council; namely, that they not oppose an application for a Jewish Community Centre Act. We didn't even seek to put them in a political quandary of having to support. We thought if they could do exactly what the city of Calgary council had seen fit to do, which would be to vote a resolution to the effect that they do not oppose an application going through to the province, then we would at least be able to come forward to you and say we as a group have consulted with the municipality in question. No doubt about it; they would be deprived of the revenue. But we hoped, as had been the case in the city of Calgary, they would recognize that perhaps it was an appropriate gesture and activity. The city of Edmonton, in their wisdom, decided no, that they would table the matter and table it again.

We are therefore before you, having attempted to deal with the city of Edmonton. I submit to you that we could go back, but I doubt that the situation would change; i.e., that the city of Edmonton, as a council, would necessarily change its policies — that is, that particular council. In a sense it is in that context that we're before you today.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I just want to add that in addition to the council minute, there is the letter, in your possession, from Mayor Laurence Decore, confirming the course of action that the city is taking with respect to this Bill.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, my question is to the proponents of the Bill. I am sure they are very familiar with the Calgary Jewish Centre Act, which has 14 sections in it. It sets up the objects, responsibilities, and the organization of the centre. I look at this Bill and there is one section in it, and all it deals with is tax exemption. I would like to ask the proponents of the Bill why they went this route instead of putting a little more meat on the bones, so to speak.

MR. PARKER: Mr. Chairman, the reason is really historical. When the property was acquired in 1975, it was not immediately known exactly how the facility would be developed and used. The solicitor who acted for the then steering committee had really three ways to go regarding incorporation. One would have been to incorporate a society under the Societies Act. Another would have been to go under part 9 of the Companies Act; that is, companies not for profit. Another alternative would have been to go to the Legislature and ask for a private Bill. At that time the facility really wasn't being used and was in need of renovation, and a private member's Bill wasn't an appropriate route then. On the advice of the centre's solicitor, they incorporated under part 9 of the Companies Act because he felt that the housekeeping provisions regarding filing annual statements, et cetera, and related matters at the companies branch were a little simpler under part 9 of the Companies Act than under the Societies Act, although the objects are very similar. I will read them in a moment.

The Calgary situation is this. The property in Calgary was owned by — what do they call the council in Calgary? — the Calgary Jewish Community Council, which performs a number of different functions. This was really a property owned by the

Calgary Jewish Community Council. On seeking exemption from municipal taxation, it didn't have its own memorandum and articles like we do. So it therefore asked for a private Bill, which was passed last year and was modelled on the Act used by the YMCA and YWCA. That's why we're only asking for an Act dealing with exemption from municipal taxation rather than an Act giving us an entirely new corporate structure, in that we have one in existence for this facility whereas Calgary didn't.

Regarding our objects, they do exist and are in our memorandum. I will just read a couple of paragraphs to give you an idea as to the fundamental constitution of the Jewish Community Centre. Paragraph 2 of the memorandum of association reads:

The objects for which the company is established are to receive property, both real and personal, by way of donation, gift, legacy, bequest, subscription, or otherwise, and to hold the same and apply the income or part thereof arising therefrom and/or the capital or part thereof as may be decided by the directors for the following charitable and benevolent purposes:

- (1) to provide and promote the development of youth centres;
- (2) to provide for and promote the development of religious institutions;
- (3) to provide for and promote the development of senior citizens' centres;
- (4) to provide for and promote the development of educational institutions;
- (5) to provide and promote the development of cultural and community centre for the purposes of furthering the foregoing objects;

Next,

supplementing and supporting other charitable organizations recognized as such for the time being by the government of Canada.

It goes on. In paragraph 3 it says:

The income and capital of the company, wheresoever derived, shall be applied solely towards promotion of the objects of the company as set out in this memorandum of association, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred or be available directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus, or otherwise howsoever for the benefit of any member or members of the company, provided nothing herein shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable remuneration to any servants of the company in return for services actually rendered to the company.

In paragraph 4 it says:

The payment of any dividends to the members is prohibited.

In paragraph 5 it says that upon liquidation or dissolution, all of the money is to be paid to charity rather than back to the members.

So really for historical reasons we already had a constitution, whereas the YMCA and the Calgary Jewish Centre didn't. That's why our Act really just deals with the issue of the exemption, as did the YMCA when it came back to the Legislature in 1964

and asked for exemption for another piece of property. It already had its constitution, so it just wanted exemption on a piece of property. Our Act is really in the same form as the most recent YMCA Act in Edmonton.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you.

MR. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, just to add briefly to what Mr. Parker has told the committee. At the stage when the petitioners were discussing their draft Bill with me in the examination stage, I discussed with Mr. Parker whether or not they would wish to re-enact their constitutional elements in the Bill. He explained to me that they had the constitution pursuant under the Companies Act, which is in the public record and which Mr. Parker has read out to the committee. We discussed this question, and we felt there was no particular legal purpose at this point in time to reconstitute the Edmonton centre, because it had an adequate constitution pursuant to the Companies Act.

I said to Mr. Parker that I felt all they should put in the Bill was what was legally necessary to achieve the purposes they needed, whereas in the case of the Calgary centre, at that time, for their own purposes they wanted to restate their constitution and have it placed in a different form. They felt it was necessary. That's the reason why there's a difference in structure between the two Bills. It just wasn't necessary to re-enact or reconstitute the Edmonton centre at this time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Clegg.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, actually my questions are in the same area that was covered in the questions by the hon. Member for Cypress. However, to be more specific — I suppose if the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood, who is a member of this committee, were present, he would say "just so we'd be crystal clear on this and everybody understands it". Mr. Walker, in your presentation on May 2, you gave indication in two or three places that there is this ongoing review of the cultural/ethnic groups who may approach the city with requests for assistance and so on. That's correct? I believe you also stated that the city of Edmonton at this time has to oppose this Bill, pending finalization of this review that is supposed to be ongoing. Right? I may have misunderstood, but in response to the questions from the hon. Member for Cypress, I believe Mr. Szechchina suggested that no matter what the result of that review, the city would still be opposing this.

MR. SZCZCHINA: Mr. Chairman, sir, the city would prefer that the province not exercise its authority in this circumstance; at least that is the indication I get from those people who are my superiors. The city would prefer to handle this matter, and like matters, in-house. I can't answer whether the city would continue to oppose or not.

We are opposing now because we feel we have not had an adequate opportunity to act — our ad hoc subcommittee on culture is meeting now — nor, if this matter is passed by this Legislature, will we ever have an opportunity to review to see whether or not the programs are still meeting the reasons for enacting the Act. Those are the city's concerns at

the present time.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, one other question. Does the city at this time have any indication when this review will be complete?

MR. SZCZCHINA: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The chairman of the committee, Alderman Wickman, is meeting with his committee now. Those meetings have been ongoing. I understand the mayor has asked him to come in with, if not a final report, at least a preliminary report to the executive committee in June.

MR. PAPROSKI: I believe it's very important, Mr. Chairman, for committee members to understand — and I'm going to stress — one specific aspect of the Jewish Community Centre that I don't believe has been covered sufficiently. I think it's important for all of us to attempt to see if the Jewish Community Centre is indeed a unique operating entity in this particular city.

I'd like to just stress again the different recreational facilities at the Jewish Community Centre. I don't know how many of the 33 others mentioned by the representatives from the city have an indoor pool, three racquetball courts, a squash court, a sauna, a steam bath, a whirlpool, an exercise room, a gymnasium, a games room, a weight room, et cetera.

I think this is extremely important, because if we're talking about offering services to the citizens of Edmonton, I believe the Jewish Community Centre indeed has tremendous facilities and programs, not just from a cultural standpoint but from a recreational standpoint. The stress of the representatives from the Jewish Community Centre has been that this is similar to the YMCA and YWCA. I would have to concur as far as the recreational facilities are concerned.

I really wonder. I have a difficult time believing — and I know some of the other cultural areas the representatives from the city of Edmonton were talking about. But I believe sincerely that this is a very unique situation. It's offering, not just to west Edmonton but indeed to all Edmontonians, another recreational facility similar to the YMCA and YWCA. I think one should consider that particular aspect very, very importantly before a final decision is made.

I just don't know whether the city of Edmonton wants to add to that. I don't know whether there are other areas of the other 33 that have similar types of programs. In addition, I think it's important that people understand that the Jewish Community Centre has altered its particular programs tremendously. For example, I know when they initially opened they were closed on the Sabbath. Now they are open on the Sabbath for sporting events and recreational facilities. Is that not correct?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MR. PAPROSKI: So I think what they're saying — I believe members of the community that I know who frequent this centre enjoy it as a recreational facility and as a tremendous entity in Edmonton.

MR. PARKER: I'd like to add one point, if I could.

that was mentioned last week and which is very apropos of the member's comments. While the centre doesn't keep statistics or have any exact way of knowing what percentage of its membership is Jewish or not Jewish, and estimates that perhaps some 30 percent of members are not Jewish, it's been estimated by the executive director of the centre and others that regarding the athletic facilities, a majority of the use is by members of the community who are not Jewish. Much of the financial support comes from members of the Jewish community who look to it as the main cultural centre for the Jewish community in Edmonton. But as far as all of the facilities go — the pool, which is operated by the YMCA, the squash and racquet courts, the weight room, et cetera — it's probably a majority that's used by citizens at large who are not specifically members of the Jewish community.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, in response to the question of the hon. Member for Highwood, I'll ask Mr. Szczechina to speak to that in one second.

I did want to point out, though, that the city has no quarrel with the fact that the Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton is a worthy organization deserving of relief and is taking steps to provide that relief. We object to the private member's Bill. With all due respect to my colleague, Mr. Clegg, it is different from the Calgary situation. Under the present legislative regime, there is no requirement that another private Bill be brought before this committee to change the articles or the incorporation of the company that constitutes the Jewish Community Centre, unlike Calgary where a private member's Bill would be required.

Mr. Chairman and hon. members, Edmonton is a capital city. There's no shortage of organizations located here, conducting extremely worthwhile causes, that pay taxes. For example, the Sheltered Workshop Society conducts a training school that trains mentally handicapped people in the manufacture of furniture so that they can accommodate themselves to civilian life. They pay taxes. WIN House, Women In Need, provides a drop-in centre for battered women, something our society has ignored and yet is a very desperate need to these women so that their needs can be met: psychological counselling, medical needs, et cetera. They pay taxes. All these organizations use the city streets, its fire and police protection.

It's true that if the city had to replicate the good work that is done by these organizations, it would be an astronomical expense to the city. However, the city has tried to be fair and consistent in its approach to these organizations. It would hardly be fair to exempt from all taxation the Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton which, in addition to providing these facilities, does carry on a certain ethnocultural program, as you will see from the brochure attached as Appendix A: a Jewish singles organization, B'Nai B'Rith, Holocaust remembrance. We have no quarrel with their ethnocultural program, with the request for relief, with the fact that they have a good facility available to all members of west Edmonton at a bargain price, comparable to the Millwoods Recreation Centre where I live.

On the other hand, all we're asking is that we be given the opportunity to review this in conjunction with the other organizations before the city. Please

do not forget that there are other worthwhile organizations providing services that neither the city of Edmonton nor the Alberta government has been able to provide, who are currently paying taxes to the city without exemption.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Walker. I should mention, as I did last week, and perhaps you were here at the time, that there seems to be confusion with private members' Bills and private Bills in the minds of the public and the people coming before this committee. There's a distinct difference. These are private Bills that we're discussing in this committee; they are not private members' Bills.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, my apologies.

MR. SZCZETCHINA: Mr. Chairman, just in response to the observations made by the member for Norwood. The city has no quarrel with . . . It is Norwood, is it not?

MR. WALKER: Highwood.

MR. SZCZETCHINA: Highwood. I'm sorry; my apologies, sir.

MR. PAPROSKI: It's not Highwood; it's Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. SZCZETCHINA: All right. Kingsway, Norwood — whatever. Sorry.

MR. PAPROSKI: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. Not "whatever". It's extremely important. It's Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. SZCZETCHINA: Having been acquainted with your family for some time, sir, I appreciate your concern.

It isn't a question of the facilities provided. It's a question of the ongoing obligation to provide those facilities for public purposes. I would again remind you that this organization has complete control of its ongoing obligation through its constitution and bylaws, which it has the unilateral right to amend. I might also suggest, sir, that there is nothing to stop the Edmonton Scottish Society from building a similar facility on their property and coming to the Legislature to ask for an exemption, or the Ukrainian Youth Unity Centre from building a similar facility on their properties.

So the degree argument certainly falls a little bit short. We're talking here about a principle of review and ongoing control to ensure that the services for which relief is being given are continuing to be met.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, with respect to the degree argument, I really wonder if indeed some of the other organizations want to proceed and pursue the establishment of recreational facilities to the extent that is available at the Jewish Community Centre, that indeed they are offering to the citizens of Edmonton a tremendous program for a change of life-style, for recreation, for happiness and health. I wonder whether one should consider at that particular time a tax exemption for those organizations as well.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, to the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway. It's interesting that Nader Ghermezian and Triple Five Corporation made the same request with respect to the West Edmonton Mall expansion. No one can question the validity of those facilities either.

MR. HYLAND: Just a quick supplementary. Mr. Walker, you named a facility in your area of the city. Could I ask you what that costs the city to operate per year, against no cost on the other facility in the west part of the city?

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman and hon. member, the Millwoods Recreation Centre is a little unique. Unlike a number of the other facilities in the city that are subsidized from city tax dollars, the Mill Woods recreation facility runs on a balanced budget. The membership, subscription, and one-time charges are calculated so as to defray the expenses of the facility and come out in the black at the end of the year. The costs are comparable to the Jewish Community Centre; perhaps slightly higher. As I mentioned, we don't quarrel that this is a bargain. I believe that the costs are in line with the Mill Woods centre, which is a good facility as well.

MR. HYLAND: Does it have the same type of facilities?

MR. WALKER: Yes, Mr. Chairman. It has a wave pool, a public library, a number of skating rinks, squash courts, et cetera.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, I think it's important for the record that the statement made by Mr. Walker is a little unfair with respect to Triple Five and the Fantasy Land proposal or for West Edmonton Mall. What we are talking about here are nonprofit organizations, sir.

Thank you.

MR. MILLER: Hon. members of this committee, it's a little ludicrous to say that the Mill Woods centre operates on a break even when there's a \$10 million capital cost that I paid as a taxpayer in the city of Edmonton. I think it's a shame that organizations like WIN have to pay taxes. As an Edmontonian, I'm sure that type of facility should be paid for through taxes. I'm astonished that the city feels they're righteous in charging taxes to these organizations.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have to balance our budget.

MR. MILLER: Then you raise our taxes and, I think, justly so.

I might just give a couple of comments in passing. Our membership is approximately 1,800. We have on average 80,000 people who use that building annually. Those are people and organizations that are using it either piecemeal or for free for various meetings and committee organizations, et cetera. I have a report from the YMCA that in the first six months of 1983, they had over 20,500 people use the pool through their program. I understand that the use of that pool by the YMCA is one of their most successful programs in the city.

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Chairman, I was one of the members of city council in Calgary at the time the Calgary recreation centre asked for an exemption. We had been granting them a grant in lieu of taxes each year anyway, but I don't know if these are similar situations. Of course we have to rely on the local city councils to evaluate these things. But in Calgary, because of the construction of the Jewish recreation centre in the southern part of the city, the city of Calgary itself did not have to build a facility in that area, thus saving the construction costs and the very heavy operating costs of such a centre. The members of Calgary city council recognized that. I think we had a good agreement from our parks department of the city at that time, saying: because of this facility, we didn't have to build one from the city.

When they originally got the \$1.5 million MCO grant from the city, which was administered by the city's parks department, they signed an agreement that 50 percent of the total usage of the facility would be for the public. I think it worked out that over 50 percent of the people participating were from the public at large. Of course that's the reason the city council had a good heavy vote in favour of saying yes, grant them this exemption, which made it quite good, quite easy for the Legislature to handle in saying that if the local authorities wished to do this, fine. So we put the Bill through for the Calgary Jewish Centre. I had no problem voting on it.

This is a little different today, when we have officials from the city of Edmonton come in and say no, we don't wish to go with this. Because of that, if we do exempt them, then the costs of water, storm and sanitary sewers, roads, streets, et cetera, will fall back on the homeowners and the taxpayers in the city of Edmonton. I find this is a little different, and I have a little problem with this. If we were to go ahead with a Bill like this, then we would be overriding the local authorities, namely the city council of Edmonton. So before we ever decide on this, I'll be looking very closely at our colleagues who represent the Edmonton ridings. I don't see this being exactly similar to the situation in the city of Calgary.

MR. CLARK: Going back for clarification on the part of it, I believe the city has relieved the penalty on your back taxes but the back taxes themselves have been charged against the property, if I'm right in assuming that. If there is no relief forthcoming from the city or an exemption from this committee, do you see such a time as losing the property to taxes?

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman and hon. member, no. The city executive committee, which has delegated this obligation under an executive committee bylaw, did a couple of other things in addition to waiving the penalties on the back taxes. They also passed a resolution that said the city would make its efforts to collect the arrear payments on behalf of the Jewish Community Centre until council was able to consider the recommendations of the city committee on culture. In other words, the city is taking the position that the Jewish Community Centre will not be prejudiced by the time it takes the city's ad hoc committee on culture to make its determination and no steps will be taken to collect

those taxes until a disposition is made.

MR. CLARK: I guess my question was that if that ad hoc committee comes in and says they don't have any relief in taxes and this committee comes out and says they don't have an exemption, then I suppose that at such time the back taxes that are now against the centre will still be charged against the property and will be collected. Am I right in assuming that?

MR. WALKER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I believe that would be the correct assumption. However, it's not a foregone conclusion that they're going to deny tax relief to the organization.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those are all the members I have on the list. If there aren't any other questions . . .

MR. SHRAKE: Just one last question. If this Bill does not go through the Legislature, would the city of Edmonton not consider giving a grant or writing off some of the taxes for the Jewish centre?

MR. SZCZECCHINA: Mr. Chairman, purely hypothetically, because of course the city of Edmonton hasn't made a decision with regard to this application — it has been tabled — of course they would. The city of Edmonton is not opposing the worthiness of the program that is being offered by this organization. We're simply suggesting that the method they're using to attain what they see to be their end at the moment is the wrong one. They should be giving the city's ad hoc committee an opportunity to act. They then decide, after that ad hoc committee has had an opportunity to act, whether they are satisfied or whether they are getting a fair shake. Right now we're talking in hypothetical circumstances, because this whole process is hypothetical. There are two or three things happening, one of which is this one. It's a question of when things happen.

MR. LEVINE: Mr. Chairman, I wish to point out that we had similar conversations when we first went to the city of Edmonton council. We had a lot of discussions with the officials of the administration of the city, at which time they prevailed upon us to give the council time to act rather than approach the province with respect to the resolution we were seeking. Namely, rather than pursue a resolution from council to the effect that council not oppose our going forward to apply to the provincial Legislature, they made representations that we should prevail upon council to act under section 106 of the Municipal Taxation Act, whereby council itself could exempt, in whole or in part, the tax burden for, at that time, the year 1983.

After much deliberation we accepted that route, and we made representations to the council to the effect that they use the prerogatives under section 106 and exempt us from taxes. It was in that context that the resolution in the materials that have been submitted to you from the corporate resources committee, suggesting a 50 percent reduction, went forward to council, at which point council tabled the matter pending the review of the whole issue by a committee. We've done that, and representations are being made to you again today that you give the council of the city of Edmonton an opportunity to

assess and review the situation.

I don't know; I must ultimately respond by saying that we're before you because we have exhausted the opportunities in the city of Edmonton. We will continue to apply for those portions of our programs that we consider worthy of grants from the city. We will apply for them, and the city will have its opportunity to review and control our programs, as it seeks to imply to you that it wishes. The application on this particular matter is here because we have spent a lot of time with the city of Edmonton acceding to their wishes that we give that council the full opportunity, and yet we have found that it has really been to no avail.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a limited time in the Assembly Chamber. There is another committee that comes here at 10 o'clock. I appreciate that you may want to respond, Mr. Szcechchina, but would you please keep your remarks extremely brief.

MR. SZCZECCHINA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Members of the committee: in the first instance, the city has perpetrated some action under 106 of the Municipal Taxation Act in relieving the penalties which have been building up against the Jewish Community Centre. In the second instance, there is a very real possibility, given the discussions that are now going on at the ad hoc committee level, that the tax exemption, which may be made available to all cultural groups which provide some degree of expansion of their program, may be greater than 50 percent, which is what my friend to the right alluded to. This matter is under active consideration by the city, and we sincerely hope that the Legislature and this committee would allow the city to act in this respect.

MRS. KOPER: A very simple question requiring perhaps a yes or no from both parties. I guess it's hypothetical, Mr. Chairman, and may be ruled out of order. Would either party consider a sunset clause until the decision is made?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's not hypothetical. That asked for a yes or no answer.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure I understand what "sunset clause" means in this particular context.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It would be the inclusion of a clause putting a time limit on the effect of the Act if it were passed. In other words, it would be good for two years or five years or whatever. That's a sunset clause.

MR. SZCZECCHINA: Mr. Chairman, it's very difficult to respond yes or no. What would then happen is that the Legislature would remove from the ad hoc committee on culture the opportunity to act with regard to this group. So I can't answer the question, I'm afraid.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman and committee members: the sunset clause certainly doesn't bother us. I don't know if it answers the question, because we're back at the bargaining table when the sun sets. As we all know, it will set, whether it's this

year or next year or the year after.

One other quick reply to the hon. member who asked where our position would be if we don't get relief from taxes. I would like to table two documents. One is a copy of our 1983 actual expenses and 1984 budget, and the other is a copy of our audited financial statements for 1983. I believe that hon. members, by reading these budgets and actual figures, can see where our precarious financial position is. In 1984 we are showing a projected deficit in operations of approximately \$190,000, with a \$57,000 tax liability in there. That would certainly go a long way to helping us fund the deficit.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Miller.

Our time in the Assembly Chamber has run out. I think the subject has been covered. If there are no further questions by members, there's no need for you to come back again. This concludes the hearing on this matter. In any event, I don't believe there's anything you can add by way of closing comments, and besides, the time has run out. I'd entertain a motion . . . The hon. Member for Athabasca moves that we adjourn. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion is carried.

[The meeting adjourned at 10 a.m.]