

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTATitle: **Tuesday, March 30, 1976 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 31**
The Marketing of
Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 1976

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 31, The Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 1976. Mr. Speaker, this act provides for improvements in the control of production of poultry and eggs, for an indemnity fund, and for the upgrading of the administrative procedures of marketing boards and commissions.

[Leave granted; Bill 31 introduced and read a first time]

Bill 23
The Plumbing and Drainage Act

MR. DONNELLY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 23, The Plumbing and Drainage Act. The purpose of this bill is to establish a firm legislative base for the administration of uniform standards for plumbing systems in the province of Alberta.

[Leave granted; Bill 23 introduced and read a first time]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 23, The Plumbing and Drainage Act, 1976, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, two young ladies from Fort Saskatchewan who are members of the Alberta Debate and Speech Association. They have taken part in mock parliament in this Legislature and are here to watch the House in action this afternoon. I would like Miss Bonnie Kinshella and Miss Moira Buck to stand and be recognized by the Legislature.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the House, some 32 brilliant young students from the Whitecourt

Elementary School, Grades 5 and 6. They are accompanied by their teacher, interested parents, and their bus driver. I'd like to have them stand and be recognized by the House.

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table five reports as required by the statutes: the Athabasca University annual report, 1975; the University of Lethbridge 1974-75 annual report; the University of Calgary annual report 1974-75; the Report of the Governor of the University of Alberta, 1974-75; and the Advanced Education fourth annual report, 1974-75.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****RITE System**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address this first question to the Minister of Government Services and Culture. It comes from a complaint from an upset Albertan who had his call intercepted when he phoned the RITE number.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister if he can indicate to the Legislature how it came about that a call to the Leader of the Opposition's number was monitored?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, the call through the RITE number was probably placed through an operator. The operator finds out which person in government the person would like to speak to. Probably inadvertently — I'm saying probably, because I really don't know the case — it may have been intercepted and passed on to someone else.

However, I would request the hon. member to get the details of the person involved, the name, and the call placed so we could check it out further.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate why this person was asked to give his name and phone number?

MR. SCHMID: Yes, Mr. Speaker. This is done because the RITE system has been so successful and accepted among the public in Alberta that, for instance, professionals like lawyers, school boards, and municipalities would also like to have access to the RITE system. Of course, this is impossible. The cost the system operates under right now is acceptable. If it included all the different municipalities, school boards, and professionals, the cost would be excessive.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. This person was told by the operator that the operator was conducting a survey.

Can the minister indicate what kind of survey the operator was conducting?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, again I have to go from an assumption. But we have requests from different areas of the province to be included in the RITE number system. We are trying to find out by a survey whether a RITE operator in a particular locality would

be of value to the people who call government from that area.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Can the minister indicate to the Legislature that there is no attempt to monitor the calls going to the Leader of the Opposition's office?

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member may be aware that any telephone system has operators. All these operators are under an oath by which they cannot disclose anything they have heard in the process of their work. I can assure the hon. member that whatever happened was inadvertent. If it was so, again, all I would need from the hon. member is the exact case so we can investigate it further.

Premier's Calgary Office

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Premier. Can the Premier indicate why press facilities in the Premier's southern office are not available to members of the opposition?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, essentially that's an office of the Premier and, as such, is used for that purpose. We've used it from time to time for legislative committees, but we haven't used it outside of that in terms of any other political party operation because it's not meant for that concept. It's a government operation and is intended to remain so.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. Can the Premier indicate if the facilities are available to government backbenchers or just to Executive Council?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, they would not be available to government members who are not members of the Executive Council on constituency business. They would be available under the possible circumstances of a legislative select committee if they were the chairman of the select committee giving a report or something of that nature.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the hon. Premier indicate to the Legislature how often this press facility is used?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I can't. I've used it a number of times myself and so have other ministers. It's part of the overall operations of the office in Calgary. When we came to office, we found that first of all, we agreed with our predecessors in establishing an office of the Premier in southern Alberta, in the city of Calgary. As a Calgary MLA, I certainly felt that was a worth-while move. Since our evaluation of that, we found that relatively little use was made of the office. So we've now set up a very extensive system of utilization of the office.

It's not used that much during the months we are in session, although a number of ministers are using it at certain times. We are using it, though, very actively in the other eight months of the year. We have ministers going to Calgary regularly to make themselves available to Calgary groups and organizations. We certainly are trying, and I try as much as I

can, to be accessible to the people in the Calgary area, having regard to the size of the population. I have to admit that the number of days a month I'm able to be there is relatively limited.

So I can't define the utilization of just the one particular aspect of the office. But I do know that the office generally is very, very active, much more than it's been in the past.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. Is the press facility, on floor number one, I believe, in the Legislature Building considered an extension of the Premier's office?

MR. LOUGHEED: No, Mr. Speaker. But the press or media utilization of the Executive Council's room is, which is where the press conferences have more recently been held.

Silverwood Dairies

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Business Development and Tourism. Does the hon. minister know why Silverwood Dairies sold out its interests in Alberta?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, in February 1976, the Silverwood organization, which has its head office in London, Ontario, examined their involvement in the Alberta market and decided, because of their profit margin and because of the massive renovations they were going to have to undertake, that they had better remove themselves from this phase of marketing of dairy products and sell their operation to two dairy pools in Alberta, the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool and the Southern Alberta Dairy Pool.

Housing

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works. It arises from comments he made to the Urban Development Institute and comments in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, is this government considering any legislation to deal with profits in the real estate business which the minister has described as being "almost immoral" in a period of wage and price restraint? My question is, are there any specific legislative moves on the horizon to deal with those profits?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge there are at this time no specific legislative moves to deal with that matter.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier. In light of rapidly escalating housing prices, has the government given any reconsideration to the speculators' tax or the unearned increment tax? The question really relates to the timetable for such a move.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I think as I said earlier — I'm not sure whether I said it in the Legislature or outside — we're reviewing the Land Use Forum's recommendation, and we've listened with interest to the debate by hon. members in the

House on this and other matters contained in the recommendation. That's only one of a number of alternatives we're looking at in this area. There are certainly some difficulties with it, but there may be some advantages. It's merely an alternative, among others, that's being explored.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. What steps are being taken by the Alberta government to monitor the so-called speculators' tax in the province of Ontario?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to take that question under advisement and check with my officials to see if any active monitoring is going on with respect to this matter in Ontario.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of the comments about profits bordering on the immoral, and unprofessional conduct in the real estate business, my question to the hon. minister is: has the government convened official meetings between the department, local governments, municipalities, and the home-building industry to consider emergency measures that could be taken to alleviate the spiralling housing price situation in the province?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I'm constantly meeting with members of industry and with members of the local governments. I am constantly being advised as to what's going on in the housing industry.

However, with regard to more formalized input, it is my intention to form an advisory housing council at the earliest opportunity within the next several months, so that I can receive input on a more formalized basis from a number of different organizations throughout the province that are interested in the area of shelter, housing, community development, and so forth.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. Again, I refer to the hon. minister's speech to the Development Institute. By word of explanation, the minister refers to "a large amount of developable lands in Edmonton" owned by the province of Alberta.

I wonder if the minister could advise the Assembly what amount of land we do own in the city of Edmonton, and whether he is by chance referring to the University Farm as possibly 'developable'.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't want to be held to my figures, but I'll use approximate figures. The land bank in Mill Woods was of the order of 4,800 acres. Presently, there is an agreement between the provincial government, or the Alberta Housing Corporation, and the city of Edmonton in terms of developing this land and bringing it on the market. The agreement is of 15 years' duration. The land is transferred to the city as the city in fact develops it and brings it on the market. Approximately 2,800 acres of the land bank in Mill Woods are still in the ownership of the Alberta Housing Corporation. Besides this, of course, other parcels of land in and around the city of Edmonton are owned by the provincial government.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question for clarification. In view of the fact that certain developers have been eyeing the University Farm with some interest, is the government prepared to rule that out as an option at this stage?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge there has been no active consideration of using the University Farm for housing projects at this time.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Has the real estate association of Calgary or the real estate association of Edmonton given any undertaking to discipline their own members?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, this matter would be more appropriately handled by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. If any such indication was given to any minister or department, it probably would be better done to that department.

Nevertheless, as I indicated earlier, I have had meetings and discussions with all segments of the industry, and have had a number of real estate people call me and explain the situation.

DR. BUCK: I'll bet.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary question to the hon. minister. Has the government taken, or does it propose to take any official action with respect to the matter raised during one of the subcommittee discussions of bills by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, concerning real estate firms trading in their own account?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, again I might indicate that this matter might be more appropriately handled by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in light of the hon. minister's answer, could I direct that final supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I have a meeting lined up with the association for approximately April 8, at which I hope to discuss that matter and a number of other matters.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works. Having raised this topic before regarding Mill Woods and land banking, is the minister still reviewing this agreement, with a view to assuring that land-banked economical land is truly passed on to the consumer at an economical price?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, a number of officials have now reviewed with city of Edmonton officials the matter of the pricing of lots in the Mill Woods area. I'm meeting with the mayor of the city of Edmonton next Monday to discuss a number of matters with respect to the agreement in regard to land banking in the Mill Woods area. One of the conditions of that agreement was an objective that a considerable number of lots would be brought on the market at an appropriate time at reasonable costs. That's one area

I hope to discuss with the mayor. Other areas I hope to discuss with the mayor relate to the allocation of land and lots in the area for low- and middle-income housing.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a supplementary to the Minister of Housing. Can the minister advise whether he has statistics with regard to the inflationary prices of housing that would indicate that the significant contributing factor is a result of the conduct of the real estate industry, or are there several other components that give rise to inflationary prices of housing?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, there are always many causes for increases in prices of any commodity. In this case the commodity happens to be land, its servicing, and housing. Generally, there are areas that attribute to the escalating costs. I have indicated these in a number of speeches. We have a large number of statistics. The builders indicate to me quite readily what it costs per square foot to build a house in the various towns of Alberta. Generally it ranges from \$24 to \$30 per square foot. On top of this you can add the price of the lot and know within reason, including profit, what a new house costs to build.

As I indicated in my speech, Mr. Speaker, there is a form of mild hysteria generated to a large degree by the real estate industry indicating that prices are going up and up, that the time to buy is now, and to buy at all costs. I think I've indicated, publicly as well as privately, that buyers should be very careful in terms of what they buy. They should relate to the fact that what they are buying is at the appropriate value.

Sour Gas Fields — Urban Growth

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I was wondering if he could advise if the government or his department has set up any policy with regard to urban growth in or around sour gas fields.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, since the hon. Member for Camrose raised this some time last fall, as I understand it the provincial planning board has undertaken to arrive at a set of guidelines with respect to that topic jointly with the Department of the Environment, the Energy Resources Conservation Board, and the Emergency Measures Organization. I have not yet seen these guidelines, but presumably they will be forwarded to us soon for discussion with the regional planning commissions, which will then set down those criteria for urban development in that sour gas area.

MR. BRADLEY: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Would the minister indicate whether the Energy Resources Conservation Board is considering issuing restrictive guidelines regarding the location of proposed sour gas wells near urban development or proposed urban development?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the Energy Resources Conservation Board now has very restrictive guidelines regarding the proposal to drill new wells

that might encounter sour gas near urban developments. The problem the hon. member asking the first question was dealing with is the matter of the wells being drilled not adjacent to any settlement, then by expansion of the population the settlement encroaches to a distance which would cause a safety problem. That is the matter my hon. colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, was referring to.

MR. BRADLEY: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Would the minister indicate whether the ERCB would consider holding public hearings before granting a licence to drill a sour gas well within two miles of a municipality or five miles of a city?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's something to consider, and I'd certainly be prepared to discuss it with the ERCB. He mentioned very specific terms of reference, and they might want to do it on a broader basis. However, I'd be happy to discuss it with them and respond to the hon. member.

MR. KUSHNER: A supplementary question to the minister. I wonder if the minister is in a position to advise the House what the life is at this point of the sour gas wells in northeast Calgary. There is quite a concern because of Calgary growing in that direction.

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly the hon. member could relate the question directly to the duties of the minister by means of a question on the Order Paper.

Land Annexation — Edmonton

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Has the county of Parkland or the city of Edmonton made representation to the minister on the recent decision by the Local Authorities Board to allow 532 acres northwest of the city to be annexed by Daon Development Corporation?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, just to clarify the question, that has been considered by the Executive Council and by OC. The LAB, acting on an independent basis, has weighed the economic concerns and all the territorial arguments which have been presented. We acted on their recommendation.

MR. PURDY: A supplementary, just to clarify that. What recommendation did you act on, Mr. Minister?

MR. JOHNSTON: The recommendations given to us by the Local Authorities Board.

MR. PURDY: A supplementary. Is it then the policy of the Local Authorities Board and the Department of Municipal Affairs to allow piecemeal annexation, as we have seen with this particular development?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, while I recognize that some studies are taking place, such as the regional growth studies for the city of Edmonton, in my estimation this is not a piecemeal annexation.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister. Has the minister or his department been approached

by representatives of the city of Edmonton for the provincial government to step in and annex the town of St. Albert to the city of Edmonton?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, while there has been no formal request on behalf of the city of Edmonton, that is formal in the sense that it would proceed through the Local Authorities Board, three or four formal studies have been completed, going back to the McNally study, the Hansen study, and most recently the *Future of this City* study, where indeed there have been various recommendations. At this point we have not decided, nor have we made any recommendation for annexation or border adjustments for the city of Edmonton.

Home Improvement Program

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Housing and Public Works. It concerns the senior citizen home improvement program. In a news release just the other night, the minister indicated that of the approximately 30,000 senior citizens who are eligible to apply for the senior citizen home improvement program, about \$15 million has been paid out and deposited to the bank accounts. With the cost of money today, that indicates roughly \$1.5 million a year in interest.

What happens to the interest on these accounts if they are not used, say, within a year?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might very briefly explain the manner in which the program is working. When an application is received, it's reviewed with respect to eligibility and then approved. When it's approved, an identification card is sent to the senior citizen who thus qualifies, and \$1,000 is deposited with the bank system that was indicated on the application as the bank of the senior citizen's choice. The deposit is made with the central office, and it then phones the branch office — whether it be the treasury branches, the banking system, or the credit unions — and establishes a \$1,000 credit in the local community for that senior citizen.

The interest accumulates to the banking system on that money on deposit. That is the only fee the banking system receives for handling the transactions between the senior citizen and the banking system.

I should like to indicate that the senior citizen has three years during which to use that money. Thus far our indication is that the average pay-out is \$750, so that to a large degree the general indication is that the money is going out in fairly substantial quantities. This is for such things as rewiring, window replacement, wall-to-wall [carpeting], interior decorating, and so forth.

So it's anticipated that the actual amount of money remaining with any part of the banking system over a long period of time will be minimal. I should indicate again that this is the only compensation the banking system receives for, to a large degree, administering the program between the banking system and the senior citizen.

MR. GOGO: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In the event the senior citizen does not utilize those funds within that specified three-year term or, worse yet, if

he or she should die, would there be any legal charge to the estate if those funds reverted to the Crown?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I believe the regulations — and I can be checked on this matter — are rather specific. If the money isn't used in a three-year period, whatever is left that hasn't been used or the entire sum reverts to the government. Secondly, if there is a death of the eligible member, the remaining spouse if in fact it is the spouse who is surviving the man, can use the money to complete the renovations to the place of residence.

MR. GOGO: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister mentions the spouse, assuming that the spouse is a senior citizen.

MR. YURKO: Just to correct the hon. member, Mr. Speaker. The spouse, who is the remaining member of the couple, has the right to use the money even though she or he isn't 65 years of age. As a matter of fact, I should indicate that the only feature of the program retroactive to March 26 of last year is in relationship to the eligible member having died in the interval between March 26, 1975 and January 1, 1976, when the plan came into being. If the deceased member was in fact eligible, his spouse or vice versa would have been applicable for the program.

Rural Gas Co-ops

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Telephones and Utilities. It's with regard to rural gas co-ops and the relationship between the new formula that provides 50 per cent and 75 per cent capital grants and the increase of the Gas Alberta price from 42 cents to 72 cents.

Does the Government of Alberta through the Gas Alberta price of 71.9 cents either directly or indirectly recover any of the capital funds required to meet the 50 per cent and the 75 per cent subsidy for grants?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, just on a question of detail. The correct figure is 71.4, effective Thursday, April 1, 1976, just so that particular matter is correct.

The answer to the question, Mr. Speaker, is no. A capital cost recovery is not involved. As a matter of fact, in the past year there was not a full recovery of Gas Alberta operating costs for the reason that in a number of instances the hardware and systems had to be in place in order to serve some of the people in gas co-ops, and it had to be of a size to serve eventually the number that would be a part of the co-op. But in the meantime, only a percentage was in a position where construction was complete, and they were able to have gas available for their use. So for that reason, as a matter of fact in the past fiscal year that ends tomorrow, the result has actually been the opposite.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Has the minister approved any rural gas co-ops with 50 per cent or less sign-up at the present time?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, I would need to check that to be sure. By the fact that he's asking the

question, I take it the hon. member feels this has occurred. It may very well be that there have been some, from prior to my time as well. I would need to take that question as notice and follow through.

Health Care Coverage

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health. For any person coming from another province to Alberta and applying for a medicare number, what is the normal policy that it would take to get that number?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, I direct that question to my colleague, the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care.

MR. SPEAKER: I don't wish to interrupt the hon. minister, but if this is something which is available from regulations, or a policy that is widely known, perhaps it might be given in that way.

MR. KUSHNER: I wish to direct this question to whoever is the minister. How long, in fact, does it take, Mr. Speaker? If you can't get this number after a period of time, and it doesn't meet the regulation, where do you apply in order to get that number?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, if I understand the question, it's the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission registration number the hon. member is referring to?

MR. KUSHNER: That is right.

MR. MINIELY: To be specific, Mr. Speaker, any information that any citizen or the member required could be obtained, of course, from the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission. In order for me to answer the question specifically, I'll have to check and report back to the House.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary to the hon. minister just before I ask a question, because the question the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View is asking comes up many times. I think the minister can indicate to the Legislature, when a person comes from another province, what coverage does he have in the interim before his number is transferred to the Alberta medicare system.

MR. SPEAKER: I hesitate to interrupt again, but it's the impression of the Chair that this kind of information is available to any member of the public by applying to the commission. It's a question whether we should be using any amount of time in the question period to find out the contents of regulations, orders, and things of that kind which are available in the ordinary way directly from the branches of government involved.

DR. BUCK: Well, Mr. Speaker, with great respect, it's a problem that arises many times. People ask us as MLAs, what do I do? Mr. Speaker, I think it would be in the interests of all Albertans to have the hon. minister indicate that to us.

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect again, that does not really constitute a matter which is properly dealt with in the question period. We could be spending the whole question period reviewing regulations, the contents of pamphlets, and things like this which are given out from various government sources.

AN HON. MEMBER: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'll rephrase my question to the hon. minister. When people come from other provinces to Alberta, are they covered by Alberta medicare?

MR. SPEAKER: That is still on the same topic, and I assume the information is available from the same source.

The hon. Member for Clover Bar, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

Sewerage System Financing

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. In instances where municipalities such as Olds are asked by the Department of the Environment to upgrade their sewerage system and treatment lagoon, can the minister indicate whether funds are made available from the Department of the Environment when such an order is issued?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, the department has a very good program of financial assistance for all Alberta municipalities. In the case of Olds, of course, some particularly important aspects are involved. I'm sure the hon. member is aware of the very important regional water line being put in to serve the Olds communities and others in the Airdrie-Red Deer corridor. During the course of putting together the easement for the water line, some Alberta residents near the town of Olds brought up the matter of the inadequate facilities in the town. I believe the points they made were right. The department took the position that Olds should improve its facilities. It's been pointed out to them that the assistance available through the standard provincial program would apply in their case.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. The Minister of the Environment can pat himself all he wants to, but I'd like to ask the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, when a municipality has used the Department of the Environment's funds and its maximum borrowing ability has been reached, are special provisions made by the Department of Municipal Affairs when the Department of the Environment says you must upgrade your facilities?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, considering the decision of future borrowing, of course, the Local Authorities Board weighs very carefully, not the amount of debt per capita, but the cash flow basis of the municipality. Included in that consideration is a reflection of the grants provided by the Department of the Environment.

Business Licences

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. To save money and for efficiency, I wonder if the minister has considered giving five-year licences, such as for people selling insurance, and for any other licences he issues.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure officials in the department have given consideration to a number of matters, and I have no doubt they have considered that one. I might also say that we're doing a review of the licensing requirements of the various acts in the portfolio.

National Lotteries

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife. Is Alberta still trying to get the Olympic lottery rights, in order to offset the costs of the Commonwealth Games?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, in relation to the question, I'm not sure what the reference was to "still trying to get" the rights to the Olympic lottery. Mr. Speaker, as it is now set, the Olympic lottery finishes at the end of August 1976. I would direct the question to my honorable colleague, the Hon. Horst Schmid, for a further follow-up.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, discussions have been held among the provinces as to continuance of a national lottery after August 31 of this year. However, no final conclusions have been set, and I understand it may even be one of the subjects of discussion at the upcoming conference of first ministers.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary. Is an application from Alberta for those rights before the body?

MR. SCHMID: Yes, Mr. Speaker. An indication has been given to us. Not only that, maybe I should also state that, when we gave permission for Olympic lottery tickets to be sold in Alberta, we had requested at the time that all assistance be given to us by COJO to have a lottery for the Commonwealth Games, subsequent to the Olympic lottery which ends in August.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. Premier. Is it the policy of this government to raise funds through participation in lotteries?

DR. BUCK: We're getting a little short, with the deficit, John.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I think one can't answer that question in a general way. We have had examples where we've looked at support of lotteries, but we looked at each particular one on its own merits. It's a matter of ongoing review and evaluation. Of course, we'll continue to be interested in the views expressed by all members on this subject.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for clarification, in view of the fact that this earth-shaking matter is going to be discussed at the first ministers' meeting. Is the Premier in a little better position to advise us whether the Alberta government does approve of lotteries as a method of raising funds?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I have some doubt whether the 11 people meeting will be considered the highest experts in the land on matters of lotteries. If it is discussed at the first ministers' meeting, as has been suggested, we will have clarified our policy on the matter more definitely before the meeting is held.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I should add as further clarification of the question from the hon. member that the Olympic lottery in Alberta is not run by the government, nor does the government in Alberta benefit directly; only up to the 5 per cent. The rest of the proceeds go to the Olympic lottery people in COJO in Montreal. Also, the benefits, especially of the sale of the lottery tickets in Alberta, go to charitable and religious organizations.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, if I could just pose an additional supplementary question for clarification. I wonder if the hon. minister could advise the Assembly the reasons this question of lotteries is going to be discussed at the upcoming first ministers' conference anyway.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I did not say this would be on the agenda. I indicated it might be on the agenda because it's possible other first ministers across Canada may consider it of enough importance. The distribution of these funds to individual provinces and the organizations might be of such importance that the first ministers may consider it for the agenda.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for clarification. I take it from the hon. minister's answer that he's really making a representation on the matter to the Premier. Is he?

Schools — Spring Break

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Education, who I see has safely returned from the ATA convention in Calgary. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether the government has given any consideration to the resolution passed by that convention urging a uniform spring break for all students in the province of Alberta?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, as is the practice, the executive of the Alberta Teachers' Association will be meeting with me following the compilation of the results of their Annual Representative Assembly. A meeting has been agreed to, I believe in the month of May — it's already been set — when the Alberta Teachers' Association will be bringing to me the various resolutions passed at the Annual Representative Assembly.

As the hon. member is aware, the question of the spring break is now within the local autonomy of the school boards of the province. The province can

choose to set the spring break during the regular Easter holidays or choose a fixed break as the needs and demands of their local electorates require. This is what is being done at the moment. Whether any change in that is contemplated I think would have to involve not only the feelings and decisions of the Alberta Teachers' Association, but should also very much involve the thoughts on the matter of the representatives of the Alberta School Trustees' Association.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Has the government received any representation from the Alberta School Trustees' Association on this matter? Does the association, for example, hold any strong views on this issue?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall receiving views from the association as such, although representations may be made by individual boards. However, I don't recall receiving direct submissions on this. I speak from memory which may be faulty.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary on this point. We're just about running out of time.

MR. NOTLEY: A final supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Does the government have any method or are there any studies which would monitor the impact of differing spring breaks on students transferring from one school jurisdiction to another?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, we don't have such studies.

Fishing Licences

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Medicine Hat-Redcliff, the home of ardent sports fishermen, my question is for the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife. Can he advise the House when fishing licences will be available for the next fishing season?

MR. ADAIR: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can certainly do that. At the moment we are experiencing some difficulty getting the licences from the printers. We hope to have those licences in the hands of the vendors almost immediately. The understanding I had was that if they were in the hands of the department today, they would be in the vendors' hands before the deadline.

I appreciate the fact that there has been some difficulty for those who may have wanted to purchase them prior to the April 1 date. We are attempting to get that in a position as quickly as possible out to the vendors for sale.

MR. HORSMAN: A supplementary question. In the event these are not available in the hands of the vendors by April 1, will the minister consider extending the current fishing licences for a period of time to accommodate those people who wish to participate in that sport?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, that is just the case. If we have received information that that will not be possible, the department is preparing the necessary documents to extend the season for a two- or three-week period, whatever is necessary to cover that period of time to get the licences to the vendors.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary to the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware or has he had representation that for practically the entire month of March, fishing licences were not available to people who wanted to purchase them, because they had gone back to the department?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of that particular one. You're referring to the old licences for the present year?

DR. BUCK: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ADAIR: No, I am not aware of that. I'm sorry, I have not had representation on that point.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister. Will the fee for licences be the same in the coming fiscal year as in the current fiscal year?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, subject to checking, I believe yes.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

146. Mr. Clark asked the government the following question:

How many children other than wards of the Crown have been adopted in Alberta for the periods:

- (a) January 1, 1972, to December 31, 1972;
- (b) January 1, 1973, to December 31, 1973;
- (c) January 1, 1974, to December 31, 1974;
- (d) January 1, 1975, to December 31, 1975?

MISS HUNLEY: [Not recorded] the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Did I understand the hon. minister to say that the question was accepted?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following motions for returns stand and retain their place in the Order Paper.

AN HON. MEMBER: Go slowly.

MR. FOSTER: Going slowly, Mr. Speaker, by special request: 129, 130, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 143, 144, 147, 148, and 150.

[Motion carried]

118. Mr. Clark proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
Each grant given for the furtherance of the Ukrainian Village development east of Elk Island National Park from September 1, 1971, to March 4, 1976, including the amount of each grant, the specific purpose of each grant, the date on which each grant was given, and the name of the person or organization receiving the grant.

[Motion carried]

123. Mr. Mandeville proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
(1) copies of all application forms, contracts, and correspondence now held by the Government of Alberta, which passed between the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation and the Dutch Canadian Club of Calgary in respect to the grant given to that organization as documented in Sessional Paper 112/75, with the concurrence of the said organization;
(2) the appropriation number from which the grant was paid.

[Motion carried]

131. Mr. Clark proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
(1) the total amounts of all capital and operational expenditures for Alberta House in London, England:
(a) during the 1971-72 fiscal year,
(b) during the 1972-73 fiscal year,
(c) during the 1973-74 fiscal year,
(d) during the 1974-75 fiscal year,
(e) during the 1975-76 fiscal year;
(2) an itemized list of any commitments and/or plans that would involve any remodelling, renovation, redecorating, and/or refurnishing of Alberta House in London, England, for the fiscal year 1976-77 and the amount(s) of the projected expenditures;
(3) the names of Albertans who have received fees or other consideration for any remodelling, renovation, redecorating, and/or refurnishing of Alberta House in London, England, during the time periods cited in (1);
(4) the total amount of fees and/or the nature of the consideration that were received by any Albertans named in (3).

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a small amendment to this motion in order that it can be replied to. I wish to propose an amendment to the first line of paragraph (1). The amendment is: delete the word "operational" and replace it with the words "income account".

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, we certainly would agree to the amendment.

[Motion carried]

139. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
A list which gives, for each program and subprogram in the 1976-77 estimates, the estimated total payments under object of expenditure code No. 730, grants to businesses, with comparative forecast data for 1975-76.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, in connection with Motion for a Return 139, I would advise the House that we can provide the information requested, but it would take a somewhat longer time than I suspect the mover of the motion contemplated. I would suggest an amendment for his consideration, whereby we delete the reference to subprograms and the reference to forecast. Because the figures for the forecast are not held in Treasury budget documents, we would have to go through each of the departments. It would be quite a lengthy job for them. I would think it would be some weeks before we could provide the answer in that form.

On the other hand, if the motion were restricted to providing that information for each program in the estimates, we could do it very rapidly and have it back within a day or so, as I assume the mover wished to use it during committee review of the estimates.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, just on a point of order. Is the minister moving an amendment? I would have no objection to an amendment. As to perhaps getting the additional information, I may hold my judgment on that. But if he's moving an amendment to this motion, I think that would be quite all right.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to move that amendment. I wanted to indicate to the House, and to the mover of the motion, that although we were prepared to accept it in its form, it would take us a long time to get the answer. I would suggest an amendment which would restrict it to each program and delete the forecast reference. Then we could get the answer very quickly.

I can hold this for a moment, Mr. Speaker, and come back to it a bit later to make the formal motion for an amendment. The comments I made apply equally to Motion for a Return 141, which we will be coming to in a moment.

MR. SPEAKER: As I understand it, the hon. minister is asking the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview if he wishes to invite the minister to make an amendment. Otherwise the minister is prepared to accede to the question, apparently on the understanding that there would be a fairly substantial time for compliance.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, since both Motions for Returns 139 and 141 really deal to a certain extent with the same problem, I would agree to the amendment. It may well be that I'll introduce another motion for a return to get the long-term information. But in terms of dealing with the matter quickly, I certainly would be prepared to accept an amendment if the hon. Provincial Treasurer wishes to move such.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we could pass on to another motion while the hon. minister prepares the amendment in writing. We can revert to this one if the House agrees.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: I take it the same applies to Motion for a Return No. 141.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

140. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

A list of the total grants to be paid under each grant program to each school jurisdiction, listed separately, for the 1976-77 fiscal year, with comparative figures forecast for 1975-76.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, we cannot accept Motion 140 for the simple reason that grants for the 1976-1977 year are calculated, for the large part, on province-wide statistics and not on the basis of per school board statistics. I would think the information with respect to the 1975-76 fiscal year would probably be available within the next couple of months. With respect to the 1976-77 fiscal year, that information on a per school board basis would not be available until the expiration of that fiscal year, and perhaps a couple of months thereafter. On that basis, Mr. Speaker, we are unable to accept the motion for a return.

[Motion lost]

142. Mr. Taylor proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) the amount of revenue gained by the Government of Alberta from the sale of waste paper for each of the fiscal years: 1974-75 and 1975-76;
- (2) the amount of Royal Record bond and 20-lb. bond paper purchased by the government in each of the above two years, and the percentage of this paper that was made from recycled paper.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, to facilitate a reply to Motion No. 142, I would like to propose the following amendments. I will explain why they are requested. Item 1 would read, "the amount of revenue gained by the Government of Alberta from the sale of waste paper for the fiscal year 1974-75 and the period April 1 to December 1, 1975". Mr. Speaker, this is to enable us to reply to that question before the end of this session. It usually takes about three months after a period has ended to get all the information.

The second one, Mr. Speaker: "the amount of Royal Record superfine linen and 20-lb. bond purchased by the government through its purchasing agency in the fiscal year 1974-75 in the period April 1 to December 31, 1975". Mr. Speaker, the reason for that is that some agency outlets — say in a small town or hamlet — could have purchased a bundle of paper for under \$25. We would not be able to establish all these. However, we can establish infor-

mation [as to] all paper purchased through the purchasing agency as requested by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Also, I understand the paper sold to the different agencies is usually used for roofing and tile rather than recycled for use in stationery. Therefore, I think we should also drop that. We do not get information on whether the paper we receive here, for instance, is recycled.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the amendment is acceptable.

[Motion carried]

149. Mr. R. Speaker proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) the number of advertisements with the headline "Thank you Trees" placed in newspapers by the Department of Energy and Natural Resources for the dates January 1, 1975, to March 1, 1976;
- (2) a list of the dates and the newspapers in which each such advertisement appeared;
- (3) the cost of each such advertisement.

[Motion carried]

151. Dr. Buck proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

The total cost of the booklet entitled "The Government of Alberta: Visual Identity Program".

[Motion carried]

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I move that Motion for a Return No. 139 be amended by striking out the phrase "and subprogram" and "with comparative forecast data for 1975-76".

[Motion carried]

141. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

A list which gives, for each program and subprogram in the 1976-77 estimates, the estimated total payments under object of expenditure code No. 430 — professional, technical, and labor services — with comparative forecast data for 1975-76.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I move that Motion for a Return No. 141 be amended by striking out the phrase "and subprogram", and "with comparative forecast data for 1975-76".

[Motion carried]

head: **GOVERNMENT DESIGNATED BUSINESS**

1. Mr. Tesolin proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

Be it resolved that the provincial government be

requested to consider the effect of the non-compulsory nature of Grade 12 departmental examinations on the quality of education in Alberta today.

MR. TESOLIN: Mr. Speaker, at the outset, I must say that I appreciate the opportunity to present this topic to the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps my resolution should read, "Once more with feeling". The new focus of our society is not on space, nor on population density within the city. Mr. Speaker, the new focus is on the three Rs, the code name for the present debate on where we are going in education. Why this passion related to education? Why the call to arms? Why has "the three Rs" become a household phrase?

University professors grumble about our unlettered youth. Businessmen are disgruntled over today's graduates who allegedly fill applications with spelling errors. Parents are sincerely and genuinely concerned.

Many who screamed progressively a few years ago have tugged the reins and demand a return to basics. The nervousness amongst all is comprehensible. Parents and society as a whole have not only a financial investment, but also an emotional investment in youth. The progress amongst youth seems to have become more urgent, more significant, and more universal.

Perhaps we might relate these worries to a recession mentality. Twenty-five years ago, schooling wasn't the end-all it seems to be today. It seemed that school excellence was not an omnipresent goal. If one failed at school, opportunities arose handily within the economic framework.

Today, however, illiteracy has a damaging effect on the chances for a rosy future. There is keen competition for employment. Throughout Canada, except in Alberta, unemployment is a real problem. [It] follows, it seems, in these unnerving times, that citizens run for the shelter of the tried and true, the traditional, that which worked in the past.

Dr. Worth, writing in *A Choice of Futures*, states:

Almost from its inception the work of the Commission has been influenced by one fundamental observation: the tradition of marking, examining, grading, credit granting and advancement is not only inadequate but highly distorting. It subverts good teaching, obstructs learning, misleads parents and is abused by employers, other educational institutions and the learners themselves.

Evaluation presumes an objective standard, the commissioners noted, a benchmark against which progress can be measured, a standard towards which learners can work. Both learners and their parents seldom find out this elusive standard, according to the commissioners. Employers assume that the learner's credentials denote the meaning of this elusive standard, yet educators more than anyone else know that the presence of such a standard is, at best, a dubious proposition.

The commissioners stated that we must establish clear and measurable objectives towards which our learners may strive. This becomes, in a sense, the essential foundation for evaluation. Given the possibility of fair and decent evaluation according to some established objectives, the report noted that evaluation must perform five basic functions: "It

must induce self-evaluation; appraise all learning objectives; organize teaching and learning; generate records appropriate to various uses; simplify reliable decision-making at all levels of schooling." This, of course, Mr. Speaker, amounts to perfection, and as such will never be totally attained.

Yet, as we move towards these goals, as the report noted, we must not judge our students simply on what they know. We do not want a regurgitation of facts, figures, and information. Rather, we must judge them on what they can generate from the knowledge the schools have provided them, on their ability to think on their own and to apply themselves to problems.

In dealing with external examination, the commission at that time strongly endorsed a change in the role of provincial Grade 12 departmental examinations. They recommended that they be redesigned as power tests that could be used on a periodic but regular basis by schools at their discretion as checks on progress. These were foreseen by the commissioners as being valuable to smaller senior schools wishing to provide a wider comparison of achievement, and secondly, as a means of accrediting private school candidates.

These power tests, Mr. Speaker, were seen as a means of appeal that could be used by students as a safeguard against teacher or school evaluations somehow influenced by factors other than achievement. Additionally, they were seen as providing the Department of Education with results that could be used to assess the levels of achievement in the schools of the province.

Hand in hand with redesigning of departmentals, the commission saw the automatic accreditation of every public and private school in Alberta. These schools would have full powers of learner assessment. In rather uncompromising terms, they stated that to have a set of compulsory, provincially administered examinations at the Grade 12 level implied incompetence or lack of trust in the schools that had assessed the student across all grades and virtually all but the final few courses. Moreover, it was noted that ever-increasing numbers of Alberta teachers are university graduates, that Alberta was moving towards possessing the best qualified teaching force in Canada.

Most important, the commissioners argued, external examinations had tended to distort the priorities of teachers, programs, and students in the final grade of high school, as attention focused on the achievement of high marks on these exams, and that goal alone. They concluded by voicing concerns that local or regional examinations or entrance examinations administered by universities could replace departmentals if they were removed. This, they stated, would be simply a new tyranny to replace the old. They noted that assessment must be based on trust. The public must, they stated, trust the institutions. Teachers and students in those institutions must trust each other.

In addressing themselves to the question of credentials, the Worth commission saw continued need for some form of passport. They saw the Department of Education issuing diplomas on the basis of the power test they recommended on a request basis. They recommended that alternatives be examined and studied. They cautioned that the perceived require-

merits of any external council handling credentials should not become as oppressive as Grade 12 departmentals.

Finally, proper evaluation was seen as providing two things to the process of learning: clear objectives, and a yardstick of progress towards them. When such are provided the student, argued the commissioners, he is provided with the potential for the greatest tool of evaluation and motivation, that of self-perception. Seldom, they went on, did conventional means of evaluation allow for this vital process.

Once the whole evaluative system is shifted towards what learners do instead of what learners remember, the teacher can shift away from grading and toward what the learner needs to know about his work and himself.

Mr. Speaker, with that, perhaps it would be of interest to discuss the past for a while. In the early days of this century, children went to school to learn how to read, write, and decipher. When they had gained these abilities, they ordinarily quit school to help with their family economy. A minority stayed on to go to high school, to acquire the bodies of knowledge that were considered to be education.

After three or four years in high school, they could go teaching if they were 16 years old or more. If they liked teaching and wanted to keep at it, they could attend a six-week course on teaching and receive a third-class certificate. Third-class certificates were supposed to be temporary, but many of them turned out to be temporary for a very long time. When the career-minded youngster decided that teaching was to be at least temporarily permanent, he attended normal school for four months, emerging with a first-class certificate. Then, Mr. Speaker, the early '20s saw the four-month course extended to seven or eight months.

The content within the course has remained much the same: foundation subjects, general methods, methods by subject, classroom management, and practice teaching. Since the purposes and ways of teaching in the school have not changed much in the half-century, so the purposes and ways of teaching teacher candidates have not changed much either. Tell them what to do and how to do it, give them a blueprint of how to make a blueprint of education: this was the blueprint.

For the first half of the century, and the previous half-century too, the procedures of the blueprint system, both in schools for children and in schools for teachers, seemed to be quite satisfactory. Although society was not exactly static, it did its best to think it was, and used education as the fundamental means by which to preserve its past.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, invention of the internal combustion engine permitted substitution of wheels for legs, gave man mobility he had never imagined, sent him flying. Then followed the First World War; the collapse of Wall Street, heralding the stagnation of the world economy; the Second World War; and the atomic bomb, a way to bury mankind in the products of its own mind. Jet propulsion and man's escape hatch into space followed.

Except for a brief puff of change in the 1930s, none of these changed education too much. Education remained what it had always been: teaching the child only what man had known, how to do only what man knew how to do. Teacher education also

remained the same: learning how to mold the mind of the child in the shape of what had been.

Then 20 or so years ago, all of a sudden it seemed society became aware that as it created change, it changed itself, requiring new social formation and formations to maintain an organic structure. At the same time, society began to realize that its children, and they alone, could create the social order of the future, a future that was no longer a half [or] a quarter of a century away, but one that now loomed up with every sunrise.

The question for education became how to teach from our past, which is all we really know, for our children's future, perhaps for society's salvation. This is the problem the institution of teacher education is trying to resolve. About the only guideline we have is that we must somehow learn to teach the child, not only how to recreate our yesterdays, but to invest in his own tomorrows.

How long it will take us, left to ourselves, to turn this trick is questionable; perhaps less time than we think, if the young ones keep forcing our attention to the problem. Certainly, they are now telling us, some by their apathy, many by their aggressiveness, that they refuse to outlive their youth in obscurity. Their problems, the problems that our children face: this is the problem of education for today.

A major source of underlying hostility between pupils, teachers, and the public is the preoccupation with evaluation. Almost anything and everything the student does is likely to be evaluated. The teacher, of course, is the chief source of evaluation. Evaluation *per se* is not the problem. It is an important and indeed intrinsic part of education, essential if teachers are to judge the effectiveness of their teaching, and if students are to judge what they know and what they are having trouble learning. The purpose should be diagnostic, to indicate where teachers and students have gone wrong and how they might improve their performance. Since students will have to judge their own performance, they need experience in self-evaluation.

But educational systems rarely evaluate this way. They make it clear that the purpose of evaluation is rating, to produce grades that enable administrators to rate and sort children, to categorize them so rigidly that they can rarely escape. The assault on the student's self-esteem and sense of self is frequently overt, with conditions virtually demanding failure from some children.

Leaving that, Dr. Bernie Keeler has stated:

The scaling procedure was designed to produce about the same distribution of marks in each subject from one year to the next (though not the same from subject to subject) and hence actually hid any changes in standards which occurred. Fifty per cent correct answers on an exam in one year might earn a failing grade . . . while in another year it might result in an 'honors' standing. Certainly a reversion to this system on the standards argument is unjustifiable.

Furthermore, Dr. Keeler adds:

It is to be hoped that the elimination of departmentals had had and will continue to have the effect of focussing attention on the need for improvement in teacher planned evaluation at all levels.

However, in opposition to this, Ian Arrol, a teacher in Scarborough, writing in Education Canada, has said:

Departmental examinations were discontinued because they were felt to be too stultifying for both students and teachers in the necessity for a rigorous cramming along a prescribed course. But surely there are some requirements which should be mandatory for all subjects and all grades.

Mr. Arrol continues:

The one way of assuring this achievement is departmental exams for all grades from Grade 9 on. These examinations, set and marked outside the school, need not examine the whole year, nor be the only mark for the final assessment. Room should be allowed for innovation, experimentation, individual projects, assessment of oral work, and so on, but, again, there are some things that should be required . .

For example, Mr. Arrol says:

The ability to write a sentence before a Grade 9 English student goes on to Grade 10 English . . .

is a necessity.

Mr. Speaker, do educators and parents want evaluation? Of course they do. But they increasingly want evaluation that addresses their educational concerns, takes cognizance of their intentions, supports children's personal and intellectual growth, and has some potential for improving the quality of particular classrooms and schools. The standardized testing generally conducted in schools today does not address these concerns to any high degree, if at all.

The rhetoric of education suggests that departmental testing is being demanded by parents. This is probably true in settings where parents don't have a secure feeling that schools care. A good documentation effect within a classroom and within a school might re-establish some of the parents' confidence. It would certainly communicate more effectively to parents and children than any departmental tests.

If departmental testing is required because of legislative mandate, it must take a minor role, a very small part of a larger and more important fabric. As an important aspect of that evaluation fabric, documentation provides a basis on which teachers in schools can improve the quality of their efforts. This, after all, is what evaluation must do to have any meaning.

Are external exams really important? Basically, Mr. Speaker, we must trust our educational staff. We are talking of staff who are well trained and qualified. Yet, being realistic, nobody — that is, the public — will trust professionals implicitly. We will have some doubts, even in regard to lawyers, doctors, and so on. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the public at large feels more comfortable with some form of monitoring.

As for reduced standards of education, people must consider that far greater numbers of students are in secondary and postsecondary institutions today as a proportion of population. Entrance is much freer. Economic barriers are lessened.

Mr. Speaker, teachers seem to have to bear the brunt of the attack, but let us not be overly committed to blaming them. After all, we do get our teachers from the universities. If we want high schools to cope better with English, perhaps the universities should be more concerned with teaching linguistics,

composition, and speaking, rather than sophisticated literature.

Also, parents have a responsibility to give children the basics of listening, speaking, and telling stories. This is where the three Rs are founded. Without the basic foundation, the school takes on added problems. The schools have to play catch-up ball to teach basics.

However, Mr. Speaker, we're living in a criticism-oriented time. In mass media, good news is no news. It rubs off on everyone. Negative is in. Positive is old-fashioned. In education, the in thing is always to emphasize the things that need improving. It's not that there isn't a good deal to brag about; it's just that fashions have changed.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the whole quality of education debate, if nothing else, will drag into the open some of the more serious problems the public sees inherent in the educational field. If we are to achieve our goals of universal education and universal literacy — something that no society has ever achieved before — parents, school organizations, and the entire society will have to stop bombarding each other with blame and partisan slogans, and begin talking and working together.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the . . .

MR. COOKSON: My goodness, Mr. Speaker. On such an important topic as education we hesitate as if we had nothing to say about it, which is surprising to me. So I would like to take a few minutes of the Assembly's time and perhaps make a few comments about the resolution of the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray, which I think is a very important and very timely resolution. I think it's worthy of considerable discussion here in the Assembly.

At the outset, though, I'd like to congratulate the minister on establishing a curriculum committee, made up of lay people along with professional people, to review the kind of curriculum we're presenting to our young people. It's a saying that whenever the ATA is against anything it's got to be good. In this case, I think the president of the ATA has been quite vocal about putting lay people on curriculum committees to give direction towards instruction in the school system. I think it's a great move, Mr. Minister. I commend you on it. I know you get lots of flak over it.

I have two or three members in my area who are former teachers. They'd be just delighted to be on that curriculum committee and not be hamstrung by any restrictions with reference to profession. They'd like to be free to express themselves. So any time you'd like anyone on that committee, I have several names to present.

It wasn't too many years ago, Mr. Speaker, that standard exams in Grade 9 and Grade 12 were accepted. They had been accepted for a long time. In my school career, I remember preparing for those exams. You know, it wasn't all that bad. We had to start preparing a month or two before the final exams in 9 and in 12. Subconsciously, the teachers had this in the back of their minds during the whole instruction year. It wasn't that bad. They knew that somewhere along the way they would have to account for the kind of instruction they were giving to

that class out in front of them. It's not that bad. By that I mean they had to prepare those students to write an exam that was standard across the province at that time. They had to be prepared to live with the results those students got.

Now those standard exams were set by a large number of people. The input was through teachers throughout the province, through lay people, through Department of Education officials and, last but not least, through administration in the schools and through superintendents. So there was a broad input into the kind of acceptable standard exam that would be presented at the Grade 9 and the Grade 12 level. This set standards for teachers. In fact, they had to gear themselves, one way or another, to prepare that student to write that exam. Students themselves knew they had to be geared for that exam. They worked diligently.

There were many, many times and many, many instances where students were practically incapable. Because of their inability to cope with figures, numbers, and interpretation, they could never have gotten through those standard exams if they hadn't been drilled and drilled and drilled. That's not that bad. You know, you repeat it enough times — it instils something in your mind which stays with you for the rest of your life.

I often think about some of the older people I meet throughout the constituency — one in particular. He could stand up at any time and recite poetry he knew as a child. I just wonder how many of our young people today have developed that kind of discipline, to permanently indent this sort of thing into their minds.

You know, some say, well what's the purpose of memorizing a lot of facts and figures to pass an exam? I say that the success of a society is based largely on discipline: discipline among the people, discipline in the schools, and discipline outside the schools. I have found in my experience that some of the most disciplined people — self-disciplined — are some of the most successful people and some of the great leaders. So my contention is that the standard exams weren't that bad.

Now, there were bad things about them too. In many instances the teachers were preoccupied with preparing the students for these exams. They took exams from 10 years back and went through them day after day after day after day, and probably took up more time than was really necessary in terms of importance, and detracted from time spent in other areas. So there was a disadvantage in this regard.

Some of the tests were basically intelligence tests. They measured the IQ, and perhaps leaned a little too heavily towards the IQ.

Then there was the problem of the student who simply could never write an exam. You and I, members of the Assembly, have run across instances where a student, because of his nervous system, his physical and mental make-up, simply goes to pieces facing an exam. Many of these young people probably were drop-outs.

They remind me of a young fellow who would like to have married but was always afraid to stand up at the altar. He was some 30 years old, I think, when he finally got up enough courage to stand up as best man. That was the first stage. I remember this quite vividly because I was the fellow who caught him as he fainted at the altar. It wasn't too long after,

though, having got through the first hurdle, that he was able to manage to make a proposal and be married.

I just want to emphasize that this is the sort of situation that we run into in education. Students who are unable to cope with the standard exams tend to opt out of the whole system rather than attempt something like this.

As we swung slowly towards another kind of system — based partly on Dr. Worth's recommendations, I suppose — we veered away from these kinds of standard exams to more exams and testing based on the year's work. Now that wasn't all bad, except we started to veer away from some of the standards set by provincial exams across the province. Further, different teachers reacted in different ways.

I remember instructing in science. I set my own exams because I wasn't instructing for departmentals. I tended to get tougher as the years progressed. In fact, my exams got so tough I couldn't write them myself. It wasn't quite that bad, but they got pretty tough. Because I had instruction at a higher level and I knew the capability of my students, I made a particular point of giving instruction to the very capable students at a very high level, almost at university level to a Grade 7 or 8 class.

I set those standards because I knew those students were capable of it, and I expected it of them. A capable student who couldn't put out was really disappointing to me. In my classroom, that student ran into quite a bit of trouble. I was always impressed with a student who didn't have the capacity or capability, but was able to work and attempt something difficult. Invariably, I gave that student a particular pat on the back.

So we went away from exams — based possibly on the Worth report and on some recommendations from the Alberta School Trustees' Association; I'm not sure whether the Alberta Teachers' Association passed resolutions to this effect. We brought in a concept that we shouldn't have to present to students a standard exam based on a provincial average. I know some of the teachers thought, well, this was great. If you have 100 students and you a draft a graph, generally speaking, 10 per cent are going to fall in the honors group, the next in the A group, the next in B, and C, and so on. Some teachers might take the attitude, well, let's see now, my results haven't been too excellent over the years. All I have to do is simply scale down the standards and I get the same results. It isn't hard to figure that out. I know some conscientious teachers went the other way. All I'm saying is that those standards were not only standards for students, but for teachers. It had positive results overall.

As soon as this concept came in, the first thing my school jurisdictional area, representing the county of Lacombe and a number of municipalities . . . I really want to give my admiration to the school committee and the superintendent involved. He said the best thing we can do is to develop some type of monitoring system that won't let our system deteriorate.

Now, of course we get these screaming meemies from the university who always say the system has gone all to pieces, and what's coming in isn't worth anything, and why don't the schools do something? It's easy for them to criticize. Mr. Speaker, they turned out the product that's instructing the children.

It's easy to find fault with some other group. This is nothing new. A professor recently discussed the problems with students coming in. This has been going on for years, Mr. Minister. So there's nothing new there. I would suggest the top echelon of students are still pretty top notch.

I can't help but think about the two-day seminar we had not too long ago. The Premier made the remark, because of the extreme capability of these young people to express themselves in front of the mikes, "Look out ...", and he referred to some minister in a particular constituency. This, a lot of it, came from our school system. So it's not all bad.

Our school jurisdiction commenced to monitor. They employed a trained person out of the school system. His job was to try to put together and monitor just exactly what was happening in the Lacombe school jurisdiction. Some of our school jurisdictions — for example, Edmonton — involve literally thousands of teachers, all under one board. They can apply the finesse, employ the personnel, and train people to set up a monitoring system and a standard kind of exam or method of monitoring and evaluating, just to see where they're going. Mr. Speaker, this is very difficult in some of the smaller communities in the province. We consider large a high school which has 700 students, which would be considered small in the city of Edmonton. In a rural situation, it is always a handicap to monitor and compare the results coming out of the system.

What we did was combine the counties in the general area into a loosely held group which met on occasion with superintendents. They are exchanging ideas and concepts about just where we are going in the area of education.

I was very interested, in attending an annual meeting last week at Lacombe, that the parents showed extreme interest in where we were going with regard to standards in education. I must confess that even with our monitoring at that level — which, by the way, many jurisdictions haven't been doing — the superintendent wasn't really sure whether in fact our system was deteriorating to some degree in terms of standards. A resolution was passed asking him and others in the profession, over the next year, to further monitor to see in fact where we're going in education. Mr. Speaker, this is essentially what the resolution refers to, the quality of education in Alberta today.

In summing up, a few words about the resolution. I can't help but think we as legislators have a great responsibility to set standards that would be appreciated and respected by parents. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, one thinks that the parents have kind of opted out of the school system. I can assure you that a fair number have opted out of the school system primarily because they have felt totally frustrated with the way things have been going.

Again, I refer to the curriculum committee. I think this is a positive step to give some assurance to the lay people, parents in particular. They're the ones who produce the children who go into the system. They're the ones who are concerned about the way we direct the school. So we have an important responsibility as legislators to take this recommendation by the member, Mr. Tesolin. I know some of this is being done. But I think we should take more positive initiative to monitor before we stampede back

to standard exams.

There may be some compromise between the two areas. There's a little bit of good in everything, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes it's hard to find, but it's a fact. If we could take the best qualities of both the standard exams set some years ago and the concept we have today — we're doing a certain amount of this. For example, I know you can request standard exams from the province. All those who are taking correspondence courses are given standard exams. So we haven't totally done away with the standard concept. I think we should continue to look at the good qualities of both sides, listen very carefully to what the public is saying about the education of children, and reflect that in the legislation that we put before the public.

It's a funny thing about the system. I remember instructing in science. I blamed the teachers in the lower grades. Everyone who came in always wanted to spell potato with an "e". I had a range of capability from slow learners to extremely bright young people. We grouped them homogeneously, which is another story. I could spend a lot of time talking about that experiment. I continually monitored on a weekly basis. I set little exams that they had to pass. That word "potato" is synonymous with a lot of other problems in education. Even though I instructed that the "e" mustn't be there in the singular for potato — and I went right through the school year — invariably, just as many bright students as slow learners ended up putting the "e" on the end of potato. I don't know whether you learn anything from that, but it's sort of.

I remember an English teacher. She was really uptight in the staff room because something had gone wrong. She was trying to teach little Johnny not to say "ain't". Well, that's a challenge. If you hear it in the home every day, I don't know what the school system can do. I said to this lady, look, they're going to come in here saying "ain't". They're going to spend all their days in school saying "ain't". They're going to go out of school saying "ain't". There ain't nothing you can do about it. So it was left at that. It gives you an idea of some of the hopeless challenges you meet in education.

But I can't think of a more fascinating, interesting, and challenging occupation than instructing young people. In this resolution, I hope we, as legislators, can take a good, hard look at it and then make adjustments somewhere down the road to continue to make it a good system.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a few words on this resolution, too. I'd like to congratulate the hon. member for bringing it in.

The resolution is objective in nature. It doesn't take one side or the other, actually. It asks the government to consider the effect on the quality of education of the non-compulsory nature of Grade 12 departmental examinations. I take it from that that it's on the quality of education each boy and girl receives, not on the effect it's having on the teacher — it doesn't say anything about that — but the effect of the non-compulsory nature of Grade 12 departmental examinations on the quality of education.

In that respect, it appears to me that the mover of the resolution has hit the nail right on the head. When I read the newspaper reports of the recent

debates by teachers in Calgary, I'm rather concerned. The debate appears to be based on the effect the Grade 12 examinations have on the teacher. The effect they have on the teacher is the least of my concerns, and I think the least concern of hundreds of parents in this province.

In one report, I notice that teachers representing 75 locals throughout the province approved a resolution

... for the elimination of standardized high school achievement tests and, in their stead, government provision of a testing service to assist teachers preparing exams ...

Another report [says] that going back to Grade 12 examinations would mean the teachers would lose ground they've gained over the last few years and would lose some credibility. They said:

the department of education should not be given the power to write examinations, that teachers shouldn't have to rely on outside force to evaluate a student and that there are some students who violently react to the pressure of facing a one-shot determination ...

Some students do react violently against writing departmental examinations, as pointed out by the hon. Member for Lacombe. But that's begging the point. In my experience as a teacher and as a student, the percentage of students who react violently against writing an examination is very, very small, I would say much less than .5 per cent.

On the other hand, I want to emphasize the fact that the resolution, if accepted, should not check the effect it's going to have on the teachers, or whether the teachers are losing ground they think they've gained over the last few years, or whether they are losing credibility because they're now going to have some form of Grade 12 examinations reinstated, or something of that nature. To me, that is not the important item at all. That's why I am emphasizing it now.

The important item is, what effect is it having on the boys and girls of this province? What effect will it have on their future? I think one of the approaches to this would be to endeavor to arrive at a consensus, to compare a student who wrote the Grade 12 examinations in the last five years we had them to the students in a comparable period where there have been no examinations, and check what effect they've had after they left school, when they display the citizenship they've been taught in school. After all, we're not teaching our boys and girls to become robots of some kind. We're teaching them in order to give them an all-round education so they can face the problems of everyday life, so they can take their places as citizens of this country in every profession and every field of endeavor. I think that is where we have to determine whether there is some merit in having a standardized test.

I think there is some merit in a well-qualified teacher setting for his classes an examination in accordance with his own thinking and his own standards of teaching. But the difficulty, as far as I'm concerned, is that that varies from high school to high school. It varies in accordance with the ability of the teacher not only to teach, but the standard that teacher himself has attained as a citizen of the province and as a person who is giving out knowledge for others to grasp.

Some of the most highly qualified teachers, with

the most degrees, were in my experience the least desirable as teachers — not in all cases, but in some cases. They were highly educated themselves, but they had no tolerance for anyone who couldn't learn quickly. They had no tolerance for those who had difficulties in learning. They had no tolerance for repeating a tough solution to a trigonometry problem. Consequently, scores of students were unable to get anything from that, and perhaps had to get special tutoring in order to get through the grade 12 examination.

But what would the result be if a teacher of that nature sets a standard that he himself marks? Is he setting the standard too low or too high? Is it really going to accomplish anything if his students have not been able to learn and grow under his teaching and under his pedagogy? I think that is the question we have to ask.

In my view, the standard Grade 12 examinations throughout the province a number of years ago had a great deal of merit in establishing a bench mark at the end of Grade 12, a bench mark that we expected of a Grade 12 student or a student wanting to complete senior matriculation and go to university, college, NAIT, trade school, back to the farm or to a job. There's a bench mark that he reached. Invariably, the people in the province would say when you applied for a position, did you complete Grade 12? If you did, they had a pretty definite idea of the knowledge you had attained. Or did you complete grade 10? We had bench marks that had to be achieved.

At one time, we had departmental examinations in Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12. Each one of them was a definite bench mark the pupil had to attain, or he didn't move on in that subject into the next class. He wasn't ready. The door there wasn't open, and he wouldn't benefit from the increased teaching.

A parent in my own constituency said to me the other day, my boy is in Grade 5, but he really hasn't got the reading, mathematical, or spelling ability of a Grade 3 student. She went to speak to the teacher. He said, oh, I'll be passing him this year just the same. Well, that type of thing is disgraceful in our schools when teachers are able to pass a youngster simply to get him out of his or her hair, if they happen to have any hair left. And a lot of our teachers haven't. It's understandable why they haven't.

The idea of shoving on a youngster who is unable to cope with the subject matter of his grade is not fair to that child. And I would argue that with any teacher. A bench mark should be achieved before you start into the next hill. You climb one hill until you get to the top, then you go up the next hill. You keep on growing. As you grow, you are able to absorb more and able to use the tools you've learned.

I favor Grade 12 examinations. Personally, I can see some merit where highly qualified teachers would want to give their own examinations. But I can't see where that teacher has very much argument against an examination based on the major points of the subject, whether it's geometry, algebra, or social studies. Give the student a chance to show whether he's reached the bench mark that permits him then to move into the university class, or at least say to people, I've passed that bench mark and I'm now on this plane.

The annoying part about the Grade 12 examina-

tions, as the last speaker mentioned, is that many times the examinations didn't touch on some of the major items. As a student in Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12, I got the examinations of the last three or four years. I went over them very carefully, not with the teacher, but as my own assignment, to get the indication of what the type of questions would be in order that I might be better prepared to answer the questions when they came. Is that wrong? In my view that was growing — growing to find out what the question was going to be and learning the answer. When you learned the answer, you knew the answer. You were getting closer to the benchmark that the examinations are hoping to reach in that particular field.

When we say we did a little cramming before an examination, I have to admit that is true. But the cramming wasn't all in vain either. After each of those grades, I remember I wrote finals in every one of them. Before each of those grades, I did a lot of cramming. But it wasn't a case of simply cramming something in your mind that you knew was going to be on the examination paper. You weren't simply learning the answer and then forgetting it. Not at all. It was learning a great number of general things that might be on the examination.

Once, a friend of mine in Grade 12, who was rather a character, didn't prepare for his examinations at all. He was very clever, but he didn't prepare. When the examination came, he told me afterwards, I looked over the questions on that paper and I couldn't answer one of them. But he said, I wrote on my paper, I don't know the answer to any of the questions on this examination paper, but here are 12 questions I do know the answers to. So he put out his questions and put down his answers. In my view, that was cramming. He only knew certain things. He was sure, if those questions weren't on the paper, he wasn't prepared.

You can't face life like that, Mr. Speaker. None of us knows what is going to happen in the particular job we have the next hour, day, week, or month. We have to train ourselves to try to meet those problems as they come. That's part of citizenship.

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Under the standing order, there may be some question as to whether we can adjourn the debate at this time. But, interpreting the standing order as setting a maximum for the debate, the motion might be acceptable if the Assembly agrees.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

1. Dr. Webber proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

Be it resolved that the Government of Alberta continue to place a high priority on education for the handicapped, and consider further improvements in the quality of education and services for:

- (1) those with learning disabilities,
- (2) both the totally and partially deaf,
- (3) both the totally and partially blind.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity today to move Motion No. 1 on the Order Paper. As members of this Legislature, I think we should continue to be conscious of the high priority our government has placed on education for the handicapped, and to understand the importance of maintaining the highest possible standards in this area in the years to come. This afternoon, my intention is to do three things: one, to outline a short background on education of the handicapped; secondly, to outline our progress over the past several years; and thirdly, to indicate some present concerns and possible improvements.

The term "handicapped" is one of common usage and is used to identify a broad range of kinds and degrees of exceptionality among students. An educational definition of an exceptional child is: one who deviates from the average or normal child in mental, physical, or social characteristics to such an extent that he or she requires a modification of school practices or special educational services in order to develop to his maximum capacity. Thus, you can see the concept of exceptionality is a highly relative one, and it could include those students who are often referred to as the gifted.

However, the handicapped generally include those who are categorized as having: one, sensory disorders, and this includes those with visual and hearing handicaps; secondly, those with mental disorders, such as the educable mentally retarded, the trainable mentally retarded, and the custodial mentally retarded. The third category is those having communication disorders, that is those students with basic psychological process problems in the understanding and use of written and oral language. Often they are referred to as the learning disabled. Fourthly, there are those who have neurological or physical impairments. The final category is those with behavioral disorders, such as the emotionally disturbed. These classifications do not reflect the growing number of subcategories of children for whom particular services may be developed, especially those with specific learning problems. Nor do these categories adequately deal with children who could logically be placed in one or more categories, those who fall between categories, and the multiple-handicapped.

In the past, and to some degree today, the learning experiences in the school, the curriculum, the organization, and the instruction were directed towards the majority of the so-called average students. Those students who did not respond reasonably well often dropped out of school completely. Then there were those who took their education outside the regular school system. These were the slow learners for whom the teachers, by reason of the limitations of their teaching situation or the limitation of their professional capabilities, could provide only minimal individual attention. Those whose learning disabilities were more aggravated might not attend school for more than a year or two, or might never enrol in school.

However, the gradual evolution of the concern for and understanding of individual differences in children produced a variety of attempts to overcome learning difficulties or to modify programs sufficiently to warrant continued attendance of these children in the schools. It was these efforts which resulted in special education classes, opportunity classes, reme-

dial classes, and resource centres.

The traditional view that provincial authorities should be responsible for these severely handicapped, and that other deviations in children fall somewhere between the responsibility of the school and the home, has undergone considerable change in the last 15 or 20 years. The education of the handicapped in recent years has tended to become a shared responsibility of institutions and the regular school system. There is still a great need for special schools such as the Alberta School for the Deaf, which is administered by provincial authorities, but the basic school system is gradually expanding services to those students whose handicaps are less severe and who are amenable to modified programs which can be given in the educational environment of the regular school system.

The question is often asked, how many of our children are handicapped? The 1970 commission on emotional and learning disorders in children is often referred to as the Celdic report, and is entitled *One Million Children*. According to this report, it is very difficult to answer statistical questions about the numbers of handicapped. However, the indication of the commission is that somewhere between 2 and 3 per cent of the school-age population of Canada is in full-time special educational placements; a further 8 to 12 per cent of the children are considered to need additional help, both in and outside the school. The rough total they estimate for the whole of Canada is that one million children could be classified as handicapped.

According to another survey, *Review of Educational Policies in Canada, Western Region Report* — it was a submission by the ministers of education for the four western provinces. They indicate that the incidence of the handicapped children in western Canada is inconclusive, but generally assumed to be in the vicinity of 10 per cent of the school-age population.

Mr. Speaker, in 1972 the Worth report drew attention to inadequacies of the educational services for the handicapped children in the province. For the next few minutes I would like to turn to some initiatives our government has taken since the time of that report. I think these initiatives reflect the high priority our government has given to the education of the handicapped. The Minister of Education and the hon. Member for Edmonton Ottewill have outlined some of these initiatives in this House this session. But I found it difficult to ascertain precisely the funds that have been made available, in that there are a number of programs which yield part of their funding to the education of the handicapped, and there are other programs where all the funding goes to the education of the handicapped. However, in 1973 the learning disability fund was established to provide school boards with funds for the assessment of children with learning disabilities and the development of programs to improve their performance in school. This fund has grown from \$10 per elementary student when it was first initiated to \$15 per elementary [student] for 1976.

Another program established in 1973 was the early childhood services program. This was for children four and a half to five and a half years of age, with special funding for the assessment and education of handicapped children, including ages down to three and a half years old. This fund started with \$4.7

million, and our new budget is allocating \$15.5 million in this area.

Again in 1973, two pilot projects became operational in Alberta. One was the learning assistance centre in Grande Prairie and the other was the learning assistance field service in Red Deer. Each program serves a large area around those communities by means of an assessment and program development mobile team. I'll refer to these two programs a little later, Mr. Speaker.

Grants for special education teaching positions are \$8,500 for resource rooms and mildly handicapped, and range from \$10,900 to \$13,400 for positions which serve the severely handicapped. That's for the 1976-77 year. Compare this with the teaching position grants of \$5,000 back in 1972.

As has been pointed out previously in this House, Mr. Speaker, the special education teaching positions have increased in number from 700 to 1,100 in the past three years. I think it should be emphasized again, even though the minister announced it recently, that the teaching positions for a number of handicapped in different categories, including the hard of hearing, those with low vision, the deaf, and the blind, will continue to be approved as the need is justified.

I think the increase in the number of students enrolled in special education programs in Alberta over the last few years has been remarkable, Mr. Speaker. In 1972 approximately 5,400 students were enrolled in special programs. In 1976 those numbers had more than tripled to 17,000. The first figure constitutes a little over 1 per cent of the total school enrolment in Alberta. The second figure now constitutes a little over 4 per cent of the total school population.

The number of students who are not classified as full-time in special programs, but who do attend a resource room on a part-time basis and then return to their regular classrooms for a good part of the day, has shown a dramatic 17-fold increase in the last five years.

Mr. Speaker, going on to another program which was also established in 1973, the educational opportunity fund provides for the operation of quality-improvement projects covering a wide range, including remedial reading, remedial mathematics, upgrading skills of the teachers, and provision of additional materials and equipment. Moneys for this program have gone from \$4.5 million in 1973 to over \$7 million for '76-77. Additional support to the handicapped is outlined in our new budget, which reflects a 21 per cent increase in support to privately operated schools in this province. In addition, Mr. Speaker, the 1976-77 budget outlines a 13.6 per cent increase for special educational services, and this includes grants for the provision of programs for the handicapped.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think it's clear from the foregoing that our government has taken tremendous steps in the last few years in an attempt to improve the quality of education for the handicapped in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to turn to that part of the resolution which recommends continued improvements in the quality of education and services for certain categories of handicapped children. First of all, there is the category of those with impaired

hearing, that is those children with some residual hearing, and the deaf in this province. It's also No. (2) on the resolution.

In 1974 a discussion paper was prepared by the director of special education services entitled *Education of the Deaf in Alberta*. That paper pointed out some of the educational needs, and outlined in general the requirements of an adequate program for the education of deaf students. It points out that it is most important to identify the hearing problems in young children so that a program of communication can be established for them at an early age. This communication program, they go on, has to be a systematic program in language development and has to commence at the earliest possible age. It should be supervised by trained teachers, consultants in hearing, and speech therapists.

The paper lauded the work of the preschool deaf clinics in Edmonton and Calgary, but they point out that this work needs to be extended and that current facilities for early detection and assessment are far from adequate. One of the problems with providing educational facilities for the deaf and hearing-impaired in Alberta is that the incidence of these children is very low and the population so dispersed that it is economically unfeasible for local school boards to provide adequate funding or educational services for these children. However, the discussion paper I referred to recommends that there be limited decentralization by the establishment of a satellite of the Alberta School for the Deaf in Calgary — I think we all know that the School for the Deaf is here in Edmonton — in order to meet the needs of the profoundly deaf in the southern part of the province. It suggested that the government lease existing space at a Calgary school, and possibly the school could be operated by the Calgary school board.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent considerable time in the last few years working with a group of concerned parents in Calgary whose interest was and still is the improvement in the quality of education for the hearing-impaired children in Calgary. In early 1975 our Department of Education carried out an evaluation of the programs for the hearing-impaired in the Calgary public school system. The evaluation team reported that the general attitude of the teachers, parents, and administrators in the system was very positive and that all the groups were anxious to improve and upgrade the current programs for these hearing-impaired children.

However, the rest of the report was not so complimentary. With respect to staffing, they report: "At present there is little if any supervision or co-ordination of curriculum, instructional procedures or programs." They reported a complete absence of any co-ordinated developmental sequential language program, and that this was the most serious weakness of the entire program. They also reported a fragmented approach to assessment and a lack of articulation and harmony between the medical and the educational communities.

I point out these results, Mr. Speaker, not to be critical of the Calgary school system, but to point out the need for many improvements. I believe the Calgary school board has made a concerted effort, since this report came out, to upgrade the system by implementing several recommendations from that report. In addition, the Calgary school board has

proposed to operate a regional educational program for hearing-impaired children in southern Alberta. This program is to be implemented as soon as possible, according to the board, out of available operating funds in the 1976 budget, and is to be upgraded and expanded to the extent that additional funds may become available.

Mr. Speaker, another problem in the area of education for the handicapped is the lack of teachers who have been specifically trained to teach these children. At present, teachers of the hearing-impaired must receive their training outside Alberta. A recent recommendation from the Calgary school board was that our universities in Alberta take action to provide some of the necessary training. I realize our universities are providing educational training for teachers to teach many handicapped students in the province, but in this specific area they apparently aren't. The Celdic report I referred to earlier, entitled *One Million Children*, states, with regard to teacher training:

If the changes we envisage in the education of children with emotional and learning disorders, and indeed of all children, are to take place, it is urgent that teachers receive a different kind of preparation for their professional roles.

This whole area could possibly be debated, I think, for several days, Mr. Speaker. I just want to point out that there is a rather serious lack of trained personnel, not only in Alberta, but in all of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to turn for a moment to the learning disabled. A learning disability is a frequent handicap and is often difficult to assess. It shows up in the area of difficulties with reading, writing, spelling, or even speaking. It's not infrequent for a learning disabled child to be intellectually gifted. However, it is not infrequent for a child with a learning disability to be one to three years behind in a subject before his or her learning disability is discovered. It has been estimated that 14 per cent of all third-graders in the Calgary public school system are one or more years behind in reading and mathematics. By that time, it's not unusual for a child to develop a failure complex, to lose his motivation, and possibly for an emotional problem to arise.

It is difficult to 'remediate' such children, and it is also very expensive. However, an effective and less expensive solution is the early recognition of these disabilities by assessment, and prevention programs for those detected.

In '74, Dr. Stanley Perkins of the University of Lethbridge carried out a study of the newly established — and when I say newly established, [I mean the] 1973 projects I referred to earlier — learning assistance service in Red Deer, also the centre in Grande Prairie. His findings indicate a high degree of acceptance of the services provided by these two projects, but with some qualifications. One qualification was that the project team members were not able to provide effective follow-up on the detected handicapped pupils. In talking to a teacher over the weekend in the Red Deer area, he pointed out the same criticism.

The second point Dr. Perkins made was that there is a need for comprehensive medical examination of children prior to entry into the schools. He also noted that prior to the commencement of these two projects I refer to, very little service for handicapped children

existed in the areas connected with these two projects. He went on to recommend that the financing of special education in Alberta be done in such a way as to minimize the discrepancy between the services provided in urban and rural Alberta.

If you think the urban was maybe poorer than the rural, it's not right. It's the other way around. I think the next point is important. A shared-services concept between separate school systems — and when I say separate school systems, I don't mean Catholic school systems, but different school systems — should be adopted as the most efficient way to deliver services to sparsely populated school jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, I think the evaluation of the projects carried out by Dr. Perkins is extremely important. In the past, there has been very little evaluation of educational services for the handicapped in Canada. In addition, I think there is an urgent need for an expanded program of research into emotional and learning disorders in our children. The western ministers, in the report I referred to earlier, indicate there is a growing recognition of the importance of research and program development in the area of preventive services, which might well give rise to interprovincial participation in studies and future planning.

Mr. Speaker, in the last few seconds I would like to point out — and I found it interesting — the section in the *Report of the Alberta Mission to Europe* on social services, services for the handicapped. If I could just read a couple of the points made by this group, in Denmark, they indicate:

There is a legal requirement that all handicapped must be reported to the administration . . .

When I say the administration, this is the administration of services for the mentally handicapped, because that's separate from the other health services

. . . by physicians and schools, and the law requires that special services must then be offered to the child.

The group which went over on this mission and studied this area said consideration should be given in Alberta to legislation requiring the reporting of all handicaps to facilitate the provision of services.

Going on to Sweden, they indicate:

Handicapped children start nursery school at three. Community preschool programs must be provided for all six year olds. Speech therapists also work closely with assessment and rehabilitation teams.

Another point was brought out with regard to Sweden, which I think is extremely important. That is:

. . . regional assessment centres for the handicapped have been developed in which highly specialized professional teams are capable of assessing the total needs of the child and its family.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the problem areas for the education of our unfortunate children, the handicapped, are not peculiar to Alberta. Nevertheless, these problems need to be solved. We have to try to solve them. I think it is not just the responsibility of government. I think it is the responsibility of our Alberta Teachers' Association, of the

Alberta School Trustees' Association, and of parents to try to make progress in this area. I think we have made significant progress in the last several years. The education of the handicapped, Mr. Speaker, has been an item of high priority. With continued emphasis in this area, I think we will continue to make good progress.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to take part in what, in my judgment, is a very thoughtful resolution, and one which merits the support of members in the Assembly.

I would be the first to admit that during the last number of years we have made some progress — no question about that — in providing more assistance to the handicapped children in Alberta. However, Mr. Speaker, the measure of how far we have to go was, I thought, described quite well by the hon. member who introduced the motion, both in his detailed assessment of the situation and when he outlined the increase in the number of children now receiving specialized training of one kind or another. I think he mentioned that in 1971, 5,400, or about 1 per cent, were receiving this kind of education. In 1976, the projection is somewhere around 17,000, or approximately 4 per cent. But, as the member quite properly pointed out, whether one looks at the western ministers of education or for that matter the report *One Million Children*, the indication in the various studies is that somewhere around 10, perhaps as high as 12, per cent of our enrolment needs some kind of special help.

So the fact that we are now providing assistance to 4 per cent is certainly a step in the right direction, but we shouldn't get so busy patting ourselves on the backs that we forget we still have approximately two-thirds of the way to go.

I was also interested, Mr. Speaker, when the member pointed out what is contained in the *Report of the Alberta Mission to Europe* and outlined the services available in Denmark and Sweden. He mentioned Denmark and Sweden; I won't repeat that. But in Germany:

Germany introduced legislation in 1974 providing for the integration of all support [for] the disabled.

Germany has legislation requiring employers employing more than 16 persons to employ a certain number of handicapped people.

Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the resolution before us, it seems to me we can tackle this in a number of ways. The representation I've received, both from the Alberta Association for the Mentally Retarded as well as the Friends of the Disabled, has suggested we need mandatory legislation which would in fact require both the public and separate school boards in this province to make facilities available to handicapped children, or to accept responsibility where these children have to be sent to other places, other institutions of learning, either in this province or outside Alberta, in the case of certain types of impairment.

I would just point out, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me if one accepts the basic proposition that education is really a right — and I believe it is — it follows that it's only reasonable that that right be extended to parents of all children, whether those children are handi-

capped or not. Mr. Speaker, it's a little difficult to accept the argument that the parents of handicapped children must bear a much heavier financial responsibility for the education of their children than do the parents of children in the public school system who are not handicapped.

Mr. Speaker, in my view this will not be solved overnight. The key is a close working relationship with the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the ATA, and the provincial government, moving towards mandatory legislation, but recognizing that this kind of responsibility simply can't be passed on holus-bolus to the school boards without proper funding from the province. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that at this level we have to ensure that that funding is available.

Mr. Speaker, I know it's difficult to draw exceptions to any overall policy of restraint. However, we have already seen the government indicate that there are going to be certain areas where exceptions will be made. The administration of justice is one of those areas. The whole question of safety in the workplace is another area that is singled out, in both the Speech from the Throne and the budget, as exempt from the policy of restraint. I'd like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the total approach to dealing with the problems of the handicapped within our province should be exempt as well.

I look at what we are doing in terms of grants to the education system for the mildly handicapped, the resource rooms, and I see that, according to the minister's statement of February 17, grants are frozen for 1976 for resource rooms and the mildly handicapped; special education teachers increased by only 4.9 per cent; the learning disabilities fund by only 6.9 per cent — in other words, Mr. Speaker, less than the current rate of inflation.

In addition, when one looks at our expenditures for hearing disabilities, schools for the mentally retarded, and special education teachers, that represents approximately 3 per cent of our total expenditures on education this year, Mr. Speaker. I suggest to hon. members, in view of the fact that 10 per cent of our children are in this category, 3 per cent simply underlines the measure of how far we have to go, as I mentioned before.

I would just refer to a copy of a petition sent to Premier Lougheed this year, urging the province of Alberta to pass legislation to require school boards to offer the physically and mentally handicapped children an opportunity for training in education.

That petition was sent in by the Friends of the Disabled, but among the organizations that endorsed it are a wide group of people in the province, Mr. Speaker: the Alberta Human Rights and Civil Liberties Association, the Alberta Society for Autistic Children, Alberta Women's Institute, The Canadian Red Cross Society, Canadian Cerebral Palsy Association, Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association, Edmonton Jaycees, the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Unifarm, Association for the Hearing Handicapped, social services department of the city of Edmonton, Lakeland Association for the Mentally Retarded, Lethbridge Association for the Mentally Retarded — to name just a number of what must be about 25 or so signatories to this petition.

The request they are making, Mr. Speaker, is not unreasonable. It is simply that we pass the legisla-

tion. But at this point I want to underline that it isn't good enough simply to pass a bill. We have to provide the funding so the school divisions are in a financial position to provide this service, on either a shared basis or what have you between the separate and the public school systems.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's going to take money. No question about that. But, in my judgment anyway, the priority this item should receive is sufficiently important that, as I mentioned before, an exception to the restraint policy should be made.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to denigrate in any way, shape, or form the very valuable work that has been done by some of the private institutions in this province. As a matter of fact, when one looks at the work of many of the volunteers who have pioneered in this area, one can only feel a very profound sense of gratitude for their self-sacrifice and human concern.

But, Mr. Speaker, while one can say that, I think it is also important that we move the next step along the road: to recognize this is an important enough area that, collectively, we have to make available the funds. The private institutions or private schools can certainly fit in. I personally agree with the government increasing the budget by 21 per cent in grants to various privately operated schools. I think that's a good move. I certainly have no quarrel with that at all.

But, Mr. Speaker, the total package, which I think people in this area are interested in, still has not been achieved. That is the recognition that, as a matter of right, we are going to say, yes, a priority item is to provide a basic opportunity for every child, regardless of his impairment. That is going to be as basic a part of the school system as the fact that in Alberta when a child turns six, he must attend school. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that is really the point that has to be stressed at this stage of the game.

I must confess I'm a little disappointed in receiving a copy of a letter from the Minister of Education dealing with this issue. He mentions, and I quote from his letter of March 1:

Our schools are accommodating increasing numbers of handicapped children as they become identified and their educational needs are determined.

No one's quarrelling with that.

We feel that we are making good progress toward our goal of providing suitable programs for all handicapped children who can benefit from some kind of instruction. Therefore, we no longer are seriously contemplating the introduction of mandatory legislation.

I would infer from the minister's answer that at one point the government was seriously giving consideration to mandatory legislation. My appeal to the government is: reassess your position. If at one time you were considering it, consider it again and move forward in this area. It isn't good enough to say, we are making progress. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that when we're dealing with a basic right, just making progress isn't adequate.

So I certainly intend to support the resolution introduced by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow. But I believe that the emphasis should be placed on further improvements in the quality of education and services. Basic to that emphasis has to be a

commitment by the province of Alberta that we will not only pass the legislation, but we will fund to make that legislation a reality, so every child in Alberta can have the best possible education that individual can acquire.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to participate in the debate on this motion put forward by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow. Inasmuch as the hon. member has covered so much of the material and information which I intended to include in my remarks, I hope you will bear with me as I sift . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but I'm not sure her speech is coming over the sound system. Perhaps she could direct it a little more to the microphone.

MRS. CHICHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I began with my opening remarks that I was pleased to participate in the debate on this motion brought forward by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow. Of course, the hon. member quite rightly has covered much of the groundwork and the information I intended to include in my remarks. So perhaps my remarks will therefore seem somewhat disjointed. I will attempt not to repeat totally much of the information, the remarks and the concerns that the hon. Member for Calgary Bow has expressed. However, I think some of the information needs to be repeated, and in addition, I would like to express certain other points of view.

I think that back in 1971 part of the election platform of the Progressive Conservative party was a goal and concern that in the province of Alberta there must be the opportunity for each individual to reach his or her full potential educationally, socially, and medically. All three of these are part of the very broad concept of this resolution.

I think that as the years have very quickly been passing by, great strides have been made in this area. I would like to cover some of them. I think time would not permit to cover all of them. But I would like to stress those areas we need to focus on to provide greater improvement and opportunity for our handicapped, in the broad sense we have included in this resolution.

I think the hon. Member for Calgary Bow stressed the benefits, or the extensive contribution that has been made by various non-profit organizations — by volunteers, individuals, parents, and families of members who have the disadvantage — in assisting those who are handicapped to a lesser or greater degree.

I think it's important to underline the need for greater strides to be made for the integration of the young handicapped into our educational system and into society, in order that they become accustomed to functioning substantially, or to their greatest potential, in the well society, so to speak — or in the norm of our society — and in order that society place a lesser emphasis on recognition of these disabilities. I think that kind of recognition or integration has a great psychological effect on both the well and those who are less fortunate.

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow has, I think, very adequately stressed the financial support the

Government of Alberta has been giving in this area. Again, we might ask whether this is truly adequate. At what level do we take the position that we have reached the maximum in the kind of funding that we, as a government, would provide out of public funds? I think it is important to maintain some degree of responsibility on the part of the private sector, the non-profit organizations, the individuals — a responsibility requiring them to make their contribution as well, in order that this entire problem be kept in its proper perspective and be recognized as a responsibility of each and every individual, irrespective of his capabilities, potential, or standing in society.

I notice that the hon. member, almost in passing, commented on the need for research with respect to the handicapped in the broad sense. I have a concern that this is one of the areas we really are not doing enough in. On the long term, whatever can be done in the area of research to assess, evaluate, recognize, diagnose, and put in place the most effective kinds of programs to assist individuals to either develop to a degree where their handicaps may be totally overcome, or to minimize them to the extent that they would not be recognizable, so in spite of [the] degree the handicap, the individual would be able to function at a level which might be recognized as a norm.

Another area that I think we have not stressed sufficiently or given a degree of concentration and assistance to is the area of aids for the handicapped. I recognize from information provided that financial aid for handicap equipment and for such matters as parent relief programs is available. I think society is not sufficiently informed about the assistance and the programs available in these areas. I'm led to believe this because of the many approaches I have had from the private sector, not only from the handicapped or their families. Society as a whole feels we are doing very little in the general area of assisting the handicapped, which is not true.

I think we have failed somewhere in our communication, whether in our individual approach to communicating the information, or as a public body, whichever is the weakness. I think perhaps it's a combination of all of them. I recognize that under the handicapped services program, children who are members of families on social assistance and adults who are senior citizens receive a great deal of assistance with respect to aid in appliances. But it seems to me there is a gap between the age of 18 and the senior citizen level that is inadequate by the concepts that I would interpret are available in the programs.

The Social Services and Community Health Department has funds available for aids to wards in the form of personal equipment, as I've indicated, and on a larger scale, in the electronic diagnostic machines available in institutions, and so on. I think it's important for us to convey and have placed on the record some of the kinds of facilities that currently exist. The facilities I'm talking about are [those where] parents can have their preschool children tested. Early diagnosis is extremely important for children. I'm not sure just how widespread the information is that the preschool hearing clinic at the University of Alberta Hospital diagnoses the type and degree of hearing loss and attempts to define the hearing aid best suited for the particular child. The same exists with respect to visual disabilities. This

program is funded by the Alberta Health Care outpatient method of billing.

We have various centres that provide a very broad area of services. I would like to deal quite extensively with this item. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I could conclude within the time I have. I would ask to adjourn debate at this time and conclude my remarks at the next turn around.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Premier's Calgary Office
(continued)

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege. It's been brought to my attention, in reading [unofficial] Hansard with regard to an answer I gave today relative to the Calgary Premier's office, when I was asked by the hon. Member for Clover Bar whether or not the press facilities are available to members of the opposition, and in giving my answer that they were not, as a government office, I was asked a supplementary question by the hon. Member for Clover Bar as to whether the facilities are

available to government backbenchers or just to Executive Council. I took the question as dealing with the press facilities and answered it accordingly.

However, with regard to the overall situation, I'd like to make sure that the record is clear. Although the press facilities are not available to government members who are not members of the Executive Council, with regard to any constituency business, as part of the responsibilities of government MLAs working on caucus committee work, we have also allowed them to conduct constituency business out of the Premier's office in Calgary, provided no political party activity is involved.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move we call it 5:30, and that the Assembly do now adjourn until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at half past two.

[The House rose at 5:30 p.m.]

