

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Tuesday, May 29, 1979 2:30 p.m.

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

## PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

## head: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I beg the unanimous consent of the Assembly to make Motion 205, regarding special education, the opposition-designated motion for Thursday next.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Leader of the Opposition have the unanimous leave requested?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: Would all those in favor of the motion for leave please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Those opposed please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is lost.

## head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

## Bill 15

The Attorney General Statutes  
Amendment Act, 1979

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 15, The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1979. This deals with three items of legislation that are the responsibility of the Attorney General: The Administration of Estates Act, The Land Titles Act, and The Matrimonial Property Act.

In the case of The Administration of Estates Act it would provide for the ability of a judge to dispense with the requirement of service of a certain type of application. The Land Titles Act proposal will continue the contemporary nature of that legislation and change some requirements that are out of date at the present time. The proposed amendment to The Matrimonial Property Act would introduce the principle that the limitation on the transfer of assets would relate to substantial assets as distinct from every type of small transaction.

[Leave granted; Bill 15 read a first time]

## Bill 19

The Alberta Hospitals  
Amendment Act, 1979

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 19, The Alberta Hospitals Amendment Act, 1979.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend that portion of the Act which refers to the Alberta Hospital Privileges Appeal Board, and will give to the appeal board members the same powers and privileges as those conferred on a commissioner under The Public Inquiries Act.

[Leave granted; Bill 19 read a first time]

## Bill 20

The Department of  
Tourism and Small Business Act

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 20, The Department of Tourism and Small Business Act.

The purpose of the Bill is to provide for the creation of the new Department of Tourism and Small Business.

[Leave granted; Bill 20 read a first time]

## Bill 14

The Fatality Inquiries  
Amendment Act, 1979

MR. PAHL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 14, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act, 1979.

The primary purpose of the Bill is to permit the pituitary gland to be removed during the course of an autopsy, for the purpose of providing treatment to children having a growth hormone deficiency. This brief amendment, proposed as it is during the Year of the Child, will enable the gift of normal growth to children suffering from a form of dwarfism. The deficiency can successfully be treated through injections of an extract made from the pituitary gland. At the present time there is insufficient extract in supply to treat all children suffering from the deficiency of the growth hormone, and those children fortunate enough to be on the treatment are taken off the treatment when their height reaches 5 feet for females and 5 feet 2 for males.

Mr. Speaker, other amendments to The Fatality Inquiries Act are essentially housekeeping items.

[Leave granted; Bill 14 read a first time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 14 be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

## head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly 115 grade 5 students from the Queen Street school in Spruce Grove. They are accompanied by their teachers Mrs. Kerby, Mrs. Madge, Mr. Hogg, and Mrs. Funk.

They are located in both galleries. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in introducing to you and to the members of the Assembly 22 grade 8 students from St. Jerome school in Vermilion. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. McGuigan. I'd like them to stand and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

#### head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Section 10 of The Government Land Purchases Act, I wish to table three copies of the report of activities, together with the Provincial Auditor's report containing the audited financial statement for the Land Purchase Fund for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1978.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the annual report of the Solicitor General's Department for the year 1977-78, as required by The Legislative Assembly Act, and the annual report for 1977-78 of the Alberta Liquor Control Board, as required by The Liquor Control Act. I also wish to table the annual report for 1978 of K Division of the RCMP, and copies will be made available to all members; also a brochure entitled Boat Safety Check '79, which will also be made available to all members.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual report of the Alberta Department of Government Services for the calendar year 1977-78.

#### head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

##### **Medical Fees**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It flows from the statement by the former minister when he enunciated government policy, saying that extra billing was an unacceptable practice. My question to the now minister is: what is the government's position on the question of extra billing?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fairly well known throughout all corners of Alberta that that question is presently before our caucus by way of intense consideration. We're trying to get an accurate assessment of the problem, if there is one, put parameters on it, come up with alternative solutions that might be acceptable to the people of Alberta, and then act accordingly.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In the most recent reports the minister has, what percentage of members of the medical profession are extra billing?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I made that information public very shortly after the provincial election. The department had those figures available. I could table a copy of that report if hon. members don't presently have one.

MR. R. CLARK: A further supplementary. Has the minister had discussions with representatives of the medical profession? And in light of the new budget coming in and this task force looking at this particular matter, has the medical profession given a commitment to the minister that they will in fact hold extra billing where it is now, at least until the task force has made its report public?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, there's been fairly extensive consultation with both the College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Alberta Medical Association. I think they're as concerned as the government is about some of the turns the balance or extra billing issue appears to be taking. We've had extensive consultation with respect to how, in the interim period until a decision is reached, we might deal with exorbitant extra billing or instances that are clearly unacceptable to the patients and to the AMA. I'm getting the co-operation of the AMA with cases of that nature.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Has the minister asked the medical profession in Alberta, through the college or the AMA, to ask the members of the profession to stop extra billing until such time as the task force has made its report public?

MR. RUSSELL: No, I haven't, Mr. Speaker, and there's a good reason for this. Although it's a minority, we're getting a substantial number of communications from citizens in Alberta supporting reasonable extra billing. These are patients writing in support of the practice. Of course we're getting a far greater number from those who object to any kind of extra billing. I'm mentioning that at this time to indicate that there are two sides to the question. I wouldn't want to see the government or the association take action before we've had time to consider carefully the whole gamut of the situation.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. What time line is the minister looking at for the task force report to be finished? And the obvious second question: could the minister guarantee to the Assembly that the report will be made public?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, of course I can't give a guarantee on either of those two questions. I've said publicly that we're working on this problem as quickly as we can. Naturally I'd like to see our caucus, the government, and the Legislature — if legislative action is required — get it behind us at the earliest possible date. We're working with that overall aim in mind. Of course the hon. leader realizes why I can't give a commitment to table a caucus report.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, would the minister outline to the Assembly why he is not prepared to give the guarantee for a caucus report? They've been tabled in the Assembly before; why not this one specifically on extra billing?

MR. NOTLEY: When it's politically convenient.

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader asked me for a guarantee. Of course, depending on

the nature of the report and our caucus decision, it may very well be tabled. But the hon. leader has been in the House long enough to know that he wouldn't stand up and guarantee tabling one of their caucus reports before it's written.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, the minister is wrong once again.

But let me ask the minister this question: when does he expect to receive the report? Will we be looking at it in June of this year, or September, or 1980? Surely the minister can be at least that definitive.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I've said several times we're working on it as quickly as we can. If it's possible to get it behind us this session, that would be a very good objective, and we're aiming to do that. But I can't guarantee that. Again, the hon. leader knows it's impossible for a minister to make that commitment in this House.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, any minister worth his salt can tell the House whether it's six months . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

#### Professions Legislation

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. What two professions are referred to on page 4 of the Speech from the Throne where, to paraphrase the speech, it talks of coming legislation dealing with two professions?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, like all members, the hon. Leader of the Opposition will have to await the filing of the Acts by the appropriate ministers, which will come about in due course.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate to the Assembly — or perhaps direct the question to the appropriate ministers — if the professions affected are engineers and architects? I ask the question because of representation made at least to me and other members with regard to individuals from the engineering profession and the architectural profession regarding their capacity to continue to draw up plans. So is it the engineers' and architects' professions we're aiming at?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure in due course the appropriate minister will identify the legislation, and that the appropriate professions will be consulted in reference to the passage of the legislation through this House.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister. Is the minister saying that the two groups have not been consulted and are not aware that legislation affecting them is coming into this Assembly?

MR. HORSMAN: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, the minister is saying the two groups have been consulted, and the legislation has been discussed with them. Is that correct?

MR. HORSMAN: I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, that appropriate consultation has taken and will take place, and in due course the Legislature will be informed as to which professions will be affected by the legislation.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, then let me put the question to the minister this way. Can the minister assure the Assembly that no threat has been made by any government minister to either the architects' profession or the engineering profession that if they can't agree on problems among themselves, the government will bring in legislation to resolve them?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is not the practice of this government to threaten anyone.

#### Medical Fees (continued)

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Deputy Premier, but before that I wonder if I might be permitted to ask a supplementary question of the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, following from the question of the Leader of the Opposition. Could he advise the Assembly when negotiations will begin for the 1979-1980 schedule of fees between the Alberta Medical Association on the one hand and the department on the other?

MR. RUSSELL: They've traditionally commenced in the fall preceding the coming fiscal year. So I would expect them to start, following the usual practice, about September of this year.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Will it be the intention of the government of Alberta to follow a fixed guideline, as is now being negotiated as far as the Hospital Association is concerned, or will it be the view of the government that negotiations should take into account those specific cost increases documented in the AMA brief to all MLAs before the last election, which are substantially higher than the guidelines that have been followed by this government?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, we have been considering whether it would be advisable to separate the schedule into two parts: one which would recognize costs and overhead and a second which would represent the pure professional payment for services, if I could put it that way. We are considering that to see if there are advantages to doing it.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In view of the minister's answer, is the government prepared to act upon the request of the Alberta Medical Association that there should be a full-scale study of the entire health care scheme, in view of the fact that it now has been in operation for 10 years? Or is it the view of the government that this MLA caucus task force committee constitutes a yes commitment to that request?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker. It should be very clear that the task force is really an *ad hoc* committee which is dealing only with the matter of balance or extra billing. I think the concerns alluded to by the hon. member with respect to the state of the whole

medical care system would encompass a much more broadly ranging study than the task force is undertaking.

I think that is a timely question, if you'll excuse a pun. Those of you who have seen this issue of *Time* magazine, the cover story is extremely worth-while reading, because not just Alberta but in fact the whole North American continent is having problems with the costs associated with the delivery of health care. There are a lot of important issues to review, as the hon. member has alluded.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Has the minister requested the task force, in their review of balance or extra billing, to examine the situation in what I understand to be the majority of Canadian provinces that follow the letter of the Saskatoon agreement, which is essentially that if a doctor wishes to balance or extra bill, he must withdraw from the medicare system and then take the chance of collecting from the patient the entire bill plus whatever the balanced bill is?

MR. RUSSELL: I'm not sure what is meant by the Saskatoon agreement. But I can say, Mr. Speaker, that there's a variety of arrangements within the provinces across Canada as to schedules of payments, allowing or not allowing extra billing, and opting in or out either by whole practice or on an individual patient basis. Of course that's also tied in with the method of collecting premiums. So it's an extremely complex situation, and the task force is examining it and comparing it to the Alberta situation.

#### Prince Rupert Terminal

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move to my main question to the hon. Deputy Premier, and ask if he's in a position to bring the members of the Assembly up to date on where things stand with respect to the wheat pool consortium and the Prince Rupert venture, and whether or not any proposals have been made with respect to commercial terms whereby the government of Alberta would loan money to that consortium.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the present situation is that there is a dispute, which has not yet been resolved, between the National Harbours Board and the consortium over the question of user-pay for the infrastructure that would be built on Ridley Island. As far as I'm aware, the negotiations between the consortium and us relative to the financial package have gone along relatively well. They are not finalized, but as far as we're concerned there isn't any delay from the financial end. The delay is on the other side, relative to the federal government and the National Harbours Board.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. With respect to the choice of location between, I gather, Casey Point on one hand, which is usable just for grain, and Ridley Island, which would be usable for grain and other types of cargo, has the government of Alberta made any representation to the government of Canada during the last six months with respect to this user-pay question? Because in my judgment it would be rather unfair to allocate user-pay to the grain industry if the reason for choosing Ridley

Island is to make the facility available for other types of cargo as well.

DR. HORNER: Naturally, Mr. Speaker, there is also an important point that any advantage the consortium might get from financing through the Heritage Savings Trust Fund should not go to the National Harbours Board. I think we're beyond the question of Ridley Island versus Casey Point. In the interests of western Canada the larger accommodation on Ridley Island is a worth-while one, in that other materials which are going to be needed can then be developed over the coming years. I do believe good negotiations can resolve the impasse we're now at with the National Harbours Board. There may be some delay until such time as we get some new people involved in the negotiations.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Deputy Premier. Hopefully the new people will make more progress than the old people. But the question is: has the government of Alberta made any representation with respect to this user-pay question? It is my understanding that that is a matter of considerable concern to the consortium. Would it be the view of the Alberta government that in the interests of all Canadians the infrastructure should be paid for by the national government?

DR. HORNER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is quite aware of our particular approach to the question of user-pay. It should be taken in a Canadian context as opposed to an individual context, and that relates to more than just the situation on Ridley Island.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Deputy Premier. Has any representation been made to the government of Canada with respect to the specific question of user-pay for the infrastructure facilities at Ridley Island?

DR. HORNER: Naturally, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Deputy Premier. Is the Deputy Premier able to outline to the Assembly specifically what that representation was?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman appreciates that on the first hand one has to understand the nature and the amount of infrastructure on Ridley Island being proposed. As far as I'm aware, that has not been narrowed down at the present time. They are still talking in generalities. We don't believe their proposal to the consortium was fair, and have told them so. I think that's where the matter now stands. I would rather see the consortium make a determined attempt at negotiating an end result with the National Harbours Board, which they're going to have to live with for a number of years, as opposed to our intervention.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, with great respect, perhaps the minister's new relationship might facilitate those negotiations. But I wonder if I could ask the minister a supplementary question with respect to the commercial terms: at this point in time has any written

proposal been made to the consortium regarding possible investment on either an equity basis or a debenture basis, or a combination of both, from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, those are ongoing negotiations. I don't see any public interest being served in negotiating on the floor of the Legislature relative to those terms.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Deputy Premier. Has the government of Alberta at any time proposed commercial terms in the neighborhood of 11.5 to 12.5 per cent for the debt portion?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member is simply repeating a variation of his previous question.

#### Fertilizer Supply

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Minister of Agriculture. It's with regard to the supply of fertilizer. From calls I've had from southern Alberta in the last few days, I understand there is a shortage of fertilizer in various forms. I wonder if the acting minister could comment on that.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Agriculture is away this afternoon attending a funeral. I would prefer to take the question as notice and ask him if he might respond to it tomorrow.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to give notice of a supplementary question. Some of the supply in southern Alberta is being obtained from the United States because of the shortage. I wonder if the minister could check what quantity that is and why that is happening at the present time.

#### Crown Lands

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Associate Minister of Public Lands and Wildlife. Could the minister bring the Assembly up to date on the government review of its policy on Crown leases?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to report that we have set up a caucus land-use committee under the very capable chairmanship of the Member for Wainwright. This committee will be examining and making recommendations regarding the improving of Crown lands, particularly in regard to grazing and forestry use. They will also be looking at recreational uses of land, ways of controlling erosion, water management, reseeding, and things like that.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate the ranchers' response with regard to reducing Crown leases from 20 years to 10?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, in 1977 the Crown leases were reduced from 20 years to 10. This will be one of the aspects this committee will be looking into. We did have representation from individual ranchers feeling they were limited in the amount of development

they would make on their lands because of the shorter time frame.

I might add that a few years ago there was a policy, a shared cost arrangement among the federal government, the provincial government, and the leaseholder. This was phased out by the federal government. We are looking at some way that perhaps we can come in similar to a program we've established for the grazing reserves, where we improve the Crown land and the carrying capacity so that we can expand our livestock production in Alberta.

#### Senior Citizens' Rent Assistance

MR. KUSHNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. It relates to senior citizens who are in effect paying rent to occupy nursing homes because the nursing homes have become their actual residences. Can the minister inform this Assembly if his department has given the same consideration, with regard to a rental assistance grant, to those senior citizens occupying nursing homes as to those senior citizens presently occupying other rental accommodation and receiving the grant?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the situation is that on introduction of the renter assistance program some years ago, we considered the level of subsidy that was applied by government to various types of accommodation such as lodges, self-contained units, and nursing homes. A decision was taken that persons residing in nursing homes had a sufficient level of subsidy applied to their rental cost so that it was not in order, or perhaps necessary, to include them in the rental assistance program at that time.

I can say, however, that events change from time to time because of changes in the level of costs associated with various kinds of institutional care. I would be prepared to look at any reasonable suggestions with regard to groups of people who may in fact or should perhaps come under our program. It's certainly one of ongoing review. We're prepared to consider any group of people who might now be in a position to receive those benefits and get some benefit from them.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister with respect to senior citizens' self-contained units. This would be of some benefit to the debate this afternoon. The rents have been increased from 25 per cent to 30 per cent of the income of these people. Is the minister saying that as things now stand, the renters' grant program will not apply to those senior citizens living in self-contained units as opposed to nursing homes?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it's a matter of the interpretation of the legislation and the regulations which are applied to it. My understanding is that only those living in nursing homes presently do not have the benefits of the renter portion of the property tax reduction program. As I said, of course, that was put into place because there was a very high level of government subsidy for that type of institutional care.

We're prepared to consider that area in future years, although I have to say, Mr. Speaker, it's rather late in the year in terms of the time frame in which applications are being processed and so on, and I would think

it virtually impossible to consider it for the current year. But the hon. member's question with respect to people residing in self-contained units — it's my understanding that they are presently eligible for the renter rebate if they are senior citizens, and that would continue to be the practice.

#### **Wage Legislation**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Labour. It concerns the proposal to amend The Alberta Labour Act to protect workers whose wages are withheld for reasons of bankruptcy. The proposal would establish a fund rather similar in principle to the unsatisfied judgment fund. Is it the government's intention to bring this legislation forward?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the matter which the hon. leader has raised is one of a series of items undergoing consideration. I'm not sure it will be brought forward. It certainly won't be brought forward in this spring sitting.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Recognizing that it's one of a series of things the government is considering, but also keeping in mind that, if my memory's accurate, the Ombudsman has raised this matter in at least his last three or four annual reports to the Legislature, has the minister met with the Ombudsman on this particular matter or does he plan to meet with him quickly to deal either yes or no with a recommendation he has made to the government for a number of years now?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, if it seems to be necessary in my deliberations, I shall certainly meet with the Ombudsman. At the present time I believe there is a considerable amount of information in the department, so I haven't come to any conclusion on whether it's necessary or not.

#### **Handicapped Residence**

MR. SINDLINGER: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Recently in Calgary some concern has been expressed over the living conditions in one of the residences operated by the Calgary Residential Services Society. The residence is a home for young handicapped individuals in the Spruce Cliff area. Inasmuch as the Calgary Residential Services Society receives most of its funding from the province, could the hon. minister please inform the House what action has been taken in regard to these concerns?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, a request was received from the president of the community Residential Services Society of Calgary, through the chief deputy minister of my department, that an independent examination be done of the operations of the Spruce Cliff residence. That was undertaken late last month. It's my understanding that the report is either finalized or nearing finalization. I have not yet seen it.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Did I understand the minister to say accurately

that it was an independent investigation being asked for by the minister?

MR. BOGLE: What I intended to indicate, Mr. Speaker, was that a request was made by the president of the society through our department that the department have an internal examination of the conditions at the residence. That is what was done; it was not an investigation or inquiry or anything like that.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister has changed the terms. Is it an independent investigation, the term the minister used in his first answer, or is it an internal inquiry? In fact, what kind of investigation is being carried out by the department?

MR. BOGLE: An independent examination, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, an independent examination. How can an independent examination be done by an employee of the department, when the department puts up all the money for the operation?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, we don't operate the residence. It's operated by a society. The request was made by the president of that society on behalf of his board that our department do an examination of the conditions within the residence. That's exactly what is now in the final stages of taking place.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Was the request from the group running the institution in Calgary a request for an investigation, or a request that individuals from the minister's department do the investigation? I draw a very careful distinction between a request for an investigation by someone from outside the department as opposed to asking the department to have someone investigate the operation, when the department is supplying all the money.

MR. BOGLE: I'll be as clear as I can, Mr. Speaker. Some concern has been expressed in the Calgary community about the operations of this particular society. It's a concern which the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo and I have discussed. The president of the society which operates the residence would very much like to clear the air. Therefore he asked, through the chief deputy minister of our department, that an independent examination of the operations be carried out — not an inquiry where we would go out and solicit comments from people at large, but to look at the actual facility and what's happening there. That's what has happened.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just one last question. Would the minister undertake to satisfy himself that prior to that report's being finalized, former staff who have worked at the institution have an opportunity at least to sit down with the person doing the report for the minister?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I've tried to enunciate that we did not initiate an inquiry. We were looking at the operations at the residence. For me to prejudge at this stage what the findings might be would be highly improper. We're trying to assist a volunteer organiza-

tion which wants the air cleared and want its good name cleared.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary, and I'll be as simple as I possibly can in asking the question. It is simply this: will the minister assure the Assembly that individuals who were working in that institution and who have been released by the board, which has asked to have its name cleared — will the minister assure himself that those people have the opportunity to make their views known to the person doing the investigation before that person finishes his investigation?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, as the minister responsible for the department that provides public funds, my main concern is to ensure that those funds are used adequately, not to second-guess a volunteer organization in its operations. Once I've had a chance to review the report coming in — and in turn I may wish to discuss that with the president of the society — we may want to examine other alternatives. But I'm not going to judge a report before it's in.

#### Hospital Budgets

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It flows from the statements yesterday by the Alberta Hospital Association. Is the minister in a position to outline to the House whether the appeal procedure for hospitals will be held by the guidelines this year, or whether there will be latitude for increases beyond the guidelines, particularly in those areas of supplies and services which have been documented in the statement yesterday by the Hospital Association?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker. All hospital boards in the province did get a letter earlier this month telling them of the appeal process and how to get involved in it, but the hospitals were again cautioned not to submit appeals based on the fact that they found it necessary to go beyond the government's inflationary guideline limitations.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. What objective factors went into the government's arriving at a 7 per cent guideline for supplies and services, in view of the statements given by the Hospital Association which would suggest that supplies and services are going to average somewhat more than 7 per cent? Was any objective criterion used to establish this 7 per cent guideline?

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that's a matter the Treasury Board and priorities committee and the minister look at, not only within the specific department but in government overall, when they're arriving at the budget figures for the department.

With respect to the hospitals, of course, much more than that was considered. Rather than establish an overall percentage guideline for hospitals in total, each hospital budget was examined. I'm sure all those boards now have their specific budgets and their overall percentage increases in front of them. That's why I found it rather puzzling to hear at second hand of the statements of the Alberta Hospital Association objecting to the two set figures, because they're only part of

the budget allocations for individual hospitals this year.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Notwithstanding that the global budgets of the hospitals have been set and figures are there for supplies and services, as I understand the minister's answer — and he can correct me if I'm wrong — the guideline is 8 to 8.4 per cent for salaries, I understand, and is to be set at 7 per cent for supplies and services.

Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister: what assessment was made by the department of the information put forward by the Hospital Association that the actual cost of supplies and services, whether utility rates or food, is going up by considerably more than an average of 7 per cent?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, the other factors involved are whether or not new programs or facilities are involved in the hospitals, whether new equipment is coming on stream and, in the case of new programs of course, whether there is additional staff. But somewhere along the line, as with the other institutions that are emanations of the provincial government, an overall figure has to be given to the boards for their guidance, saying, keep your supplies and materials within this guideline. If it means cutting down on quantities to keep inside those guidelines, that's one alternative the boards would have to consider.

MR. NOTLEY: I question whether we should be cutting down on the quantity of the food, and . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary on this topic.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would put to the minister whether he can advise the Assembly whether any of the appeals, in the \$20 million or thereabouts of appeals authorized after the Legislature adjourned last summer, went beyond the guidelines. The question is whether the policy last year, before the election, was to allow appeals above the guidelines; but now, after the election, we're going to stick to the guidelines.

MR. RUSSELL: I'm not sure I understand the full import of that question, Mr. Speaker. I think we can say that last year any hospital that had a legitimate case and a legitimate argument to put forward was recognized by way of additional funding, and we propose to do the same thing this year. In order to I think improve the appeal system, we've given the hospital boards until December 1 of this year so that they'll have a good way through their fiscal year to consider whether or not an appeal is warranted. So I think we're being fair and as open-minded as possible. But still, in this field of health care, at some point some guidelines have to be given to the boards for their guidance, and we're trying to be firm with those.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, if I may, to the hon. minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we could come back to this topic at another time. We still have another person who wants to ask his first question, but perhaps there

would be time for a short supplementary by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, is the minister in a position to indicate what action the government is going to take on hospital boards' deficits from last year?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to check on this. I believe they've been picked up.

#### **Lethbridge Air Terminal**

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the hon. Minister of Transportation concerning the construction of the Lethbridge air terminal. As the minister may be aware, they've had some difficulties with both weather and labor strife. I wonder if he could advise the House as to the progress of the construction of the new terminal, and perhaps the anticipated completion date.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, the building is nearly completed. The time frame on the actual opening or the operation, though, is going to be restricted because the old buildings have to be removed. So the terminal has to be used in its present form, notwithstanding the fact that the new one is nearly finished. As soon as the new one is finished, which will be very shortly, the demolition will start. The new airport will be operational about the middle of September.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Deputy Premier because of his involvement with the construction of the terminal. Could he advise the House whether the apron around the terminal and the terminal facilities would accommodate aircraft of the nature of, say, 737s, such as Pacific Western Airlines'?

DR. HORNER: My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that it will.

MR. GOGO: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Deputy Premier therefore advise the House whether or not the application by Pacific Western Airlines to serve the Lethbridge area is still before the air transport board?

MR. SPEAKER: Is not the member directing his question to the wrong target?

#### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

101. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing copies of all reports prepared by the Interdepartmental Committee on Hazardous Materials, chaired by Mr. Ernie Tyler.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that this motion stand and hold its place on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

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

201. Moved by Mr. D. Anderson:

Be it resolved that the government of Alberta give immediate consideration to convening a congress on our aging community to deal with the impact of the increasing average age on Alberta. The congress would include legislators and prominent Albertans from all walks of life.

Be it further resolved that the said congress establish a committee which from the findings of the congress will formulate suggestions to the government recommending ways to deal with the economic and social problems associated with aging.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to first outline this motion to the House. It calls for immediate consideration by the government of convening a congress on the aging community and what is taking place with respect to that particular phenomenon. It asks that we bring together prominent Albertans from all walks of life and that they meet and determine a direction that we can establish with respect to the problems we may encounter in future years.

With that paraphrasing behind me, I'd like to state that this motion is a direct result of studies which indicate that the problems we're now facing as a result of what was termed the postwar baby boom are only a small part of what we will experience in the future, only the tip of the iceberg.

If the members will recall, the term "postwar baby boom" came about when our soldiers abroad returned in 1945, just after the Second World War. After their long-awaited reunion with loved ones, the result was a massive increase in births in this country and in many parts of the Western World.

We didn't really note the problems this caused, Mr. Speaker, until the 1950s, when those babies of the late and mid-40s became children of age to attend our educational institutions. At this point we realized there was going to be a requirement to build a great number of new school facilities and to hire teachers to deal with the problem of educating this great number of students who entered the work force. In addition, in the 1950s the concern developed regarding population growth. A good number of individuals speculated that it would now be a problem, that it was going to begin in that year, and that the population growth difficulties would expand throughout the years.

In the 1960s the children who had entered those educational institutions in the '50s, who had caused so many problems in terms of the kind of facilities required but had never been dealt with to that point, began to enter our postsecondary institutions, and the emptying of the elementary and senior high schools began. At the same time, we faced the economic problems associated with giving proper education at a postsecondary level to that mass of students who had been babies in the '40s and children in the '50s.

The concern over an expanding population — the zero population growth people began to mellow their conversations with respect to that problem and think that problem might be dying down, because as yet we'd seen no great influx of babies again into society. During the '60s we also noted that the idealism of youth, which is always there, had a more significant impact on our society. The great number of people in



teen years and early adult years caused our society to reassess a good number of its social directions, its mores, its philosophies. Such changes as the approach to the Vietnam war, the civil rights movement, and other such social concerns were very immediately brought to the fore and dealt with by the community in the '60s.

Perhaps most important and most relevant to this particular resolution, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that our society at that time had to open up space in its economy for this new influx of workers, the young and energetic people who had come from that postwar era. In doing so our community encouraged, indeed at times forced, our aging citizens to retire by mandatory ages, pension plans, and other projects initiated to encourage those people to retire from the work force. Indeed at that time there was even a philosophical point of view that the individual had a right to retire at an early age and that we had been denying this right to former populations. That, combined with the economic need to have the young in the workplace, caused great changes for that senior citizen element of our community.

We might note that to deal with retiring senior citizens, in the 1960s as well we began to initiate projects: senior citizens' lodges, projects to help them deal with their retirement. We'd had those kinds of programs before but had never needed them in significant numbers. That was one of the requirements of that period, near the end of the '60s.

In the '70s the babies from the '40s, who had become children in the '50s and young adults in the '60s, became part of the middle-aged population, or at least the aging young. Those individuals then caused society to change again. We saw significant problems with respect to our educational community. A great number of schools in the core areas of our cities were left empty, and we were forced to begin looking at that specific problem.

The zero population growth people prevalent in the '50s and '60s were indeed not prominent in the '70s, because finally there was a realization that there would no longer be a population growth problem. We noted in the '70s that our particular growth pattern ended up becoming 1.7 in terms of the number of people to replace a couple, 1.7 for every two people in our society.

The social concerns that had developed dramatically in the '60s began to die in the '70s. They mellowed as the population reached more of a middle age. We began to recognize that for the first time in the history of man, our community had an average age higher than it had ever been. We then expanded senior citizen programs to deal with this coming issue and evolved a number of projects to look at that increasing need.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before you that calls for a congress to be established to look at the aging phenomena, is there in order to deal with the future ramifications of the aging phenomena. To look at the possibilities with respect to that area, I'd like to quote from a Provincial Senior Citizens Advisory Council report of 1978:

The demographic trends of Canada's aging population have been thoroughly documented. There is clear and overwhelming evidence that the number of older people, the percentage of older people, and the services needed for older people will not only be increasing but increasing at an alarming rate.

To put figures to that alarming rate designated in the council report, I'd like to quote from a Health and Welfare Canada report which was presented to a symposium on aging held in Ottawa about a year and one-half ago. That report indicated that by the year 2031, 48.2 per cent of our working-age population, 18 years of age and over, will be 60 years of age or greater; that is, as long as the population growth trends in terms of immigration and life expectancy stay constant. I would like to repeat that statistic: 48.2 per cent of our working-age population over age 60 within 52 years. The first question a congress would have to address itself to would be the ramifications of that particular statistic and the fact that we will face degrees of that over the next few years.

The first and obvious ramifications we have to look at are those in that particular population, that portion of our society who are now and will be senior citizens. Indeed, the increased services that will be required — housing, income, and recreation — are projects that have been looked at by a number of agencies attached to the government and independent agencies in our society. I think they have done an excellent job. Particularly the Senior Citizens Bureau, the Alberta Council on Aging, and the advisory committee to the minister have developed a number of ideas which I believe are excellent and which are now being initiated in many respects.

What I believe the congress needs to deal with to a greater extent than those particular needs of the senior citizen population is what I call the second dimension: the effect this large number of senior citizens will have on our society as a whole. Indeed when you stop to look at it, we can immediately see a number of potential problems. Some deal with housing, because senior citizens will be primarily attached more to single units than to the multiple family living unit we now have in our society. We'll have perhaps one-half the number of people we currently do to pay taxes to governments around the country and therefore contribute to the costs we will need to deal with the kind of social service projects in that period. We'll have a great increase in the kind of programs for adapting senior citizens to the pension plan schemes and dealing with depleting pension plans.

Perhaps most important to the province of Alberta is that the work force will be greatly reduced, and at that point in time will be changing from an oil- and gas-based economy to other forms. Will we have the kind of population that will be required to operate the industries present in the year 2031?

The congress will have to look at issues to deal with these specific problems. They will have to investigate housing trends designed to deal with senior citizens and see if they are particularly practical. They will have to deal with the income governments will have and project whether we are going to be able to provide the kind of social services we'll need. In that particular case, the Heritage Savings Trust Fund may be our saving grace.

The congress would have to look at the practical medical and social service needs that would be required and do some sort of cost projection with respect to what pacing is going to have to take place on the part of government. We're going to have to look at the way in which we can encourage industries that could particularly use the kinds of services that senior citizens can provide, since they will make up almost 50 per cent

of our population. We will definitely have to reassess mandatory retirement ages and see if they're practical and desirable at this point in time.

I believe this congress would be a first step toward dealing with the difficulties we possibly face in the future. That particular congress will be unable to do some of the in-depth research I've suggested, but it will be able to initiate it, to give this problem a high public profile, and to develop the directions that we as a government should take with respect to this in future years. Indeed, it's rare that legislators have an opportunity to plan for future problems rather than deal with today's problems. I believe this particular resolution gives us that opportunity. It's ironic that we've always said that youth are the future of our society. At this point in time they may not hold all the keys. It may be the senior citizens who indeed are the future of this community.

MR. NOTLEY: In rising to make several comments on the resolution we have before us, I would like to congratulate the hon. member on the introduction of, I think, a useful resolution.

I intend to support the resolution for some of the reasons advanced by the hon. member, but as a point of departure I'd also like to perhaps differ with some of my colleagues in the Legislature on where we stand today with respect to our senior citizens. I think it would be unfortunate if we took a rather complacent view of the level of programs presently being made available to senior citizens. One of the reasons I would support a resolution of this nature is that I think it's not only important to assess where we are going on this matter, but to evaluate where we are today.

I remember well, Mr. Speaker, the few weeks before the 1975 election was announced. This is the Year of the Child. I think January 1975 was the month of the senior citizen, because we had all sorts of comments about what this government was going to do for senior citizens. With great fanfare we had the announcement of the assured income program, and various members of the Conservative party eagerly went from senior citizens' home to senior citizens' home to nursing home, what have you, extolling the virtues of this great new program. And I'd have to say, Mr. Speaker, that when the time came in the spring that year to approve the budget, all hon. members in the House approved the budget of the assured income program.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the fact that we have indexing of federal pensions, there is no indexing of the assured income program. So here we are, in perhaps the most financially favored part of all Canada, with a program which was useful when it began in 1975 but, quite frankly, has not been indexed to the higher cost of living that has occurred over the last four years.

I look at some of the other programs that have been announced. Home care was announced with almost equal fanfare a year ago, Mr. Speaker, but we find that because it's underfunded, one has to have a short-term medical ailment in order to qualify for home care in most of the province. We have already discussed in the question period today the increase in rent charged for self-contained units, from 25 per cent of senior citizens' income to 30 per cent; the highest percentage, I might add, charged by any province in Canada. So it would be a rather serious error for any of us in this

House to be so complacent about the plight of senior citizens today that we assume that all is well in 1979, and all we have to do is worry about 2031.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the 1976-77 annual report of the Human Rights Commission made some observations that I think are particularly relevant. On page 3 of the report:

Recent statistics indicate that above 60 per cent of all women over the age of 65 are forced to live on incomes well below the so-called poverty level.

Above 60 per cent of all women over the age of 65. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, with that kind of situation facing us today in Alberta, one of the very first things a congress should have to consider is the actual situation faced by the many thousands of senior citizens living in this province today.

Mr. Speaker, as we look to the future there is no doubt, as the hon. member pointed out, that an increasing percentage of our population will be in the category of senior citizens. As I see it, we have to place greater emphasis on recognizing the contribution of senior citizens, and not in a gratuitous way, not sort of patting granddaddy on the head and saying, great that you're still around, we hope you can hobble along for a few more years, or we give you a plaque or something of that nature.

It seems to me that we have to recognize senior citizens in one of the ways the hon. member spoke of, the whole question of retirement age. Should we be looking at mandatory retirement at 65 or 70? I know people of 80 or 85 who love their work. Should we be taking a totally different approach to the age of retirement? It seems to me that as medical science improves the capacity of people to live longer and healthier lives, we have to take a second look at this whole question of the retirement age. That is clearly necessary, Mr. Speaker, if you're going to look at how we're going to pay for the cost of pension programs. If we assume that the present retirement age will stay as it is, as the population gradually shifts to a higher age bracket, that's going to put some strain on the economy. No question about that.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me the counterargument is that simply putting people out to pasture because they've reached the age of 65 is short-sighted. We lose the talents of many people who can make an extremely useful contribution to the economy and to society.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just take a look at the wording of the resolution we have before us today:

Be it resolved that the government of Alberta give immediate consideration to convening a congress on our aging community to deal with the impact of the increasing average age on Alberta. The congress would include legislators and prominent Albertans from all walks of life.

I thought that in a resolution of this nature we should perhaps be a little more specific than "*prominent Albertans from all walks of life*". It's important, Mr. Speaker, that at the congress level at least we make sure that every single group that represents senior citizens in this province would in fact be permitted to come and fully participate.

I remember just a few days before the Legislature reconvened, in the last stages of the federal election, going to a very beautiful place in this city — I believe it's called Strathcona Place; just an absolutely beautiful building — and having several of the senior citizens

coming to me and saying: you know, it's a very nice physical surrounding; we have no quarrel with the physical surrounding, but we feel regimented in this kind of situation; it is too organized, and we're being watched all the time. Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether that's a valid point. Nevertheless it is the kind of feeling you're going to have from many people who were able to live independent lives over the years.

So a congress of this nature should not focus primarily on having a few prominent Albertans who are going to try to get their names in the newspaper, or even in a gratuitous way do their little bit for the senior citizens. I think the place to start is to emphasize the input we would get from various senior citizens' groups, whether it be the Council on Aging, the pensioners' concerns, or even some of the more obstreperous groups of senior citizens who have very definite ideas on what they want to see. Some of those ideas involve expenditure of money well beyond the guidelines so arbitrarily set by this government.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, the fact still remains that the resolution does require this Legislature and the people of Alberta to look into the future. Despite the fact that I think we have to be cognizant of where we stand today, that is something that is long overdue. If we're to ensure that the quality of life in this province remains at a high level, clearly we have to begin looking at the options where, perhaps, a higher percentage of our population will be in the higher age bracket. Whether or not the year 2031 has any particular significance, as the hon. member implied, is quite aside from the point that a look at the future and where we're going is long overdue on this question.

The only other point I would make in addressing some remarks to the resolution, Mr. Speaker, is that just as it is necessary to plan for the kind of society that will be in place as our population gradually grows older, I think the same is true that we now have to begin the preparation of some pretty clear ideas on the type of economic structure we will have in place 10, 20, 50 years down the road. The hon. member talked about what happens to Alberta when we have a large percentage of our population in the category of 50, 60, 70, 80-plus years and we've run out of oil and gas. Well, that's the sort of thing that concerns all of us, and one of the crucial aspects of where this province goes in the future is just what we plan to do about preparing for the day when we run out of non-renewable resources. I can't think of anything more crucial.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to see in the Speech from the Throne the same sort of forward-looking approach on the economic diversification of Alberta that I see in this particular resolution. If we had that kind of assurance from the government, coupled with a look at where our senior citizens stand and where we will stand collectively with respect to them down the road. I would have much more confidence in where this government is taking this province.

Nevertheless, I think the resolution is a useful start, providing we emphasize, as I mentioned, the contributions at the level of the congress itself, the level of this representative gathering of senior citizens. Hence I intend to support it.

[Mr. Little and Mr. R. Speaker rose]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary McCall, I believe, caught my eye first.

MR. LITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to Motion 201.

As pointed out by my colleague from Calgary Currie, one of the most significant changes that have taken place in our lifetime is the significant increase in the proportion of senior citizens in our society. People today are living much longer and are much healthier and, indeed, women are living even longer than men. I understand that in North America, due to the early demise of the male, females have inherited almost 70 per cent of the personal wealth.

Combined with the falling birth rate in North America, this has created a demographic shift which is creating a whole group of new problems in our society, not the least of which is pensions, in that a smaller and smaller group in our society is supporting those who are not employed for one reason or another; reasons of youth, infirmity, or old age. I read predictions that in the very near future, one-third of the population will be supporting the other two-thirds. This will create very serious problems in pensions, as has already been mentioned.

So it might be interesting at this point, Mr. Speaker, to trace the origin of pensions and of this alleged mandatory age of 65. To this end I am indebted to a very, very efficient Legislature Library staff, who provided me with the book *Bismarck and State Socialism*, printed in 1891. It still finds its place in our library, and was readily accessible by that most efficient staff. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote a couple of sections from the book.

It was Prince Bismarck who determined this mandatory age of 65 for retirement:

Replying once to the accusation made by an opponent in the Reichstag that his social-political measures were tainted with socialism, Prince Bismarck said, 'You will be compelled yet to add a few drops of social oil in the recipe you prescribe for the State; how many I cannot say.'

Further, to trace the dates of the legislation:

The Sickness Insurance Law of 1883, the Accident Insurance Laws of 1884 and 1885, and the Old Age Insurance law of 1889 are based on the principle of compulsion which was introduced into the sick insurance legislation of Prussia in 1854.

There's just one more little section that I know will prove of great interest to this Legislature. This is how the insurance laws originated:

Before the Government of Prince Bismarck had promised the trio of insurance laws which are now in operation, a small body of Conservatives in the Reichstag urged the introduction of obligatory insurance against old age and indigence.

Showing once again that although this party is a free-enterprise party, it has a social conscience, Mr. Speaker.

As I said a moment ago, this alleged magic number of 65 was determined by Prince Bismarck in those early days. The only reason I can find for his selecting this age was that very, very few of the workers at that time attained it, and therefore didn't qualify for pensions. In fact I would like to remark, Mr. Speaker, about a friend of mine in Calgary, a Dr. Upton, whose hobby is researching gerontology. He has travelled all over the world. He found that in the 1700s many in

England died in their 40s. When he researched the hospital records, he found that the death certificates indicated the cause of death for people in their 40s was old age. So as I state, I don't suppose too many people in that day qualified for the pension provided for in the legislation of Prince Bismarck.

However, with the advent of better nutrition, better health care, better housing, we have today a considerable percentage of the population over 65. Indeed we find that in many industries and occupations today, people are retiring much sooner than that mandatory age of 65. Many of these people who are physically and mentally able to function for many years after this mandatory age limit want to, but are prevented because of the laws we have. Of course when I make the statement that it is interfering with their desire, their need, their urge to continue in the work force, I also appreciate the great confusion that abolishing a mandatory retirement law would have in industry today. It would certainly interfere with the promotion sequence and with the upward mobility, and to a great extent inhibit motivation within the organizations.

On the other hand, the mandatory pension age does not prevent the retired worker from pursuing other careers. A year ago I had the pleasure of going around one of walkathons with our previous Lieutenant-Governor, Dr. Grant MacEwan. Of course, Dr. MacEwan is working on his fifth or sixth career at the present time. He suggested that an excellent private member's Bill in this House would be legislation to prevent any citizen of this province staying in any particular occupation for more than 20 years, to assure that each would have a variety of careers during his lifetime. I've attempted to follow his advice in a smaller degree.

The older worker is frequently more skilled and, to a great extent, more reliable. After leaving my previous occupation, I set up a consulting firm of personnel trouble-shooting. One of the projects we took on was that of a grocery wholesaler. We found there were several areas in this organization. In the grocery warehouse the ages ranged from 17 to 35. The turnover rate was almost 300 per cent in one year; absenteeism, vandalism, sickness, and accidents were very high. In contrast, in their produce department the youngest man was 47 years of age and the oldest was 65. Their absenteeism rate was almost nil, and their turnover for a whole year was actually nil, no turnover in this group. Management was able to report that when orders came in, this group would carry out their tasks without instructions from supervisors.

One of the foremost, and probably the most outspoken, opponents of early retirement and the mandatory retirement age in North America today is Garson Kanin, probably known to many of you as an author and movie producer. Garson Kanin is in his late 80s and is extremely active in his chosen profession of producing moving pictures. His wife, the actress Ruth Gordon, is also in her late 80s, and still acts in many movies, performs on Broadway, and commutes twice a week between Hollywood and Broadway. Not bad for a lady in her late 80s.

In his most noted book, entitled *It Takes a Long Time to Become Young*, Garson Kanin states that there are only two acceptable reasons for retirement: number one, the desire of the person to leave his employment or retire; and number two, that he has ceased to function adequately in that occupation. He gives endless ex-

amples in that book of the aged performing effectively; for example, he and his wife. Sam Goldwyn was still producing movies in his late 70s. Arthur Fiedler, one of the most famous musicians in the world today — middle 80s. In our own province, as I say, Grant MacEwan is pursuing his fifth or sixth career in his late 70s. When Margaret Thatcher announced her cabinet recently, I thought it quite significant that most of the members of the cabinet were late 50s or early 60s, which gave a great deal of hope to members such as me and the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight.

There was an announcement on the air just yesterday about the Russian Politburo. The average age of the Russian Politburo is 69; their leader, of course, is 76. In the Greek Parliament you had to be over 50 before you qualified for entrance. I understand that in the Mormon Church the president and the elected 12 are frequently in their 80s and 90s and the president is frequently middle-90s. Consider men such as Churchill, Forsey, Diefenbaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's quite significant that we should have selected this day for this debate, because today marks the 76th birthday of the comedian-actor Bob Hope, who is still performing rather adequately. It's also the 75th birthday of Senator Eugene Forsey, who is recognized as one of the experts on the constitution in this country. Aneurin Bevan was in the British Parliament for 50 years. I think his most significant quote was on the day he retired, when he said, this Tory government that is now in power has passed social legislation that neither myself nor my colleagues would have dared ask for in our early days in this parliament.

But I think the most important feature that we are ignoring to a great extent, as quoted by Garson, is that we are taking away freedom of choice from a lot of senior citizens. Kanin states in his book that he has known many young people in their 80s, and that he has known old people in their 20s.

That brings to mind the research job that was done a year or so back by the psychology department of the University of Calgary. I'm sure many of you heard about it. They went all around this province questioning elderly people as to the reasons for their longevity. They interviewed an old fellow sitting in front of the general store in Medicine Hat. They said, "What's your secret for longevity?" He said, "Well, I really don't know." They said, "Do you drink?" He said, "All my life." "Do you smoke?" "All my life." "What about the women?" He said, "I'm still chasing them." "And how old are you?" "Twenty-nine." [laughter]

Mandatory retirement is frequently a very traumatic experience, as also covered in the research books. The hon. Member for Calgary North West remarked yesterday on the increase in suicide among young people. Suicide is very frequent and increasing among men in their 50s who have retired and no longer found a reason for living. The meaning has gone out of their lives.

I had a very sad and very interesting experience recently. We were in the city of Phoenix and I visited an old friend of mine who had formerly been in charge of the Kodak exhibit in Disneyland. In fact, Gerry Arzrouni took over the Kodak exhibit the first day that Disneyland opened, and he stayed there until his retirement two years ago. He was with the Kodak organization for 44 years. He had one of the most interesting and fulfilling careers of any many I have

ever met. Mention the well-known, the important of this whole world, and he had met them personally. Many of the important people that I spoke of were his personal friends. Then came the day of mandatory retirement. Gerry Arzrouni said to the management, please leave me on. Leave me on as a consultant; I'll work for nothing. No, the rules say you retire this day. Off with you. He was a frustrated and very depressed man.

As I say, I don't have the solutions. I realize that abandoning the mandatory retirement age causes a great deal of confusion in many organizations, but it's something we have to take a long look at. I would hesitate to suggest another study, but we need to consider the personal needs of the elderly and those who retire. Maybe we should be asking them. As the old saying goes, different strokes for different folks. The institution doesn't suit everybody. For example, can you imagine men such as Arthur Fiedler or John Diefenbaker being in one of the institutions we have built in this province? They would go mad. It just doesn't suit them. There are many others in the same category.

There is no universal solution, but freedom of choice is important above every other consideration. In many instances, we treat senior citizens as children and think they are not capable of making that election. We have to give the senior a sense of worth, a sense of self-respect and, above all, a sense of independence.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, as a senior citizen of this institution, I'd like first of all to congratulate the mover of the resolution. I think it's very appropriate to bring to this government a resolution on aging. I've only been here for three days, and I have found that there's more indication of aging than in the last eight years. In those terms, Mr. Speaker, I think it's very appropriate that we bring in a resolution on aging. However, I don't want those comments to be taken in the sense that the resolution should be taken in even a lighter sense, because it shouldn't.

I believe that the concept of a congress certainly has merit at this time. Senior citizens have a number of needs and concerns across this province of Alberta. But I think it's the intent or the direction that is significant in a congress such as this. If the government has the intent of placing a frame of reference on the congress, where they're going to the people or senior citizens and saying, what type of programs can we give to you, or what should we do for you, I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, that will be a successful congress. Because when we examine and talk to senior citizens across this province, they want to be independent. To me that is key in whatever we do.

I believe one of the best examples of programs of co-operation between government and the local community where the initiative of the senior citizen is recognized is the drop-in centre program in this province, funded by the federal government. In those drop-in centres across the province you find senior citizens doing their own thing. They're independent, building a facility, building recreational programs, extending themselves into community programs, and becoming very, very useful citizens. To me that's the kind of framework we should use in determining what that congress does. So we should examine the future and the past.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that when we talk in terms of

independence we must talk about the role of government. That concerns me when we talk about the role of government relative to a Conservative government. We talked about home care in the last Legislature. The home care program received an excellent discussion in this Assembly. But has it proceeded across the province? Is it available to our senior citizens in need in this province? Not on a universal basis. It doesn't enter the many homes where all the senior citizens want, maybe, is someone to visit them; as the hon. Mr. Ghitter who was in the last Legislature said, someone maybe to fix the fence or help with the yard. Is that really happening from this government? A lot of words, but no follow through.

Hospitalization and health care in this province: many, many senior citizens are very anxious and are feeling very insecure at the present time with the trends in hospitalization. Just this morning when I left southern Alberta, it was reported to me that the Lethbridge hospitals will have to cut back on some services. Talk to the senior citizens and see how they respond to that type of thing. One senior citizen who spoke to me this morning has been waiting four days to get in the hospital in Lethbridge, under very severe conditions in his own personal health and under great anxiety. He was unable to get in. I said, why don't you go to the emergency and lay there on the floor. Well, he wasn't even in a good enough state of health to do that kind of thing. But those kinds of conditions exist.

When we talk about the independence of senior citizens in this province, we must co-ordinate and relate that to the support facilities they need. They don't want everything done for them, but they want health care when they need it. They want to be assured that if they need institutional care, it is available to them. But they also want to be assured that as long as they can stay in their homes and look after themselves, that is available to them in the province of Alberta.

At the present time, Mr. Speaker, there are good indications that this government is not willing to provide that extent of health care service in this province, and I think it's the most unfortunate thing. The priorities of this government are mixed up. We talk about aging today. After the 1971 election we had great talk in this Assembly about the handicapped; they were forgotten until this throne speech. And really, nothing has been done significantly new or different for the physically or mentally handicapped since that early burst in 1971. Very, very little has been done for them. Here again we're coming with a burst about a congress to help the aging and discuss things with the aging in this province. I think this government has to look at some basics beyond a discussion in a congress.

As I've said, two of the best examples are health care and home care in this province. They are inadequate to meet the immediate needs of the senior citizens in this province at the present time. No senior citizen in a province as rich as this should have to wait to get into a hospital for hospital care. I can give the minister or anybody else the name of the person this morning who has been waiting for four days to get into the Lethbridge [hospital] for a very, very serious health condition. I think that's totally unfair, and I'm sure there are examples right across this province of the very same thing.

I think a Conservative government with the funds available to it at the present time should hang its head.

Sure it's nice to talk about aging in the future, aging at present. We're going to have a discussion. But the fact lies with any government responsibility, with a government that's supposedly doing things for the people of Alberta, with a government that has a majority beyond what the people really wanted in this province. [interjection] They've got to take a responsibility even greater.

The hon. Member for Medicine Hat says, huh. That's exactly the way he reacts to every other program in this House: with an air of irresponsibility. That irresponsibility doesn't come from just the minister, but emanates from the central position, from the Premier. On the first two days of questioning about hiring people in this province, we saw the irresponsibility emanating from this government.

We can't believe every pensioner in this province gets the big pension of a retired cabinet minister. Most likely the hon. Member for Medicine Hat will retire in four years, come back, and look for a big job from a maybe existent Conservative government. Every senior citizen and aging person in this province isn't that lucky. Now we're coming about with a discussion on a congress, and we're going to have a discussion with the aging about their future. I think that's all right. But I think some of the terms of reference and the direction of this government need to sharpen up and take a little bit more notice of the people of Alberta rather than their own self-vested interest.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the motion before us, I speak from a background of being fortunate enough to be chairman of Trinity Place Foundation of Alberta, which has under its care a senior citizens' housing development which has 180 units. At the moment we have over 200 people living within that facility, provided by this government. I see that that, was provided by this government and not by the previous government, of which I gather the hon. Member for Little Bow was a member.

One of the interesting things in the course of the debate has been to listen to the comments by the members who have spoken before me. I was also interested to hear some of the thoughtful comments by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. I think we should certainly assure him, as well as the Member for Little Bow, that this government is not complacent, especially in this area of senior citizen support services. I think I have to take serious exception to the comment of the Member for Little Bow that extended health care has not been fully available to senior citizens within this province. The facts speak for themselves, that extended health care is very much in evidence and completely available to the senior citizens in this province. This matter of an air of responsibility is something where I'm afraid the hon. Member for Little Bow is more than a little off-base with regard to this particular issue. Well, aside from that . . .

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, can I ask the hon. member a question?

DR. CARTER: I suppose, when I get through this, if that's permissible, sir.

First, with regard to the motion before us, I think the mover recognizes, as do other people in this House, that with regard to the department concerned, a num-

ber of people who are very much concerned with the whole matter of aging in terms of this province, in addition to groups such as the Council on Aging, are working in these areas.

Again, one would hope this particular motion and the convening of the congress would continue to focus attention upon Alberta's leadership with regard to this whole area of senior citizens, because it's not only in the area of housing that this government and this province have been quite sensitive to the concerns of senior citizens. By the same token, we also realize the millennium has not arrived. We also realize that one should indeed encourage the independence of these individuals, but by the same token, that no government, no matter what its political stripe, is going to be seen to interfere in the lives of senior citizens, to look after every little problem which will arise. I think some of the issues that need to be addressed with regard to economic and social problems relate to the housing cycle, if I may refer to that, and then deal with some of the financial aspects.

Moving from house to house is the general pattern which takes place, provided you live long enough for it to happen. We know that in the early stages of our careers, we can move into an apartment and then into a house, if we're lucky enough. One of the great things is to be able to own your house, and I myself have had to deal with that issue in this last number of weeks. As you come to seniority of years and after your own family has moved away, when it comes time for your pensionable years, hopefully you are able to live in your own accommodation for a number of years, if your physical and financial stamina are adequate.

However, the pattern that one of the couple starts to fail a bit then starts to evolve. Then you move back into an apartment so that you can again maintain your independence. Of course while you're there, in order to make that transition, you have to start to sell off some of your worldly goods, your favorite pieces of furniture, for example. That in itself is traumatic, along with the trauma of moving to another residence.

The couple may be able to move into a senior citizens' residence when they find that apartment living is really getting to be too much for them as well. In many of the senior citizens' residences available in this province, there are personnel to help you with that move and in terms of programming that takes place within that building, so that you are not entirely, so to speak, on the shelf.

Again, as time goes by and perhaps your health starts to fail, you find that one of you is sent to a nursing home because the other person or the facility in which you live is not able to carry out the kind of health care needs you require. Some couples are able to go to a senior citizens' lodge facility, and there they perhaps have meal service, because they find they are no longer able to prepare their own meals.

Where do you go from there? You may well end up in a nursing home where you need to have complete care. You probably will end up at a facility where you do not have your own private room. If it turns out that both the husband and wife go into that facility together, they are more than likely to be segregated from each other.

Where do you go from there? Probably into hospital. From hospital you are likely to end up donating your body to the medical school for medical research, or you take that trip to the cemetery.

What's happening in that kind of process is called life, naturally. It's called life and death. Nevertheless, at every stage of that cycle, there is a matter of trauma, because every step of the way you have not only to move but to sell off bits and pieces of your property, items which have helped to give you not only identity but comfort and stability over the years. Along with moving, you also tend to leave friends, a support group in your particular community, for oftentimes you have to go a fair distance to take advantage of another type of living accommodation.

A number of people who go through the moving process fear bureaucracy. No government is able to control the operation of all those people who carry out the implementation of its programs and, as in any other institution, there is a great variety of experience in the implementation of programs, depending very much upon the sensitivity, let alone the training, of the particular individual carrying out the processing of applications, as one example.

We find that over the course of their lifetime many senior citizens have not developed a broad range of interests in terms of hobbies or other activities. They have found themselves, as it were, locked in a rut with regard to their work or occupation, and that has conditioned the kind of interests they have developed over the years.

Many senior citizens are very easily intimidated, [and] not only by bureaucracy which can rear its head in various forms, in terms of housing authorities or certain implementation of policy. Earlier in the day the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview mentioned one of the facilities where some of the residents felt they were overly regimented. And I know that may well be the case in some instances. Again, one has to hope there will be continued careful screening of on-site personnel, who meet on a day to day, regular basis with the persons who happen to be residents within that type of facility.

Earlier I mentioned this matter of intimidation. I give you one example where I think every one of us would feel intimidated. There is an older section in downtown Calgary which I referred to yesterday as "the strip". One of the buildings in that section of town is called the Beveridge block. If I had my way, if I could move all the people out, I would hope that building would somehow disintegrate from the face of the earth. Before we opened our own high-rise and took some of these senior citizens out of that slum accommodation into our facility, one 80-year-old man lived on the fourth floor and was afraid to go into the elevator unless he carried a knife, because he had to protect himself against some of the other transient personnel who move in and out of that particular building in the city of Calgary. As they walk down some streets, senior citizens find they are intimidated by the size or the aggressiveness, let alone the sometimes drunken behavior, of some of the people who happen to be using the same sidewalk.

In the kind of changes that go on within the later years of our lives, too many senior citizens do not place a sufficiently high value upon their own worth. I don't know all the factors involved in that trend. Perhaps it is this mandatory retirement age, which the hon. Member for Calgary McCall spoke about. Oftentimes it is the perception of the individual as he comes up against bureaucracy or other individuals within the community. At any rate, those of us who have taken

the time to sit down and talk with senior citizens — one of the great programs for young people these days is that they do go into some of these facilities, take along their tape recorders, and conduct interviews with some of the senior citizens. A bridging takes place, and a mutual appreciation.

Many senior citizens obviously have great talent, and we in this province need to learn how to mobilize the implementation of those talents through various ways. Hopefully the congress might come up with certain ways in which we might be able to do that.

When we come to our older age — as a matter of fact, at any stage in our aging process, from birth to grave — many of us find we are lonely. This condition is not confined exclusively to the elderly. Indeed, loneliness is probably the worst and most general disease of our society. Part of the loneliness syndrome, if you will, is the fact that as we get on in years we find ourselves to be less attractive to members of the opposite sex. This is very much a part of our feelings of self worth.

I must confess that one of the highlights of the operation of the senior citizens' home in Calgary has been the fact that two marriages have now taken place with people who were no younger than age 70. It is interesting to observe senior citizens in this kind of situation; to observe them in terms of their courtship, the whole process where they really are seeking to do away with loneliness. They are seeking a reaffirmation of their own individuality, a reaffirmation of their self worth in terms of society.

There is also a sad side to this. The first time we had an in-house residence party was a New Year's Eve. I found that that was great, in terms of helping to put to rest some of the anxiety I had experienced over the previous seven years of getting that structure built. It was a great party, but the sad part of it was as far as the women were concerned. They outnumbered the men six to one. That made for difficulty when it came to getting up and dancing. In fact, it took me back to the days of my youth, when all the girls were dancing with each other and the guys were sitting at the sidelines. The trouble here was that the women were dancing together because there were just not enough men.

Yesterday I mentioned that one of the factors we perhaps need to look at in terms of some of these housing facilities is the hiring and development of tenant relations personnel, people who have an increased sensitivity toward some of the issues with our senior citizens. I also mentioned the financial aspect or, if you will, the financial conundrum. Mr. Speaker, from time to time when we're talking about some of the delivery systems with regard to senior citizens, I know some hon. members have mentioned, well, what about a means test, because some of these senior citizens seem to have adequate funds. Perhaps that in itself is an issue for that congress to consider.

At the moment, there is definitely a very fierce spirit of independence with our senior citizens. That also deals in terms of their financial independence. In some miraculous way, some of these people have saved their few dollars throughout the Depression and those recovery years following the Depression and the Second World War. I say "miraculous" on purpose because, in the examples I know of personally, I don't know how they could possibly have saved anything. Many people are in that kind of condition. They fiercely pride their

independence. While they appreciate extended health care benefits and senior citizen discounts, they also want to hold onto their own funds as long as they can, because it is a matter of pride to them that they do not die as paupers.

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

I think each of us here should be very cognizant of how important that independence factor is. I suppose I could use a very earthy example, because I want you very definitely to value your own feeling of independence and think of how this is going to affect you in your later years. The earthy example is this: when you are in hospital and have to undergo surgery, for example, do you experience frustration at your dependence on others in your recuperation period? Do you really experience frustration when you have to use a bedpan instead of going to the bathroom in your normal fashion? That earthy example really brings to mind how I value my independence and my ability to function on my own in all fashions. In terms of this motion, one would hope that the congress would consider every avenue possible to encourage the continued independence of our senior citizens.

I would talk about two other areas very briefly. The matter of dying. Dying, of course, can come to us at any moment. It is not just a matter of having to wait for our old age. In terms of the dying process, it has been an observed fact that if there are two calls on a floor in any hospital ward where a patient is dying, the call where the person is not likely to be dying very frequently will be answered first, depending on the personalities of the staff people on the floor. Part of that is an ego defence which all of us must engage in, because in some professions within this country we of course are exposed to many people in the process of dying. After a time, you start to believe that you just cannot face yet another time someone who is going through that inevitable process.

Perhaps we need to perhaps consider again, hopefully with this conference under the terms of this motion, the establishment of death trauma units or the hospice program, as known in some of the hospital care units of this country — I believe there is one in operation in Montreal — where specially trained people help people in the process of dying. Again, this takes us into the whole area of the right to die with dignity.

The other area I would briefly touch upon is with regard to the matter of funerals and cemeteries. Obviously this is all part of the process involved in this motion, because the motion is so all-embracing with regard to the issues which should be examined. I think we should give a word of appreciation to funeral directors. That may seem a strange thing to do. The word of appreciation is that most of the time these men and women obviously are taking up a task you would not do. They again also have to involve themselves in ego defence. That is the kind of process whereby they survive, because of this almost daily occurrence of dealing with death, with grief. Nevertheless, in terms of the process not only of senior citizens — but especially with senior citizens — we have to be aware that no undue pressure situations will be allowed to develop in terms of this dying factor for all of us in this nation.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in our seniors we know we have a resource group who have great experience. I think we also know that all members of all parties in

this House have concern for senior citizens and their well-being. With other members who support this motion, I would hope that this congress as proposed would indeed focus on those senior citizens now and that it might help others who might live long enough to make it to that particular stage of their senior majority.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a few comments on this resolution. Unfortunately, coming after the hon. members from Calgary who have just finished speaking, about three-quarters of my material has been used. But I will struggle on just the same.

Before I address myself to the resolution, though, I'd like to point out some interesting comments that I got from a magazine which I think all members of the House would find most interesting. It's called *The Center Magazine*. It's put out by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, and they have their locale in southern California. I can't think of a more pleasant place to sit and dream and study about democratic institutions. [interjection] No, not Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, one of the problems in North America is that we are a youth-oriented society. Unfortunately, this is one of the things we've emulated from the Americans. It's quite valid, because of the tremendous migration from Europe to North America. Now, on a smaller scale, we even see it here in Alberta, a great number of young people moving into our province from all parts of Canada. Unfortunately, though, as these young people come into our society, with mandatory retirement at age 65, we see people who are still quite useful and still feel they have a part to play being arbitrarily removed from our society.

I'd like to comment on an article by Dr. Alex Comfort. Some of you probably remember that gentleman from writing a book on the *Joy of Sex*, but I'd like to point out to you that he also used to be the head of the medical research group on aging at the University College in London. He's also a clinical lecturer in the Department of Psychiatry at Stanford University. So while being an expert on sex, he is obviously an expert in other fields as well. One of his comments, which I think is interesting, is:

... if you prescribe that older citizens must retire at an arbitrary and decreasing age and condemn them to poverty, and if you then repeat often enough that older people are ineducable, unemployable, asexual, unintelligent, and as the Greeks say "a burden to the soil," you will generate some of the problems which the older citizen now faces. It is no wonder that the over-sixty-five group have come in America to resemble an underprivileged minority ...

But this is a minority that, if we live long enough, we are all going to join.

He goes on to say that by the year 2000, over 20 per cent of the people in the state of California will be over 65. But he also goes on to say that they are becoming more militant and more informed, and he says they're not going to have the garbage laid on them that has been laid on them in the past.

One of the comments he makes, which I think is very significant — and this is something, Mr. Speaker, that I would suggest having a congress, a meeting, or whatever is not going to solve — is the problem of loneliness. Loneliness is one of the greatest difficulties



older people face. It's one of the reasons we hear so many older people on phone-in programs, and why they watch so much television. It's one source of communication they have with society. I thought it was interesting yesterday that the Member for Edson, who is a member of the medical profession, mentioned that elderly people cherish their independence. They want to keep their privacy, but it's our responsibility to help them in those areas where they cannot help themselves. He also mentioned that the question of loneliness is already apparent. It's obvious that it's apparent to the members of the medical society, so there's no reason for us to hold a meeting to discuss it; we know the problem is already here.

I'd like to point out that as we proceed into the later stages of our lives we are going to be fortunate, in that we're going to be able to take advantage of modern technology to correct some of the present biases toward people who are now older than ourselves. I should point out, Mr. Speaker, that middle-age is always 10 years older than what you are at present, so you and I are still middle-aged.

Again I'd like to point out that one of the difficulties people run into is the psychology of aging. They're convinced that they're not going to have enough money, that their health is going to be bad, and that they're going to end up with a handicap of some kind or another. Many of us have handicaps right now, Mr. Speaker. I have to wear glasses to drive, and I'm told that pretty soon I'm going to have to wear glasses to read. Yet we don't worry about this; we recognize the disability we have, yet try to minimize it so we can continue to function to our maximum capabilities. I think one of the things we have to be conscious of as we get older is that while you hear a lot of talk about being chronically ill or disabled, it's not as serious as it may seem.

Another point, Mr. Speaker: those coming along now are better off financially than they thought they would be. I accept the fact that there are people concerned about inflation. But a recent study on retirement in Alberta issued by the department of higher education indicated that 80 per cent of the people in the province who were facing retirement were worried about not having enough money, and 20 per cent were worried about having too much time. Yet when retired people were studied, they found that 80 per cent of them did not have a money problem, but 20 per cent didn't know what to do. So the figures were reversed. Unfortunately, those people who had more time than they knew what to do with could only spend it watching TV, which they hated. But there was nothing else they could do. They hadn't trained themselves, as the Member for Calgary Millican said. Their lives had been spent in such endeavors that they were unable to suddenly use the spare time they had.

Mr. Speaker, on that one point, I would like to point out to all members here that statistically right now the chances that you will not end up in a nursing home are 19:1; the chances are 19:1 that you're going to be mentally alert, involved, and active, and you're not going to be a vegetable in custodial care somewhere when you come to the end of your days.

Finally, on this magazine, I have one other item I'd like to mention. Maggie Kuhn, at age 69, organized a group in America called the Gray Panthers. Again, Gray Panther power hit on the same things about mandatory retirement, lack of money, loneliness, and

all the rest of it. But one of things they did mention is that if you worked at a routine job all your life, and it's damned drudgery, then you're glad to be able to retire at 65. You've had enough of it and you want to get away from it; you want to sit and watch the grass grow, or whatever. Likewise, these same people said that there are lots of opportunities when you retire.

She said — and my colleagues in the medical profession will probably take umbrage at this — that one of the concerns in America is that people have hearing problems when they get older. They have to buy hearing appliances. But who looks after supplying these? It's not the physicians. They virtually abandon the deaf to the hearing aid dealers. And who is making the money? The dealers. They are profiting from the weakness of old people. Mr. Speaker, this is in the United States of America, not in Canada.

DR. PAPROSKI: Hear, hear. In Alberta it's different.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, dealing with the congress: looking at a dictionary, a congress is a coming together and meeting, a formal meeting of delegates for discussion and action, or a supreme legislative body in a nation, particularly in republics. Mr. Speaker, I ask you, do we need a congress? Do we need a series of meetings, of discussions, of hearings? Do we need to listen to lobby groups? We've already had all this, Mr. Speaker.

I recall last year, I believe it was, when the gallery was full of people and the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo got up and gave an impassioned speech on home care. The House was rocking with applause. Now the hon. member is suggesting that perhaps we should go through that again. I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that we don't have to. What we have to do is read the report of the Provincial Senior Citizens Advisory Council, look at their recommendations, and be prepared to act on their recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to deal with a few of their recommendations which I think are important. I'd like to point out some of the problems we face.

Recommendation Number Three suggests that in planning programs they should "use qualified seniors in the planning, development, and instruction." I couldn't agree more.

Mr. Speaker, in items six and seven they say we should be giving money to communities "to develop home maintenance services for seniors based on a fee for service." Again, Mr. Speaker, it's money.

Recommendation Number Seven: there should be "a rental assistance program as an alternative to the various forms of subsidized housing for seniors." Again, it's money. Mr. Speaker, I think this is what we have to concern ourselves with.

Recommendation Number Eight, Mr. Speaker, and unfortunately I feel a certain bias of bureaucracy here. I get a little annoyed that they are not conscious of the fact that we live in a free-enterprise society. A lot of these things are being done in the community now and, for heaven's sake, we don't have to create government departments or agencies to do some of the things they recommend. For example, in Recommendation Eight the council recommends

that the Alberta Housing Corporation continue its construction of apartment . . . units and . . . devel-

op expertise in the design, construction, and management. . . . Furthermore, Council recommends that A.H.C. be prepared to provide consulting services to private bodies managing such projects.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that private industry in the province of Alberta well knows how to manage apartments, and before we start hiring people in government agencies I'd suggest you consult the private sector, which is doing a fine job in this field.

Going back to the recommendations, Number Ten "recommends that the Minister implement an indexing of the Alberta Assured Income Plan." On this note, I'm sorry the hon. Member for Little Bow isn't here. We do index payments to the elderly. But again, Mr. Speaker, it's money.

The next item I'd like to comment on, Mr. Speaker, is Recommendation Number Eleven, on home care. It talks about "greater flexibility for the development of home care"; which I support; "consumer participation on home care"; and the strengthening of surveillance services. I recall when I was an alderman in the city of Calgary . . . It really makes me laugh — the member isn't here. He was telling us we didn't need a central agency for our Meals on Wheels program, that we should let it be run out of the Y, and the fire department should deliver the meals. The Meals on Wheels volunteers could disappear as far as he was concerned. Unfortunately, the hon. Member for Little Bow is not here. He was giving us a great lecture today on how unresponsive, arrogant, and cold we are. I always like to remind him of that particular meeting. It happened in July 1971, and the situation was resolved in August 1971.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to just touch on another article, *Living Arrangements of Older People in Alberta*, produced by Mary Engelmann, director of the Senior Citizens Bureau, and Norma Harper, a research assistant. I'd like to mention a couple of items in there, Mr. Speaker. One is on living alone: "A fairly high proportion of senior citizens were living alone, 22 percent." Well, that's a problem. What are we going to do about it? Are we going to set up marriage bureaus? You know, we've got to face the facts of life, Mr. Speaker.

The other thing this report says:

Current knowledge emphasizes that care for the elderly should be family and community oriented, with an attempt to keep them in their own homes and communities wherever possible.

The report also points out that the great majority of people in Alberta are in such situations. But I think here is the important thing:

Prevention of unnecessary dependence is essential. This can be achieved by guarding against excessive service and ensuring that dependency needs are met only to the point that independence is enhanced.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I was chairman of the Metropolitan Calgary Foundation, and for several years I was a member of the board which houses senior citizens in Calgary. I think it has been mentioned earlier that many people like a protective environment. They've been used to one all their lives. They're the kind of people who have been told where to go, what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. When age 65 comes and they can't look after their own homes, they can go into those kinds of facilities and be happy there. But there are several thousand people who look after them-

selves, are on their own, and I think we should try to reinforce whatever we can to keep them in that situation.

We should look at the materials we have available in our department, and we should be prepared to act on them. The last thing we need is another conference to discuss the problems of the aging.

Thank you.

MR. OMAN: Mr. Speaker, I suppose that coming from another level of government into this level, one inevitably has a tendency to make comparisons. I notice that a number of speakers have given accolades to you, and I am sure they are richly and well deserved. I should simply like to pass on that from the arena in which I have operated, in which the Chair has not been particularly concerned with impartiality, but maybe more with manipulation, I have appreciated the sense of fairness you bring to this council and to the sense of order which is here.

I don't know if this is my maiden speech or not. I really hadn't prepared to give one, but this is a subject which is pretty close to my heart and also close to my constituency, so in fact that's what this will be. I'd like to indicate, of course, that Calgary North Hill, which is my constituency, is located in Alberta's largest and finest city. That's all right, you can swallow again. [laughter]

If you are coming through our city on Highway No. 1, which of course is Canada's number one route by its very name and zips through the city in freeway style — there was something there for the Minister of Transportation — as you follow from the east and look to the right as you go through the city, I'm sure you'll be enthralled with my constituency, for that's where it is. Don't be looking too much to the right so that you have an accident, because we don't want to have extra expense for ambulance service.

Nevertheless, it's a well-established community; salt-of-the-earth people, middle income, generally speaking. When I said this topic was particularly adaptable to my constituency, it's because my constituents are somewhere in the area of 30 per cent to 40 per cent senior citizens. Also, by its very nature and provision, that constituency takes care of its senior citizens. There are at least four large institutions in my constituency which serve the senior citizens exclusively, one of them being Bethany Care Centre, operated by the government in conjunction with the Lutheran Church; another being Sunset Lodge, operated in the same manner by the Salvation Army. The Fanning Extended Care Centre was opened just recently, as you know. Then, of course, I think one of the finest institutions for seniors in Calgary is the Confederation Park senior citizens' lodge and drop-in centre. Plans are now under way to construct another 107 units there. I met with some of the people yesterday morning with regard to some of the plans concerning that.

Incidentally, I believe the Member for Little Bow indicated that only the federal government was involved in operation of drop-in centres. That is not true. Our government has both funded and is very much involved particularly in the continuing operating costs of that one at least, and I think that's true across the province.

While talking about these institutions, I should like to give credit where credit is due. For my predecessor, Mr. Roy Farran, knew what it was to scratch for his

constituency and certainly did a lot in bringing some of these institutions to fruition in my constituency. I think that ought to be a matter of record.

Incidentally, one more thing about my constituency is that it's an area in transition. While it's well established and there aren't too many problems in it right at this moment, of course many of those senior citizens are either passing on or moving into the institutions, and that brings in a newer generation, which has all kinds of implications: school closures, new families moving in. One of the real rewards of door-knocking is that you get a sense of your community that you couldn't any other way. I noticed on some of those 25-foot lots, for instance, new houses are going up with good styles, good architecture, much refurbishing, adding on, and rebuilding. So a lot of this community is coming alive.

Let me move on, however, to the matter of senior citizens. Not too long ago, someone told me there were three characteristics of old age. The first one was loss of memory. For the life of me I can't remember what the other two were. I suppose that indicates that I am beginning to approach middle age. As I look around this Assembly, certainly various ages are represented. But my own white hair indicates that the senior citizen or the golden years aren't that far away. Maybe they should be called the snow white years.

Now it's easy, I think, to make pious platitudes, particularly when you're talking about senior citizens. And it's very popular these days, because they're an increasing segment of our society, and certainly their vote means a lot. But I think that any society that forgets its elders and doesn't allow them the provision to live out their last years in dignity is by the very act being judged as at once forgetful and ungrateful.

As I look at the record of this government, I have to say just entering into it that it's admirable, has basically been compassionate, and that as I've gone around from door to door I've found that by and large our senior citizens are happy people. I'll never forget knocking at the door and finding an elderly lady who was 89 years old answering. She came with some feebleness of body, but with a mind that was bright and crisp as cool, fresh-picked lettuce. With that shine, she said, Mr. Oman, I thank God every day that I live in Alberta. And she meant it. I think she'd even have said that if she'd lived in Edmonton, quite frankly. [laughter]

Incidentally, another door I knocked on was a senior citizen who had moved from my colleague's constituency in Millican/Ogden up to the North Hill. I asked her how she liked it. And she said, "Well, I do like it, but I find that the air is just a little different." I was reminded of David Carter's aromatics, and I said, "Why?" "Well", she said, "the air just doesn't have quite the same body to it up here as it did down in that other area."

I'll not go into a litany of the works the province has done for our senior citizens. I think you're aware of them. Some of the things that I think have come closest to the needs and have been appreciated most are the home care, the repair program for their homes. For those senior citizens in my constituency largely still live in their own homes. They will be moving out shortly, when they become too feeble to do so. Meals on Wheels has been another one that's been a real godsend for many of them. Now I suppose a government that has done such a superb job might tend to

rest on its laurels at this point and say, well, we've done enough and haven't anything more to do. I don't think we can take that position or fall into that kind of temptation, for I still do hear certain areas of concerns.

I wasn't able to get all the speeches this afternoon, but some areas continue to need monitoring. For that reason the purpose of the motion before us needs to be listened to. There is, as we're all aware I think, the continuing fact of inflation and its impact on those of us whose incomes are supposed to be increasing. Certainly those with fixed incomes have some real problems. Senior citizens who have a substantial pension from their jobs, as well as the Canada Pension, generally speaking are getting along rather well. But again, I think we need to look into those situations where two people are living on one pension because only one has reached that age, both with regard to the federal provisions and our own. Certainly there are some areas of difficulty for one person who is trying to keep up a home on one pension.

Another concern I am hearing a number of times is the rise in utility rates, which has tended to be far beyond the regular inflation rate. I recognize that we as a provincial government don't have direct control over those, but I think we have a direct responsibility to be concerned about them.

I've heard again about the matter of doctors balance billing senior citizens. That particular area, as I understand, is not covered in our medical provisions for senior citizens. There have been some areas with regard to rent increases, although by and large I think we have done very well in housing for our senior citizens.

Well, we come down I suppose to the matter of decision-making on this particular resolution. I certainly support the purpose and the spirit of my colleague's resolution. Before the vote, I would like to hear finally from the minister in this area as to whether sufficient agencies or methods are set up whereby an adequate monitoring process is going on, because I'm not interested in piling on organizations or agencies upon organizations and agencies just for the sake of seeing them done.

So to summarize very briefly, Mr. Speaker, I say we can take hats off to this government with good reason, because it has done well by its senior citizens. There is not, however, room for complacency. I say hats off to the past, coats off to the future.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to participate in the debate of the resolution. First of all I'd like to commend the member who introduced it. It reaffirms the faith in some of us who are serving our second or longer terms that after each election the people of Alberta, in their wisdom, certainly send to the highest court in the province of Alberta some extremely talented people who are concerned about issues of the day, and this resolution is no exception.

I was taken with the fact that the previous five speakers have all come from Calgary. I don't know whether that's part of an aging process with those people. However, the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill did mention some of the basic differences between the Chamber here and the Calgary city council. Far be it from me to have the temerity to comment on that, except I would note on the one hand that Calgary North Hill has 40 per cent senior citizens and Calgary North West has 3 per cent, which tells us something

about the sort of planning the city of Calgary does for its citizens.

We have in the province, Mr. Speaker, 8 per cent of Canada's people. The senior citizens number just about the same proportion. I understand we have about 160,000. Those of us who will be debating this resolution — I hope there are many from rural Alberta. For example, Lethbridge city has 50 per cent more senior citizens than the provincial average. Therefore I think the problems there are somewhat unique to that community.

I believe senior citizens are extremely unique kinds of people, and perhaps they, above others, would fall into the area of optimists. Certainly in my experience I have found them to be extremely helpful, very interested in issues of the day, and I would classify them as optimists. Perhaps a definition of an optimist could really be an 80-year-old man who marries a 21-year-old youngster and then buys a home near an elementary school. I believe essentially that aging and elderly people display an attitude probably not found with the younger generation. The statement that we're all familiar with, that you're only as old as you feel, particularly mentally, is probably truer with regard to aging than anywhere else.

The Member for Calgary McCall — and I think, Mr. Speaker, with respect, many of the points I was going to refer to have been covered by other members — very accurately pointed out that many famous people of the world really didn't become famous until they were senior citizens. I would think the senior citizen primarily wants to feel wanted; he wants to feel useful.

The Member for Little Bow tried in his normal way to suggest that we have a government that, although it has an overwhelming majority, hasn't attempted in some way to play a very meaningful role in helping or assisting senior citizens live out their lives in dignity. Well, he's totally wrong. One only has to look at the number of programs offered in Alberta, with a price tag on them, ranging from the health end to the housing situation.

I recall in the last House, Mr. Speaker, the member from the old constituency of Hanna-Oyen telling us something about the attitudes of senior citizens when he related a story of a rancher from up in the hills who went into a senior citizens' lodge in Oyen. He was found missing one day — he wasn't found; he was missing one day. There was great consternation, and it took several days and several police officers to locate him. Sure enough, he was found up in the hills in his little cabin where he had spent, heaven knows, 30, 40, 50 years.

MR. KROEGER: There aren't any hills, John.

MR. GOGO: Anything five feet above sea level in that country is a hill.

When he was picked up and asked why he had run away from the home, this 80-year-old fellow said, well, I just couldn't take it. The place was full of old people. I think it tells you something about the attitudes of certain senior citizens, particularly in Alberta. I think perhaps they're unique.

I recall in the recent election campaign a lady in Lethbridge, 103 years of age, requested that she be able to sign the nomination papers of the Conservative candidate. I had the good fortune to be that Conservative candidate. She did this out of gratitude for the

senior citizen home improvement program that allowed her, with her meagre income, to fix her home in such a way that she could remain in her home and not go into a public institution. One of the campaign workers who was involved with me, a Mr. Stead, was 84. He was a next-door neighbor and would assist her with various chores. He took me over, along with this fellow who was a commissioner, in order that she may sign the nomination paper. This 84-year-old didn't quite think the 103-year-old was so capable. He began to explain what the nomination form was. She said, just a minute, sonny. I can manage it on my own. I think that's perhaps indicative of some of the attitudes of our senior citizens.

I was at a meeting recently in Lethbridge with the Minister responsible for Native Affairs and the Minister responsible for Culture. At noon, after the meeting, we sat down in a restaurant to have lunch. It was very dark in there. You had great difficulty reading, because the lights were so dim. It's indicative in those places that have so-so food and extremely high prices, I think. She was having difficulty reading the menu because it was so dark. This senior citizen — I don't know how old she was, certainly over 65 — looked at the menu and, having some difficulty, quick as a whip she remarked, I knew I should have gone to night school. If you think a minute about that, Mr. Speaker, that is a pretty significant observation for a senior citizen to make.

I'd like to comment, Mr. Speaker, about some of the characteristics we find in senior citizens, the ones that stand out to me. First of all, I find they're tremendously loyal. They're the ones who feel very strongly about things like patriotism. They're the ones who bought war bonds to win the war back in 1940. You know the ones I mean, the ones they paid \$100 for that will buy something like \$25 worth of goods. Those kinds of people who have been systematically — and this was reflected by the Member for Calgary North Hill, in terms of inflation; people who have little choice. They can't turn their lives back to where they were. They can't recoup the ravages inflation has placed upon their savings, and they can't go back to work. That would imply, I think, some role that people who print money in this country should have responsibility for.

They're very proud people. They're fiercely independent, as was pointed out earlier by the Member for Calgary Millican. They believe in the work ethic. The remark has been made many times: it's not difficult to find people to do a day's work, if you're prepared to pay a week's wages. They're not that kind of people. They're people who, I believe, have come out of a generation that realized and respected a day's work for a day's wages. They want to help themselves. Sometimes they're not able to help themselves, but they want very much to be able to.

The Member for Little Bow made reference earlier to government priorities with regard to health care and hospitals. I think we should be cognizant of the fact that senior citizens utilize the health delivery mechanism about two and a half times more than anybody else, because they need it. I also suggest it's there. If any senior citizen in this province is not allowed into a hospital when seriously ill, surely that's not the fault of the hospital. That's the fault of the physician. Because if any physician in this province declares an emergency on a patient, that patient must be admitted. So I would take exception to that comment by the Member for

Little Bow.

In terms of the housing program, I think no other province in Canada has the record this province has through the lodge program, through the self-contained program. Reference was made by the Member for Spirit River-Fairview about raising the income level from 25 to 30 per cent. I suggest to you that in Alberta, in this day and age, when the rent for new or relatively new self-contained senior citizen accommodation is \$100 a month, where the government of the day, along with the federal government, subsidizes each suite on average by about \$255 in Lethbridge, I don't think the rent is high. So we shouldn't get carried away in terms of 30 per cent of income. We should look on the one hand at the guaranteed income of Alberta senior citizens at \$349.50 a month and then 30 per cent of that. I would suggest to you that the number of senior citizens in Alberta who would dearly love to be in that accommodation, if it were available, are critical that it's only 30 per cent, because they would happily pay more.

Reference was also made to the number of senior citizens prepared to help themselves — the tremendous growth in the drop-in centres in Alberta. Today in Alberta over 400 senior citizen organizations are operating. If anybody is going to have the opportunity to debate what should or should not be done for senior citizens, they should be the number one people, obviously, because they are the ones most concerned.

The Member for Spirit River-Fairview also made reference to Strathcona House. He felt the senior citizens there certainly should have an opportunity to contribute to a congress, if it were convenient. He may or may not be aware that the Minister of Transportation also lives there. So I would assume the Minister of Transportation would be allowed that. I would also hope that come July 18 of this year ...

MR. KROEGER: Explain that.

MR. GOGO: I should point out that Strathcona House is a place not noted for its occupants being senior citizens, Mr. Speaker, but indeed as a residence noted for housing only the very wealthy in the province. [laughter]

I would also think, Mr. Speaker, that come July 18, 1979, you yourself, sir, on that very famous day, would also be in a position to contribute as a result of becoming a member of that austere group.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude with some of the concerns and problems I perceive with our senior citizens. On one hand, it's extremely exciting that we have a housing program that can accommodate all these senior citizens. But I suggest to you a point that was brought out by the Member for Calgary McKnight and the Member for Calgary Millican; that is, the problem of loneliness.

I personally know many senior citizens in self-contained suites who really aren't eating properly. At most, they'll have maybe a tin of soup and an egg a

day. Because their health wouldn't enable them to stay, they've been transformed from the community in which they've spent heaven knows how many years into these beautiful self-contained suites. But if you look at the life styles they're experiencing behind those closed doors, in many cases those fridges and stoves are really not used. They try to subsist on very little nutritious food. I suggest that's a problem that should be looked at.

I've mentioned inflation. The Member for Calgary Millican mentioned the dedication of the funeral director or the local boxer, however you want to define that chap who looks after the remains. Because senior citizens are proud, I suggest that they don't want other people to have to worry about them, so a concern they have is the final expenses when they're gone. That's a very real concern and a difficult one for us to appreciate. As a result, they get involved in prepaid funerals and prepaid monuments. Maybe that area could also be looked at, at that time.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think that we as a government have provided as much or more and, as I say, there are still problems. Gerontology has to be a coming problem in this province. I think we have one and at the most two specialists in geriatrics, physicians who study the diseases and problems of the aged. I don't know how many there would be in the nursing profession. I suggest it's an area that has to be addressed and should be addressed soon. Perhaps the fact that we have three physicians as members of this Assembly — they too would participate in terms of what ...

AN HON. MEMBER: Four.

MR. GOGO: Four, plus another doctor. Thank you. Perhaps they too could find time to assist other members of the House in resolving this.

In closing, I'm pleased that the member has sponsored the resolution. I believe it's exciting and timely. Unlike the Member for Calgary McKnight, I don't think you simply go back to the dusty shelves and extract studies that have been done. To me, this is an issue concerning 8 per cent of Alberta's people, perhaps 160,000 Albertans. It's a very real issue. If we address it today, as we approach the '80s, Mr. Speaker, I submit that the '80s and '90s will be extremely exciting times for the senior citizens in Alberta.

Thank you very much.

MR. MAGEE: In view of the hour, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Member for Red Deer, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:25 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]

