

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**Title: **Tuesday, March 8, 1977 2:30 p.m.**

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

**PRAYERS**

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**head: PRESENTING REPORTS BY  
STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the special committee to select the various standing committees, it is a pleasure to table four copies of them as follows: the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders, and Printing, chaired by hon. Dr. Backus; Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act Committee, chaired by Dr. McCrimmon; Law and Regulations, chaired by Mr. Wolstenholme; Private Bills, chaired by Mr. Horsman; and Public Accounts, chaired by hon. Gordon Taylor.

**head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 212**  
**An Act to Amend The**  
**Occupational Health and Safety Act**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 212, being An Act to Amend The Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Mr. Speaker, there are five major provisions within Bill 212. The first would be the establishment of mandatory health and safety committees on the work sites. The second would be to strengthen and clarify the right of a worker to refuse unsafe work. The third would be to remove the appeal from the inspector to the courts. The fourth would be to provide 50 per cent worker representation on the [Occupational] Health and Safety Council. Finally, it would provide that employer rather than worker bear the cost of the administration of the act.

[Leave granted; Bill 212 read a first time]

**head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you and members of the Assembly a special guest in your gallery. He is the hon. Marcel Lessard, the federal Minister of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion.

Mr. Lessard's riding of Lac Saint-Jean is in the province of Quebec. He was first elected to the House of Commons in 1962 and has been almost continuously re-elected since that date. He was appointed Minister of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion in September of 1975. He's meeting with the hon. Mr. Dowling and myself con-

cerning DREE matters this afternoon. I'd ask that he stand and be welcomed by the Assembly at this time.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly 20 grade 6 students from the St. Helen elementary school in my constituency who are here with their teacher Mrs. Carriere. They're here to see whether or not what she has been telling them is correct. I would ask that they stand and be acknowledged by the members of the House.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the hon. members of this Assembly, 50 exuberant young students from St. James Separate School. They are in grade 9 and are accompanied by their teachers Mr. Sniher and Mr. Spavor. I would like them to rise and be recognized by the Assembly.

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you, sir, and to the members of the House a grade 4 class from the John Barnett Elementary School in my constituency, about 50 students accompanied by one teacher. They're in the public gallery. I should like to ask them to rise and be acknowledged by the House.

**head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Legislature Library a manual entitled *Companies Branch Procedures*. I might say this has been used at 10 seminars in Lethbridge, Red Deer, Calgary, and Edmonton with those people who are interested in the services offered by the companies branch.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table with the Assembly the annual report of the Department of Housing and Public Works.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a sessional paper required under The Surveys Act in accordance with Section 87, Chapter 358; and the annual report of Alberta Transportation.

**head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Department of Agriculture**

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the government of Alberta has had under consideration the continued operation of the Lamb Processors Co-op Ltd. in Innisfail, Alberta.

The co-op commenced operations in early 1975 with a view to ensuring that lamb producers would have the opportunity to ship lamb to a specialty plant, and to ensure a continuous and profitable market. The mandate of the co-op has been to ensure this continuous market opportunity and at the same time to build a market in Canada for fresh Canadian lamb.

The co-op has been successful in pursuing both these goals. Producers have received a fair return for their lamb and the Lambco product is recognized across Canada.

However, the co-op has suffered continuous operating losses as a result of an uneven flow of lambs and

the inability to assemble an effective management team. The result has been losses on a monthly basis of over \$60,000. It is the government's view that the continued operation of the Innisfail facility is vital to the development of an expanded sheep industry in Alberta and western Canada. The objectives of the Innisfail plant are even more important today than when the plant began operation. It is our view as well that changes in the operation could considerably reduce if not eliminate operational losses.

Accordingly today we have submitted a proposal to the Lamb Processors Co-op Ltd. which would see the continued operation of the co-op's lamb processing facility in Innisfail, Alberta. This proposal involves the government of Alberta assuming all the assets of the Lamb Processors Co-op. In return the government would assume responsibility for the liabilities of the co-op, which include \$2.1 million in capital debt and interest, and about \$280,000 in unpaid operating losses. If the co-op shareholders approve such an arrangement, it would be the intention of the government to continue the operations at Innisfail until such time as arrangements can be made with an experienced processor for a long-term lease of the facility, with a firm commitment to continue the processing of lamb.

It is expected that the longer term arrangements will see the co-op continuing to function as a buyer of lamb and a seller of the processed product.

It is understood the shareholders of the co-op will be meeting within the next two weeks to consider the government's proposal.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in replying to the ministerial announcement, I think there are just five things I'd like to say very briefly. It's quite obvious that an insufficient feasibility study led to the project going ahead. My information is, regrettably, that in fact we don't have more sheep in the province today than we had in 1975.

I think it should also be pointed out, in light of the minister's announcement, that last year this same government had a consulting firm from Edmonton which supposedly dealt with a number of the problems that the plant was operating. I am somewhat suspicious of that portion of the minister's announcement where reference is made to improving the operation a great deal, because it is my understanding that is what the consulting firm the government selected last year was supposed to be doing.

Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, I think the co-op has little alternative to accepting the government's offer, and I would hope that in the future we wouldn't get involved in more of these kinds of endeavors. I say that, Mr. Speaker, without proper assessment before, and I say that as a shareholder in the plant in Innisfail and a person who is involved in a very marginal way in selling lambs to that plant. [interjections] Yes, there is no question that the taxpayer is supporting it.

#### head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

##### School Closures

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, the first question would be to the Minister of Education. What is the minister's

policy with regard to the closure of city schools where school populations have dropped severely?

MR. KOZIAK: Well, Mr. Speaker, on many occasions the hon. Leader of the Opposition has indicated his support for local autonomy of school boards and municipal governments throughout this province. This is one area where local autonomy is very strongly involved. It's a decision that rests with the school boards.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. In light of the minister's recommitment to local autonomy, what kind of criteria will the department and the minister use when parents from Calgary, whose schools are being closed now by the Calgary public school board, come to the minister? I think under Section 140 of The School Act a school board has to get the approval of the minister. What kind of criteria are the government using for the minister either to give his approval or not?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, of course that decision has not been made. As I understand it, the Calgary Board of Education will be meeting at various locations with the groups and parents involved in the schools that are the subject of discussions, with the possibility of closure being the ultimate result of those discussions. The question of the involvement of the Minister of Education in the school closures is strictly one that primarily involves a look at the debentures outstanding and the program that would be provided for the payment of those debentures in the event the schools are closed or otherwise disposed of.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is the government giving active consideration to the concept of picking up the outstanding debentures on those schools which may well have to be closed in Calgary?

MR. KOZIAK: As the Leader of the Opposition realizes, of course, most of the outstanding debentures on schools are in fact being paid by the provincial government on an annual basis. I believe the latest calculations would indicate that approximately 85 to 90 per cent of all outstanding debentures on school construction are in fact paid by the provincial government by virtue of the annual grants, which exceed \$40 million.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Given the information the minister has just given us, why is the minister considering the question of debenture retirement as an issue as to whether or not he's going to let the school board close a school?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I'm not considering it as an issue. The hon. Leader of the Opposition asked me a question. I believe the question was what considerations would I take into account when looking at the application for school closure under the appropriate section of The School Act, and this would be one of the major considerations looked at.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a follow-up question to the minister. Has the minister given consideration to the question of allowing the Calgary public school board to in fact dispose of some of the school sites that are in the process of being closed, in light of Section 93, I think, of The School Act, where the minister has to give approval for the sale of school properties?

MR. KOZIAK: Well, I'd be interested in looking at the requests of the Calgary Board of Education in this regard. It would be premature of me to make a decision now before any consideration of the matter had been given by the Calgary Board of Education.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, has the minister discussed both the question of the closure of schools and the disposal of property with the Calgary public school board?

MR. KOZIAK: As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I have discussed [it] with the board and with the chairman John Curran on a very pleasant visit I had with the Calgary Board of Education on February 14. On that occasion I toured a number of the schools in the Calgary jurisdiction and saw some very good programs that they provided for students.

On that occasion in discussing the matter with the board, there was complete understanding that this was a decision which came within the purview of the board's authority.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. I wonder if the minister could confirm that there are between 75 and 100,000 empty school desks in the province of Alberta, and that's indeed the reason why school boards are deciding to close schools.

MR. KOZIAK: Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a phenomenon occurring that, notwithstanding the substantially increasing rate of growth of the overall population of the province of Alberta due to the efforts of this government in diversifying the economy, the student population has remained stagnant. As a matter of fact, it's declined a couple of thousand over the last four or five years. Projections for the future are such that over the next five years, Mr. Speaker, the student population in our schools could possibly see a reduction of about 20 to 35,000 students, which is a significant decline on an overall enrolment of approximately 420,000 students.

The hon. member from Lethbridge indicates that throughout the province of Alberta there are spaces in schools which aren't occupied by students, and that is correct. Over the course of time, while the student population has remained stagnant, school construction has continued to go on. We find ourselves in a bit of a conundrum because of the fact that where the schools are isn't necessarily where the students are. We can't be arbitrary and cut off new construction in those areas where the students are just because there are vacant facilities elsewhere.

So it requires a great deal of attention and consideration, but at the same time we must consider the needs of students in this province.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the minister another supplementary. Referring to your

remarks on local autonomy, could I assume that if the local school board decides to sell some of these sites, there'd be no purpose in citizens appealing to you as Minister of Education to prevent the sale and the use of the land for some other purpose?

MR. CLARK: That's what he said.

MR. KOZIAK: Each situation may have its unique circumstances. In certain situations it may not be possible for the school board to dispose of the land itself because of the nature of the land and the fact that it had been dedicated for either park or school purposes. There may be some consideration that if it's not used for school purposes, it should revert to park purposes. Some of these considerations will be those which the board together with the city of Calgary, in some circumstances, will be looking at. The local level is where the decision will be made.

#### Public Lands Employee

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the minister responsible for public lands, the hon. Mr. Schmidt. Has the minister initiated investigation within the department to determine if the type of activities which allegedly were undertaken by Mr. Larson extended to other departmental employees?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. member's question, no I have not at the present time.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is it the intention of the minister in fact to cause an investigation to be undertaken in the minister's area of responsibility, namely the lands branch, in light of the charges being laid, and the particular gentleman being suspended with pay?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, I would certainly await with interest the report I hope to receive on behalf of the department. After receiving that report a decision will be made whether there will be a complete investigation.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. minister please elaborate on this report? Who's doing the report? When will it be made public?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, the report in regard to the operations would come on behalf of the department to me as the minister.

MR. CLARK: To the minister. Who is doing the report?

MR. SCHMIDT: Senior people within the department, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then a supplementary question to the minister so I clearly understand this situation. Are senior officials within the department doing an investigation within the department to see if in fact this alleged situation of handing out contracts is going on? Are people within that very department doing the investigation, no outside group at all?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, not at all. The department is bringing these circumstances collectively before me. That is the report I will be receiving.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister prepared to table that report in the Legislature?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker it would depend on the report. I would certainly . . .

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Attorney General. Has the RCMP completed its investigation with regard to the activities of Mr. Larson and will further charges be laid?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, it runs in my mind that a charge has been laid. I'm not sure of the status of those proceedings. I assume it's before the court at the present time. I am not aware of any additional charges being laid against the accused.

#### **Tendering Procedures**

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Housing and Public Works. Can the minister indicate what progress is being made in developing a uniform tendering manual to be used by all government departments? If my memory is correct, I think the minister indicated on November 2, 1976 that he'd look into this question and report to the House.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, the tendering practices in the Department of Public Works are generally applicable to those areas under the department's responsibilities in regard to other departments. Tendering practices in government agencies may differ somewhat from those in the Department of Public Works.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister didn't understand the question. On November 2 the minister indicated he would be looking into a uniform tendering manual to be used by all government departments. What progress is being made on that tendering manual?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to check and inform the hon. member.

MR. CLARK: Obviously None.

#### **Physiotherapists**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. Has the minister received any representation from the Alberta physiotherapists with regard to physiotherapy being practised by persons who do not meet the qualifications outlined in The Chartered Physiotherapists Act?

MR. MINIELY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe both my colleague the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health and I have received representations, I think it would be fair to say, on both sides of that question.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Has the minister or the government given consideration to allowing the physiotherapists to form their own self-regulatory organization?

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, I believe it would be more proper to address the regulation of the profession of physiotherapy to my colleague the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. The hospital system contracts private physiotherapy, but the actual responsibility for the act is with my colleague.

#### **Holden Arena**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the hon. Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife. Mr. Minister, this is in relation to a letter relating to the Holden arena. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask what response the hon. Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife has given to a youthful hockey player in Holden regarding the closure of the Holden ice arena because of a lack of operating funds for the \$.25 million facility.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. I just ask for some clarification of that particular question. It was in relation to a specific arena. I didn't get the first part.

DR. BUCK: In relation to the inability of the Holden arena to open because of a lack of operating funds — the minister by a young hockey player.

MR. ADAIR: And what were you asking of me?

DR. BUCK: I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, what response the hon. minister has given to the young hockey player, indicating if there is or isn't going to be help from the department as far as making use of this \$.25 million facility.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I'm not just sure where that happens to be in the department, but certainly one of the things I would be responding to, and this is in advance of that, would be explaining what the major facilities program does for the area.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Does the minister have information if any consideration will be given to the application by the Holden Agricultural Society for a grant toward assisting in putting artificial ice in this plant which is now not being used for anything?

MR. ADAIR: Well again, Mr. Speaker, I would think that if an application came forth and they could meet the requirements of the program, certainly funds would be available. One of the areas they would have to respond to is that they could in fact operate that facility. If they can't meet that requirement, we'd have to carry on some further discussions with them as to how we may see assisting them to provide that information to us. If they can't operate, they would not be able to get assistance under the major facilities program.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate to the Legislature

the status of other recreation complexes in the province facing the same situation Holden is facing?

MR. ADAIR: No I can't Mr. Speaker. I can say though from the standpoint of the major facilities program that [of] those we have approved, there are almost none. I would say that in the sense that one or two have asked us for some extension of the time relative to their providing us with the information that they could in fact operate. If they can't, they won't get the money from us.

#### **Recreation Facilities Program**

DR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister could indicate to the House how many applications he has received under the major cultural/recreation facility program? How many are approved, and how many are pending approval?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has drafted an excellent question for the Order Paper. It would seem that we really are getting into that area.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, with respect, could I rephrase the question? I wonder how many applications have been received.

MR. SPEAKER: It's still a matter of statistics. It might be well to put it on the Order Paper.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, could the minister answer the question if he has that information?

MR. SPEAKER: I think we should leave it at what we've just said.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary to the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister in a position to indicate to the Legislature if he has received representation from several other recreation complexes in this province that they cannot keep on operating their facilities? We have millions of dollars invested, and some of these can't operate. Can the minister indicate how prevalent that problem is?

MR. ADAIR: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we should clarify one thing. Relative to the major facilities program, very few if any. But there are some facilities out there that are already in existence, and were in existence prior to the program, where the communities are in fact experiencing some difficulties. To my knowledge, two or three of these have come to my attention.

We're attempting to work with them as to how they can in fact tap our program. But if they can't provide operating, there isn't a means of tapping that. So if an organization other than the municipal authority has the problem, we are asking them to get together and lay out the various plans as they see the possibility of operating and how they might be able to meet the requirements. If they can, we'll provide the funds to them.

DR. BUCK: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate, or does he have the knowl-

edge at hand, how many of these facilities have at present been taken over by either a town or a municipality?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information at hand.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise whether the government is giving any consideration to reviewing and perhaps changing the operating funding available under Project Co-operation?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, just to clarify, you're speaking now of Project Co-operation?

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. minister please use the ordinary parliamentary form of address.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I believe the question related to Project Co-operation, not the major facilities program. Is that right?

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, just to clarify the question. It's directly related to the operating program under Project Co-operation, but to the extent that it includes any other funds that might be available for operation of facilities, that would be included too.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, to start with, yes, we have reviewed and have just adjusted some of the various components of the major facilities program and of Project Co-operation. I should also point out that relative to operating costs we have been, I think, firm from day one that in order to tap the major facilities program the community must provide the operating costs. We would not.

As a matter of fact, that was discussed quite thoroughly last fall at the AAMDC, Mr. Speaker. I might point out that a resolution on the floor was soundly defeated when they did ask for some consideration of operating costs. One of the reasons was the fact that the communities felt, in essence, that if they were not involved in the provision of some funds relative to that facility, in fact they would be getting everything for nothing and wouldn't be looking after it. I was quite pleased with the response from the members of the AAMDC relative to that particular point.

MR. JAMISON: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary to the minister. On the major recreation facilities, I was wondering if the formula on the matching grants may be changed, [whereby] a municipality would then have the grant end of it. Doing away with the matching grants is what I'm really getting at. Are you contemplating doing away with matching grants and the grant would be strictly on the basis of population, so municipalities would have moneys to operate the facility?

MR. ADAIR: It's not being considered at this particular point, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Rural Gas Co-ops Brief**

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telephones

and ask if a follow-up has been done to the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops brief that was presented to the cabinet on February 10.

DR. WARRACK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. At the time the brief was presented — and I believe it's been circulated to all members of the Legislature — a meeting was set up between a number of government members and the board of the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops. As a matter of fact, a very useful discussion was held last night at that meeting.

MR. PURDY: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Did the federation board suggest any proposals other than what was presented in the brief?

DR. WARRACK: Mr. Speaker, I'm going from memory now. There may have been a number of possibilities outside of exactly what was written in the brief, because we did have a very wide-ranging and useful discussion. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the advice of the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops and their hard-working board has been a great help to all of us throughout the effort in the rural gas program that we have in Alberta. From time to time we are able to get brand-new ideas, refinement on existing approaches, that are very useful.

MR. PURDY: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister received representation from consumer groups in the province regarding the increased price of natural gas, other than from the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops?

DR. WARRACK: Yes I have, Mr. Speaker, not necessarily organized on an association kind of basis, but by way of a number of letters from individual citizens; however, certainly nothing like the number of letters that have been written to me by members of rural gas co-ops.

#### **Working Conditions — Females**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that today is International Women's Day, I'd like to ask the hon. minister if he can advise the Assembly whether the government proposes any amendments to The Individual's Rights Protection Act which would prohibit discrimination by marital status or allow for affirmative action programs.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the question of amendments to The Individual's Rights Protection Act is under consideration. A number of representations have been made, in particular those of the Human Rights Commission. I believe I've indicated to the House on a previous occasion that I've had very useful discussions with the Alberta Human Rights Commission in regard to what changes might be proposed. They and we felt that the existing legislation was in very, very good order and was functioning extremely well. It has frequently been said to be the best in the country.

Therefore the idea of legislative change, although there is no intention to defer it unnecessarily, isn't

something we had planned for this spring sitting. A caucus committee is looking at the matter and following a progress report from them, and no doubt some further communication with the Human Rights Commission, announcements can be made about proposed changes.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question which I believe should really be directed to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. Is the Provincial Treasurer in a position to advise the Assembly whether the government proposes to move on an affirmative action program within the Alberta public service, in light of recent statistics tabled in this House in response to a motion for a return which show that men receive, on the average, some \$3,500 more than women within the public service? Is the government entertaining at this time the concept of an affirmative action program within the public service?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, as I recall, the information the hon. member refers to in his question dealt with the starting salaries of male and female employees, and showed that male employees start at a substantially higher salary. But I think I'll refresh the hon. member's memory by pointing out to him that accompanying that information was an indication that that flowed from the fact that we get more male applicants for the higher paying jobs, such as tradesmen and employment of that nature, than we do from women. And we get more applications from women for the lower paying jobs, such as clerks and stenographers, than we do from men.

I also would call to the attention of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that this government's policy is to pay equally for equal work, regardless of who does it. I'm not sure what the hon. member is suggesting by "affirmative action". Is he suggesting we pay unequally in an effort to correct the discrepancy he referred to? Mr. Speaker, frankly I would much prefer to see a growth in the qualifications among women so they apply for and receive these higher paying jobs.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. In light of comments made in the Alberta Legislature last fall, I believe, in response to questions by the hon. Minister of Labour concerning affirmative action, is it the government's view at this time that affirmative action in the public service is being ruled out?

MR. LEITCH: No, it certainly isn't, Mr. Speaker. Within the personnel administration office we have a unit which performs a number of functions. One of those functions is to seek out qualified women within the public service — and there are a great number of them — and encourage them to apply for the more senior and higher paying jobs. So affirmative action of that nature is certainly being taken now, but not affirmative action in the sense of different pay for the same work.

#### **Status of Women Report**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, who I understand is now the gov-

ernment's liaison representative with the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee. I gather there's a quieter, more harmonious relationship as a result of that change.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. minister is: is the minister in a position to report any progress on the major concerns in the Alberta Status of Women summary of recommendations to the Alberta government, dealing first of all with a cabinet committee, women's secretariat, and a citizens' council?

MR. HYNDMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the representations were made by the ladies to me in my capacity as chairman of the social planning committee. Certainly a number of ministers as well as myself are liaisons in that regard. I had a useful discussion with them. We agreed to disagree on a number of points.

I made it very clear in a letter to them the other day that with respect to the matter of appointing a ministry of equal opportunity or a ministry of women this government supported the position set forth in the statement by Dr. Horner last fall. We do not endorse as appropriate any kind of special ministry of women, because that would clearly be discriminatory and would not suggest equality for women. It would follow then that any bureaucracy which would support such a ministry would be equally inappropriate.

However, I did indicate that the brief which was presented last fall, and which we reviewed again, would be reviewed by the social planning committee; that over the course of the months ahead we would endeavor to have discussions and, at the moment, to find out particularly something of what other provinces are doing with regard to literature that is available for dispersal.

#### **Women's Bureau**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether the government plans to announce any new programs or expansion of the activities of the Alberta Women's Bureau?

MISS HUNLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, the activity and direction of the Women's Bureau has not altered to any great extent. It has already been explained to the hon. member and to this House what our philosophy is: that all departments are concerned with all people's problems. We will endeavor to solve them to the best of our ability.

#### **House Lots — Mill Woods**

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Housing and Public Works, which is following on a question regarding availability of affordable housing lots in Alberta. I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House if he has information regarding low priced lots that will be available this spring by way of Alberta government land-banking in Mill Woods.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, the city of Edmonton of course is addressing itself to this matter but has given us preliminary indications that approximately 400 lots would be available under SHOP and direct

lending programs. I think 300 lots are going to be directed toward the co-operative housing program.

#### **Tendering Procedures**

*(continued)*

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet I want to suggest that I wouldn't want to leave the hon. Leader of the Opposition in the dark, or lead him astray in any way, or indeed . . .

MR. FOSTER: It would be very easy.

MR. NOTLEY: Oh, you wicked man.

MR. YURKO: . . . to give him an opportunity to realize that perhaps the Department of Public Works isn't as efficient as I know it is. Indeed I have before me a summary of the policies compiled within the Department of Housing and Public Works. I don't mind suggesting to him that — I can read to him if he wishes — we do have compiled policies on tendering, commissioning of consultants, space request flow diagram, job site inspection, project management, cost control and procedures, energy conservation, application to government buildings, bonding, and so forth.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question to the answer, Mr. Speaker. If the minister and his department are so competent, why on November 2 last year did the minister indicate that in fact his department was in the process of preparing uniform tendering procedures across the whole government? When is it going to be finished if the department is so competent?

MR. YURKO: Well, Mr. Speaker, we in the Department of Housing and Public Works consider that our policies are uniform. We just wish that the rest of the agencies in government would use them.

MR. CLARK: Supplementary question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: We're going to have to shorten the number of supplementaries. Order please. Might this be the last supplementary on this topic. We have a number of members who still wish to ask their first question.

DR. PAPROSKI: [Not recorded] topic if I may ask again.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. member doesn't know which topic, perhaps we should proceed to the next question.

#### **House Lots — Mill Woods**

*(continued)*

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I know the supplementary, I'm just wondering about the answer.

But with all respect, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Housing and Public Works. Since I raised this concern to the city of Edmonton last year regarding these low-cost land-bank lots not getting directly to the owners, I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House whether in fact he is now satis-

fied that the vast proportion of these lots will be going directly to owner/builders. Or does he have any information in that regard?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. minister's satisfaction is definitely a matter of opinion. We still have a number of members who have not yet asked their first questions. The hon. Member for Drumheller, followed by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley.

#### **PWA Headquarters Move**

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Transportation. Now that the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled in favor of the Alberta government in moving PWA headquarters from Vancouver to Calgary, what progress is being made in that actual move?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to report that for all practical purposes the move is complete as to the number of people who will be moved at the present time. There may be a few additional moves later on as the office becomes fully operational, but for all practical purposes the move is complete and is now located in Calgary.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. Does the hon. minister have a ballpark figure of the extra expenses involved because of the intervention of the Hon. Otto Lang?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I don't have, although I could perhaps get an indication from management relative to the additional costs caused by that particular federal government action.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. Is either the government or PWA pursuing a claim to the federal government to pay that amount which properly should not be charged to the shareholders of PWA?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, certainly the chairman of the board and I have had some discussions relative to whether or not we should take that action. At the moment we are giving it consideration and seeing whether that would be an appropriate course, or whether that would be useful leverage for some additional course down the road.

#### **Municipal Debt**

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. This relates to the last issue of the Treasury. Are your department and the Municipal Financing Corporation not concerned with some of the heavy borrowings by some of the municipalities as shown in the report?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I haven't got the information at my fingertips with respect to the analysis of debt held by municipalities, but of course it is one of the concerns we are aware of. In one of its capacities, the Local Authorities Board monitors very carefully the amount of debt outstanding for every municipality.

MR. ZANDER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is there a guideline or are some criteria set forward as to what mill rates are set aside for repayment of principal and interest on the indebtedness to the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, as I recall, sometime in 1973 the criterion for debt per capita was removed from the limitations of municipalities' borrowing potential. In its stead was substituted [what is] generally referred to as a cash flow requirement based on the ability of the municipality to repay that debt. The ability to pay is the criterion now being applied.

#### **Home Lending Programs**

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works. The annual report the minister tabled indicated there were six applications, slightly over \$166,000, in the farm home lending program. Due to the limited interest, is the minister planning any reassessment of or changes in the program?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, the annual report is a year old. Since then we have had one assessment in terms of permitting the size of the housing for farm home families to be somewhat larger than the initial standards. Some other minor changes were made, some not so minor, which I'm prepared to give the hon. member. However, since then the reaction to the program has still not been very extensive. So the Minister of Agriculture and I and our officials will be getting together again in the very near future to reassess the applicability of the program.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the changes the minister made. It certainly did help to a certain extent.

But the annual report also indicated that out of the \$76 million lent under the direct lending program, \$42 million went directly to builders instead of homeowners. What direction does the minister give to the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation to ensure that the houses get into the hands of qualified applicants at the proper interest rate and at correct prices?

MR. YURKO: Well, Mr. Speaker, all agreements with speculation builders under the direct lending program are pretty complex in nature, and all the various points are indeed itemized before an agreement is signed with a speculation builder. In that agreement, of course, is the requirement that the housing unit be built for a maximum price. Under the direct lending program, the maximum price is \$46,000. This is one way by which the government controls the price structure of housing.

In addition, there are other requirements such as the sale to qualifiers under the conditions of the direct lending program.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the \$46,000 maximum on the prices of homes, is the minister giving any consideration to increasing this?

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I can without equivocating suggest that the industry has continuously attempted



to get us to consider our views in regard to the maximum price of housing under the SHOP and the direct lending program. We have continuously refused to increase those limits. Indeed, as a government it has not only been our policy to assist low- and middle-income families in regard to their accommodation, but also to put a downward pressure on the price of housing by removing excessive aspects of the housing industry and amenities not necessarily required in a basic house.

So even though we have had a considerable amount of pressure to increase those limits, we have refused to do so. Indeed I might suggest that we are going to maintain our limits because the activity in both the starter home ownership program and the direct lending program is increasing rather than decreasing.

#### **Recreation Facilities Program** (continued)

MR. JAMISON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to add another question to the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife with regard to the major facilities, and with a short preamble. Originally in 1975, when the program was released, just two cities — Edmonton and Calgary — were regarded as regions of their own. I was wondering if the minister had considered adding other cities or urban centres on a regional basis to this program.

MR. ADAIR: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that relates to what I said just a little while ago relative to some changes we had already made at the request of the municipal authorities. One of them was to include other than the city of Edmonton in the regional category. All cities in Alberta are now classified as regional for the purposes of the major facilities program. That includes the new city of St. Albert.

#### **Transportation Corridor — Calgary**

MR. KIDD: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Transportation. I wonder if the minister could indicate when the transportation corridor within the RDA around Calgary will be precisely located.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I think that will depend on continuing conversations and discussions with the city of Calgary and the surrounding communities, because I think it's important that we all agree as to where in a precise way that transportation corridor should in fact be. I would anticipate we'll have ongoing discussions, and hopefully some time later this year at least a portion of the transportation corridor could be identified.

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the hon. minister. Possibly the hon. minister could advise whether he regards the transportation corridors as they are exhibited around the city of Calgary as acting as the natural boundaries of future growth for the city of Calgary.

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly the hon. member could change that question into a matter of policy. What he has said, with respect, is a question eliciting an

opinion. The question as I understand it used the word, does the hon. minister "regard".

MR. GHITTER: Mr. Speaker, if I may then. Possibly the hon. minister could comment as to whether any studies have been undertaken by his department to determine whether the transportation corridor would act as a natural boundary of the city of Calgary.

DR. HORNER: Well, Mr. Speaker, of course my responsibility is to work with the urban area relative to a transportation corridor. The nature and size and future of the boundaries of the major cities in our province are the responsibility of my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. GHITTER: If I may, Mr. Speaker, ask the elusive Minister of Municipal Affairs whether his department has undertaken any studies in this respect. [interjections]

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the question of urban boundaries in the area of Calgary, as the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo is well aware, is being weighed carefully by the Calgary Regional Planning Commission, and studies will be out in the next week or so.

The urban form is very important to us in our metropolitan affairs cabinet review. We are at this time dealing with the question of urban form for the city of Calgary. But we are looking toward the views of the city of Calgary which seem to state that a uniform city is their preference.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

#### head: **WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I move that Question 114 stand and retain its place on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

#### head: **MOTIONS FOR RETURNS**

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following motions for returns stand and retain their place on the Order Paper: 104 and 108.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would have made the same motion with respect to Motion for a Return No. 101. However, I would like to suggest that in dealing with that motion, the hon. member moving the motion might possibly be prepared to consider making each request a separate motion for a return. We have spent some time looking at this and find we cannot deal with them as a total group. We could deal with them individually, and we would be in a position to do so relatively soon.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could suggest that the hon. Attorney General include 101 with 104 when he moves that it be held over, because obviously that would have to be done.

MR. FOSTER: I would be happy to do so, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the proposal of the hon. Acting Government House Leader?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion carried]

102. Mr. Clark moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing the following information with respect to every trip made outside of Canada by employees or other persons acting on behalf of a government of Alberta department, board, commission, or agency which was paid for from public funds during the period April 1, 1976, to March 31, 1977:

- (1) the date of each trip,
- (2) the destination of each trip,
- (3) the purpose of each trip,
- (4) the name of each government employee or other person acting on behalf of the government who went on each trip, and
- (5) the total cost of each trip.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I move an amendment to Motion for a Return No. 102: that it be amended by striking out the words "public funds" and substituting the words "public money", and further by striking out the date March 31, 1977 and substituting the date March 8, 1977. I am proposing the first amendment, from "public funds" to "public money", to make the wording of the request consistent with the terminology used in The Financial Administration Act.

Mr. Speaker, the reason for proposing a change in the date is that I question whether it is appropriate for the Legislative Assembly to order that something be done that has not yet occurred and may occur at some time in the future. I make that comment, sir, noting that there are a number of such motions on the Order Paper, but again submit that it is only appropriate for the Assembly to make an order for events up to the time the order is made.

[Motion as amended carried]

105. Mr. Taylor moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

The number and location of nursing homes and auxiliary hospitals constructed or started in the province between

- (a) April 1, 1974, and March 31, 1975;
- (b) April 1, 1975, and March 31, 1976;
- (c) April 1, 1976, and December 31, 1976.

MR. MINIELY: Mr. Speaker, we accept that motion. In answering the hon. member, I would assume that we could also provide information right up to date to March 8, 1977.

[Motion carried]

106. Mr. Taylor moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) the number of inmates in (1) Belmont Rehabilitation Centre, (2) Fort Saskatchewan Correctional

Institution, (3) Lethbridge Correctional Institution, (4) Nordegg Forestry Camp, (5) Peace River Correctional Institution, (6) Spy Hill Correctional Institution on December 31, 1976, who were (a) under the age of 18 years, (b) between 18 and 25, (c) between 25 and 60, (d) over 60;

- (2) how many of the inmates in each of the above institutions, 25 years of age and under, had been in prison before (a) once, (b) twice, (c) three times or more;
- (3) the average cost per inmate per day in each institution during the 1975-76 fiscal year;
- (4) the number of persons in each institution on December 31, 1976, who were (a) detained while awaiting court hearing, (b) serving a sentence, (c) employed as staff.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I accept Motion No. 106 and beg leave to table the reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Under those circumstances, would there be any purpose in the House passing the motion if the information is already tabled? No harm, I suppose.

[Motion carried]

109. Mr. Taylor moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) What was the total cost, to December 31, 1976, of the coal gasification project conducted at Forestburg?
- (2) What are the names of the members of the consortium that paid the cost of the experiment in 1976, and what was the contribution of each?

[Motion carried]

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a response to Motion No. 109.

110. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

A copy of all studies commissioned or prepared by the Energy Resources Conservation Board on the House River oil spill from the Great Canadian Oil Sands pipeline in December 1974.

[Motion carried]

111. Mr. Taylor moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) the number of patients in Alberta receiving clinical abortions in 1976 that were paid for by the Alberta Health Care Commission who had been aborted (a) once before, (b) more than twice before;
- (2) the number of women aborted in 1976 who were:
  - under 16 years of age and (1) married, (2) single,
  - over 16 years of age and under 18 and (1) married, (2) single,
  - over 18 and under 25 and (1) married, (2) single,
  - over 25 and under 35 years of age and (1)

married, (2) single,  
over 35 years of age and (1) married, (2) single.

[Motion carried]

112. Mr. Clark moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:  
The annual salary of Mr. David Mitchell, President of the Alberta Energy Company.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, while I tend to admire the hon. member's persistence, I have difficulty in appreciating his lack of understanding about the issue since we've discussed the matter in the past. This is a matter of business of the directors and management of the Alberta Energy Company. The government, as a shareholder, has no greater privileges than any other shareholder. I must ask the Assembly to turn down this motion for a return. As a matter of fact, it's information the government does not possess.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in rising to address a few comments on the substance of an issue which has been discussed many times before and, I suspect, will be discussed many times again, we have to remember that the Alberta Energy Company is still 50 per cent owned by the people of Alberta through 50 per cent of the shares. I'm not going to get into the argument whether it's 50.001 or 50, but it's essentially 50 per cent of the shares in any case. That represents public dollars that have been invested in this particular mechanism, which is probably the key instrument of the present government's development policy in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, in my judgment, because there is 50 per cent of the investment in the Alberta Energy Company, the public has a right to know certain information as a consequence of that 50 per cent. In my view it's not correct to treat the Alberta Energy Company like any other private company. We're not dealing with any other private company, Mr. Speaker. We are dealing, first of all, with the clear instrument of the government's development policy. Secondly, we are dealing with a company that is funded by at least \$75 million of public funds. Eventually as the years go by, that may be increased substantially. That being the case, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that we have a right to access to certain very necessary information.

Now the argument can be made, as it has been made many times before in this House, that no, like any other company the Alberta Energy Company is essentially just a private company and it's up to the board of directors. Mr. Speaker, nobody really believes that. Perhaps a few of the backbenchers do, but nobody in the province as a whole who's at all interested in the financial affairs of the province seriously believes that the Alberta Energy Company is just like any other company. They realize that it is a hybrid of government and private money.

Mr. Speaker, I have often argued before and would argue again — not at this particular place, because it's not the proper place — that the very set-up of the Alberta Energy Company makes it not as accountable as it should be. Nor does it make it possible to really insist that our money invested in the Alberta Energy

Company be made fully accountable to the Legislature. If we're going to develop these instruments, far better that they be under direct public control. Whatever one could say about the ill-fated Alberta Export Agency — and I hesitate to use the Alberta Export Agency as an example of anything in terms of administration . . .

MR. CLARK: Especially today.

MR. NOTLEY: . . . especially today — at least, Mr. Speaker, all the problems the Alberta Export Agency got into we could debate and discuss in the Legislature. We spent most of last spring in Public Accounts hammering away at the Alberta Export Agency and the policies and decisions of the agency. An awful lot of extremely important data about the operation of the agency — indeed who the people were who were supplying senior management to the agency. Day in and day out we had them here sitting across from the members of the Public Accounts committee. We could do that, Mr. Speaker, because it was a public agency.

But frankly, now with the Alberta Energy Company we have the government maintaining this myth that it's just another company. It's just another company, even though it's 50 per cent owned by the people of Alberta and we're putting up the funds. Well, Mr. Speaker, if we're going to have any sort of accounting at all, it seems to me that what is more important in this resolution than whether or not we get the salary of Mr. Mitchell . . . Might I just say that quite frankly I think Mr. Mitchell is a very good choice of the government for president of the Alberta Energy Company. I think he is doing a very capable job. Nevertheless what is important here is the principle of whether we have a right to know.

Mr. Speaker, I would argue that because we do have a right to know, and because of this sort of thinly disguised effort to in fact remove accountability from the Legislature for public funds, this particular motion should be passed by the Assembly.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, one of the comments of the minister concerns me very much with regard to this motion. The minister indicates that we just haven't got the information. It is a little difficult for me to believe that that is a fact and that there isn't any more concern than that.

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview has indicated the amount of taxpayers' money that is involved, the shares that belong to the government. And I point out the fact that the government appointed the president and the directors. How in the world can that happen without some knowledge of what the actual annual salary or remuneration to the president is? That's very difficult for me to believe, and I just can't go along with that if it was the basic reason the minister indicated as to why we should refuse to go along with this motion in the House.

Number one, I can't believe that. That reason can't hold water. I see no reason why we can't pass the motion as such.

head: **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, I

wasn't lying. I told them that we do not have the possession. I wonder what the hon. member is now insinuating with his comments about being unable to believe it.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I wasn't saying anything about using the word "lying". I didn't say that. The hon. minister raised that word. In my remarks I said that on the basis of the fact that the government negotiated with the president and with the directors, and most likely has discussions with them, it was difficult for me to believe that the minister or the government hasn't got that information. That was the point I was making.

MR. SPEAKER: On the point of privilege raised by the hon. minister: it is true that a remark by an hon. member that he does not believe another hon. member is getting pretty close to the line as far as parliamentary language is concerned, but it is open to several interpretations, one of which might be that the hon. member was not telling the truth. Another one could be that he was mistaken.

Might I add to the remarks I just made that nothing which I said bears directly on the remarks just made in the House by either the minister or the hon. member.

#### head: **MOTIONS FOR RETURNS** (continued)

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Leader of the Opposition conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in concluding the debate on Motion for a Return 112, I simply point out for the sake of the record that it was back in the winter session of 1975 that we first asked this question about the salary, the contract between Mr. Mitchell, the president of the Alberta Energy Company. And we're going to continue to ask the question, Mr. Speaker, because we think it is important that the public know just what is going on as far as this particular area is concerned.

I never cease to be amazed at how the members of the Conservative Party in Ottawa can lament about the situation of atomic energy in Canada and all the problems involved there, and how there is a great need for complete disclosure of all that's going on, and so on; yet we come to the Alberta Energy Company and the argument seems to get lost somewhere between Edmonton and Ottawa.

In this case it's well known that the taxpayers of the province have \$75 million invested in the Alberta Energy Company. Until there is some form of accountability as far as the Energy Company is concerned, we're going to continue to ask this kind of question about the Alberta Energy Company and any other operation like this the government gets involved in.

We believe it's the public's right to know what's taking place in this area. For the government to simply say that this is just any other company — that's like the argument the government used a year ago on the Alberta Export Agency: we couldn't make

the information public because it would hurt some of the dealings.

With regard to the minister's comments that he doesn't know the salary of Mr. Mitchell, I find myself in very much the same position as my colleague from Little Bow. I find it very hard to understand how come the minister wouldn't know. Because if my recollection is accurate, it was the government who appointed Mr. Mitchell as the chairman.

We've heard the suggestion this afternoon that the government doesn't know what the chairman is getting, yet they selected the chairman. Now it seems to me very strange that a businessman as astute as Mr. Mitchell would take on the job of chairman of the Alberta Energy Company and not once in the course of discussion would we come to the question: what are you going to be paid? That's a very strange situation.

MR. NOTLEY: Just doing it for the public interest.

MR. CLARK: I doubt very much whether you would find many people, business people or other people in this province, who would get involved in a project along that line. I just find it very, very hard to understand how the government says it now doesn't know what Mr. Mitchell's salary is, even though they selected Mr. Mitchell. They were the ones who encouraged him to leave the private sector, supposedly, and take on the job as head of the Energy Company. And we're being told here today that the government doesn't know. I just find that extremely difficult to understand.

Mr. Speaker, I've said it before and I'll say it again: this government is having an increasing amount of difficulty sorting out its corporate interests and the public interest. Once again, the public interest is today going down the drain.

[Mr. Speaker declared the motion lost. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Three minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Buck	Clark	Mandeville
Notley	R. Speaker	

Against the motion:

Adair	Hansen	Peacock
Appleby	Harle	Planche
Ashton	Hohol	Purdy
Backus	Horner	Russell
Batiuk	Horsman	Schmid
Bogle	Hunley	Schmidt
Bradley	Hyland	Shaben
Butler	Jamison	Stewart
Chambers	Johnston	Stromberg
Cookson	Kidd	Taylor
Crawford	Koziak	Tesolin
Diachuk	Kroeger	Thompson
Doan	Kushner	Topolnisky
Donnelly	Leitch	Trynchy
Farran	Lysons	Walker
Fluker	McCrae	Webber
Foster	McCrimmon	Wolstenholme
Getty	Miniely	Young

Ghitter	Musgreave	Yurko
Gogo	Paproski	
Totals:	Ayes - 5	Noes - 59

113. Dr. Buck moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

The following information with respect to every employee of the Department of the Solicitor General who was not a resident of Alberta immediately prior to their employment with the Department of the Solicitor General and who commenced employment with the Department of the Solicitor General during the period May 1, 1975, to March 1, 1977:

- (1) the name of the employee,
- (2) the position of the employee when commencing employment with the Department of the Solicitor General,
- (3) the position of the employee as at March 1, 1977, and
- (4) the name of the city and province or state of which the employee was a resident immediately prior to commencing employment with the Department of the Solicitor General.

[Motion carried]

#### head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

1. Moved by Mr. Diachuk:

Be it resolved that the provincial government give consideration to introduction of legislation amending The School Act to provide for the distribution of corporate assessments on a per pupil basis for those corporations that are unable to determine the religious faith of their shareholders.

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Young]

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker . . .

AH HON. MEMBER: Where's everybody going?

MR. YOUNG: Thanks. Mr. Speaker, my expression of appreciation was to the hon. member to my right for his assistance at that particular moment.

Mr. Speaker, last Thursday I adjourned debate on the resolution which proposed that the government enact legislation

... for the distribution of corporate assessments on a per pupil basis for those corporations that are unable to determine the religious faith of their shareholders.

Mr. Speaker, the problem we have before us is that of apportioning certain types of corporate assessments. It's a problem which has arisen as a consequence of legal and quasi-judicial intercession at the behest of ratepayers on both sides — both public and separate schools — to try to obtain some clarification which supposedly would have advantage to one or the other school boards in Edmonton. It is a problem in the sense that the intercession has caused a situation, or so it appears at the moment, which deviates from what has been customary, historical, or the norm in terms of the distribution of a certain element of the corporate assessment.

The nature of the problem can be identified by the indication that this year it means a loss of assessment to the Edmonton separate school board which it is suggested can translate into a loss of about \$900,000 in tax revenue. As I understand it, the crux of the matter is that it has been ruled that holding companies cannot claim any particular religious affiliation. I'm sure we're all aware that the nature and complexity of business and commerce have changed over the years, and that holding companies are now much more significant in terms of the amount of assessment they control.

Mr. Speaker, I want to underline that the problem is a problem in the immediate sense as I understand it. I'm not sure it's a problem that will not be resolved in the courts or at the quasi-judicial level, the court of revision. There have been reports, statements allegedly made by some members of the legal fraternity, that certain decisions are open to a number of challenges. If in fact those challenges are continued forward and prove to be well founded, then we may have a change in the situation, a change which would remedy it. So as matters now stand, it is my conclusion that I'm uncertain as to the legal status of the problem.

Last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, I indicated I was concerned where the proposal advanced here might lead us, if it goes in certain directions. I'm concerned because it seems to me that any program of educational finance must have two or three foundation stones.

The first of course has to be a concern for equality of opportunity for all students. We have generally considered this to be translatable into some degree of fiscal equalization. We have never had and do not now have this in its ultimate form, and it's doubtful we can have it so long as we provide for the supplemental requisition. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, it's crucial that we retain for the individual school boards the right to have a supplemental requisition. It seems to me that failure to do that will inevitably result in the removal of local autonomy. I would not wish to see that, and I do not think most hon. members in the Assembly would wish to see it. I would imagine there would also be quite a battle on the part of school boards to see that opportunity for discretionary action, for initiatives for local adjustment to their particular situation and to their desires and aspirations. There would be quite a challenge to us if that were to occur.

The problem, then, is how do we balance the equality of opportunity and the opportunity for local initiative, local autonomy? If we look at this problem as it stands today — as I understand it, between the school boards and the city of Edmonton, and we presume we can generalize across the province — it has two or three approaches to resolution. One is that we could try legislation along the lines the hon. member proposed here, if I understand it. We could try legislation which would hopefully overcome the impediment identified by the separate school board here, and at the same time would not go so far in the other direction that we would have challenges from supporters of the public school board.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we're on pretty uncertain ground in attempting legislation. I suggest that because, as I understand it, the British North America Act and The Alberta Act guarantee certain rights to

separate school supporters. There have been a number of decisions, but I'll only refer to one. I think it can be identified as the Schmidt case in Calgary. As I understand it, the judge held that there could in no way be a payment of taxes by, in this case, a Roman Catholic to the public school board unless there was in fact an error in law. I take it from that, unless it was undetected and unchallenged — in other words, it just wasn't legal. I think what we're into is a situation where, while the British North America Act and The Alberta Act provide a guarantee, they also provide some very restrictive bounds within which we have to act. So, Mr. Speaker, I have to admit I'm uncertain, and I'm wondering if maybe we have to watch the process of the courts a bit longer to try to clarify what the ultimate decision of the judicial process may in fact be.

My second possible solution would be a fiscal solution. The hon. Minister of Education will probably not be thrilled to hear this, but it seems to me the solution would be to determine the level of supplementary requisition which would be available per pupil on a corporate assessment basis, based on the public school board in Edmonton as a bench mark, and out of the general revenue of the province pay the separate school board the same amount. The only problem we'd get into here would be a challenge that if we're going to do that for the separate school board in Edmonton, what about all other school boards around the province? Before long we'd be a situation of a complete circle; only the circle goes ever upward, and I think local autonomy would eventually be in jeopardy again. However, that may be a temporary resolution while the courts clarify if it turns out that there is a situation which needs to be rectified as far as a particular school board is concerned.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that a third solution — that is, complete removal of the corporate tax base from school boards for supplemental requisition purposes — would probably lead us along similar lines. Now we could do that, and could argue in doing so that we would strike some arbitrary amount included in the foundation program fund and pay it to all school boards on a per pupil basis. That argument would probably be acceptable to some people in the year 1977. But by the year 1980 it will have been forgotten that that in fact was what we were doing, and it will be challenged on the basis that by doing that we have not put in as much from the general revenue as we would otherwise have done, and school boards should get more. In accepting it in this particular year, the capacity of the school boards to tax, and therefore their capacity to develop local initiative and bring their local autonomy to full flower, will have been hindered because their assessment base will have been narrowed.

Mr. Speaker, from what I have said, I guess it's obvious to all hon. members that I'm not yet sure of the most desirable resolution of this problem. It is a difficult situation, a situation which is a problem to me in the sense that I am committed to equality of opportunity in combination with the opportunity for local school boards to manage their own affairs. That means for them to have the capacity to raise a marginal quantity of their own revenue. I think that is inclined to assure financial responsibility and stability, and to keep the public's interest in school board

affairs. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I think it's absolutely necessary we be careful to avoid any harm that may befall any particular school board because of major or abrupt changes in the status of affairs.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, to reiterate, I'm not sufficiently skilled in the interpretation of law. But if, as I understand, it will be possible and likely that challenges will be put to some of the decisions that have been made, then it may be that we have to watch these challenges run their course and take the intermediate action which may be required from the general revenue of the province.

I will listen with great interest to other speakers in the debate to determine whether they can lead me through the maze of legal argument which surrounds this problem, so that I can better vote on the hon. member's suggestion.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in joining this particular debate, I was pleased that the hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place pointed out — probably the obvious, but something I think many people overlook when we discuss this question of the separate school system in our province — that we really do have two public school systems, a separate public school system and a public, public school system, set out as a result of The Alberta Act. I understand from the history of that particular time that this was a compromise within the Laurier government to avoid the tremendous conflict that had arisen some 15 or 20 years before over the Manitoba schools question, which had brought down one of the Tory prime ministers. I think it was Sir Mackenzie Bowell who was turfed out of his position as a result of a palace revolt within the caucus over the Manitoba school question.

It continued to be a festering issue in Canadian politics. In the resolution of it, from a national point of view, we had The Saskatchewan Act and The Alberta Act, which very clearly set out the right of a religious minority, either Roman Catholic or Protestant, to have a separate public school system.

I think that's important, Mr. Speaker, because I also agree with another point the Member for Edmonton Jasper Place made; that is, that our basic starting point in any discussion of educational financing must be to provide equality of opportunity for students, regardless of what system they attend and, for that matter, regardless of where they attend within the province. Too often there is a tendency, among bureaucrats especially, to equalize the yardstick. We had, for example, this business of "so much per student", and that was supposed to solve the problems.

In actual fact, Mr. Speaker, the objectives should be to provide an equal access at the end of the system; that is, equal access to education whether that young person is attending a separate school in Fairview, which is a Roman Catholic school, a separate school in St. Paul, which would be a Protestant school, or for that matter a public school anywhere else in the province. The objectives should be the end result, which is the education of the student, not an artificial formula which provides so much across the board. So [from] that vantage point I would like to address this particular issue before us today, Mr. Speaker: that our objective must be to provide equal access to education.

Reading the resolution very carefully, I would have to say that it may be a small step in the right direction. I can see it would be of some assistance, particularly in view of the present ruling on the division of corporate assessment between the Edmonton public and separate school boards. I'm sure it's that recent decision which caused this particular resolution to be placed before us today.

In talking to several people in different separate systems about the resolution, Mr. Speaker, there is a certain ambiguity. Not being a lawyer, I'm not in a position to argue the case from a legal standpoint. But let me just pass on to the members of the Assembly the concern that was very clearly expressed by one secretary treasurer of a separate school system concerning the wording of this particular resolution — not, I suspect, the spirit of it. I believe I understand the objective of the hon. Member for Edmonton Beverly: that where we are unable to determine the religious faith of shareholders, the corporate assessment would in fact be divided on a per pupil basis. That's fair enough.

However, this case was put to me by this particular secretary treasurer. What happens in the case of one particular corporation that was 50 per cent owned by a husband and wife, 25 per cent owned by two additional people, and 25 per cent owned by a large number of people among the public whose religious affiliation would be impossible to determine? Under the present ground rules the 50 per cent owned by the husband and wife would be assigned to the separate school system because they wanted that money to go to the separate system. So would the 25 per cent. But the remaining 25 per cent, under the terms of this particular decision, was divided 5 per cent to the separate system and 20 per cent to the public system.

Now the concern expressed by the secretary treasurer who brought this to my attention was: are we talking about the entire 100 per cent in the resolution, or are we talking about just that portion about which there is some ambiguity? In other words, in those corporations where some of the shares can be identified, would that corporate assessment be allocated as per the request of the shareholders? Or in this particular instance where 75 per cent could be allocated but the other 25 per cent couldn't, would only that 25 per cent be allocated? It seems to me if the spirit of the resolution were to be followed, as I understood the Member for Edmonton Beverly, it would only be referring to the 25 per cent and that [for] the 75 per cent the wishes of the shareholders would be followed.

You can appreciate the concern of a secretary treasurer who is looking at possibly getting, in the case of Edmonton, 30 per cent of a corporate assessment, when under the old formula they might have been able to look at 80 per cent in the particular instance. So I suggest to the hon. Member for Edmonton Beverly that there is some ambiguity in the wording of the resolution. Unless that ambiguity is cleared up, at least some people in the separate system are going to be just a little uncertain as to what our objectives are. I believe I know what his objectives are but, if one reads the resolution carefully, there can be a good deal of uncertainty.

No question about the situation. The hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place has pointed out the simple

facts of the situation: in Edmonton, 30 per cent of the students but 25.2 per cent of the assessment. There now appears to be some dispute over the amount of loss in taxes to the Edmonton separate system. The latest information contained in today's paper would indicate that rather than \$900,000 we're looking at somewhere between \$200,000 and \$500,000 in taxes, depending on the success of the appeals.

Mr. Speaker, the point I would like to pursue, and where I part company with the hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place, is the suggestion that you can generalize across the province. I suggest, with great respect, that this is the last thing we can do when it comes to educational financing. One of the reasons many of our school divisions are in the most unbelievable financial messes today is because in fact we have generalized across the province. We have taken a system that might work reasonably well in Edmonton or Calgary and with minor accommodations here and there have applied that system across the province.

Mr. Speaker, in my judgment it just doesn't work. Let me take, for example, the impact of this resolution on one separate school system. St. Thomas More Separate School system, to my knowledge at least, is the largest separate school in the western Peace River region outside of the city of Grande Prairie — 414 students. Last year their total corporate assessment revenue from power lines and pipelines — and that's the only thing they can base their corporate assessment on — was \$314. Now the separate schools in St. Thomas More [district] are not waiting with bated breath. The future of the system is not really going to be determined by how we deal with this resolution today, because they simply don't have any corporate assessment.

I well remember meeting with two separate school boards on a tour of southern Alberta in the fall. There was a great furor over where a particular township should lie. Should it be in school division X or school division Y? This township contained only a very small number of students, and they were remote from both school division centres. But there was a great squabble over this particular township, not I suspect because of any great concern over the students, but rather because there happened to be a gas plant in that township, and who would get the corporate assessment. Mr. Speaker, the figures in the annual report of the Department of Education — and these are the most recent figures, for 1975, so they have been altered to a certain extent by the passage of time — underline what I mean. There is an enormous difference in the ability of both separate and public school systems to provide that additional funding which is yielded by the supplementary requisition.

Let me just take an example. Looking first at the differences in separate school assessment, Edmonton separate in 1975 had a supplementary requisition of 19.56 mills. On the other hand, Fort Vermilion separate school system had a supplementary requisition of 43.26 mills. Mr. Speaker, changing the corporate assessment as this resolution suggests is not going to solve that inequity between a large separate school system in the city of Edmonton and a very small separate school system in the Fort Vermilion region of Alberta. Unless members are *blase* about this and assume it's not a very significant difference on a \$10,000 assessment base — which is what many

farmers could look forward to in the Fort Vermilion area for example, compared to an urban home-owner in the city of Edmonton — that difference would work out to about \$240 on supplementary requisition alone for people in two separate public school systems. Yet in the rural areas, because we don't have access to corporate assessment, this particularly hits the separate systems.

When one looks over the statistics, Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the position of public school systems will vary from area to area depending on the industrial assessment. But when it relates specifically to the separate system, by and large these systems are so small they don't really have any important access to corporate assessment outside the large city regions.

Mr. Speaker, when one looks at the statistics for the public system, very much the same thing is borne out. Edmonton public has a supplementary requisition of 19.57. Again at the other extreme we have Fort Vermilion School Division with a supplementary requisition of 32.68, again a difference of about \$130 on a \$10,000 assessment between people in two public systems.

The argument made by the hon. Member for Edmonton Jasper Place is at first glance apparently quite sound; that is, we provide opportunity through the supplementary requisition for school divisions to have some latitude and some flexibility to provide improvements, to set out for their young people a better quality of education.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when I look at the reasons many of the rural supplementary requisitions are not higher — in almost every case they are higher than the urban supplementary requisitions. On an average they are higher than the urban supplementary requisitions. The reason they are not even higher than they are was very well expressed to me by the superintendent of the Acadia School Division, whose division incidentally has a higher supplementary requisition than the city of Edmonton, either separate or public. He said to me, the only reasons we can stay within the guidelines and keep our supplementary requisition at its present level is that we are cutting programs, that we are not getting into new programs, that we are staying away from some of the programs that have been trumpeted in this Legislature as part of the government's commitment to education. Even so, Mr. Speaker, they have a supplementary requisition which is higher than either the separate or the public system in Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, I'm saying that this particular resolution really doesn't go far enough. While I would support it because I think it might deal with an inequity in the Edmonton and Calgary areas, it is my submission that if we're really going to tackle the question of educational funding as it relates both to the separate and public systems and to the larger question of educational opportunity in Alberta, we have to look at the larger question of school funding.

Let me say that I believe that in order to maintain some degree of flexibility and to preserve local autonomy, it is necessary that there be a supplementary requisition. I believe there's no question about that. If we had 100 per cent last-dollar funding from the province, there would be no serious way we could preserve local autonomy at all. So I think there has to be access to the local taxpayer. But, Mr. Speaker, in recognizing that access, it seems to me we still have

to look at whether our basic foundation plan is today providing the same objective that guided its introduction some years back. That objective was to provide equality of opportunity for students in the school system. I suggest that we have become so preoccupied with formulas that we have lost sight of the basic goal of equal access to education.

I look at some of the divisions in my constituency. In Spirit River School Division, for example, the community of Wanham, which has had a high school for half a century, is still going to have a high school, but is going to have two teachers. Two teachers in a high school. They are going to have a program that is really getting back to the basics, Mr. Speaker. You can't get much farther back to the basics than that. And the reason they have only two teachers in the Wanham high school is the serious financial constraints that exist today. Already the Spirit River School Division has a supplementary requisition 7 mills higher than Edmonton or Calgary. So they're not able to expand at the local level.

The reason I suggest we find that this is the prevailing situation in many of our rural areas, Mr. Speaker, is that our present formula, our present foundation plan, is not supplying the necessary funds that take the differences into account. It gets right back to this question of whether or not we generalize from Edmonton and Calgary, or whether we recognize that there are varied costs in a province like Alberta: the cost, for example, of purchasing gasoline in Edmonton compared to the cost of purchasing it in Fort Vermilion; the cost of heating a school in Medicine Hat compared to the cost of heating a school in northern Alberta; the cost of operating a school bus system on roads around Edmonton or Calgary, where you have a lot of, if not hard-top, at least reasonably good roads compared to many of the roads in eastern or northwestern Alberta, or other parts of the province where our roads are rather primitive, to put it mildly.

There are differences in costs not taken into account by the present foundation plan. So the net result is that the divisions have to (a) increase the supplementary requisition beyond the provincial average and (b), and this is the more important result, they are forced to cut the quality of programs.

When I met with trustees in the Acadia School Division, they told me that one of the things they're having to consider — they don't like having to consider this — is closing four schools this year because the money is just not adequate to cover the costs. So I suggest to the members of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, that while this particular resolution is worth supporting, we would be fooling ourselves indeed if we didn't recognize that — as it relates to both the separate system and to the quality of education throughout the province — education financing is probably the most serious problem we are facing today.

To conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker, not too long ago the Peace River MLAs were invited to meet with the Peace River zone of the Alberta School Trustees' Association. We had an excellent meeting of some three hours. You know, Mr. Speaker, the interesting thing was that very little time was spent on getting back to the basics. There was really very little time, and these people are extremely interested in education. They're probably much more interested in edu-



cation than the vast majority of the members of the Legislature, because they are trustees dealing with education day in and day out.

But to the largest extent what we got from this meeting was: how can we make our bus system work? How can we make our financing work? What about the problems of building schools and the formula there? What about the supplementary requisition this year and the possibility of having to have a referendum? Almost all the MLAs got for three hours was a recitation of one after another well-documented complaint and concern over education.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just close by returning to the point I made when I began. The Alberta Act sets out a separate school system for those of us who support that concept. We have to do everything possible to make that separate school system workable. And that means providing equality of education to whatever student, regardless of religious background, either Protestant or Catholic, in this province. That is part of the history, part of the make-up of this province.

But I would say in conclusion that, if not as important, certainly an important issue that has to be kept in perspective is the question of ensuring that we have sufficient funding so we can begin to grapple with the larger problem of providing equality of educational opportunity for students wherever they live in this province, and regardless of what system they attend.

MR. ASHTON: Mr. Speaker, I guess I should have known better. During the first 10 minutes of the talk of the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, I began to believe he had a positive contribution to make. But it seemed inevitable that he would spend most of it spreading gloom and doom about the educational system — the purveyor of dissent and dissension.

I, for one, make no apologies about our educational system in this province. There's no question in my mind that in spite of some improvements that may be due, it's still the finest system in Canada and perhaps one of the best in North America. We spend more on education than any other province. When I hear some hon. members voicing their complaints, I just suggest they travel to some other provinces and understand how well they have it in Alberta today. There's no question in my mind that the quality of the teaching staff is high, the students generally are well motivated, and the physical facilities are unsurpassed and perhaps unequalled, certainly in Canada. So we have the potential for an excellent system, and we have that system.

However, we have a specific problem before us today. I congratulate the Member for Edmonton Beverly for bringing this issue to the Assembly. It's very important that this issue be discussed, although I would have to express some reservations as to whether the method that the Member for Edmonton Beverly proposed to solve the problem is necessarily the best method. I think if nothing else is accomplished out of the resolution today, it will indicate an expression of intent by the members of the Assembly, representing their constituents, that the government indeed find an answer to the problem, whether or not the answer is the specific proposal made by the Member for Edmonton Beverly.

It's very important that the problem be dealt with

and solved. Alberta has a very fortunate history of having two excellent school systems, the public and the Catholic separate. The history of co-operation between these two systems is perhaps unequalled in North America.

The existence of the Catholic school system in this province is based partially on the constitutional guarantees which were briefly described by one of the previous speakers, but secondly on the good will of Albertans as expressed through their legislatures and their governments — this government and previous governments — towards each other. However, I should remind those separate school supporters who tend to get a bit emotional when they're discussing the topic of equality of education and so on that no matter what can be said about some of the deficiencies of the system in Alberta, there is still no question that the rights and privileges in education enjoyed by Catholics in this province are unsurpassed and perhaps rarely [equalled] anywhere in North America. As separate school supporters, I don't think we should forget that.

I support the motion again on the basis that the government must deal with the issue and find a solution. The rather unbecoming dissension taking place right now, where the systems tend to be fighting with each other over assessment dollars, is diverting their energies from issues they should be spending their energies on: providing a high quality of education for the students they are responsible for.

Unfortunately, it's a new problem. The specific issue we're dealing with today is a relatively new problem. Back in the so-called early days there was no problem of corporate assessment, because in the past we didn't have the complex corporate mix-ups, or whatever you call them. They were fairly simple and straightforward. But now with the proliferation of corporations in the last 50 years, the large number of public companies — these companies having very large numbers of shareholders who are not known to the management except in the records, and it's really impossible to find out their religions — it's become an impossible situation to allocate on the basis of religion the corporate assessments for these large public companies between the two systems.

As that problem started to develop, it didn't become a practical problem because the two systems co-operated, at least in the separate and public systems I'm personally familiar with. They co-operated and there was a spirit of good will between them which resulted in a fair and reasonably equitable allocation of the corporate assessment.

However, as all members are well aware, very recently the issue was forced upon us. Because of the decisions of the court and other quasi-judicial bodies, it's necessary that we now handle the issue.

It's my opinion and my assessment of my constituents that the vast majority of them wish the government to solve the problem. It is true there are many people in Alberta today who would take the attitude that we should not have the two systems, that we would be much better off with only one public system and then we wouldn't have the problem we face today. But I sense a consensus amongst Albertans that they recognize we have the two systems, there are constitutional guarantees, and as long as we have those two systems, there's a collective will that students in both systems have the same opportunity of

education. This can only be provided if they have the same access to the assessment dollars.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I support the resolution, recognizing some of the difficulties voiced by some of the other members. The more I've thought about the content of the resolution and the issue itself, the more confused I've tended to become as to just what the proper solution will be. But I support the resolution on the basis that it expresses the intent of myself and my constituents that the government has our support in dealing with the problem of equitably distributing the assessment dollars for corporations between the two systems.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a few comments on this particular resolution because of the high interest the hon. Member for Edmonton Ottewell indicated his constituency has in it, and also my constituency. From the outset I would like to indicate that I support the resolution in its intent. I think the specifics of the item will be dealt with and can be dealt with very well by the minister and his department, and I hope he takes heed from the comments — I know he will take heed from them — of the members of the Legislature here today.

To be abundantly clear on the spirit, the intent, and the direction that the resolution indicates, I will reread it, Mr. Speaker:

Be it resolved that the provincial government give consideration to introduction of legislation amending The School Act to provide for the distribution of corporate assessments on a per pupil basis for those corporations that are unable to determine the religious faith of their shareholders.

Mr. Speaker, holding companies which have Catholic ratepayers as shareholders are not allowed to support the Catholic school system in some cases. I would suggest the members of the Legislature reverse that statement and put in "public school ratepayers". Then the members could see the issue more appropriately if they are in fact supporting the public school system. If I may rephrase it: holding companies which have public ratepayers as shareholders are not allowed to support the public school system. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, that is an unacceptable situation. I suggest that that should be corrected as quickly and as expeditiously as possible by the hon. minister responsible for that area.

Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of reiterating all the comments made by the government members. I think it's been done very well. I would just like to make a few more comments to underline some of the issues as I have received information on this topic. The issue deals centrally with the appropriation of corporation assessment between the separate and public school districts. Mr. Speaker, it should be abundantly underlined that the public school system is doing an excellent job and so is the separate school system. There is no debate about that issue whatsoever.

The other issue is that in view of both separate and public school supporters, the problem has arisen because of the provisions of The School Act. Here is the central area that has to be corrected. We won't go into the explicit detail of that, but I understand it can be corrected in a very proper way so there is no

offence to either the separate or public school supporters.

Mr. Speaker, as indicated in a statement from the Edmonton Separate School Board on January 3, 1977, the problem really arose in Edmonton. As the hon. member and mover of the motion indicated — and I would like to take this moment to congratulate him for bringing this issue to the floor of the Legislature — it did start in Edmonton, but it has application across the province apart from what the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview has indicated. Although in any given instance it may not be of any great consequence, Mr. Speaker, it's not only the dollars we're considering here. The salient point is the principle surrounding it. I suggest that based on the principle alone, apart from the dollars involved — which of course are of great consequence — this should be corrected and modified as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. Speaker, why should we have a change? Let me just read this into the record: the Catholic school system believes the full intent of the legislation in Section 60 of The School Act is that the Catholic and the Protestant separate school supporters should have the right to support their separate schools. Mr. Speaker, there is no question here in the Legislature today that we believe in that. Having said that and having quoted from a letter from Mr. Gibeau, chairman of the [trustees of the] Edmonton Catholic School Board, I have no hesitation in saying that the members of the Legislature will undoubtedly choose this particular course and therefore must, on a compelling basis, support this type of motion which applies to both public and separate schools.

Mr. Speaker, the rights of the individual have been championed by this province. There is no question about that — The Alberta Bill of Rights, The Individual's Rights Protection Act. We are talking now about the right for an education, not only in a public system but also in a separate system. We have already indicated our policy direction regarding private schools. We've supported those. So there should be no difficulty in that area in passing on direction and support with respect to change of legislation for this particular motion.

Mr. Speaker, to underline again: what is the central problem? Various interpretations of this Section 60 of The School Act have led to a complete denial of the purpose and intent of it. Catholics who hold shares in corporations find that property held by these corporations cannot always be assigned for the support of Catholic schools. I underline that comment and would suggest the members reverse it if they are public school supporters. Public school supporters who hold shares in corporations find that property held by these corporations cannot always be assigned for the support of public schools. I think the reverse application brings home the problem to those who are public school supporters as well as the problem to Catholic school supporters.

Mr. Speaker, this occurs in today's society in businesses where properties are owned and operated by public companies. These companies have a large number of shareholders who are not known. They're not known to the management or even to the public at large, except in the records of the trust company which, I understand, acts as a transfer agent for the shares of that company. Of course, Mr. Speaker, the ownership of these shares changes constantly. So

it's impossible for companies to determine the religious faith of shareholders or their decisions as to what system they want to support.

The basic issue is Section 60. It's being interpreted to mean that the proportion of its assessment which a corporation can assign to a separate school must be precisely the proportion which the value of shares owned by separate school supporters bears to the total value of the shares of the company. Mr. Speaker, there is a "but" here. But in most companies it is impossible to determine the real value of the shares at any moment in time. And there is the problem.

To underline it again and turn it around, and not say that we're debating for Catholic schools — we're debating for the principle of the issue. I know the minister has this in mind when he's listening to debates in the House. The principle and central right of the whole issue is the thing he should take into consideration in addition to the dollars involved. But in a recent statement the chairman of the Edmonton Public School Board, and it was quoted by the hon. Member for Edmonton Beverly, stated that the legislation is antiquated — page 20, January 10, 1977. Mr. Speaker, even he realizes it. I know him personally, and I can assure you I know the intent of his comments. If I'm misreading them, I'll stand to be corrected by him.

So, Mr. Speaker, these legislative changes being suggested by all members would eliminate all the problems with regard to shareholders, primarily the onus of proof. Mr. Speaker, we're not going to go into the details of legislation. I know the hon. minister's capability in this area. He is very able, and with his department and staff can resolve the issue. But, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most important thing is that it would make it possible to carry out the intent of The School Act as it's laid down and would provide separate school supporters the rights which properly belong to them and of course maintain the rights for the public school supporters.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are my brief remarks. It started in Edmonton. We're talking about \$900,000. It's a lot of money in a school system in Edmonton. There's no question about that. But the principle is even more important. Mr. Speaker, I know this issue was raised a few years ago. I know it went to the Supreme Court of Canada, and last year the Supreme Court stated that the local court of revision has the power to settle the case. Mr. Speaker, a judgment decision of courts is based on a matter of law, and I think we have an opportunity here to make a very important decision to help that court of revision make the proper decision.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from an *Edmonton Journal* editorial in concluding my remarks: surely it would be fair to allocate tax dollars on the basis of a system population without regard for the creed, without regard for religion.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in dealing with Motion No. 1 on the Order Paper today, I commend the hon. Member for Edmonton Beverly for putting the matter on the Order Paper.

My remarks today will be directly related to the issue before us and not to the much broader question of educational finance, because I think there isn't time between now and 5:30 to deal with that whole

area properly. But I would like to deal specifically with the matter before us and say at the outset that I think members should recognize that this is a very difficult question. At the same time, I think we shouldn't let the legal advisors of the government or the Department of Education ponder too long on what a decision is going to be.

Frankly, I was extremely surprised, as a member, to see no mention of an amendment in the Speech from the Throne this year that would deal with this situation. When I consider that the question of The Alberta Emblems Act was important enough to be included in the Speech from the Throne, it seems to me that a matter as important as the continuation of the separate school system in this province in the long run rated some indication by the government of its desire to move in this area.

I believe it is essential that the government move on the question during this spring session. If the minister in the course of this debate can give us some reason why that isn't possible, the only alternative I see is for the Department of Education to make a grant in lieu of the assessment lost to the Edmonton separate school district and other separate school districts if they find themselves in a similar situation.

I say this for three reasons. First of all, as I understand the financing of the Edmonton separate system, they can't afford to be losing something like \$900,000 or even a sizeable amount less. I think that would put very major financial strains on the Edmonton separate system.

Secondly — and I would emphasize this to members of the Assembly — we have municipal elections this fall across the province. I can see some people running for local school boards — not in Edmonton, but in other parts of the province — who will cite the situation in Edmonton and the change in the assessment situation here and possibly say, should the Calgary public system be looking at going the same route Edmonton has gone? Should Red Deer? Should Grande Prairie? Should Lethbridge? It seems to me that's the most immediate danger before us right now: that we deal with this question of the assessment, its complications, and the bad effect it's having now primarily on the Edmonton separate system. But if this thing that has happened in Edmonton fans out across the province, then I think we have the grounds for losing a great deal of the harmony there is between public and separate school systems across the province.

That's the first point I'd like to make to the government on this particular issue. It is that something should be done quickly, hopefully in this spring session. But if not in the spring session, certainly the government's intention should be known loud and clear across the province well before the school elections this fall. Because if no decision is reached, I am fearful that the effects of this court decision and administrative decisions — which really are changing \$900,000 from the Edmonton separate to the Edmonton public system — and the ramifications of those decisions will find their way into the municipal elections this fall. That would be extremely regrettable.

The second point I'd like to make is that really what we're talking about here is the continuation of the separate school system in the province on an equal balance with the public school system. That's whether it's the separate school system in Edmonton,

which happens to be a Roman Catholic system or, if you go up to St. Paul, a Protestant separate system. So it should be looked at on that basis. If my memory is accurate, the St. Albert separate board has more students than the public board. So it has real ramifications right across the province.

The point I want to make is that unless this matter is dealt with and dealt with quickly, we'll find an increasing difference in level of support between the public and separate systems even within a particular jurisdiction. In the long run, that would really mean we would end up with three levels of education in the province. I think it's fairly well recognized now that the urban systems have a high level of education. The rural areas don't have quite so high a level. We'd find a separate system which would be somewhat in between. And that would be extremely regrettable as I see it. So that's the second point I want to make. It's important that we deal with this matter and that it be dealt with quickly.

The third and last point is simply this: if it's the opinion of the government that nothing can be done because of the legal entanglements — and I recognize the legal entanglements in the School Act as it applies to Section 60, and also that the constitutional guarantees given to separate school supporters in the province back in The Alberta Act of 1905 are extremely important — if it's the best judgment of the government that nothing can be done on this issue in this session, then the very least we should expect is a commitment from the government that there be a grant to the Edmonton separate system in lieu of the amount of money they're going to lose. But that should only be a stopgap move for 1977. Then certainly by the fall of this year the government should be able to bring in whatever legislation is needed to right the situation.

Frankly, I am inclined to lean in the direction of the motion proposed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Beverly. I'm prepared to be persuaded if there is another proposal that will meet the problem. But I think it's so very important that a grant in lieu of taxes be made to the Edmonton separate system if this matter can't be resolved in this spring session. In the oncoming fall municipal elections, I see the possibility for this issue to become part of the school elections. That would be very regrettable and very regressive as far as education itself and the relationship between the public and separate boards in this province are concerned.

For that reason, my colleagues and I are prepared to support the resolution before us today. But in supporting it, I think we are serving fair notice to the minister that come his estimates, we want some indication of a definite resolution of this matter or we're going to do all we can to convince the government that there should be a grant in lieu of taxes to the Edmonton separate system. If there are more systems finding themselves involved in this bind right now that I'm not aware of, then of course the same principle should apply. But I would hope the matter could be dealt with quickly here in Edmonton so it doesn't become a province-wide issue in the fall elections this year or develop into a situation where we don't have two levels of education but three across the province.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to lend my support to the principle of the motion and congratulate the mover. I want to make my speech very brief, really just to summarize the points. [interjections] The hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower applauded there.

First, I don't want to begin by going very deeply into the merits of the competing school systems, although I believe that under our philosophical approach to the economy and things in general, we believe in competition and the possibility of making comparisons between two approaches. Certainly the right to separate schools is contained in our constitution, and the principle has been well established. It has given us many benefits in terms of comparisons.

In my own area of Calgary some of the new economies and methods came out of this possibility to compare: while the public schools embarked on open-school construction, the separate schools went in for portable walls. The semester system was first experimented with at St. Francis high school in Calgary, and so on. The plurality of the systems helps to achieve advances. Also of course, there is a reflection here of the continual debate between the Christian motivation in education and the secular. It's just as well we have two systems with fundamentally different basic principles so far as that's concerned.

In our form of democracy all people are equal. It is true that all are entitled to equality of opportunity and equal access to education. For years the Roman Catholic and the Protestant schools in this province got along fine on a gentleman's agreement. There was no attempt to go into the fine letters of the law, but to do what was right, certainly in the Calgary area. As the hon. Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, there are in the province some public Catholic schools and some separate Protestant schools. So it's not really a question of religious differences.

Both schools depend to a large extent on the corporate assessments, particularly for their supplementary requisitions. The Roman Catholics in this province pay rents, buy consumer goods from shopping centres, work in factories, and contribute their share to the corporate assessment, to the profits made by industries. Broadly speaking, 20 to 25 per cent of the population in the province is Roman Catholic. In Edmonton it goes as high as 30 per cent. That 30 per cent play their fair part in the economy.

The business of election of where one's taxes should go may be the law so far as individual property owners are concerned, although even here there are strange anomalies: you get into mixed families where the husband may be a Protestant and the wife a Catholic, or the husband a Catholic and the wife a Protestant. They have an election nobody else has as to which system they send their children to. But so far as industrial and commercial assessment is concerned, there can be no such fair definition.

Part of the trouble in the north of Ireland is that in the cities most Protestants are property owners and have the vote, and the one-third who are Catholics are renters and disenfranchised. I think that's a bad system in basic principle. I believe we should be fair and divide the corporate and commercial assessment according to the population division. Best of all would be the ratio of the children; but if that is not acceptable, then the ratio of the total population, regardless

of how the shares are allocated in any particular corporation.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words on the resolution too. I'm not planning to cover the whole gamut of education, although there is a temptation to do so.

I support the resolution. I think three or four items should be emphasized. The first is that our Alberta act does recognize the public and separate school systems. I believe this was wise on the part of the people who devised it at the beginning of the province of Alberta. The problem would be compounded if we had a situation such as exists in Newfoundland today, where almost every recognized church has its own school. A former minister of education and minister of highways in the Newfoundland government, who is now in the Senate in Ottawa, stated they had myriad problems because the Baptists, the United, the Catholic, the Salvation Army, the Pentecostals, the Anglicans, et cetera, all had their own churches and their own following. There I think is a real problem.

In my view the basis of The Alberta Act is very fair. Sometimes I feel sorry for some religious groups who are so determined to have part of their faith taught in their schools and who are not happy with some items being taught in the general curriculum that they separate and pay for their own schools rather than send their children to public schools. I think you have to admire that type of conviction, from whatever group it may come.

But generally speaking, I think the people of Alberta have been happy with the two systems we have. Both have been working together, in most cases in a very excellent manner. Both have been putting the education of the child as the most important item.

In the setting up of the two systems, I think I have to refer briefly to the school foundation program. The basis of that was that there be equalization of assessment and equalization of opportunity. Equalized assessment throughout the province has been more or less realized. As far as the school foundation program is concerned, the amount a person pays on a \$20,000 home in Lethbridge is very similar, if not the exact amount he would pay on the same assessment in Peace River, Milk River, Lloydminster, Lacombe, or Drumheller. I think that part is good, because it's in the interest of every person in the province that the boys and girls of this province be educated. All should be paying a relatively equal share toward that education. I have yet to find any serious concern about that aspect of the school foundation program.

When we come to the next point, though, the equalization of opportunity, we have a long, long way to go. Who would argue that children in a small high school have the same opportunity as children in the composite high schools of Edmonton and Calgary?

A few days ago I visited the open house of the W.P. Wagner High School, and I was literally amazed at the advances that have been made in education in a school like that. For the benefit of the members who don't know it, in this school they spend half a day on academic work and half a day on technical work. I was simply amazed at what I saw in both sides of that school. The academic work was excellent as far as I could ascertain, and the technical part was almost out of this world. I could hardly believe some of the

things I saw; for instance, the building of a trailer, a modern trailer. You couldn't find anything wrong with even the cupboards or the locks, let alone any of the more detailed aspects of it. Excellent work. The principal and teachers of that school are to be commended.

Compare that with a small school in the bushlands of the north or even in the areas of the south, and there just isn't equalized opportunity. But to the greatest possible degree, I think we'll never have it completely equal. I think we want to have equalized opportunity, certainly equalized opportunity between the two systems, so that boys and girls in one are going to have an equal chance to have an education comparable to that of the other. I think the point raised by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview about the end result being the pupil is a very primary concern. I certainly agree with it.

The original basis was that those in the separate system pay for their system and those in the public system, whether it be Protestant or Catholic, pay for theirs. This has been accepted by the people of the province and has worked very, very well. It's the modern basis, the modern development of a complex society, that has added some problems to this particular aspect. I agree with the resolution. I think the resolution goes a long way toward setting out a straight method of sharing the assessment that is unknown.

I think the wording of the resolution has to be improved somewhat in regard to the assessment of the corporations, insofar as the percentage of that which may or may not be in doubt. If there's no doubt about 25 or 50 or 75 per cent of the wishes of that corporation and in small corporations as outlined by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, that could be the case — certainly that should not come into the consideration of the resolution. In my view it should be the percentage that is in doubt. That's the portion that should be developed.

We've heard a number of suggestions on how that should be done: on the basis of the population, on the pupil ratio, and so on. I rather favor the per pupil basis. I think that would be very close to the population basis, and it can be ascertained more simply and easily. Compare the ratio of the number of pupils in one system to the ratio of the other, and that would be the ratio of the division of the assessment that is in doubt. I think this would not only assist but fairly administer the intentions of those who set out the two systems in the Alberta charter when we were made a province. At the present time I am concerned about the uncertainty and ambiguity of the percentage of that corporation, because if we don't pay attention to that now, we might compound the problem and solve this problem by creating other problems. I don't think we want to do that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move an amendment to the resolution — I'm passing it around now — and it's certainly not to muddy the waters, but to clarify the waters. I think it can be dealt with very, very easily.

If the amendment is adopted, I amend the resolution by replacing the period at the end of the resolution with a comma and adding the following words: "based on the percentage of the total assessment that is in doubt". I think that's a very important item, otherwise we will simply compound the problems and create more problems than we have today. The reso-

lution would then read:

Be it resolved that the provincial government give consideration to introduction of legislation amending The School Act to provide for the distribution of corporate assessments on a per pupil basis for those corporations that are unable to determine the religious faith of their shareholders, based on the percentage of the total assessment that is in doubt.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make a few remarks about the amendment. Hopefully I can restrict my remarks to the amendment without recapturing too much of what has been said in the main provision of the resolution. I think, as the hon. Member for Drumheller has suggested, the amendment as proposed probably clarifies and may expedite some type of adjustment that could be made to the original motion, so that the issue could be dealt with more rapidly than may be possible without the amendment.

I just might recap some of the things that have been said this afternoon about the origin or the historical significance of education in the province. The British North America Act and various acts that followed the BNA Act in 1905 set up the province and made provision for education in the province. This provision made it possible for the public school system and also for a separate system. I was interested in reading some of the historical background to it, because generally speaking, as I interpret what was said in that particular provision, the province must in fact support a public system; however, if there are minority groups who wish to form a separate system, provision must be made in the act for this. I certainly agree with this.

I might hesitate to some degree to suggest that they are a minority. I don't like the connotation of "minority". I think it would have been better to say "equal", even though we're dealing with two different groups of people, perhaps on a religious basis, and with different numbers of people. But the underlying point I'd like to make is that it was set up to deal with a public system; and I'm not sure whether the intent of the amendment or the intent of the motion changes that kind of concept.

Of course the situation that created the problem, as has been suggested by other speakers, is the problem of areas of assessment that aren't easily identifiable. Therefore it seems at this point in history there must be some provision made for this difference.

The one thing that does bother me in talking about the amendment, and in particular the resolution in the one context, is equality of education. I don't think we have it, Mr. Speaker. I don't think we will ever have it. I think it's a very lofty term that's used. The Member for Spirit River-Fairview spoke on this, but I doubt very much if we will ever attain it. I think it is a worthy objective that we will never reach.

In our system at Lacombe I know I could point out a number of inequities in the educational system; partly because it's practically impossible to provide quality education as we know it in some other parts of Alberta, where you have small numbers of young people and where you cannot get specially trained teachers for specific courses. So while it is a lofty objective, I think it's mostly unattainable.

In 1951 I remember attending courses at Victoria

Composite High School in Edmonton and seeing facilities that my whole constituency still hasn't been able to attain. This is 1977, 25 or 26 years later. So this term escapes me. If we talk about the initial rights and ability of young people and so on, we are talking about differences, financing, and the cost to get an equal education. These are all pretty variable.

In referring again to the amendment, in the hope the motion will be dealt with I still would like to reaffirm that the public system has to be an underlying system in the province, and that is regardless of whether it is a Catholic, public, or Protestant system. I say this because I'm not sure where the province would head if they financed and balanced the total financing equally amongst all segments of society who perhaps wish to develop their own systems.

In our own particular situation at Lacombe, we have three private schools: the Seventh Day Adventist school, the Hutterian Brethren school, and the Christian Reformed school. In talking with those people who administer their own systems, they think it would be nice to have equal funding from the province for their system? But when you ask them very carefully that if this were the case, would they be prepared to forfeit their individual preferences, which they might do under the public school system or possibly the separate school system, they hesitate. The conclusion I have gathered is that they would rather support part of the system among themselves in their own way in order to maintain their individuality.

Perhaps that is the danger in talking about equality and equity in an educational system. I go back again to emphasizing that we still must support the importance of the public system, regardless of its religious background. In the main, Mr. Speaker, I think the province and the legislators of the province have done a tremendous job over the years in being able to make this system function without any major conflict or upsurge of opinion or diversity of opinion. They have operated very successfully.

Others probably want to speak on the amendment to the motion. In conclusion, I can only say that I can accept some of the suggestions about balancing this problem of where the assessment isn't identifiable. One of the suggestions made — and if it hasn't been made, I'd like to suggest it to the Minister of Education — was that possibly the province should pick up the unidentifiable assessment and then, in turn, prorate that as between the separate system and the public system. This may be one way of solving the problem as I see it today.

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member proposing to close the debate on the motion or to speak on the amendment?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few comments on the amendment the hon. Member for Drumheller introduced. In reading it and giving it the thought I did when I worked on the resolution, I really appreciated his support for the resolution. But I believe the amendment becomes more restrictive. It narrows it down so the school jurisdiction would only get the portion of the corporate assessment on the basis in dispute.

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview used a good example where a corporation could have 75 per cent of its assessment decided on and the other 25 per cent in doubt. For that reason, I read the amendment [as meaning] that the only portion that then would be distributed to jurisdictions would be the one in doubt. I raise this, Mr. Speaker, as a concern that I have about the amendment. I know other members would like to speak on this amendment, so we'll leave it at that.

Thank you.

DR. BACKUS: Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak to the amendment. It certainly seems that this is narrowing down the object of the motion because, although the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview pointed out that in a certain business there might be 75 per cent of the people in support of the separate school system and only 25 per cent in doubt, I think it might equally be said that there are a number of businesses where 75 per cent might be in support of the public school system and only 25 per cent in doubt. In other words, a much smaller section of the total assessment is going to be divided between the two schools.

I think part of the object of the original motion was to in fact acquire a certain amount of money which could be divided in what the mover of the motion felt was a fair distribution between the two school systems. In fact the more of the assessment that could be divided in this way, I think the happier he would be. I think many of us feel too that maybe the industrial and commercial assessment does come in a little different category than the property assessment, and maybe should be divided as a whole between the two schools in proportion to the number of pupils.

The type of situation that can arise is that maybe a person's home is in Sherwood Park. This is where they send their children to school. It's probably very right that they should have every right to support the particular school system they wish within their community, and which they want their children to go to. On the other hand, the business might be in Edmonton, and although I think there's some recognition of the fact that they [may] feel strongly about what school system they supported in Edmonton, really it has nothing to do with where they send their children

to school. In fact, one wonders whether the total business assessment should not be divided in this way within the school systems in that particular jurisdiction.

Although I'm sure the object of the amendment was to clarify the situation, I therefore think it has in fact so narrowed the whole thing that we may end up with a very small pot, so to speak, to be divided between the different school systems. I feel the original motion was aimed at trying to acquire as large a portion as possible that could be divided in this equitable manner.

I therefore would certainly recommend that this amendment not be supported. I would even be happy to support an amendment that would expand the whole thing to the total business assessment being divided in this manner.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN: I move we call it 5:30, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: It's now 5:30 by suggestion of the hon. Government House Leader.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn until tomorrow afternoon at half past 2.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion for adjournment 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 2.

[The House adjourned at 5:25 p.m.]

