

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Thursday, June 28, 1979 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to indicate now that I will be asking for unanimous leave to designate the hour in the afternoon for government business next Tuesday.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 226

The Farmland Protection Act

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 226, The Farmland Protection Act. The basic purpose of the Act is to establish a land commission and set out certain procedures that have to be followed before agricultural land is taken out of production.

[Leave granted; Bill 226 read a first time]

Bill 30

The Health Occupations Act

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, The Health Occupations Act. This Bill will provide for the registration of people working in certain health occupations.

[Leave granted; Bill 30 read a first time]

Bill 31

The Architects Act, 1979

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 31, The Architects Act, 1979. Along with Bill 30, just introduced by my colleague, this Bill is the first step in the implementation of the policy on professions and occupations which was tabled in this Assembly on May 16, 1978.

This proposed legislation is designed to provide a greater degree of public protection by ensuring quality standards and outlining professional registration and complaint procedures. In addition, it will provide architects with an exclusive field of practice.

Throughout the drafting of this legislation there's been a high degree of co-operation and consultation with the architects' association.

[Leave granted; Bill 31 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to table the kind and gracious message of appreciation to the members of the Assembly from His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

I know that when we receive a formal message from His Honour, we stand to hear it. But in regard to this message, I'm sure His Honour would prefer that it be received more informally. Therefore I'll be filing it and making copies available to all members of the Assembly.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Department of
Housing and Public Works

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to announce today the commencement of the new Alberta pioneers' repair program, effective July 1, 1979.

Brochures and application forms will be available for eligible senior citizen home-owners to pick up at participating financial institutions during the first week of July.

The new program is directed at helping our senior citizens keep their homes in good repair, thereby helping them remain in their own homes as long as possible. Grants of up to \$2,000 will be provided to senior citizen home-owners whose total household income is under \$12,000. Specifically, \$2,000 grants will be available to seniors whose income is under \$9,000, \$1,500 to seniors whose income is between \$9,000 and \$10,500, and \$1,000 to seniors whose income is between \$10,500 and \$12,000.

The funds will be deposited in the participating financial institution of the senior citizen's choice and may be withdrawn on the presentation of paid material bills and approved-for-payment bills that contain labor components.

The senior citizen will have five years from the date of approval to spend the funds. Only one grant per household is eligible. Applicants who previously received a grant under the senior citizen home improvement program are eligible, provided they still meet the eligibility criteria. Eligible senior citizens must be at least 65 years of age and must have been Alberta residents for at least one year.

Generally all repairs or alterations to the exterior or interior of a home or garage are eligible repairs. Security devices such as burglar alarms, bolt locks, and fire extinguishers are being emphasized to help maintain the security and safety of a senior citizen.

Improvements to yard items such as sidewalks, fences, driveways, porches, ramps, and patios are also eligible. Our seniors will be pleased to hear that the purchase or repair of stoves, refrigerators, washers, and dryers are included as additional items in the program.

Mr. Speaker, the senior citizen home improvement program has helped over 37,000 of our senior citizen households maintain their own homes. The new Alberta pioneers' repair program is expected to help over 55,000 seniors repair their homes. I'm certain all members of the Legislature will be enthused about this announcement today, as it affects all our senior citizens and improves the neighborhoods in which they live.

Copies of the brochure are being distributed to every member.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Students' Financial Aid

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower and ask if he'd explain to the Assembly why there's been a two-year delay in implementing the changes in The Students Finance Act which were promised to Alberta students by the Premier in March 1978, when the [students] met the government and Members of the Legislative Assembly on the front steps of the Legislature Building.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, as hon. members are aware, following the announcement by the Premier a task force was established under the chairmanship of Mr. Ron Grantham. That report was made available to members of the Assembly and to the public in December last year.

My predecessor announced that responses to the various recommendations would be received by the department until May 31, 1979. Some 21 or 22 recommendations have been received and are now being reviewed by me and departmental officials, in particular with regard to the recommendations respecting student finances — not the matter of student fee levels at this stage, because no new student fees that have not already been announced will be announced this fall.

So that matter is under very active consideration at present. The recommendations may result in some changes in the Students Finance Board and policies in this province.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the preamble of the question, I'd like to take notice of the alleged timetable referred to by the Leader of the Opposition in his question.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question either to the Premier or to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. What progress has been made in the area raised by the students: requiring financial assistance from parents before students could receive a loan?

If I might be permitted a word of explanation, the suggestion had been made by the students for age of independence of 18 years as opposed to 21 years.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition is aware, one of the main recommendations of the report by Mr. Grantham, which I referred to earlier, is to eliminate the necessity for parental consent for students over 18 years of age. There have been many responses with regard to that particular recommendation, which are being reviewed at the present time. Of course that is something we'll have to address, not only from the point of view of the desirability or otherwise of making changes, but as to the implications it might have with respect to the costs.

If I may supplement my earlier answer, I would suggest to the hon. leader's memory that it was just over a year ago that the demonstration took place on

the steps of the Legislature, and not as long ago as indicated in the preamble.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. I accept the point made by the minister, but would point out that unless changes are made very quickly there will in fact be no changes for two academic years.

My supplementary question to the minister is: since the visit — that's a word we've been using here quite often — to the Legislature grounds by the students, what changes have been made in the student assistance program, if any?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think I should point out that there have been no major overhauls. I think it would be inappropriate to do that, in view of the fact that we have asked for extensive public review and representation, which went into the task force report, and likewise with respect to responses to the recommendations.

I think I should point out that [from] my review of the Students Finance Board and its operations, the policies we have in effect in Alberta at the present time are by far the most generous of any province in Canada. I would also point out to hon. members of this Assembly that in every other province there are the same requirements as to eligibility with respect to the age of majority as are in effect in Alberta. It relates to the Canada student loan program as well. Whether or not we are prepared to vacate the contribution received under the Canadian plan is a very real concern in addressing this particular problem.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just one last supplementary question to the minister. Why has the minister not given the University of Alberta Students' Union and the Federation of Alberta Students a date for a meeting to discuss a number of these proposed changes in student assistance, despite several requests for a meeting from the two groups?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have met with students' council representatives at the University of Alberta and with the Federation of Alberta Students, at my request. Indeed, in my visits to the 21 institutions prior to the opening of this session in May, I met with representatives of every students' council group within the system of advanced education. On each of those occasions we discussed this very question. I advised the groups involved that when I was prepared to make recommendations to my colleagues in cabinet and caucus and to this Assembly, I would be able to meet with them again. Within the relatively short period during which the House has been in session, I have not had the opportunity to finalize or formulate the policy recommendations in an appropriate form to make to my colleagues.

I wish to point out, Mr. Speaker, that as soon as that is done I will be holding meetings with the groups in question. During my term as Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, I look forward to open communication with all student groups in the province of Alberta.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, will the minister indicate to the Assembly that he will meet with students

from the Federation of Alberta Students and representatives from the University of Alberta Students' Union prior to making recommendations to his colleagues in caucus and cabinet and to the Assembly?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, not necessarily. I think indeed it would be appropriate to discuss the proposals with my colleagues before doing so with the groups in question. But I certainly intend to meet with them at the earliest opportunity. To me it would seem inappropriate to go into meetings with the groups in question without having received policy endorsement of any proposals from members supporting the government side of this House.

Student Quotas

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. Since the minister did visit the various universities in Alberta, could he advise the House if any new quotas will be imposed in certain faculties?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the question of quotas is a matter for determination by the institutions. The hon. Leader of the Opposition and I had a discussion on that subject during the estimates of the department. To my knowledge, no new quotas are planned by any of the institutions. I should point out that in my visits to the 21 various institutions prior to the opening of the session, and to two private colleges since the session commenced, my meetings with the students have been very favorable. Indeed, I would suggest we have established good lines of communication. With regard to the subject of quotas, that was not raised by student groups in any significant way.

I should point out that in addition to the universities there are technical institutions, vocational institutions, and public and private colleges which will be affected by the decisions with respect to student finances.

Students' Financial Aid (continued)

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. The minister's responses remind me of an old phrase coined by the Premier in 1970 . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. R. SPEAKER: . . . about party over people.

MR. R. CLARK: Well done.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: will the changes be made so that the 1979-80 student body has access to those changes and will benefit therefrom?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the intent of the question; that is, to help me clarify the position I've already stated on many occasions. If we are going to make the changes effective for the coming school year, which will commence in early September, it will be necessary to have those changes brought in at a very early date. I'm working in a very tight time frame, and I appreciate the opportunity given to me by the Member for Little Bow to clarify

that position.

If we're not able to put any changes into place within a very short period of time, I will advise student organizations, universities, and anyone else interested that we will not be proceeding, and end the uncertainty, which is there. But certainly I have not yet been able to finalize a position within the month available to review these various recommendations.

Annexation Hearings

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. It's a follow-up from yesterday, on the Local Authorities Board hearings as far as the city of Edmonton is concerned.

Is the minister in a position to indicate to the Assembly what decision has been made with regard to individuals who feel they will be affected by the proposed annexation by the city of Edmonton? What arrangements will be made for individuals to make their representations before the Local Authorities Board?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I think I indicated yesterday that no decisions have been made with regard to that matter. That will be discussed with the chairman of the panel which will hear the Edmonton application, and I would not want to prejudge the outcome of those discussions.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. I raise the question in light of annexation hearings held in Red Deer, where individuals whose land wasn't being annexed but was adjacent to land proposed to be annexed to the city of Red Deer were not permitted an opportunity to appear before the board. So I ask the minister if he'll take that matter into consideration in his discussions with the chairman of the panel that will hear the Edmonton annexation thing, and urge the chairman to make it possible for individuals who will be adjacent to land affected or feel they will be indirectly affected to be able at least to make their presentations to the Local Authorities Board panel.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it's reasonable that matters of that nature be taken under consideration by the chairman, and that will be done.

Hazardous Wastes — Proposed Plant

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Environment and ask whether the department has done a review of the hazardous waste treatment and disposal plant proposed for Fort Saskatchewan; a plant, as I understand it, that will not only utilize the hazardous waste in the Fort Saskatchewan area but will in fact look after the problem for the entire area of western Canada, as well as possibly part of the United States.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, that particular plant was raised at the recent conference held by environment ministers in British Columbia, and expression was made by Alberta Environment with regard to the kind of support Alberta might receive in funding and constructing such a plant. Naturally no settlement was made at that time. These discussions are continuing.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In view of the fact that, as I understand it, the environmental impact assessment is virtually complete and a land assembly program is being executed, is the minister in a position to outline to the Assembly what steps the department proposes to take, if any, to permit some form of public input before the plant is constructed, particularly by people in the Fort Saskatchewan area?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, one of the things I flagged at the time we discussed the proposal put forth by Alberta several years ago was the concern that if it became broader than within the confines of Alberta, we address ourselves to the concern that might be expressed about movement of hazardous chemicals across borders and into Alberta. As I say, I placed that before the group across Canada and pointed out that the province was prepared to assist in the construction of such a plant. It seems reasonable then to assume that if such a project is proceeded with we will certainly make it possible for the people in the general area to have input into its construction.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In asking the question, I point out again that the land assembly for this project is virtually complete, as is the environmental impact assessment. That being the case, can the hon. minister be a little more specific in answering the question of the form public input might take? Would the government be prepared to ask the Environment Council of Alberta to conduct the hearings?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I take note of the submission of that route by the Member for Spirit River-Fairview. We could probably go other routes with regard to hearings and presentations, but at this time I would say this is really at the proposal stage. I think we have to address ourselves to a lot of issues out there, and certainly it will be my responsibility to undertake public input into such a plant.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to either the Minister of Economic Development or the Minister of Transportation. What studies is the government taking with respect to the specific problems of transportation of hazardous chemicals from all over western Canada to such a waste disposal plant? It's my understanding that this plant will service everything from Ontario west, and could at some point even service the disposal of hazardous wastes from parts of the northern United States.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I think that has to be looked at in the same context as other hazardous materials, whether they're coming or going, for disposal or for use. As I said earlier in the session, I hope to file with the Legislature a paper relative to what has been done and that ongoing situation.

I have already contacted the federal government relative to their position on the former Bill, which I think also deals with that matter. We expect to hear from them in the next few weeks on the position of the new government and how soon they might move ahead with that legislation.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question either to the hon. Minister of Economic Development or the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. In view of the land assembly taking place by the promoter — Kinetic Contaminants Canada Ltd. is my understanding of the firm's name — is it the position of the government of Alberta at this stage to encourage the location of this type of hazardous waste disposal plant in the Fort Saskatchewan area with a mandate somewhat larger than the hazardous waste in Fort Saskatchewan; indeed, one that would look after the needs of a large part of Canada?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member could confirm. Did he mean to direct that question to the Minister of Environment? He said the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, but I presume he meant the Minister of Environment.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, the question was to either the Minister of Economic Development or the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. But perhaps I could direct it to the hon. Premier, and he could direct it to whichever minister is in a position to answer.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is creating further confusion, if he wanted to involve the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Perhaps the Minister of Economic Development can respond.

DR. HORNER: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, in this case it would be the Ministry of Environment, relative to the assembly of land. So I pass it on to my colleague in Environment.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member could rephrase his question. I've forgotten what it was. [laughter]

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, the question is whether or not the government of Alberta is encouraging the location of this type of facility in the Fort Saskatchewan area, which does more than simply look after the dangerous chemicals in that location of Alberta but in fact has a broader market, if you like, of the bulk of Canada and even part of the United States. Has there been any encouragement by the government of Alberta, through the Department of Environment or the Department of Economic Development, to locate that type of enterprise in the Fort Saskatchewan area?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I think initially Kinetic Contaminants Canada Ltd. made a proposal to Environment, and it has been discussed by the prairie provinces. I think northern Ontario and parts of the United States were interested.

One has to remember that we have to have central points for disposal of some of the more hazardous waste products, and at the present time some of our hazardous waste products are being transferred out of Alberta for disposal, in this case to the United States. The United States has recently taken the position that they do not wish this to continue, and therefore we have initiated dialogue in our own country to see if we could arrive at some acceptable location for proper disposal of these by-product wastes at some central point. I emphasize proper disposal.

In the process of dialogue, Kinetics has arrived at a location. We think dialogue should continue with our sister provinces as to what we in Alberta can do to assist in this disposal, keeping in mind that any kind of disposal plant will be confined to the strictest disposal requirements that can be laid down.

As I say, the proposal is there. There has been no commitment or final decision with regard to this particular proposal on the part of Alberta, and that dialogue is continuing at this time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, one further supplementary question to the minister, for clarification. In view of the fact that land assembly is already taking place, did the government of Alberta give Kinetic the indication of support or at least encourage the company to reach the conclusion that the site in Fort Saskatchewan would be acceptable to the Alberta government?

MR. COOKSON: I can't comment on the position of the land assembly, Mr. Speaker, but if Kinetic itself can come up with the strict requirements that will be laid down by the Alberta Department of Environment, we would certainly be prepared to look at the concept.

MR. COOK: A supplementary question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Could he indicate to the House whether or not the affected town of Fort Saskatchewan would also be involved in the approval of such a plant, and whether they would also set down restrictions and requirements?

MR. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member asking whether this is the present state of the law, or is he seeking some information on an aspect of government policy?

MR. NOTLEY: Check the regulations, Rollie.

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, I might be advised to rephrase my question. Would it be the intent of the government to refer such a decision to the local authorities concerned, so they might have some input on the siting of such a plant?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I believe that in general the municipalities work very closely with the Department of Environment when it comes to matters such as have been raised in the Legislature today. Indeed, there is always consultation through subdivision and the process of permits issued for developments. I don't believe a municipality has the right to refuse an application, based on environmental considerations. But certainly from my point of view there has always been good co-operation between the Department of Environment and municipal authorities in that regard.

Home Care for the Aged

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. It arises from the ministerial statement this afternoon by the Minister of Housing and Public Works, relative to the pioneer home repair program. This question is specifically to do with home care.

I wonder if the minister could advise the House whether he is giving consideration to expanding the present home care program from a strict health care approach to include home help: helping with chores,

storm windows, shovelling sidewalks, and whatnot, so seniors will be able to retain the use of their homes which are going to be repaired so well under the new government program?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, when the program was introduced by my predecessor about a year or a year and a half ago, that was one of the considerations which obviously was addressed. It was felt, and I think very properly so, that the appropriate approach in this very important area of home care was to develop a program and to do it well. Therefore the decision was made that we should begin with a particular level and, associating that with the medical needs of individuals, work through local health units and boards of health in the cities, and allow the administration, the delivery, to be on a local basis rather than through the provincial department.

I think it's important to point out that in the current fiscal year the increased budgets of the health units across the province range from between 24 and 38 per cent . . .

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, the Chair is having increasing difficulty relating the answer to the question.

MR. BOGLE: All right, Mr. Speaker, I'll attempt to come directly to the point. Through the preventive social services program, ancillary home care types of ventures like Meals on Wheels and the like may be offered. But that is not through the home care program proper.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I appreciate that it is not through the home care program, and that really is my question. Is it the intention of the government to expand the program into these home help areas in the near future?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, surely an increase of between 24 and 38 per cent in budget is a significant expansion in itself. So the key point is that we'd better ensure that what we're doing now is being done properly across the province before we look at expanding into another area of home care.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Has your department conducted any study as to the substantial savings that may result from expanding into the home help area rather than having folks forced to go into nursing homes when they choose not to?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, there has been considerable input from the provincial senior citizens' advisory committee and the Council on Aging on the very important matter of senior citizens staying in their own homes. That matter has also been debated in this Legislature on at least one occasion that I can recall. This government is committed to that approach, and that's one of the reasons we developed a home care program.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, in light of the minister's comment that there has been substantial input from senior citizens groups with respect to expanding

home care into home help, can he advise what were the recommendations of these senior citizens' groups?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I think it goes without saying that generally the suggestions have been that the program be expanded in content. I've indicated that the key concern of my predecessor, and I share that concern, is that we ensure what we are now doing is properly implemented province-wide. That's taking place through the health units. Once we're satisfied that that goal has been accomplished, we'll seriously consider the appropriate actions to be followed.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. I wonder if the minister could advise whether he has any mechanism in the department to assist community groups to organize programs of home help which would be complementary to the other programs we now have insofar as the health services — in the other area of home help which the hon. Member for Calgary Forest Lawn raised.

MR. BOGLE: The primary delivery route, Mr. Speaker, would be through the preventive social services program, whose costs are shared 80 per cent by the province and 20 per cent by the local municipality. That's the primary avenue we would follow. We have some specific examples where we've provided direct assistance to senior citizens' groups, depending on the circumstance. But generally speaking we encourage the groups to work with the municipal PSS program.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary by the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood. If there's time we could come back to the topic. A considerable number of members have not yet asked their first questions.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary really is . . . Perhaps I didn't make myself clear. My intent to the minister was not a request as to whether a government-funded program was available, but the assistance of the department in organizing community groups to provide that help.

MR. BOGLE: I'm sorry I misunderstood the hon. member, Mr. Speaker. The answer is yes. We do have a very small mechanism through the senior citizens' bureau in the department. But we encourage groups who require that kind of assistance to work with the Senior Citizens' Advisory Council and the Council on Aging, because those bodies are volunteer and have provided excellent leadership and assistance to senior citizens in this province.

Provincial Buildings — Cold Lake Area

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works relates to my concern that we improve the delivery of provincial services to the people in the Grand Centre-Cold Lake area, both current residents and our anticipated population growth.

For some time now, there has been some discussion regarding a free-standing courthouse in the town of Grand Centre. What is the current status of that courthouse?

MR. CHAMBERS: Through the department and the two corporations, Mr. Speaker, I'm responsible for construction of several thousand projects going on at the present time. So obviously on any given day I cannot recall the specific status. However, the Member for Bonnyville was kind enough to give me at least a general hint of what he was going to ask me today, so I checked before I came in. The courthouse in Grand Centre is going to tender in July.

MR. ISLEY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Have plans been finalized for a treasury branch building in the same community?

MR. CHAMBERS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the treasury branch in Grand Centre should also go to tender in July. The treasury branch in Cold Lake has actually been expanded to about double in size. That will go to tender approximately in September.

Air Pollution — Medicine Hat

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Environment. Mr. Minister, some six days ago you issued a stop order . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. HYLAND: . . . to a construction firm near Medicine Hat. Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: has this stop order been complied with?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I hope so.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the minister is: does the firm have a vehicle whereby it can appeal the order?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member is asking a question of law. Perhaps he might seek the information elsewhere.

RITE System

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Government Services. Could the minister indicate whether problems are being experienced with the capacity of the RITE government telephone system, and if there is going to be an expansion of the system?

MR. McCRAE: To the first part of the question, Mr. Speaker, the answer is a very decided yes I might expand by saying that that is a reflection of the buoyancy of our economy, both the increase in people coming into the province and the increase in business. The other part of it is the increase in communication between government levels. So yes, we are experiencing difficulties with the system.

To the latter part of the question, yes, we are reviewing the situation. With the representations made by you and many other members of this Assembly, we hope to come to a resolution of the difficulties we are experiencing.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate whether the extension will be to some of the government services? I'm

thinking of the Alberta hail and crop insurance programs and the regulatory systems we have in Stettler under Agriculture.

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, my answer would be speculative at this time. We have the matter under study and certainly will consider that as a representation.

Justice Review

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney General. It's with regard to the Kirby commission report. I'd like to ask the Attorney General what actions will be taken during the summer break on the 30 recommendations that still have not been dealt with by the government. Will we see progress by the fall session?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not clear whether the hon. member is asking about 3 or 4 — Kirby 3? As I think the hon. member would agree, since the report came out in 1977 those have been the subject of a number of implemented policies based directly on the recommendations of Mr. Justice Kirby and his commissioners. A number of others are still under review. The hon. member has chosen the figure of 30. That may well be right, out of well over 100 as I recall.

All I can say to him is that although since March I've had one briefing on progress, I intend to review it further over the summer and of course would be in a position to answer the question quite fully in the fall session.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Does the minister have an implementation committee or special task force within the department to implement and assess the various recommendations?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, in the case of some of the most weighty recommendations, in particular in regard to the second volume of the Kirby report, precisely that was done. I believe at the present time the recommendations for implementation left in regard to Kirby 3 are thought by the deputy minister to be capable of implementation without a special task force, by administrative personnel within the department. The co-ordination of that is being done through the project planning division of the department rather than by a special task force.

Pioneers' Repair Program

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Housing and Public Works. It relates to the program the hon. minister has announced today with respect to the Alberta pioneer home repair program. I wonder if the minister could advise us how soon the application forms will be available to senior citizens and what mechanism will be provided, particularly for those senior citizens not receiving the assured income supplement, to be able to obtain the forms without too much difficulty.

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I know members haven't really had a chance to look at this booklet. All the information on how they go about making application is explained in it quite carefully. Regarding timing, the brochures will go out to the various

financial institutions today. Hopefully next week senior citizens could pick up the brochure and details on applications.

MRS. CHICHAK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I recognize the hon. minister's response as to the information in the booklet. My concern is the requests we are now getting — or at least I'm getting — as to where the forms will be available and how they obtain them. Will MLAs be provided with some forms, so they can assist senior citizens who have difficulty communicating for the forms?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, on the back page of the booklet it says in fairly heavy print:

... further information can be obtained by contacting.

Director
Alberta Pioneers' Repair Program
Main Floor, Devonian Building
11156 Jasper Avenue
Box 2453
EDMONTON, Alberta
PHONE 427-5760

I'm serious. I think it's important — and that's why I ensured that each member received a copy of this booklet — that each member be able to direct senior citizens to contact either this branch phone number directly or any financial institutions listed in the booklet. They include treasury branches, normal chartered banks, and participating credit unions.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: We seem to be exploring a booklet which has been published, and even having it read in the Assembly. Unless this question is of a different nature, I would suggest we go on to the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is of a different nature. The hon. minister overlooked answering my question on whether MLAs can ask for a certain number of forms to have available for senior citizens who come forward.

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, it's doubtful that that kind of communication between ministers and MLAs has to take place in the question period.

Head Offices

MR. OMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question either to the hon. Premier or the Minister of Economic Development. Yesterday I think an announcement of great significance to both Calgary and Alberta was made. The Bank of Montreal indicated they were building a 57-storey tower in Calgary, which would exceed the Calgary tower in height and, more significantly, that they were moving the board chairman there. I believe the board chairman said the business would exceed . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps the hon. member has a question for the minister. He could deal with the board chairman outside the question period.

MR. OMAN: With due respect, Mr. Speaker, I think the board chairman is more important than the building. It seems obvious that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The respect is mutual, but if the hon. member has a question, would he please ask it.

MR. OMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is whether the Premier has had any conversations with the Bank of Montreal or with other large financial institutions that would indicate they're moving their head offices to Calgary or Alberta?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, both the Provincial Treasurer and I have been involved in discussions of that nature. This of course is the first time one of the national chartered banks has decided to locate its chairman outside Toronto and Montreal. They chose a location in Alberta, of which we're particularly pleased. We have no additional information on other banks intending to follow that important course of recognition of the realities of Canada.

DR. CARTER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary . . .

MR. SPEAKER: We've exceeded the time for the question period. If the House wishes to extend its indulgence to the two hon. members, we might have two further supplementaries.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. CARTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, I'm pleased that the hon. member to my left, as chairman of the Calgary caucus, takes such a great interest in what's happening in my riding.

I have a question on this topic to the Minister of Economic Development. With the Bank of Montreal sending its great project and its staff members to Calgary, in their statement they mentioned that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Has the hon. member a supplementary question? I've been unable to discover it in the text thus far.

DR. CARTER: This is interesting 5BX.

The Bank of Montreal stated it wants to participate as a financier in major natural resource projects within the province. Has the Minister of Economic Development had any discussions with regard to possible participation in projects?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the specific answer would be no. We have had a great deal of discussion not only with a number of financial institutions which are moving to Alberta; indeed, more recently we had a delegation from the city of London who were also very interested in participating in the projects in the province. I would expect over the coming months we'll see an expansion of Alberta's becoming a financial centre for western Canada, and indeed for Canada.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the Premier is an update on a question I raised about a year ago with regard to head offices

coming to Alberta. At that time I asked the Premier whether there was any type of formal strategy to encourage various head offices to move to Alberta. The Premier indicated there were no planned strategies; it was an informal type of arrangement. Has the intent of the government changed at this point in time?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'll resist responding as the advice to my right has given me, that of course one of the keys in this is to assure the stability of government. Our approach is to create an atmosphere here that's conducive to it, rather than direct solicitation with regard to head offices from other provinces. I think that is the key. I think the development by the Provincial Treasurer of our own provincial corporate tax system over the next year or so will have a significant bearing on the important question raised by the hon. member.

Students' Financial Aid (continued)

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, with the leave of the House I would like to respond, before the question period is over, to the preamble by the Leader of the Opposition at the start, on which I would like to clear the record.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I have done some checking, and certainly I can find nothing in *Hansard* of March 15, 1978, or in reports of statements I made with regard to that day, or in my recollection of discussion with student leaders, that put any timetable on our response to the request to review the matter of student finance.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: **WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

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

- (1) dates, destinations, and purposes of all trips outside the province of Alberta taken by Mr. Gordon Miniely during his term as Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care.
- (2) names of all persons accompanying the minister on each of those trips at the expense of the government of Alberta.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, a point of order with respect to a matter on the Order Paper. No. 111 appears as a Motion for a Return. If it were worded as a question, it would be acceptable to the government.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree to the motion by the hon. Deputy Government House Leader that the Motion for a Return be recast as a question?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: I must confess my complicity in allowing it to go on in its present form.
So ordered.

MR. McCRAE: May I revert to Tabling Returns and Reports?

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**
(reversion)

MR. McCRAE: I'd like to table a response to question No. 110.

head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN
GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

208. Moved by Mrs. Cripps.

Be it resolved that this Assembly recommend that the government of Alberta give consideration to reviewing the extended flat rate calling program carried out by AGT with a view to extending the 34-mile limit of this program.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce a motion which will expand an excellent program already available to many Albertans.

EFRC, extended flat rate calling, is a toll-free telephone service between communities. The first such service was implemented in 1950 between Blairmore, Bellevue, and Coleman, because the high cost of manually handling and billing calls made toll-free service for a short distance more economical. During the '50s, EAS, extended area service, was provided to communities within a 12-mile limit. With the advent of direct distance dialing in the '60s, and with higher costs, the program almost stopped. Public pressure resulted in minor rate and policy changes and resumption of the program in 1967, with the mileage limits extended to 15 miles. However, this was not sufficient for the social and economic needs of small communities more than 15 miles apart. Subsequent policy changes of major significance were therefore made in April 1973 with the introduction of EFRC, and the program was extended to communities more than 15 miles apart. The limit is now 34 miles.

An area wishing to be included in EFRC must send a petition signed by at least 40 per cent of the subscribers. A mail-in ballot is sent out, but the results are tabulated on the number of total subscribers, not the number of ballots sent in. This results in unreturned ballots having a negative effect by their silence, a presumption that is unwarranted but, by the wording of the Act, a fact.

Extended flat rate dialing results in a slight increase in the monthly rate. The average increase appears to be \$8 for businesses and \$1.25 for residences. There is an extended charge if it's to a larger centre. Places such as Winfield, Waskatenau, Robb, Lake Louise, Manyberries, Youngstown, and Eaglesham pay the lowest rate, or are on the first zone, under 500 phones. Their monthly charge is \$5.70. Compare that to Calmar,

which has access to all the Edmonton area for \$9.10; or the Calgary area, which has access to all Calgary for \$7. So for an additional \$1.25, they have access to over 300,000 phones. The point is, there really is very little difference between the monthly charge of the larger centres that have access to businesses and those centres that only have a community convenience.

The real problem is that these places must pay long-distance charges to do any business whatsoever. They have no access to doctors, police, machinery dealers, garages, and, most of the time, not even local municipal government. Of necessity they must use long distance to obtain services or information that other people take for granted and is available to them at no charge. The average long-distance bill for most farmers in my exchange is around \$60. This sounds exorbitant, but I checked with the commercial department yesterday. With these kinds of long-distance charges, I would have to come to the conclusion that these areas are subsidizing the toll-free areas.

Most of these code areas were originally set up as community telephone co-ops. When AGT became involved, the boundaries remained unchanged. Ninety-seven exchanges do not have access to another exchange. Four of these are in my constituency: Alder Flats, Buck Lake, Winfield, and Warburg. A fifth, Evansburg, has many of my constituents in it. Many of the 97 exchanges fall within the 34-mile guidelines, but the rest have absolutely no hope of getting EFRC under the present guidelines; therefore, the request to extend the limit beyond 34 miles.

Under the present conditions, Point 3, there is "no by-passing of a viable market town in favor of a larger town or city". This is a reasonable condition, but by the same token a community should have access to a viable market town regardless of the distance incurred. Consideration should be given to the shopping patterns of the community and to accessibility of local government, police, hospitals, doctors, and businesses necessary for the livelihood of that community. If the distance is more than 34 miles, all the more reason to have toll-free phone service available. I hope that the 97 locals not presently served by EFRC will soon be able to take advantage of the service.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this motion is to give fair and equitable telephone service to rural telephone locals which cannot at present phone their service centres without paying long-distance charges. The concept of the EFRC program is commendable, but in some cases the program may have to be adapted to serve the needs of the people.

MR. TOPOLNISKY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to express a few concerns relating to Motion 208. As a matter of interest, the improvements and development reviewed by the previous speaker are certainly commendable. I want to restate that in 1973 the EFRC program extended the limit to a 30-mile range, in October 1978 the policy was revised, and the extended limit is 34 miles.

In the county of Thorhild there are nine exchanges: three within one and a half miles just west of the hamlet of Egremont; two villages and a town are all under different exchanges. The history of these many exchanges is that telephone co-ops were started during World War II, territories were set up, and the boundaries of the different co-ops were registered. AGT required permission from the co-ops to amalgamate

them. These boundaries created real problems. People went for the quickest service offered; all created the various exchanges, which today are difficulties. Each town wanted its own office and, therefore, each had its own exchange. Some communities did not want to lose their identity but today, with modern technology, these offices exist unmanned. Ten years ago cables were not able to transmit [over] long distances, as they do today, and this certainly complicated matters.

I want to list three problems. Exchanges had a calling distance of 30 miles; one route, one exchange. And exchanges had to accept extra costs. Both exchanges would be required to accept these costs. I hope AGT could develop a program where two large exchanges could replace numerous small ones.

With two towns and five villages in the constituency, four of these do not have any extension to another town, in spite of the distance of seven or 15 miles between them. These communities are Redwater, Radway, Waskatenau, and Andrew. In spite of delegations to AGT officials on several occasions, meetings on a local basis — one at Woodgrove sponsored by Unifarm — and another attempt by a lengthy petition, these four towns still do not have the benefits of the EFRC program. I raise this issue on an annual basis, as recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr. Speaker, one of these obstacles has been the 30-mile limit, which included the town of Redwater. This obstacle certainly was removed in October of last year. The other obstacle is the guideline AGT imposed: "There will be no by-passing of a viable market centre in favor of a larger town or city". I believe this should not be applied to Redwater and Fort Saskatchewan, because it is not relevant to these two towns. The town of Redwater — a young town on the move — wants to go direct to the city of Edmonton, a distance of 33 miles, where the various interests are, and certainly within the present EFRC program.

The village of Radway wants to go into Thorhild or Redwater, some 15 miles; the village of Waskatenau to Thorhild and/or Smoky Lake; and the village of Andrew to Willingdon and/or Lamont. Another matter of complaint came from the village of Warspite, Mr. Speaker, where for some reason some 40 names were omitted from the 1978 telephone directory.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that in the near future a new program will be developed to remove the obstacles in the way of the three villages and the town of Redwater receiving the benefits of extended flat rate calling. Perhaps the area should be changed to a county or regional basis, or in fact even a provincial basis.

Mr. Speaker, I support the motion.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased this afternoon to be able to go on record as supporting the resolution regarding extended flat rate calling here in the province of Alberta.

I'd like to congratulate the hon. Member for Drayton Valley, who has brought this resolution before the Legislature. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to say that I appreciate very much the privilege of sitting beside this very capable, industrious, and charming member of our Assembly.

I would like to give credit to the previous government in this province for the progressive steps they took in developing the AGT program throughout the province. I very well remember the type of service we had when the old mutual telephone systems were out in

the rural areas. In our particular district the only way you could get a telephone was to buy a share from somebody who already had one, because there were 19 subscribers on the line and they weren't going to put any more on.

Eventually somebody died and we were able to buy a share. We were three miles from the main line, so the mutual telephone company said to us: here are your insulators and wire, and here's a permit to go out and cut the poles. Go ahead and build your line. Very fortunately the neighbors in our district thought it would be very good to have a telephone, and they all rallied around and helped to cut the poles, peel them, haul them, and string them out. Eventually they were set into the ground with the insulators attached, and the wire was strung.

[Mrs. Chichak in the Chair]

Then, Mme. Speaker, we came to the point where somebody had to climb those poles. None of us had ever climbed telephone poles before. We asked the mutual company if they could give us somebody to do this. They said, no, but here's a pair of climbing irons and a safety belt. It just happened that I was the youngest member of the group, so I was delegated to climb the poles. I very well remember the first one I tried to climb. I got halfway up, the iron slipped, and I fell back down to the ground. However, in the end the wires were strung, and we connected it to the main line. Then we attached the two 1.5 volt batteries to the telephone instrument in the house. The neighbors were all gathered around. We brought in the lead wires, and connected one and then the other. With 19 subscribers on the line, it started to ring immediately. A great cheer went up. We had telephone service in the district.

No doubt there have been a great many improvements since that day, Mme. Speaker. We have seen direct distance dialing and other improvements. I think the program brought in several years ago to extend dialing into areas beyond the local exchange limits was a very progressive one. As we all well know, we have had a fluctuation in the growth of our smaller centres in the province. Some of the smaller towns, villages, and so on, have seemed to die or fade away. Of course in recent years, through many of the very progressive — and I guess I should say aggressive as well — and helpful policies of this government, we have seen a regrowth in many of these centres. Programs such as helping these districts with their community halls, the rural gas programs, and other things, have seen a great attraction to rural living in these areas of the province.

However, throughout the years we have developed service centres where people do some of their main types of business: dental treatment, doctors, machine shops, and things like that. Not all the smaller centres have these services. Of course in order to keep in touch with these sorts of businesses, people in more distant areas have had to use the telephone.

As the hon. Member for Redwater-Andrew said, it happened that very great pressure was put on these smaller communities to develop the exchange. And when the extended area service program came in, they found it awkward to decide which exchange they wanted to be connected to. Some of the votes held were not very satisfactory, but they had to make a decision as

to which exchange they wanted to tie into.

However, throughout the years it gradually has pretty well worked itself out of the system. In general, I think folks are fairly well satisfied. As the member also said, there's been an increase in rates. That was an objection at first, but they learned to live with it, and I don't think it's a problem anymore. The problem we have now — and I don't think it's really a great one, if you survey the whole province — is that a few of these smaller exchanges are still beyond the 30-mile limit which was the original extension of the system. In my constituency I think five exchanges were tied in under the program. I have only one now, about 40 miles distant, that is remote and not tied in. What I would like to suggest this afternoon is that if we could extend it to 40 miles, we'd get the only one left in my constituency. I believe if we went to about the 40-mile limit . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: I need 42.

MR. APPLEBY: How far do you want to go?

MRS. CRIPPS: Forty-two.

MR. APPLEBY: Forty-two. Well, maybe 45 miles, then.

We would probably get to the stage that none of them is outside. Because if you get 45 miles from here, maybe you're only 45 miles from the other one. So you could get tied into one of these service centres. When we talk about this resolution this afternoon, we're asking for consideration to give a little more distant recognition in developing the program.

I know more costs are going to be involved, Mr. Speaker, but I don't think people are going to be very uptight about that anymore. We live in an affluent society. They have good roads, expensive vehicles, snowmobiles, color TVs, and all these sorts of things. An extra \$2 or \$3 a month on their telephone bills isn't going to worry them very much.

Mr. Speaker, I'm suggesting that if we could just get that extra few miles into this program, we'd have a lot more happy people in the province of Alberta.

Thank you.

MR. NOTLEY: I certainly welcome the opportunity to participate in this debate and to support the resolution before the House this afternoon. I'm sure various members can cite a number of examples about their respective constituencies. I have a community called Cleardale in my constituency. If he looks back over his correspondence, the minister was probably besieged with representations from people in that area, and properly so. The difficulty is that it is beyond the 34-mile limit. The result is that the people in question don't have access to any service centre as such and, that being the case, I think they have some sense of legitimate grievance.

As the Member for Athabasca has pointed out, I realize there will be additional costs. But, representing an area where people don't qualify because of the present limit, I can assure you there would be very substantial support for the extension of the principle beyond the present 34-mile restriction.

Mme. Speaker, I should just add a couple of additional comments somewhat related to the extension of the 34-mile limit, and ask the minister — I presume he's going to be participating in this debate at some

point, hopefully today — to give us the assurance that in fact this motion is going to be passed by the government and acted on quickly, or that AGT is going to act on it.

I would like to make representation about the problems we have in border areas, and I think it is appropriate under Resolution No. 1. I'll give you an example. Bonanza is 12 or 13 miles from Dawson Creek and, to a large extent, the business of the people in Bonanza and Bay Tree is done in Dawson Creek, notwithstanding the efforts of the town of Spirit River to shift things otherwise. The minister of highways has been so tardy in finishing Highway 49 that they can't get to Spirit River, so they go to Dawson Creek where there's a nice, paved highway.

But there is one obstacle; that is, the problem of telephone service. All the business is done in Dawson Creek. The hospital is in Dawson Creek. Even the high school students go to Dawson Creek. But it isn't possible to work out an arrangement with B.C. Telephones. Now, I realize we have a problem with B.C. Telephones, because AGT is a Crown corporation and B.C. Telephones is a privately owned firm. But I imagine we would have the same general situation on the other border as far as Saskatchewan Telephones is concerned.

It occurs to me that as we review this resolution, Mr. Minister and Mme. Speaker, Alberta Government Telephones should be examining the concept of extending the toll-free limit within the province. But I'd also be interested in the minister bringing us up to date on whether there have been any discussions between SASK TEL and AGT, and B.C. TEL and AGT, concerning those people along the borders who feel a certain sense of frustration, too. Even if we extended the 34-mile limit, in the case of Bay Tree it really wouldn't amount to too much, because I must confess that even if the minister of highways gets around to finishing Highway 49 someday, I suspect the balance of the business is still going to be directed to the city of Dawson Creek. I would just underscore that there are more problems in the case of B.C., because it's pretty hard to tell a privately owned company — perhaps you can work out an agreement with another government, but it's more difficult where you're talking about a private concern.

Nevertheless, Mr. Minister, it seems to me that that area would be consistent with the spirit of this resolution, notwithstanding the fact that costs are involved. I remember receiving several letters on different occasions from the former minister, Dr. Warrack, who always cited the costs but held out the hope that when we completed the present program we would move beyond the 34-mile limit. We're almost at that stage, as I recollect anyway. That being the case, Mme. Speaker, Resolution No. 1 has merit and I certainly support it.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mme. Speaker, I too appreciate the opportunity to speak very briefly on this motion and to indicate that I'm going to support it. I think it's a good step in the right direction, and I hope it will be supported.

Mme. Speaker, I have an example in my own constituency: an area that's within the 34 miles, but we've been toying, fighting, and taking every measure we could to get this area into the extended flat rate program. However, we're not able to do that. The problem we're facing is that when you take the vote, the people who want in have to vote, and also have to

be accepted. As the mover indicated, 40 per cent of the subscribers have to vote. We run into the problem of getting enough people interested enough to support extension of the flat rate.

Bassano is the area I have problems with. In Brooks you can phone anywhere for 34 miles, and there are no problems. But if Duchess, Rosemary, and Patricia want to phone Bassano, it is long distance. So we're certainly having a problem, and I look forward to getting them into the flat-rate program. I hope the minister is going to give me some assistance when I get things in gear and get this on the road.

I would like to bring just one area to the minister's attention, Mme. Speaker, and I'm certain it's been brought to his attention on many occasions. When we first started the flat-rate extension program, they put in private lines to many rural people. When they got the lines to the subscribers, a change was made by our previous minister. For example, in a rural area, if he sells his farm or changes the phone number with a renter on the farm, he has to pay \$100 to make the application. That's the initial charge. Then if they want to retain it as a private line, they have to pay \$100 a mile to get it changed. After that, they have to pay \$1 per mile per month to keep this private line. It's an area that causes much confusion. A farmer or someone in a rural area will sell his property with the impression or the understanding that he has a private line. But when they go to change the line, the person who purchases the farm and takes over the contract has to pay for the installation of this private line. It causes a lot of confusion.

I would certainly like the minister to look at this. I know he's had many complaints in this area; I get many of them every time there's a change of a telephone on a private line. You have someone phone you, and they're not aware of it. I'm sure the minister has had this complaint brought to him on many occasions. With those few remarks, Mme. Speaker, I am prepared to support the resolution.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mme. Speaker, I certainly support the arguments for the resolution with regard to the private telephone in rural areas, specifically with regard to boundaries and that the 34-mile limit be extended. Certainly the cost factor is one of the controlling agents that the minister must make some kind of judgment on.

I'd like to put on the record for the information of the minister — and I'm sure his departmental officials will be reviewing this debate — one area that is under review in my constituency at the present time. Cost assessments have been done, and hopefully we're going to cure the problem which exists. I'm sure the problem exists in other areas, because communities of interest of the citizens of Alberta certainly have shifted over the last 10 to 15 years.

For example, I can tell you of one area, between the Lomond and Enchant areas. A number of people who earlier had an interest in the Lomond area now are shifting their interest to the Enchant area. Their children go to school in that area, they buy their groceries in that area, and their recreation is in that area. There are four or five families along the boundary line that separates these two different telephone systems. Each time they phone to their community of interest they have to pay a long-distance fee, which certainly is very upsetting to them when someone just across the road

within 200 yards phones without any toll charge.

As I've indicated, we have raised this matter with the department, departmental officials have been in the area, and a cost assessment has been done. In order to make this change, if I recall correctly, the charge is going to be something like \$2,500 per family.

The question I would like to raise with the minister for consideration — we haven't got to this point of negotiation yet — is: will the local people or the government pick up the cost for that change of the residents from one exchange area to another? I'd recommend that the government accept that cost.

The other areas of concern are the Turin area and a small community called Sundial, a general area in the Vauxhall exchange. None of the people in this particular area have a community of interest in the Vauxhall area; their community of interest is across the Little Bow River, toward Picture Butte and Lethbridge. But at present, to phone their local town of Turin they have to phone long distance through Vauxhall, Taber, around Lethbridge and back into the Turin area. Their phone bills are quite excessive. We've had this assessed, and to make the change I think the cost is around \$1,500 per family. Again I make representation to the minister that the department consider picking up this cost to accommodate these particular people.

Looking at this concern in general, I'd say to the minister that the first priority should be rearrangement of the boundaries between the various EFRC areas, so that people can be accommodated and can phone to their community of interest with a flat-rate charge. Following that, if we're able to extend the 34-mile limit, maybe that should be the next priority. But I see the first one accommodating many people at the present time.

DR. REID: Mme. Speaker, the hon. Member for Athabasca and I share many interests in hair styles, but unfortunately we don't share neighbors in the Legislature.

I note that this motion was introduced by one of the fairer sex. I don't know that that has any particular significance, but it would behoove us as politicians to also take advantage of any extension as we probably do more talking than anybody else in this province.

The hon. Member for Drayton Valley has introduced a motion that I'm sure all rural members will want to speak to and approve of; it's a motherhood issue in many ways. Therefore I'll keep my remarks rather brief. I would like to address two particular concerns in this debate.

The population pattern in this province outside the two large cities has not developed in a homogeneous manner by any means. The size of communities and the distances between them is extremely variable. As a result, the distances between telephone exchanges are equally variable. In the constituency I have the honor to represent, we have exchanges as close together as 12 miles and as far apart as 93 miles. The latter distance, between Brule and Grande Cache, is somewhat of an exception, but I'm sure the members for Peace River and Lac La Biche-McMurray can outdo me in that regard by some considerable margin.

As a result of the very varied areas of the exchanges, the application of the present rigid 32-mile limit to EFRC results in some people being able to cross two or three exchange boundaries and other people not even being able to call their neighboring town. We also

get some rather odd anomalies. I have one in my own constituency, where people who live 15 miles from Hinton, at Obed, are attached to an exchange at Marlboro, which is 35 miles from Hinton. They can talk to Edson, which is 40 miles away, without a long-distance charge, but they can't talk to Hinton, 15 miles away.

My second concern, apart from the pure distance factor because of the distribution of population, is that there have developed in this province, for historical, geographic, and transportation reasons, what we can call regional distribution centres or commercial centres. To get out of my own constituency, we could mention Peace River or Camrose. People have to be able to converse with those centres. It's a matter of necessity, not social convenience like a lot of telephone calls. These necessary commercial calls are a considerable percentage of the long-distance telephone calls made by many people in rural Alberta.

To get back to my own constituency, if you live in Grande Cache and have a General Motors automobile, you have a dealer in Grande Cache. For any other make of automobile you have to call Hinton or Edmonton. Hinton happens to be the next community down the road, but it's 93 miles away. Jasper, because of its peculiar involvement with the federal department of national parks, and because of the policies of Parks Canada, has very limited commercial enterprise within the community. Therefore they of necessity make a very large number of calls to Hinton or Edson for what in the city would be regarded as neighborhood essential services, but to them are anything but neighborhood.

Mme. Speaker, as may have become obvious from my remarks, I'm not suggesting just an increase in the limits of EFRC. Other speakers have done that very adequately. What I'm addressing in particular is the possibility of looking at a regional approach to the program, paying due regard to these specific concerns.

In modern society the telephone has become a necessity. It's become almost a utility in its necessity as well being legally a utility. While I'm not asking for a Utopian equality of costs for the rural as opposed to the urban subscriber, I feel there's considerable room for improvement in the program based on a regional type of approach.

Many programs have been introduced by this government to encourage the development of rural Alberta and to reverse the drift to the cities. If the minister can address some of the concerns that I and other people have brought up during this debate, he could add to those programs by this particular approach to the provision of telephone service in rural Alberta.

Thank you.

MR. BORSTAD: Mme. Speaker, I strongly support the resolution put forward by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley, as I think the problem bothers most rural communities throughout the province. But I also realize there is a problem in establishing guidelines and regulations which will satisfy everyone. You're always going to run into areas that can't be serviced.

The system first started, with a 12-mile limit and went to 15, 30, and 34 miles, as it is today. We should look more at spheres of influence or trading centre areas, as used in the economic development of this province. In some areas you might be able to call within a 30-mile limit; in other areas you might need

50 miles to get to the trading area you're dealing with.

I believe this affects the newer areas of the province and those experiencing growth. In my area the village of Hythe is just three miles outside that limit, yet their service centre is Grande Prairie. Several other centres in my constituency have been petitioning for service for a number of years. A request for toll-free dialing between the village of Hythe, the village of Demmitt, and the surrounding areas, and the city of Grande Prairie, which is considered their major trading area, has been brought to the attention of the Northern Alberta Development Council on several occasions: first in a brief presented to a public meeting in Hythe, in March 1977, again in Hythe in '78, at Sexsmith in '78, and again in Beaverlodge this May. As I mentioned before, the village of Hythe is just outside the 3-mile limit.

In the council's communications with AGT in 1977 and '78, they were advised that they were engaged in an overall review and evaluation of the extended flat rate program. Since that time, however, there has been no extension of flat-rate service. Village merchants have their source of supply in Grande Prairie. The telephone lines in the area are inadequate, and the circuits are often not available for peak periods. Grande Prairie has a large trading area, and the extension of that service would be of major benefit to the total constituency or county.

While I am speaking, I would like to mention the RITE number, which maybe has no connection with this particular subject. It is continually plugged, and you cannot get on it. I think that's another item that should be looked at.

In closing, I would like to support Motion 208 strongly, and recommend that AGT look at servicing growth centres or spheres of influence, rather than mileage.

Thank you.

MR. HYLAND: Mme. Speaker, as I rise to take part in this debate, I wish to commend the hon. Member for Drayton Valley for bringing forward Motion 208. I agree with many of the previous speakers who have suggested we need flexibility in the guidelines with reference to toll-free dialing. We need it so that we're dealing with a shopping and trading area. I'm sure we have all found that certain businesses have moved out of some towns and villages, and there are no businesses left to phone or contact in these areas. Thus it would be much better if we could be phoning a service centre.

Mme. Speaker, we've heard a number of examples of areas where there are particular problems with mileage, and my constituency is no different. I have one case where extended calling is to be put into one town in the near future, but the major service centre is 1 mile beyond the limit. As the rules say 34 miles, and the town is 35, under the existing rules it is impossible to put dialing into the major service centre in the area. I suggest that we be more flexible with these guidelines and look toward service centres more than toward distances.

I have another case where they would have to go some 44 miles to their service centre. The only advantage of hooking them up to the adjacent town, which hopefully will be hooked up to the service centre in the future, is that it gets them 10 miles further down the

road and only allows them access to one business.

Mme. Speaker, we have heard some stories about the old telephone lines. But I'm sure the old lines and telephones were an institution in themselves, because in those days it seemed all the neighbors knew what everybody else was doing. All you needed to do was pick up the phone, listen for a while, and you knew everything that was going on in the neighborhood. With the newer phones, we're getting away from that institution that existed in rural areas for many years.

In summation, Mme. Speaker, I would again like to urge the minister to consider using trading area involvement more than distance as a guideline to the boundaries on toll-free dialing.

MR. STROMBERG: Mme. Speaker, I have a little article from the weekly *Alberta Business*. It reads:

Provincially-owned Alberta Government Telephones posted a 1978 net profit of \$15.9 million, 310 per cent higher than 1977's \$3.9 million.

Swollen by heavy long distance traffic and new phone installations

And it goes on about the profits. Bearing in mind that I'll have a hard time explaining the next AGT rate increase application to my constituents, Mme. Speaker, with due regard and respect, I think that if we could train our wives to quit phoning their mothers and vice versa, AGT might be facing a deficit.

I recall that several years ago the Camrose Chamber of Commerce, which I was involved in, led a delegation from the community of Bawlf that wanted to get an extension to Camrose. We met with the minister, Raymond Reierson, who set out the guidelines and indicated to us that it was 10 or 11 miles, period. The town of Bawlf happened to be half a mile outside that radius, and no way was he giving them flat-fee privileges. So I offered the minister that if we moved the town of Bawlf half a mile closer to Camrose, would he be a little more receptive? Of course his answer was negative. I became a Conservative that day and decided to enter public life.

Mme. Speaker, I realize that in Alberta we probably have the best telephone service in the world. It's expensive. Perhaps we could offer some alternatives to our people in rural Alberta and to the minister's office. For instance, a subscriber should have the opportunity to have two out of three services: medical, county seat or local government, or his business. If two of those three are not met, I think he should be brought into the area.

Perhaps we could look at growth centres, as the Member for Grande Prairie indicated. But, to the minister: why not a flat rate for the several areas of Alberta — for the northeast, the southeast, central Alberta, the Edmonton area, the Red Deer area, the Calgary area — and try to work out a more equitable means that way?

I find it a little discouraging that we have businesses that have been financed through the AOC and encouraged by this government to come out of the larger centres and locate in rural Alberta. When they start up their business in Camrose, Mme. Speaker, they find out that perhaps three-quarters of their customers are in the city of Edmonton. So they're running a phone bill of approximately \$2,000 a month. If they locate their business at Redwater or Devon, that's the profit and loss picture to them at the end of the year. So they're forced to come back within a 30-mile radius of Edmonton to get toll-free service.

I must congratulate the Member for Drayton Valley. By the tone of the discussion here, I think it's our number one problem. It certainly has been my number one problem in my seven years in this Legislature. I would urge all members to support this resolution.

Thank you.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mme. Speaker, I also appreciate this opportunity to rise and join this debate. I commend the hon. Member for Drayton Valley for submitting it.

When I look at the opportunity to extend the boundary lines, one thing that comes to mind is, where do you draw the line? We've had some debate here already. Is it 40 miles or 42, or should it be 100, or could it be 500 miles? The first thing you know, we want it across Canada. I see a concern there. I don't think it's a problem that can't be solved. I would like to suggest to the minister and to the House a couple of things that could be looked at.

Number one, I think the choice should be given to people who live on a boundary line of which community they want to be tied into. In particular, I bring up one that happened lately. These people live between Barons and Claresholm. They're on the Barons exchange. When the telephone was put in, they didn't want to be on the Barons exchange. They both joined in the same way, and it was the same number of miles to hook in either way. But since someone had sat down and drawn the boundary line, there was no way they could change it. Now, Barons doesn't really have any implement dealers, it doesn't have a hospital, a high school. The children of these people go to school in Claresholm, and all their business is there. You know what it's like when you have teen-age children going to school, and the number of times they're on the telephone. You can imagine what his long distance bill is.

He wasn't listened to, because they had to draw a line. Consequently he offered to pay for it, but even that wouldn't work. So I would suggest that when you come to a boundary line, instead of having the boundaries set, they should have the option to join either way.

I know hon. members from both sides of the House all agree that this has to be looked at. I join in this, and look forward to action forthcoming.

Thank you.

MR. NOTLEY: Just say yes, Neil.

DR. WEBBER: Mme. Speaker, I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to make a few remarks on this very important motion that the Member for Drayton Valley has brought to us today. I must congratulate the member for bringing it to the Legislature. Also, I think we've had some excellent debate on this topic, some very good remarks by all hon. members. Certainly I've heard some of the specific issues brought up this afternoon, and will be reviewing them. I imagine there will be more to come in the future.

I think it's generally agreed that the implementation many years ago of EAS, the extended area service program, was good. It's proven to be of great benefit to Albertans. I think the extension of that program, the extended flat rate calling program introduced in 1973, has been of particular benefit in terms of our government's policy of enhancing growth in the smaller

centres of Alberta. I think it's increased the quality of life and certainly has improved the economic framework in rural Alberta.

The historical review we've had has also been excellent. Starting with the 12-mile range, going to 15 miles, going to 30 miles, going to 34 miles, we've heard 40 miles and 42 miles today. It almost sounds like an auctioneer calling for bids. However, with the extensions over the years, I think we have certainly seen many improvements in the service provided. As a result of a review of the program last year, some 20-odd new exchanges will be getting extended flat rate calling through 1980 and 1981.

Listening to the debate, Mme. Speaker, it struck me that there was some confusion with regard to the balloting procedure to determine whether people in an exchange want extended flat rate calling. I'd like to refer members to a decision of the Public Utilities Board dated November 17, 1978. It was the AGT interim decision re balloting procedures in connection with EFRC. In particular, I believe the Member for Drayton Valley and the Member for Bow Valley made some comments that were in error with regard to the balloting procedure. One particular comment was that they needed the majority of the subscribers in the area before EFRC would be granted. In fact, the change has been to have a majority of the ballots returned, which I think is a considerable improvement.

I would like to make a number of other comments, which there is not time for. I think I should make a comment about the costing of this particular service, which has been raised several times. Certainly I think all of us would like to see extended flat rate calling throughout the province. That would be great. However, somebody's got to pay for the service. Suppose we did have extended flat rate calling across the province. I'd like to give a few figures that might relate to the total cost.

The costs to provide such service are estimated to be approximately \$1 billion. Intra-Alberta toll losses, using a 1979 estimate, would be about \$150 million. To pay for this capital expenditure and recover the toll losses would require a monthly rental fee of approximately \$60 per AGT customer.

Certainly, Mme. Speaker, the extreme would be to have province-wide extended flat rate calling. It is expensive; on the other hand it may be worth the expense. However, in view of the fact that the Public Utilities Board regulates AGT, I think they're certainly going to have something to say about it. In fact in the decision I referred to earlier, they indicate that during phase two of the 1975 rate application they would review the EFRC service and its effects on the revenues and costs of AGT.

A number of other questions have been raised, such as boundary problems with regard to exchanges, northwestern Alberta, B.C./Alberta, and Saskatchewan/Alberta. Contracts have been made between the telephone companies of these two provinces where EFRC does in fact extend over certain areas.

The Member for Grande Prairie has in the past raised a particular problem with the Bonanza exchange in his area. We're looking at that particular problem now and hope to resolve something on that.

In closing, Mme. Speaker, I just want to say how much I appreciate listening to the debate today and hearing the representations. Certainly I can see I have

some work cut out for me in the next few months.

Thank you.

MME. SPEAKER: If there is no other speaker, are you ready for the question?

DR. WEBBER: Mme. Speaker, in view of the fact that I have some other remarks, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS**
OTHER THAN
GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS
(Second Reading)

Bill 201

The Alberta Family Institute Act

[Adjourned debate June 21: Mr. D. Anderson]

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mme. Speaker, when I adjourned debate last week on The Alberta Family Institute Act, I attempted to answer three basic questions. I would like briefly to recap that discussion so I can lead into today's remarks with some continuity.

The first question I asked last week was, are there problems with respect to the family unit in Alberta? I cited a number of statistics and trends that indicated a disturbing and alarming move toward difficulties faced by our family unit. I think there was conclusive evidence to show that indeed there is a problem with the family unit in Alberta and, in particular, problems with family members.

The second question was, what programs exist to deal with family difficulties? I went over a variety of organizations — universities and colleges to study the problem, and agencies such as family planning groups to help deal with the problem. In that respect, I admitted that indeed a significant number of people are attempting to do something about the growing problems faced by the family in the province of Alberta.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

I adjourned my remarks during my attempt to answer the third question: why should we consider The Alberta Family Institute Act one way of dealing with the difficulties outlined previously? I started to answer that, indicating first of all that this Legislative Assembly and other public bodies in the province of Alberta still make decisions with respect to the family unit without having a firm and coherent idea of the impact those pieces of legislation and programs will have on the family unit and its membership.

The second point I made last week was that we have no particular group in this province to move into a given community and assess the impact of growth or changes in that area on the family unit or on individual family members. I believe I cited examples such as Fort McMurray and the kind of preliminary work we could have done with respect to planning and dealing with potential problems in that area.

What would the Alberta family institute do that is

not already being done by agencies throughout this province? I believe this organization would have three basic functions. The first would be to compile all presently existing data from organizations such as the Vanier Institute, the universities, and various agencies in this province in such a way as to be able to advise this Assembly and other public bodies in the province of Alberta what the impact of given pieces of legislation would be on the public of Alberta, specifically the membership of families. They would not do research that other organizations have already compiled, but rather would direct that and put it in a central place so we could recall it.

The second and perhaps major function of the Alberta family institute would be to fund research in communities, where we can deal with specific family problems. In outlining the problem last week I gave some examples that in fact relate to the answer. We would move into small towns and take a look at their requests, the existing problems, and ways we could solve those problems and deal with the difficulties.

The third function of the Alberta family institute, which I did not significantly deal with last week, would be to deal specifically with large and, if possible, small companies and groups of employees in the province of Alberta. The company may want to develop programs that would hold the family closer together. I'm thinking in terms of day care centres located in large industrial developments for working single parents, or recreational activities that would keep the family together; assist that company in designing those programs. In addition, that part of the institute may well look at counselling problems that companies have and specifically advise them on how to deal with problems that come up in relation to specific members of the family unit. Surely, a positive family unit would lead to more stable and productive employees. That would be the aim of that part of the institute.

Let me make clear that it's not my belief that the institute should at any time deal with projections, alternative life styles, or other theoretical research already completed in this country. We adequately have those facilities, though they may not be compiled in a manner that we can deal with. It has to be an action-oriented organization, which will lead us to conclusions with respect to problems and define specific programs to deal with the very significant difficulties we are now encountering. Basically, we have enough theory. We must have a group now to tell us how to put programs into practice.

How would the institute operate? A number of sections in the Bill allude to how that would take place. There would be a group of seven trustees, the majority of whom would be citizens, not professional sociologists, who would make sure the institute stays down to earth and deals with the day to day problems facing the family in the province of Alberta. One trustee would be a member of the Legislative Assembly, so that at all times we would have a direct tie to what is taking place and direct access to the advice of that particular group and the research they fund in order to make our decisions with respect to the family unit.

The research done by the institute would be on a contract basis. I do not believe we should attempt to develop any further the large bureaucracy or group of civil servants or agency employees that are attached to government, but rather fund the research on an individual basis, leaving a small staff to compile, direct,

and assess what is taking place. A component in the funding formula associated with the institute would allow us to take donations from corporations. I would hope that when we deal with major corporations and their problems associated with the family unit, we might be able to persuade them to contribute to the research, which would assist their employees to become more productive and effective and have happier lives, and therefore add to the company itself.

The funding for the institute in general would be debated once we approved the institute in principle. A number of figures have been attributed to me, one of them very large. I would just say that is a point for discussion. We should consider, though, that if we're going to deal significantly with the problems facing the family and our developing communities, we have to be ready to look at the Heritage Savings Trust Fund in terms of how its investments could help our future and whether or not the family unit should in fact be an important part of that investment formula. We will soon put \$300 million into medical research. Perhaps it's not too far off base to suggest that 5 or 10 per cent of that could form an endowment fund to look at the problems facing the family unit in the province of Alberta.

I've been very gratified with the response I have received to date, by and large unsolicited. Since the Bill was introduced on June 1, Mr. Speaker, I've received between three and five letters a day from individuals across the province with respect to this Act. I'd like to give a brief indication of the kinds of statements being made in the letters.

A Calgary housewife writes in part: We guard and invest in petroleum, we clean up the spills of disasters, but what do we do with respect to the family unit? Welfare agencies, lawyers, and doctors help cope with the aftermath of such things. Why not guard and invest in our Alberta family unit as a base for a stable future for Alberta? Bill 201, The Family Institute Act, is before the Legislature. This Bill is a step in the right direction.

A psychologist from Edmonton writes: I was very pleased to hear your opinions regarding the state of marriage in Alberta. I am also excited by your present attempts to organize funding to establish a mechanism to research and eventually deal with this problem. I am writing to offer whatever help I can. Any attempt to study the state of marriage in Alberta not only would be of great benefit to Albertans but would shed a good deal of light on a very prevalent and disturbing North American phenomenon.

A worker in a major social service department in one of the Alberta cities writes: I am daily involved in building up the strength of the family whose young people are in trouble with the law. I have worked in this department for 15 years and offer any assistance I can give. Another one, from a businessman in Edmonton: Congratulations on your efforts to investigate the trend away from the traditional family unit. This heart-breaking, alarming, and costly trend must be reversed.

These letters go on to a great extent, all but one very much in favor of the general concept, and some indicating some very far-sighted suggestions on ways this Bill could be improved and added to. I hope we can get into that kind of discussion should the Bill reach committee stage.

In designing this Bill, Mr. Speaker, I had discus-

sions with people across the province. I discussed it with the vice-president of the Vanier Institute in Ottawa. She assured me that that institute would be very happy to have a complementary organization here which would deal with specifics and could take their very general research and apply it in this province. I've discussed it with the mayor of Edmonton, who recently funded a study into it — we've indicated that we'd have further discussions — and he made a number of very helpful suggestions; with aldermen in the city of Calgary; with the PSS director in Bonnyville, Alberta; with ministers of this government and at least two MPs in the province of Alberta; with businessmen, because I wanted to get that kind of response; and with general citizens. I'm happy to say that generally those people feel there is a need and, though there is variance on how we should go about doing it and there have been suggestions on how the Bill can be improved and questions as to exactly what the institute would do, generally there has been acceptance of the philosophy behind this piece of legislation.

I'm now writing to all groups I can find out about who somehow deal with the family in the province of Alberta, either in terms of research or direct counselling on family problems, and asking for their input with respect to this Bill. Mr. Speaker, I hope that as we go through the various stages I'll be able to relay to this Assembly the information I obtain from those efforts.

In closing, I would like to say that statistics and trends indicate that we do have a crisis situation. While you can never be sure what statistics mean, no practitioner and in fact no legislator I've yet run across in this province will not agree that we have a very definite problem. We must now look to the solution. I suggest that we all look at the Alberta Family Institute Bill, assess it carefully, discuss additions and changes that might improve upon it, and then pass it. I think we have a chance to balance our record of being the highest-divorce-rate province in the country and having the greatest number of problems associated with the family unit, with perhaps the most concentrated and coherent effort to deal with problems associated with the family in the western hemisphere.

I urge support of this Bill.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, as one of the members of the Legislature who is going to be involved with research, I must confess I have great difficulty taking an opposing view on this Bill. I cannot, in all honesty, accept the eloquent arguments made by the hon. Member for Calgary Currie — eloquent, but not good.

Some people are concerned that there is unhappiness in our land. There is, because wherever there are human beings there is unhappiness. To those who have read Huxley's *Brave New World*, there was no unhappiness there. If you got concerned or upset about something, you just took a soma pill and became happy. Some people will say that with our emphasis on drugs today, we're moving into that kind of society. When you look at the alcoholism that exists in the Soviet Union, others would say that George Orwell's *1984* is not far off.

I'd like to take perhaps a different point of view. I certainly support the family unit. Last weekend I celebrated 37 years of marriage, so obviously I'm quite happy. [applause]

AN HON. MEMBER: That's for your wife.

MR. MUSGREAVE: That's for my wife. Thank you.

When we go back in history, the idea of the family had pretty strong support. In Biblical times wives were pretty important; they were rated a little better than goods and chattels. Women have always been considered the weaker sex, but that's a lot of nonsense. Biologically, they're certainly tougher than males. Man evolved controls on women in particular. It was a good way to control the tribe, the city-state, and eventually the nation. But was it right?

The basic, main purpose of the family unit is to ensure the propagation of the human race. When you look at the tremendous growth in world population, there's some question that this is even desirable any more. We have misery, want, disease, death, and destruction. Today all we need to do is look at the boat people coming out of Vietnam or the terrible tragedies taking place in Nicaragua.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the hon. members, do we need more study, more research, more regulations? Do we need more people on the government payroll exercising a questionable function at best? It would be very refreshing if we would introduce a Bill into this Legislature asking for a reduction of civil servants, an elimination of rules and regulations, a call for people to be responsible for themselves and not call on government to hold their hands on every occasion as they walk through life.

Mr. Speaker, history seems to repeat itself, sometimes in decades and sometimes in hundreds of years. In 1968 the Social Credit government introduced an Act to establish the Human Resources Research Council. It was established:

to undertake educational, social, economic, and other research relating to and affecting the development . . . of human resources in Alberta.

Under Section 4(a) of The Alberta Family Institute Act the purpose is:

. . . to carry out research, to fund the carrying out of research by others and to co-ordinate research into matters affecting the family unit, including changes in the structure of the family

Going back to the research council, they talked about carrying out social research, and I imagine that would include families.

I note that in Bill 201 the institute is:

to make such recommendations as it sees fit on the basis of research carried out by it and by other organization to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health and . . . other ministers . . .

who may have the vaguest connection with family concerns. The resource council of the Social Credit government was to disseminate findings and knowledge that might be useful in determining social policy, and to develop plans, materials, and procedures relevant to development of human resources.

I'm concerned that in our technological age there is a great alienation of people. We do have problems of loneliness, suicide, marriage breakdown, alcoholism, and mental stress. Yet compared to most of the world, we are tremendously rich in material wealth, we're the best housed people in the world, the majority of us are well dressed, huge numbers of us are overfed, and great quantities of money are spent on booze, gambling, and drugs. Mr. Speaker, it is not a question of money.

As some members realize, the Human Resources Research Council was not supported by the new Progressive Conservative government and was abandoned in 1972. But before it was discontinued, concern was expressed that it was a cozy backwater for university profs who wanted some comfortable research projects. It had an ongoing program in six study areas: education, social/economic opportunity, urbanization, human behavior, studies of the future, and social audit. These are the kinds of studies that could also be undertaken by the proposed Alberta family institute.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting when you see what the bureaucrats do with what we legislators put into law. One of their bulletins, Volume 2, Number 1, January 1970, says:

What have you done?

... looking back and looking forward, for preparing annual reports and submitting budgets

.....

The following list includes activities which have either been completed at HRRC during the past year, or which are underway and due to be completed within the next few months.

Mr. Speaker, I'll just run through some of these, but my question to the members is: was any action taken by the politicians? A Study of Social Development and Planning in Alberta: "an initial endeavor in an attempt to enhance and contribute to an improved capability in Alberta's human resource development planning." Or a working paper on the "implications for social development planning in a transition from relatively stable to rapidly changing social welfare functions". Another one was: Who Gave the Lead? Thinking Makes It So; and Related Problems on the Meaning of the Human Resources Concept. Then we go into Symposium on Social Opportunity in Alberta: "Papers presented by forty scholars from Alberta universities on social opportunity in education, legal justice, health care, economics, politics and minority groups". On and on it goes. There's a picture here of a bureaucrat who "has cleared his desk in anticipation of the applications for the next grants-in-aid competition." Beautiful.

Mr. Speaker, we have on page 3 a research project: Design for the 70's — Humanization of Learning: A Proposal. The purpose is "to design and develop a total school program and environment which has as its overriding objective the humanization of learning." Whatever that is. And get this, Mr. Speaker: "Project will last for five years." I'm sure glad this government shut that operation down.

Mr. Speaker, I could go through the appendix: Personalities and Aging; A Codification of Studies of the Future; The Demand for an Action Guidance Program for Women; Demographic Study of Edmonton and Calgary. That one was "aborted", whatever that means in the case of studies, but that's what happened to it. They talk about an Exploratory Social Audit; Humanization of Learning — I mentioned that previously. On and on it goes.

Mr. Speaker, we could go on forever. Do we want to set up another institute with this kind of activity?

The hon. Member for Calgary Currie mentioned the Vanier Institute. It was set up by proceeds of an endowment fund supplied by the provinces of Canada in concert with the federal government. It has roughly \$500,000 a year for work, and a staff of between 12 and 13. Here's a quote my research assistant got from the

executive director: Originally the major money was spent on research, but they found this to be of little value, and they've spent their time and energies on other things.

Again, I think it's interesting to see what kind of activities they've engaged in. In 1972 they had a catalogue of Canadian Resources on the Family; 1969, Day Care: A Resource for the Contemporary Family; Seminar; in 1971, Day Care: Establishing Community Services; 1970, The Family and Tax Report: Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, Trade, and Economic Affairs; 1968, The Family in the Evolution of Agriculture; 1970, Family Life Education in the Media of Mass Communication; 1971, Family Life Education in the Schools; 1973, Family Life Education in Voluntary Associations; 1963-67, An Inventory of Family Research and Studies in Canada; in 1977, The New Life: Contemporary Familial Lifestyles. You see, Mr. Speaker, it goes on and on and on.

In defence of his suggestion, the Member for Calgary Currie said:

... if we go to any university in this province we'll find shelves of information with respect to the family unit: trends regarding it, and an assessment of problems facing it.

I ask, does the hon. member wish to take up more shelf space? Do you want to look at more squiggles and graphs prepared by students who probably never were any good at mathematics or statistical analysis? What good is an assessment of any problem if no specific action is taken to solve it?

Further, the hon. member said:

... we as a government ... make decisions based on the family unit We ... pass laws and create social directions without a detailed analysis of what is happening in those areas.

I'd like to take one subject in brief detail — day care. Did we say it would be better for mothers to adopt the traditional role as seen by some of us male chauvinists, that women should stay home? We might have thought so, but we realized we had to live with the times. Did we say that all those people who were divorced and separated should go back with their spouses and raise their children so the mother could stay home? Did we say we don't like the social direction we find Albertans taking, so we are going to legislate them into different directions?

We as government members said: there are a lot of parents who need help, there are a lot of children being raised in day care centres, there are a lot of one-parent families that need financial help, and we're going to do something about it. Mr. Speaker, an Act was introduced so that those in need could be helped.

Let us take seat-belt legislation. Will it be introduced after we investigate the families of the riders and ask their opinion? Or will we look at statistics involving car accidents and what happens to passengers with or without seat belts on? Did the motorcyclists who were protesting our helmet legislation suggest that the family unit should be considered? Not likely. Returning to their stated reason, they were unhappy because we were invading their privacy.

Mr. Speaker, I don't accept the reasoning of the hon. member when he talks about doing things from the family unit point of view. I don't agree that we go back and take the family unit out from our total society and deal with problems in that way. Mr. Speaker, if we

adopt the institute as he suggested, all I can see is we're going to have more of these studies on university shelves.

The hon. Member for Calgary Currie also mentioned that he had some very, very positive reports on the validity of \$11,000 of taxpayers' money that was recently spent by Edmonton city council on a report that the *Edmonton Journal* called a "meagre report". I've already mentioned numerous reports of a similar nature where millions of dollars have been spent on studies. The one that came from Edmonton — any of you fellows here who are hon. taxpayers of the city of Edmonton, you contributed to this. [interjections] One of the recommendations, Mr. Speaker, was that an attractive, colorful summary should be prepared for public consumption to promote the positive features of family life through posters, regular news features in local newspapers, and featured radio and television programs. Kiss your wife every morning; she's a great gal. Pat the kids on the head as you go out the door, and everything is going to be great. Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of nonsense that will come forward as long as politicians do not act on reports already completed or studies that have been prepared after careful research.

Many of us appreciate that perhaps we're moving from a liberal society to a more conservative one. Perhaps some of us are disturbed, but let's be a little critical for a few minutes.

The report of the local academic says that in 1971-76 we had the highest divorce rate in Canada. Yet according to a research table I have, Alberta had a rate of 309.9, the second highest in Canada in 1976; the province of British Columbia was first.

But, Mr. Speaker, here is an interesting statistic from that table. The province of Newfoundland had 76 divorces per 100,000, roughly one-quarter of our rate. Many years ago I lived in Newfoundland. Right now, it has the highest unemployment in Canada, it has the lowest minimum wage in Canada, it has a very, very difficult economic scene, and perhaps it may have a stronger religious bias than we have in our province. But I suggest, Mr. Speaker, this is what happens when people pull statistics out and don't compare them with the environment from which they come. We can get trapped in these things time after time.

Let's look at what may cause some of the divorces in our province. How many people come here from British Columbia or Saskatchewan so they can be here a year, get a divorce, and not have to wait as long as they do in the other provinces? How many divorced people remarry? Why should society get upset about people wanting to end a union that two people made without society input? Mr. Speaker, if you really want to make the divorce rate go down, prevent marriages. It's that simple.

You may laugh. I'm a member of the board of stewards of the United Church in Calgary. One of the difficulties we always come up with is somebody who rushes in and says to the minister, we have to have a church wedding. You haven't seen him for years; you'll never see him again. He's one of the BMB wanderers. They go into a church three times in their life: when they're born, that's when they're brought in to be christened; when they're married, they walk in for that one; and when they're buried. Two out of the three times they're brought in by someone else. [interjections] Right. Hatched, matched, and dispatched.

Mr. Speaker, the report goes on to say that two-

thirds of single-parent families headed by women are on welfare. Well, I question that. Do they have a police-type of surveillance where they check the figures every day to see who's on welfare and who goes off, this kind of thing? Perhaps if we paid more women the same kind of money that we pay men for the same kind of work, we'd have fewer women on welfare, and fewer women in need of social assistance.

Mr. Speaker, another figure that I found, a little concern. It mentions illegitimate births being up 36 per cent. We all know that people are living together without benefit of clergy. I'm not saying I condone it; I certainly don't. But this does happen. In spite of the pill and all these other devices we have today, women do get pregnant, whether they're married or not, and they do have babies. Why should you get that concerned about that kind of statistic when you look at the situation in which we're living?

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member's figures were misquoted in *Hansard*, but here's one I do get a little upset about. I have discussed this with agencies in Calgary and Edmonton, and with medical people, and none of them agree with these figures. The report suggests there's one abortion for every five conceptions. I should point out, Mr. Speaker, a woman can abort for a variety of reasons, and many of them are beyond the ability of a woman to initiate. The term they use is "spontaneous abortion". My colleague on the right would be quite familiar with that, but I wasn't. [interjections] How ridiculous to suggest that a ratio of conception to abortion should be of any concern.

He goes on to say that there are two illegal abortions for every five conceptions. Now remember: two illegal, one legal. That's three out of five, 60 per cent. Now, my medical colleagues tell me they find that very, very hard to believe. The other thing I'd like to know is: does the researcher have a hotline to the abortion mills, so that every time an illegal abortion is committed they tell him about it? I would suggest, having been on the Calgary hospital board for seven years, the number of illegal abortions is a lot less than before the abortion law was changed. More important, does he get confirmation from every doctor in the city to advise him that a woman is pregnant?

Mr. Speaker, another issue is mental health. They claim that in the city of Edmonton, they have more mental health problems in families. I know of four families in the province of Alberta that are all what you'd call good, middle-class families. They've been married 25 years or more, their kids have gone to university, the people are pillars of their church, they went to hockey games with their kids, they were coaches of the kids. They've done everything they were supposed to do, but they still have mental problems. What are the research people going to do about that? And, Mr. Speaker, they have sought and got professional counselling with regard to mental health.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not concerned about the rates in Ontario, Quebec, or the rest of Canada. I'm concerned with the rates of mental health problems in the province of Alberta. This is where the problems are, and we surely can solve them ourselves. I'm not saying we don't talk to those other provinces if they have information or experience that will help us, but we have to solve our own problems.

Mr. Speaker, we don't need more research. We need action. We need solutions. Perhaps what we need is a

pragmatic analysis of why politicians don't act on some of these research programs, of which we have hundreds and thousands lining the university shelves.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to mention one other thing. The hon. member mentioned the great support he has. I have a letter here, and this came quite by accident. It was addressed to my research assistant from the chap who is an associate dean in the University of Calgary. I'm a little nervous, because I don't know this chap. He's probably going to be very annoyed at me. Here's why he supports the concept of the Alberta family institute. He says:

... we would like to propose the establishment of a Chair of Family Practice within this faculty for a ten-year period. This Chair of Family Practice would be a joint appointment between the Institute and this faculty, and would serve as an integrative ...

That's a new word on me.

... link between research and teaching so that there would be an immediate application of the knowledge generated from the Alberta Family Institute.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that just adds more confirmation of what I was afraid this institute would become.

In conclusion I'd like to say that private members' Bills time is precious time. There are other jurisdictions in Canada where if a member sponsoring a private member's Bill gets the support of say 20 members in the House, it has to be voted on. Being politicians, we all have to get a certain amount of press, whether in the news media or on radio, television, whatever. Otherwise your constituents say, what are you doing, you just sleep up there all time. If you're promoting all sorts of Bills of varying natures they say, what are you trying to do? I've had my share; all I need to do is mention fluoridation and non-smoking. Mr. Speaker, I think we should be cautious in putting forward Bills that may represent our biases but not necessarily our constituents'.

I'd like to close by mentioning Aesop's fable about the green peas. There are five peas in a pod. The little guy in the middle looks at his neighbor, and he's green; and the little guy in the middle's green; and the fellow on the right is green; and the pea pod is green. And he says, the whole world must be green.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this discussion of the proposed Alberta Family Institute Act. I was intrigued by the comments of the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight, and I found that I was in substantial agreement with one of his concluding comments that we "need actions and solutions". I quite agree with that appeal. I just wish there hadn't been in his comments an impoverishment of "actions and solutions". As he dealt with the proposed legislation, I couldn't help but recall a former business partner of mine who was always critical of people in committee who would attack good ideas before they had been properly formulated. He circulated a memo to my other partners. The title of the memo was: 85 Ways To Kill a Good Idea. On the weekend I intend to contact my former partner and say, from the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight here are two more to add to your list.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in this sitting as I participated in the debate on the throne speech, I made this observa-

tion with all sincerity:

Calgary Fish Creek is a constituency characterized by strong families, attractive homes, and a good life style

In my constituency I see abundant evidence of the value of strong families, and I can readily recognize that there is a substantive correlation between strong families and a strong nation. That recognition has prompted me, sir, to rise today in support, albeit qualified, of the legislation proposed by the hon. Member for Calgary Currie.

I'm sure that support for the concept of the family and its contribution to society is widespread, in this House and certainly throughout Alberta. But by no means would I suggest that support is unanimous. The family is coming under increasing attack in Canada and in Alberta from many quarters, ironically even from professional groups. A professor at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry in Toronto recently observed that the family is coming under harsh criticism with many contemporary psychiatrists stressing its alleged capacity to destroy and harm. He also said that today many Canadians feel they must break with the family and establish their individuality.

Mr. Speaker, before examining what's happening to the family in Alberta and the implications of the proposed Alberta family institute, I want to emphasize to the hon. members present my unequivocal endorsement of the family. The family unit functions the way it does because of its efficiency as contrasted with any sort of social unit devised for such purposes. The family unit provides the background in which a child can learn to live with others, and it's a major source for the transmission from generation to generation of cultural and, perhaps even more importantly, spiritual values. As the Royal Bank of Canada Monthly Letter observed a few years ago:

The family confers personhood. Only in it can a person be fully himself. In all other spheres of life one has to win recognition by accomplishment, but in the family one has status by virtue of existence.

The benefits of family life of course aren't limited to children. Adults also are nurtured by the family unit. Bonding to others in the family may be as life sustaining for an adult as it is for the smallest infant.

Just one other comment on why I feel the way I do about the family: the harmonious family forms the nearest-to-complete basis for the happiness and prosperity of the person, as well as being the very foundation of society. That takes me to the rhetorical question: how is the family faring in Alberta? We've had somewhat conflicting views of that question. After my examination of that question for the past few days, Mr. Speaker, I am prompted to reply, not very well. May I cite five family deterioration indicators in Alberta. One, Alberta has the highest divorce rate in Canada. Two, Alberta has twice as many single-parent families per capita as any other province. Three, nearly four out of ten recipients of social service benefits are single-parent families headed by a female. Four, Alberta has more mental health problems associated with the family unit than any other province. Five, in an interesting comparison of the 1966 and 1976 censuses in Alberta, the average number of children in the Alberta family has dropped from about two to about one and a half.

The birth rate is plummeting from 21 per thousand to 18 per thousand, and reference has already been

made to what's happening to the divorce rate.

To relate that to financial terms, the dollar cost to Alberta taxpayers of the results of these declining family characteristics must be a very significant drain on our economy. Despite the fact that here in Alberta much research is being done regarding the family, and despite the fact that a number of agencies and institutions are working in family areas — a point made very well by the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight — I am forced to conclude, Mr. Speaker, that if we as legislators merely cling to the status quo, the deterioration of the family in Alberta will continue, resulting in an ever-increasing drain on our resources and, more importantly, an increasingly weakened foundation that not even a Heritage Savings Trust Fund can buttress.

Well, what then can be done? Of course the answer has eluded many societies and nations, and certainly I don't have the answer. But I do think the proposed Alberta family institute, with some modifications, is a potential partial answer, and therefore must be seriously considered by the members of this Assembly.

The hon. Member for Calgary McKnight has paraded the standard three or four objections to an institutional solution. But might I point out, Mr. Speaker, that these objections are also the usual criticisms levelled at legislative assemblies. Frankly, I don't think they necessarily apply in either case.

What would the proposed institute do that isn't already being done? The proposer of the legislation, the hon. Member for Calgary Currie, previously and again today enunciated some of the things the proposed institute could do. I think he made a valid point when he said that data that has been assembled and is being assembled by agencies throughout the province needs to be co-ordinated and then brought together as formalized input into this government's longer range planning. I think when this government looks at legislation, at social thrusts, someone needs to ask on a systematic basis, what does this do for our families? That the legislative process needs to be conducted with periodic family impact assessment was also, I suggest, a valid point.

A number of other arguments have been advanced by the proposer, and in the interests of time I won't reiterate them. But I would certainly endorse a rereading of *Hansard* to ensure that we really are clear on what has been proposed and its rationale. I did suggest, though, that my support for the notion had some qualifications. I'd like fleetingly to refer to two.

The concept of trustees with citizen input is valid, but I would like to qualify that somewhat. In making this suggestion, I share the reservations many of you have about academics and sociologists. I don't think those reservations are utterly justified, but I must admit I have those reservations. Consequently I would suggest that these trustees should be drawn, if not exclusively at least primarily, from the business community. That is to say, the chief executive officer and most of the trustees would not be academics, not sociologists, but business people with a demonstrated ability to translate research conclusions into plans for action.

A second addition in the area of public communications, and then a comment for my hon. colleague from Calgary McKnight. I am persuaded that the traditional methods of the advertising profession could profitably be brought to bear on this very serious social problem in Alberta. I see lots of potential for advertis-

ing and promotional campaigns designed to keep us — as fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters — reminded of our individual responsibility to the family and, secondly, to keep us all recurrently apprized of the value the family plays here in Alberta.

In making this second recommendation, I recognize somewhat the logic of the position advanced by my hon. colleague from Calgary McKnight. But if my memory serves me correctly, he used the word "nonsense" in summarizing his response to the recommendation for, I think it was, some printed material or other material that would be part of the communications program. I think that he who pursues that line of reasoning very seriously underestimates the potential impact of public communications. On another occasion, or perhaps in another place, I would like to acquaint the hon. member with literally dozens, if not hundreds, of programs . . .

MR. MUSGREAVE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I would like to suggest to the hon. member that I'm well aware of the abilities and materials of media people, particularly advertising men.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that comment. But I would still like to use this as an occasion to . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: To flog it.

MR. PAYNE: . . . to flog it, yes.

The hour is almost gone, Mr. Speaker. May I add a P.S?

I believe it was two years ago when we saw International Women's Year throughout the world. That proved to be a very useful mechanism for focussing world attention on problems experienced by women of the world. Of course this year, 1979, we are seeing the International Year of the Child. Although it's too early to make an assessment of its impact, I think we as an Assembly would agree that there is great potential value in the International Year of the Child; which leads me to the obvious recommendation that we should forward to responsible authorities that perhaps in 1980 we consider the international year of the family. I think such a year would be very timely.

In its Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations declared: "The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society . . .", and I'd like hon. members to catch the last half of the sentence, ". . . and is entitled to protection by society and the State." I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the erosion of the family in Alberta has now reached the point where it could well be said that it is in need of the protection spoken of in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I further submit that the family institute proposed by the hon. Member for Calgary Currie is a most appropriate vehicle to satisfy the need.

I would like to conclude with an interesting appeal for leadership made by the Royal Bank monthly newsletter:

We need something more definite, more fixed,
more readily available. No sweeping philosophies
or meticulous statistics will do . . .

which perhaps may be the critical point that was advanced

. . . but a programme of education and leadership,
starting now.

I propose that that leadership start in this place, and

start now.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, in view of the hour, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, at 8 p.m. this evening the House will consider certain Bills for third reading, and then proceed to deal with Motion No. 16 on the Order Paper by the hon. Government House Leader and Attorney General.

[The House recessed at 5:27 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.]

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS** (Third Reading)

Bill 22 **The Legislative Assembly** **Amendment Act, 1979**

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 22, The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 1979.

MR. R. CLARK: For the third time, Mr. Speaker, I want to express in the strongest possible way my feeling that the principles in this Bill are wrong. In my judgment the move being made in this legislation is contrary to British parliamentary tradition. It's contrary to the basis that elected members come to this Assembly as representatives of their people. Yes, some are selected to be members of Executive Council. But a very interesting bit of arithmetic will point out to hon. members that we're now in a situation where if one totals up the number of MLAs who are either cabinet ministers or have received appointments from the cabinet, or are in the process of being appointed, to government boards, agencies, and commissions, that group will be in the majority in this House. In my judgment that is absolutely and totally wrong in principle.

Mr. Speaker, when the Government House Leader opened debate on Bill 22, he explained what the government was trying to do. There was a feeling among the public that elected people really were not having the kind of input or in control of what was taking place in government. I think many people, regardless of where they sit in this Assembly or how they voted in the recent federal or provincial elections, would share that point of view. If that is the government's feeling — and I think it's a feeling held by many people — government might have done a number of things: one, a far wider use of public accounts; secondly, a far wider use of the legislative committee idea, an idea this government was quite keen on in the early '70s. One of the agencies reviewed by a legislative committee for years is the Workers' Compensation Board. That government agency is reviewed every four years.

A number of years ago the Member for Camrose was chairman of a select committee dealing with crop insurance. I really would not want to become involved in commenting on the value of the recommendations made, because I was a member of the committee. Despite my being on the committee, the government selected and followed up on a large number of the recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, I remind members of the committee on censorship, chaired by the former Member for St. Albert Mr. Jamison, and the legislative committee on government regulations, chaired by the former Member for Drayton Valley, Mr. Zander. That committee spent a great deal of time looking at this whole question of the flood of government regulations, and some things that could be done, one, to bring it under control and, secondly, so it could be more carefully reviewed by the Legislature. Mr. Speaker, precious little has ever been done with the recommendations from that committee. Precious little has ever been done with the recommendations of the committee on censorship, either.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, there are several things this government could do, other than what's in this Bill, that would enable this government to come to grips with the idea of elected people being more in charge of what's happening in the governmental process. I would suggest to members that in my judgment there are some valid suggestions in an April 1979 statement by the Business Council on National Issues. Albeit, these recommendations deal with the government of Canada, but they certainly have some implications for us here in the province of Alberta. In my judgment, once again this is an area where this government has had the chance to do some pioneering. The direction this piece of legislation takes us is not the direction at all that I think Alberta should be moving in if we're really deeply committed to the system that has elected us all.

[Motion carried; Bill 22 read a third time]

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following Bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried]

No.	Name	Moved by
6	The Fuel Oil Administration Amendment Act, 1979	Crawford (for Gogo)
13	The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1979	Diachuk
21	The Municipal Debt Reduction Act	Moore
25	The Landlord and Tenant Act, 1979	Koziak

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

16. Moved by Mr. Crawford.

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta request the Executive Council to appoint a committee of three Alberta citizens, namely

- (a) Mr. Justice Tervie H. Miller, chairman
- (b) Mr. N.B. Coutts
- (c) Mr. William S. McGregor

with instructions to:

1. assess the adequacy or otherwise of
 - (a) existing indemnities and expense allowances (including per diem living allowances) of MLAs taking into consideration present and anticipated circumstances and the demands upon the MLA to meet his or her legislative and constituency responsibilities;
 - (b) existing salaries of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Premier, Leader of the Opposition, and members of the Executive Council;
2. make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly as to changes (if any) in the said indemnities, expense allowances, and salaries as may be fair and appropriate.
3. complete and publish its report on or before September 15, 1979, and deliver a copy of said report to the Speaker, the Premier, and the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I gave notice of Motion No. 16 and at that time indicated to hon. members what was proposed. Of course the motion is now on the Order Paper.

I think all that need be said in respect to this motion is that, to all intents and purposes, given only a few changes that were appropriate in the wording, it is the same motion that was passed by this House on two previous occasions. It establishes a means whereby certain citizens of Alberta can advise this House and its members in regard to the matters described therein. As in the past, the citizens are distinguished ones, and have undertaken the duties proposed under this motion and agreed to perform them and report to the House in due course in whatever manner they consider to be appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, those are all the remarks I would make in moving Motion No. 16.

[Motion carried]

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS** (Committee of Supply)

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply will please come to order.

Before we commence proceedings, I would like to remind all hon. members of the committee that we will continue to try to follow the regular rules of the Assembly with regard to procedure during address. All comments will be addressed to the Chair, and then on to the minister or hon. member to whom they may be addressed. I know that during the session the Speaker has, from time to time, brought this to the attention of hon. members. I trust that we will try to keep following that procedure during committee stages as well.

Department of Municipal Affairs

MR. CHAIRMAN: Has anybody any comments or questions regarding Vote 1? If not, we'll proceed to the sub-votes.

Agreed to:

Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services:

1.01 — Minister's Office	\$110,883
1.02 — Personnel Group	\$198,066
1.03 — Administrative Support	\$2,537,719
1.04 — Provincial-Municipal Finance Council	—
1.05 — Urban Policy Research	\$197,013

1.06 — Assessment Equalization Board

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. What are the government's plans with regard to looking at this taxation base question? I raise the question for two reasons, one being that in my own constituency there has been a reassessment in the town of Olds. If the minister hasn't already heard of it, he is going to. I've been requested to see if someone from the equalization branch of the department can come down and meet with a number of business people in town who feel that something like a 50 to 80 per cent increase in their assessments is totally out of line.

Perhaps on a broader front, Mr. Minister, is the age-old problem of acreages and the \$40 per acre for farmland. I know it's a thorny political issue, but I ask the minister very directly: does the government have plans to take any initiatives relating to the equalization formula and procedures, and specifically to acreages and agricultural assessments?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, those are important questions. I think it would be well if I did try to explain to some members who have been inquiring about this — and there have been many — what the situation actually is, why the problem is there, and perhaps indicate to some extent how we intend to resolve it.

First of all, the problem with equalized assessment only exists with respect to areas where we have a school division covering more than one municipality, which is common in many of our rural situations. The market value of urban land in our smaller towns and villages has grown quite dramatically over the past three or four years. So you have a situation where a lot might have been worth \$3,000 three years ago, and now it's worth \$20,000. Equalization is a very simple thing. In its simplest terms, the board comes in and says: look, you haven't done a general assessment for five years. According to our calculations on increased values, your equalized assessment should be something more than your live assessment. There's an appeal to that. Many municipalities have appealed, and sometimes they get some relief.

But the basic problem isn't with the equalization board, and the appeals don't solve the problem. Quite frankly, the problem has arisen because we have a maximum \$40 per acre assessment on farmland, and there is no ceiling on assessment in smaller urban communities that lie within counties and MDs and are part of the same school division. Those communities are paying an increased proportion of the supplementary requisition. That's where the problem is.

I have not had an opportunity to discuss with my colleagues how we will resolve this total problem. Part of the reason is that I wanted to await the publication of the Provincial-Municipal Finance Council report that deals with that very issue quite extensively — once members have had an opportunity to read it. I want to get some reaction to that report and its recommendations from the Association of MDs and Counties and

the Urban Municipalities Association, whom I met with at noon today.

All I can say is that we will have to move from the fixed, frozen ceiling on the assessment on farmland. My personal preference, which has certainly not yet been endorsed by our government, is that we need to move to a system of assessing farmland based on its productive value. I don't think there's any way we can go to market value, but certainly we need to move from this fixed ceiling of \$40 per acre. Quite frankly, as the years go by that will result in farmers paying a larger share of the taxation dollar. In addition, we need to look at the increases that occur in the cost of operating schools and the requisitions that are being levied, and that's not necessarily my department.

That's the problem. I'm well aware of it, and it is a real problem. It can't be solved by the equalization board reviewing it, although that may help in some instances. But I'd have to say it isn't the board's fault. It's the system we've had — I don't know, Mr. Chairman, for 30 years or more. We've had that ceiling on farmland for a very long time. It's just in recent years that the market value of urban land has moved up so dramatically.

So we'll be looking at it. I think I said yesterday, perhaps in the Legislature, that quite frankly my target is to try to get the groups together, have the discussions, make the decisions, and hopefully be in a position in the next spring session to bring in the necessary legislation to make those changes, together with the various regulations that have to be altered.

Bear in mind, then, that we'll have a very large job in terms of reassessment in some places. That isn't done overnight, either. So it will take a little time. But I think we'll make some progress on it over the next few months with the publication of the report.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to make one comment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wonder if we could have a little order and keep the noise level down.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to make one remark on the possible move to take the \$40 assessment ceiling from farmland. I'm thinking of irrigation districts, where the productive value is much higher than it is on the dryland farms. I just hope the minister will take into consideration that the cost of production is much higher on our irrigation systems: we have to pay for our water. When the minister is looking at the recommendations in the municipal finance report, I hope this will be taken into consideration.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of comments on Vote 1, and a question or two to the minister.

First of all, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate very much the report on the municipal finance council regarding the financing of local governments in the province. At the outset I'd like to congratulate my colleague the Member for Lethbridge East, the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, the chairman of that committee. As the minister has already noted, I think it should be made very clear that the individual recommendations are not necessarily the views of the government. I think the minister is fair when he says the

government will consider it.

However, I notice on page 139 we have some uniqueness here in Alberta. We went a long time without daylight saving time, and somehow we had that changed. We're still unique in that we don't have a sales tax. And I see we're unique in that only the western provinces of Canada exempt farm buildings. The rest of the country somehow manages to do it.

Alberta was pioneered by people in sod huts, which was essential. Today they're in \$200,000 air-conditioned homes, and for some reason those homes aren't taxed. I have always had great difficulty understanding where two homes are side by side, one is taxed at some exorbitant rate because they don't produce the equivalent of a municipal by-law, perhaps the old age pension, and someone next door is paying \$4,000 or \$5,000 in taxes. I think that has to be addressed, and I'm pleased to hear the minister is going to look at it.

Surely we're in the Dark Ages when we have land assessed in statute at \$40 an acre, and it's selling at \$40,000 an acre. And we have the audacity to talk about assessments based on market values of things in the province. For such a progressive province, I think we're still in the Dark Ages. I would hope that matter would come to resolution stage here, and we could talk about it. Certainly it's got to be resolved. I'm pleased to see the Leader of the Official Opposition agreeing with me.

MR. R. CLARK: Speak for yourself.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Minister, I've had representation made to me — and perhaps you'll see fit to comment — on the planning commissions, certainly in the southern part of Alberta, where people tend to complain about the role of the planning commission in preventing their doing the things they want to do. Yet, I notice that according to the Act, planning commissions consist only of elected people. So I have great difficulty in understanding how people can complain about the role of the planning commission when, in effect, it consists only of elected people. I guess the message is that the administration in the planning commission somehow manages either to convince the elected members to go contrary to the wishes of the districts represented or to give them snow jobs.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, to the minister: the Alberta debt reduction plan is of course welcomed all through the province. I recall comments that municipal tax on people's properties was going to be reduced by 10 to 20 per cent. I know many cases where the tax bill is due the end of this week, and there are increases. As we all know, that is a result of supplementary requisitions by school boards. While municipal governments are holding the line with taxes, the school boards are increasing — by 30 per cent in Lethbridge District 51. That's kind of difficult for a dull fellow like me to understand, Mr. Minister. We enact legislation giving \$1 billion to the municipalities and end up having a 30 per cent increase in the supplementary requisition.

Of course, the argument you hear from the school board is that the provincial share of the contribution to the municipality is reduced from somewhere like 88 per cent to 68 per cent. The school boards seem to think that because the provincial share is decreased, they must pick that up from the local taxpayer. I have great difficulty when we as a government explain that wage guidelines of 6 to 7.5 per cent are recommended, then we see settlements of 9 per cent with schoolteachers

who average around 20,000 a year. Well, is it any wonder that the provincial share decreases? We believe in local autonomy, then we let these people do these things. Yet it comes back to the complaint to the MLA from constituents: you people give \$1 billion and yet our taxes increase. Now it would appear that somewhere in the legislation — and I don't want to make the judgment — regardless of where we reduce the municipal property tax for municipal services, the difference is always picked up by school districts.

Mr. Chairman, my question to the minister is: has the Minister of Municipal Affairs had discussions with the Minister of Education about the matter of supplementary requisitions?

Thank you very much.

MR. L. CLARK: I'd just like to say a few words. I looked at the report on assessment that came down the other night. I was quite pleased with what was in it, because it's closer to what I think than I thought it would be, after being on the council.

I have only one concern: they're still leaving it up to local governments or local people to assess what constitutes a farmer. I feel that nobody can sit down and say who a farmer is. You can go to land use, if you'd like, but to say who a farmer is and whether they're using that land to advantage or for farming, I think is just a matter of opinion. Whether a person wants to run 10 cows or whether he wants to grow grass, I think is a management decision. I'm still of the opinion that all land, from acreages that have never been subdivided down to a certain acreage, should be classed as farmland and then the residents in that area taxed. The houses of farmers should be taxed the same as any other individuals in this province.

I just wanted to put that in. I did not look it over as well as I should have, because I haven't had that much time. But I'm going to look it over a lot more before this goes through.

Thank you.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a few comments relating to some of the comments made by a couple of previous speakers, one being with reference to assessment on production. I agree with the Member for Bow Valley on irrigation. Recently, about two or three years ago, the county of Forty Mile received quite a substantial increase in its assessment because of some 10 years or thereabouts between assessments. A ruling put in, I believe prior to 1969 or '70 — where the productive ability of irrigation was valued at three times that of dryland — created a manyfold increase in the taxes and in the assessment. I would urge the minister, as a previous member suggested, to consider the production costs involved, because they do tend to run pretty high.

Secondly, Mr. Minister, planning commissions in southern Alberta claim that because of the new Planning Act they need to double the staff they have and double their contributions, more in some cases. I'd like the minister to comment on the need for planning commissions to expand to that extent and the costs that are involved in doing that.

MR. MOORE: Just a couple of brief comments, Mr. Chairman. First of all, the planning commissions do come under a later vote. I've made note of the questions and will try to respond to them then.

I did want to say a couple of additional things about taxation and some of the equities that might exist. First of all, to say that the suggestion, which is pretty prevalent in some quarters, that the solution of all problems is to assess and tax farm homes does not take into consideration in any way the benefits that that might provide to other property tax owners. I've assessed the situation with regard to a place like the county of Strathcona, and really all that would do is suggest that misery loves company. That's why I talked earlier about the top level on farmland, because that's a far more effective way to shift taxation levels from one group to another.

Members should be well aware, too, if they read this report — and I know you'll have time over the course of the next couple of months — that we've been assessing railways at a flat figure of \$1,000 a mile for about 35 years. If that isn't out by 10 or 20 times, I'd be surprised.

You should be aware as well that we have a depreciation schedule on machinery and equipment, which constitutes a very significant assessment base in many areas. That results in perfectly good operational plants of various kinds, industrial plants, having their machinery and equipment completely depreciated in three or four years and still perfectly good. There's no assessment at all on it.

I just wanted to make those comments, Mr. Chairman, to indicate to members that while I did talk about farmland in my initial remarks, that's not the only problem with regard to taxation levels. Certainly a lot of industry has been escaping a level of tax because of high depreciation schedules and things like railways, which for years and years and years have been set like farmland at \$1,000 a mile.

So we're going to be taking a look at a good number of other things besides farmland. Most if not all of them are contained in recommendations in this book. The report itself has some pretty good background discussion in those areas. For my colleagues, whether they be on the government or the opposition side of the House, who think the only solution might be to assess and tax farm homes, you really have to study the proposition a little before you consider that that's the only solution.

MR. SINDLINGER: Mr. Chairman, a question in regard to comments just made by the minister. I was interested in his comments on taxation inequities, especially with regard to the \$1,000 per mile tax on railways for the last 35 years. It's my understanding that railways through cities were not taxed during that period. I wonder if the minister could comment on that inequity.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I believe the hon. member is correct. We're talking about railway lines, not the yards, going through various municipalities in this province. I understand that tax has been \$1,000 per mile. The Provincial-Municipal Finance Council recommendation is that it move to \$10,000 a mile, or that some other more rational system of assessing and taxing those lines be developed. It may well be that there should be a total reassessment of taxation that might apply to other forms of railway equipment or yards located in cities. I would be open to representation and suggestions in that regard.

MR. SINDLINGER: A supplementary question, Mr. Chairman. Several Alberta municipalities are considering the relocation of rail lines within the municipality. Would you give consideration to the establishment of a tax system which would encourage or discourage such relocation?

MR. MOORE: I'm not sure I understand the hon. member's comments, Mr. Chairman. I'm not aware that we want to try to discourage the relocation of railway yards out of some downtown areas.

MR. SINDLINGER: Mr. Chairman, some municipalities are giving consideration to the relocation of railway tracks from prime areas within the municipality. Certainly tax regimes or systems could go a long way to encourage such relocation. I wonder if any co-operation or consideration is being given to the design of a tax system which would encourage or at least facilitate the relocation of railway tracks from those prime areas.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I'd be open to receiving the hon. member's thoughts in that regard. It isn't a matter that I've addressed. First of all, I don't think we should be using property tax to steer development or make people move things. But if hon. members, after reading the report I've referred to this evening, think there is an avenue we could explore in that regard, I'd be open to considering anything they might suggest.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. I was glad to hear him say he didn't think property tax should be used to influence development in our communities. As he is a new minister in this portfolio, I hope I can do a little lobbying on behalf of the cities. I've been unsuccessful with former municipal ministers. This goes back a long time, to 1967.

My understanding is that just this week the city of Edmonton agreed to spend \$75,000 on what they call an advanced life-support ambulance program in Edmonton. At the same time, they've expressed concern that the province is doing a similar study. The minister may think this is a health problem, but I'd like to point out the difficulty to him. The city of Calgary adopted an ambulance program with the idea that we would lobby the provincial government very strongly to try to get them to realize this was a health facility and therefore shouldn't be a burden on the property-tax payer.

The minister just said he doesn't believe — I gather he means property taxes should go to expenditures that look after property, such as fire, sewage disposal, garbage collection, police maintenance, these kinds of things. I'd like to ask him this: will he make his best efforts in persuading members of Executive Council that the delivery of an ambulance system is primarily a health measure and should be removed from the burden of property taxes, particularly in our larger centres, where we're trying to develop metropolitan ambulance systems that look after not only the major centres but also the areas around them?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I can't go so far as to commit that I would lobby or support any particular system to ensure that we have a proper ambulance service in this province. I know it is a matter the hon.

Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has been addressing himself to in recent weeks.

I would refer members to recommendation number 78 of the Provincial-Municipal Finance Council report, which says the province should look into the financial arrangements and the prospect of cost sharing with municipalities inspection and training and examination of ambulance personnel. It makes a number of other recommendations with respect to delivery of health services and so on.

I'd like to have some opportunity to see what members of the Legislature and others think about the province being extensively involved in ground ambulance services. My department has been involved, but in a different way than most members would realize. I think we've been fairly extensively involved in providing municipal grants to assist with ambulance operation in almost every improvement district in the province. I've signed a good many in the last three or four weeks where we joined together with the town or something to support an ambulance service.

My personal opinion is that the system isn't that bad. Quite frankly, it perhaps could be improved by the addition of some support grants, but I think a province-wide system of ambulances operated by the provincial government would probably be the wrong direction to go. That doesn't mean there doesn't need to be some support for existing systems. My view is that in many, many regions they're doing quite all right.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the minister's comments and support what he's saying. Now that he's going to try to give some money to the cities, I'd like to suggest we take it away.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like the minister to comment — perhaps he hasn't had time yet to look at this particular facet of it. I would like to know what his reaction was to the suggestion of the municipal council that new industrial development in our province, as of a specific date, be pooled. Then the proceeds of that flow back to the various municipalities throughout the province, so that areas that don't benefit from the Cold Lake or the Fort McMurray installations, these kinds of things, would be able to enjoy some of the fruits of industrialization in our province. I think the cities of Calgary and Edmonton probably would come out even or lose a little, and they're a little nervous about any suggestion of this kind. I just wonder if the minister has had a chance to look at this equalization?

MR. MOORE: I've had a chance to look at the recommendations in the report. Quite frankly, they are that we move the school foundation fund 28 mill levy against all property except residential and farmland, which the province pays, from a school foundation fund to a municipal equalization fund, if you like. That would result in roughly a \$110 million or \$120 million fund being utilized for distribution to municipalities on the basis of need.

That's the recommendation in the report. I think it's well worth considering, and I've asked the Minister of Education if he would have some review of that particular aspect of the report. As I said earlier, I hope that over the course of the next few months we'll have broad discussions and be able to come to some conclusions on many aspects of it within the next year. That is one aspect of the report I certainly wouldn't rule out. I

think it is a useful suggestion. But certainly no commitment can be made at this time to move in that direction.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to get up and make a couple of comments and ask a question of the minister. I am particularly pleased that this is the minister who is going to be reviewing the tax system. I know of no one better than someone from a rural background to do that. I'm pleased with this report. I haven't had a chance to read it yet, but skimming through it I think it's one of the most positive things I've seen in a long time.

The concerns raised in the Macleod constituency, in particular about taxation of farm homes, is that it's the thin edge of the wedge. When you start taxing farm homes, the next thing in line is all other farm buildings. Since we have had The Planning Act and the land-use by-law that is coming in and the number of permits needed now, it's just an added thorn in the flesh to a lot of people. Now, that's only from the Macleod constituency.

I would like to ask the minister: has there been representation from all across the province on the taxation issue, from different municipalities, counties, and improvement districts? Basically, is that representation about the same from all over the province, or is it different?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, the Provincial-Municipal Finance Council did try to draw recommendations from various municipalities. If you read the full report, you'll see that on the question of sharing of new industrial property-tax growth, I believe they canvassed all municipalities for their views, and on other matters as well. So there's been some pretty good input. But this report is not one that's been widely discussed in terms of its recommendations. In fact, it hasn't been discussed except among those who were involved in developing it. So now we have an opportunity. We really have a discussion paper, and a very good one. I expect that over the course of the next few months there will be many more representations from municipal governments as a result of this report. I don't think we've reached the stage where we don't need any more representation. Certainly they're welcome over the next while. I would hope we'd be in a position by late this fall where I would be able to determine what direction we might take and say then that we've received everything we can in terms of recommendations from municipal governments, their two associations, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the hospital association, and others.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: A supplementary, Mr. Chairman. I understand the representation from the southern part of the province is basically that they feel it's something we're going to be doing, that there is going to be taxation on farm homes, so they better get their best plan in, even though they don't want any part of it. They think if there's likely going to be one, they better get their representation in. That's why I ask: until the time of this report, what kind of representation was made? Was there very much or very little?

MR. MOORE: There's been wide discussion among municipal groups on the question of whether or not

you tax improvements on farmland. It's varied a great deal.

MR. L. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister if municipalities will be receiving a copy of this report.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, 3,000 copies of the total report were printed, and 2,000 copies of just the 84 recommendations. During the latter part of this week and early next week copies will be mailed to all municipalities in Alberta, counties, MDs, towns, villages, cities, and improvement districts in sufficient number so that every councillor has an opportunity to have a copy. In addition, some volumes have been supplied to the two associations in case they have extra need for them. School boards throughout the province will receive copies of the report. I hope they'll all be in their hands by the end of next week, but to some extent that depends on Her Majesty's mail service. They're going out and, if any members need additional copies, I have them in my office. When municipal councillors call you, tell them they're coming and will be in the mail next week. There's no point in your picking them up to take to municipal councillors.

Agreed to:

1.0.6 — Assessment Equalization Board	\$280,215
1.0.7 — Liaison Group	\$35,390
Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$3,359,286

Vote 2 — Financial Support for Municipal Programs:

2.1 — Unconditional Assistance Grants to Municipalities	\$67,038,363
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MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Chairman, if I might direct a question to the minister. In the Speech from the Throne, I recall reference to the government's planning to look at an increase in the level of unconditional grant assistance to municipalities, yet I notice a change of some 4.1 per cent. I wonder if the minister could advise members of the committee what plans the government, and his department in particular, has with respect to a review of unconditional grant assistance to municipalities.

MR. MOORE: An important question again, Mr. Chairman. The percentage increase forecast is a bit misleading in that we have a 7 per cent increase across the board in unconditional municipal assistance grants. The figures are like they are because in the expenditures this year we do not have some special grants that were provided to the new town of Fort McMurray and, I believe, the county of Thorhild when we had a separation and a change of boundaries. We took some one-time special grants out of the vote, so the increase is exactly 7 per cent for the dollars that go as unconditional grants.

In addition, this year we are providing funds on a formula based on need. There are a number of different groups — towns, villages, cities, MDs, counties, and so on — and a system based on relative need relates to assessment levels per capita and so on. No one will get less than they got in 1978, the base year. Beyond that, the cities of Edmonton and Calgary are receiving

exactly 7 per cent increases. The balance of the province varies from increases as low as 1 per cent to increases as high as 100 per cent in some cases. Most summer villages, for example, are receiving fairly substantial percentage increases but, because they're quite small, that's not very many dollars.

The information on the exact level of unconditional municipal assistance grants for this year, together with an indication of how the formula was developed, went out last week and is now in the hands of municipal governments. I don't have any here with me, Mr. Chairman, but I could distribute in the Legislature tomorrow copies of the formula that's contained in a small paper.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Could the minister then advise members of the committee whether or not the reference in the Speech from the Throne about a review of unconditional municipal assistance grants has been addressed by this budget?

MR. MOORE: It's really not addressed by the budget in that the budget doesn't provide for the mechanism of distributing grants. The reference in the Speech from the Throne was to a new method of distributing unconditional grants. Since 1973, we have basically been adding a percentage increase to every municipality's grant, regardless of its need. Since that time and because of industrial assessment base, some municipalities' needs are far less than six years ago.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, the unconditional municipal assistance grants, going back perhaps the last 20 years, were based on a formula relating to need in only one year, 1973. We brought in a new program based on relative need. It was developed by the hon. Roy Farran in a caucus committee at that time. We put it in place for one year, then we didn't follow it. We kept adding percentages to it, and inequities tended to build.

This year we're back to that basic '73 formula based on relative need of municipalities and their ability to provide for their own needs through their assessment base. If we continue to follow that formula, there will be some fairly substantial shifts: poorer municipalities will get a greater percentage of the increases each year. However, we can't say there's total equity in it, because we've used 1978 as a base year and have said nobody will get less. The very simple explanation for that is that I didn't feel municipalities would accept less. So we guaranteed everybody what they had last year.

But as the years go by and we increase the amount of dollars in this particular vote, we'll have the ability to distribute it on the basis of need. Incidentally, that is again a recommendation in the report, including the suggestion with regard to the formula that has already been put in place. That was of course because I had knowledge of that single recommendation some time ago.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Could the minister advise the committee whether any consideration is being given to further revision of either the formula for funding or the level of funding? Are the changes the minister has referred to the extent of change we can anticipate in the foreseeable future?

MR. MOORE: This is the extent of the change we can anticipate in the foreseeable future, Mr. Chairman. The program was just developed. Municipalities became aware of the exact formula and their percentage of the funding increase within the last week. I hope it will stay in place for some considerable length of time.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister if Vote 2.1, Unconditional Assistance Grants, includes grants in lieu of taxes for AGT buildings, for example, and treasury branches? Does that come under that vote?

MR. MOORE: No.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, many rural areas are becoming increasingly aware of the need for rural fire protection, and they're forming rural fire co-ops. To date I haven't been able to find any government department that would assist or handle these co-ops. Could that possibly come under this unconditional municipal grant procedure? Is there anything in your department that would help rural fire co-ops finance their co-operatives and equipment?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, municipalities are of course free to do anything they like with the unconditional assistance grants. By their very name they can use them for fire equipment, ambulance services, building roads, or whatever. So in a manner of speaking, yes, funds are there if they want to use them for that.

As to a specific program for assistance in providing fire-fighting equipment, there isn't one in the Department of Municipal Affairs. For some reason, of which I'm not totally aware, the Provincial-Municipal Finance report recommends that that situation remain: that local governments be responsible for fire-fighting equipment and so on. Mr. Chairman, I know that matter is addressed largely by the Minister of Labour in his capacity with respect to fire regulations and so on. It is again something that that minister has had under consideration, and the question of to what extent anything might be developed would really have to be addressed to him.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might ask the minister one very straightforward question. Mr. Minister, would it be possible for you to make available to all MLAs the list of money municipalities got last year and the amount they're going to get this year?

MR. MOORE: Yes, it would, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately I don't have copies here. I have one copy. But if I can find them in my office I will undertake to make available to members tomorrow or later this evening copies of the exact dollars going to each municipality this year. They will include the base component, which is exactly what they got last year, plus a fiscal capacity component and a population growth component which are part of the formula, together with a pamphlet that explains the formula and how we arrive at these payments. I'll undertake to do that.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, a supplementary to the minister. The co-ops I'm thinking of don't want grants, but they certainly would like to be able to borrow the money to finance their trucks at a reasonable cost. I'd feel rather silly going to the Department

of Labour and asking if they have funds available to finance a capital project like that.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, if it's done through municipal government, I suppose there's no reason they're not able to borrow funds and finance fire-fighting equipment. Many municipalities borrow funds for that purpose. If it's a co-operative unrelated to the municipality, that's something we could take a look at. But it's not something that has ever been drawn to my attention, Mr. Chairman. If the hon. member has a specific case, I'd be pleased to look at it to see if there isn't some way assistance might be provided.

22 — Municipal Debenture Interest Rebate Program

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, on this particular vote, I see there's a 21 per cent decrease. I thought the decrease would have been greater than 21 per cent because of the debt retirement fund of \$1 billion we just put in place. Can the minister inform this committee what's taking place there? Are municipalities still borrowing money for new programs that will be eligible for the rebate program over 8 per cent?

MR. MOORE: The answer is yes, Mr. Chairman. The program is continuing. In spite of the municipal debt reduction program, extensive municipal undertakings are going on and a lot of borrowing will still occur. That \$9 million is our best judgment of the difference between what was out there before, what the municipal debt reduction program will reduce it, and what the increased borrowings will be. Bear in mind as well, Mr. Chairman, that we are faced with pretty extensive additional interest costs in 1979. So the decrease in the figures, as you add them up, doesn't totally reflect municipal borrowing, because we're involved in a shielding above 8 per cent. Many of those loans we were shielding were taken out at 9 or 9.5 per cent, which is only a 15 per cent cost to this fund. The ones that are being taken out this year are at maybe twice that level of subsidy, so you can get a pretty dramatic shift just because of those increased interest rates over the last year.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, would the minister have available to the committee the amount of money paid back to the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation through the debt retirement plan?

MR. MOORE: I won't have a final figure on that until about the last week in July. But the rough figures are that about \$350 million of \$1 billion will be provided in cash by way of cheques to municipalities for whatever they determine to use it for. That leaves \$650 million, which will be used to repay debt, almost the total amount of which goes to Municipal Financing. So it's roughly \$650 million, but I could be out \$10 million or \$20 million.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, a question to the minister. Proportionately, the dollars from the school foundation program have continued to decline in comparison to the taxation dollars from the school board supplementary requisition. I realize that this might not apply to this particular vote, but could the minister advise this committee if this trend is being

monitored, and is a review of the adequacy of the foundation program a possibility?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I think I could advise that yes, it's being monitored by taxpayers, by government, and by school boards. But I would have to defer to the Minister of Education for the answer as to what, if any, changes might be made.

Agreed to:

2.2 — Municipal Debenture Interest Rebate Program	\$9,000,000
2.3 — Transitional Financial Assistance	\$400,000

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, if I might be permitted a few comments and then a question. This particular section pertains to the unification of the communities in the Crowsnest Pass, and there's a provision in The Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification Act whereby the communities there will be provided with a \$2 million transitional grant over a five-year period. I'm very pleased to see that the first \$400,000 is allocated under this particular vote.

One of the commitments made to the communities down there was that of the \$2 million, more than \$400,000 per year could be drawn in any one particular year. Could the minister comment on how he may intend to handle that matter, if a request comes to him for more than \$400,000 in one year?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, a request has already come. Unfortunately it came two or three weeks ago, well after the budget was established. I'm undertaking to look at the situation with regard to how urgent it is that the municipalities of Crowsnest Pass receive more than \$400,000 in the fiscal year we're talking about. If the case can be made well enough, and if I can make it well enough to the Provincial Treasurer once I'm convinced, it's possible that we can provide them with more.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, would it be the minister's intention to pursue that matter by special warrant?

MR. MOORE: I think, Mr. Chairman, I indicated that if I can be convinced, and I can convince the Provincial Treasurer, I know of no other way that you would pursue the matter.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 2 — Financial Support for Municipal Programs	\$76,438,363
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Vote 3 — Alberta Property Tax Reduction Plan — Rebates to Individuals.

3.1 — Program Support	\$305,066
3.2 — Senior Citizen Renters Assistance	\$13,500,000

3.3 — Property Owner Tax Rebate

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister why — maybe I'm a little thick; I've been accused of that quite often.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. KUSHNER: I really walked into that one. I understand there is an increase of population in the province. There is also an increase in the number of actual real properties that are being developed in our province, yet we find a decrease of 3.2 per cent on the property owner tax rebate. I wonder if the minister would please elaborate on that and explain.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, the comparable estimates for 1978-79 were just a touch over \$3 million. During the last fiscal year, it was determined that \$17,034,000 was not an accurate figure and that we would need more than that in order to provide for that property tax rebate. I have to admit that the comparable '78-79 forecast in the estimates book is probably not accurate, in that our more recent information led us to believe that in 1979-80 we could carry the program with \$20,334,000, which is up \$3,300,000 from the estimates last year. So we really have a misleading figure in the forecast for '78-79.

We've had some difficulty getting a handle on the program costs, because until you get through the year it's unknown how many people are going to apply. As you suggest, the province is growing very fast, and things are happening all over. It's just not possible for us to estimate the required amount with total accuracy. But I think we're becoming more adept at it as each year goes by, and hopefully we've come closer this year than we did last year.

Agreed to:

3.3 — Property Owner Tax Rebate	\$20,334,000
Total Vote 3 — Alberta Property Tax	
Reduction Plan — Rebates to Individuals	\$34,139,066

Vote 4 — Support to Community Planning Services

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I believe the minister was going to answer a question I posed earlier.

MR. MOORE: Could you repeat the question?

MR. HYLAND: The question was with reference to the increase in staff in regional planning commissions, they claim because of the new Planning Act.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, in fairness to regional planning commissions, an additional level of work certainly has been required because of the new Planning Act. The vote that determines provincial support is up as well.

On the other hand, I think it's necessary that the new Planning Act and the increased workload should not be used by regional planning commissions as a reason to dramatically increase their staff. Some members will be aware that regional planning commissions have been lobbying for an increase in provincial funds for their operations. In most cases I've had to say, you'll have to fine tune your operations and do with the increase presently in our budget.

One thing that bothers me about financing regional planning commissions is that the province really collects a tax levy for planning commission operation that varies between municipalities, depending on their size. We put it in a fund, match it with provincial dollars — in fact more than match it; I think we're now paying close to 80 per cent of the total costs — then we

distribute it to planning commissions.

I have that system of financing regional planning commissions under review, for a couple of reasons: one, I'm getting a little tired of municipal governments that are members of planning commissions writing to me and saying, we don't like what our planning commission is doing; and me having to say, it's your planning commission, not mine. I really think that situation would be corrected to a large extent if there were a direct link in terms of financing between the regional planning commission and the municipal governments that are members. In other words, if the regional planning commission needs seven more staff members and wants to do some things, to some extent at least they should have to go directly to the municipalities that are members of that planning commission. In some areas, I rather think there is a tendency for staff of regional planning commissions to make policy decisions, when elected officials of regional planning commissions perhaps ought to be spending a little more time in the area of regional planning and being a little more in charge of those operations. Our system of regional planning will simply break down if the municipal governments that are members of that regional planning commission don't take a very keen and active interest in the operation. Quite literally, it will break down if they don't run it.

I make those as general comments, recognizing that some municipal councillors and municipal governments spend a great deal of time and effort working on regional planning commissions, and others hardly know they're members of them. My remarks should not be applied to those doing a good job. But on average across the province, I think much more could be accomplished in regional planning if elected municipal officials or persons who sit on those boards would take a more active interest.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Chairman, perhaps this is an appropriate time to ask if the minister might tell the committee whether the situation in Fort McMurray and the northeast Alberta commissioner's office — as I understand it, this was to be sort of an *ad hoc* arrangement. It seems to me a natural situation for a regional planning commission to step into. Geographically, the tar sands area is big enough to cover with a planning commission. You might have a very small number of municipal jurisdictions there. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could tell the committee if there any plans are afoot to create, if you will, a regional planning commission centred specifically on the Athabasca oil sands deposit?

MR. MOORE: A good question, Mr. Chairman. The facts are that the northeast commissioner's office has basically been responsible for the development of a regional plan in the Fort McMurray region. The staff in the planning branch of my department have been responsible for the development of regional plans in the Cold Lake area.

The situation is that much of northeast Alberta is not presently covered by a regional planning commission. It would be my objective — it's down the road perhaps a year or two, when those regional plans are finalized and in place — to see if we can get that portion of the province involved in a regional planning commission. It may take two of them; I don't know. I haven't discussed that matter thus far. But certainly the direc-

tion will be to have that region in a regional planning commission, as opposed to the decisions being made by the Alberta Planning Board.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Under the old Planning Act a reserve was set aside whenever the land was subdivided. Under the new Planning Act that isn't necessarily so. But many, many titles had caveats registered against them by planning commissions, and they're still on them. The individual owner has to apply to the Land Titles Office, and it costs him \$5 to get this caveat taken off. Is there any interest in the department in seeing that some of these old caveats that are no longer in effect are taken off?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, that's not a matter I've had under consideration or discussed with anyone. My colleague the Attorney General says \$5 isn't enough. We'll have to review that.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, the minister has answered a number of my questions when he responded to the Member for Cypress.

There are petitions going around in one particular area where the ratepayers aren't happy with the regional planning commission. They say they only got in to begin with because they had to make a contribution; they thought they might as well get their money's worth, so they went in. Now they want out. How can they get out, Mr. Minister?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I'm not exactly sure, depending on the situation, what the procedures are. But if the hon. member has a specific community which is now in a regional planning commission and wants out, I'd be pleased to get the details from him and provide them with information as to what approach they might use.

I think the more important aspect of this is why they want out. Perhaps they want out because they haven't been involved in the decision-making process. It's their regional planning commission. If they opt out, they're subject to decisions by the Provincial Planning Board based in Edmonton. Our effort as MLAs, in my view at least, should be to support the concept of regional planning commissions, to encourage municipalities to stay in, and to find out why they want out, what the reasons are. That's what I'm trying to do. If all we do is try to find ways to allow municipalities to get out, we better sit down and reassess the whole concept of regional planning commissions. They aren't very effective, I'm sure, if half the municipalities are in and half are out.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, a comment to the minister. My concern with regard to regional planning commissions is with the process. Just as background, I've been rather a critic of the planning process and The Planning Act and some of the things that go on. So prior to this session of the Legislature, I took the opportunity to sit in on some of the subdivision hearings of the Oldman River Planning Commission. I was able to discuss it with some of the committee members following the meeting. I observed, and the commission members and various councillors from the area around Lethbridge were also concerned, that a number of subdivision applications and items of concern that came before them and the

hearings they had to sit in on could have been solved at the local municipal level. For example, the municipality of Cardston could have solved some of the problems. The town of Raymond could have solved one of the problems before it came before the commission. The MD of Taber could have solved one of the problems. The county of Lethbridge could have solved another problem before it even came to the subdivision hearings of the Oldman Planning Commission.

I raised it with them. I said, why does that happen? Where is the process faulty? They just didn't have an answer. I was concerned about that, and I think it directly relates to the workload of the planning commission staff. They have to go out and do all this subdivision work, all this planning, and then try to solve some of these local political problems at the same time. They just don't get solved, so they bring them to the total commission and spend a lot of hours hearing and examining and making local decisions for the local government.

I wonder if the minister has observed this in his responsibility up to this point or prior to the time of taking on this portfolio. If so or if not, does the minister have someone in his department who sits in on some of the commission hearings and observes the processes that are going on? I think a lot of the work of the regional planning commissions could be reduced if somebody put their finger on that problem. I can give specific examples of these situations where the hearing should not have taken place at the point it did. The local governments could have solved the problem very easily before it ever came to the regional planning commission.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I have to admit I haven't spent enough time with respect to planning matters and regional planning commissions to observe or think about some of the problems the hon. member raises. I'd be interested if there is further information that can be provided by anyone, as to whether those problems are extensive or how they might be solved. At the present time I just don't have enough knowledge of the inner workings of planning commissions to be able to shed any light on the subject that's been raised.

Certainly I have staff in the department in the planning division who from time to time sit in on the regional planning commission meetings and, I would presume, are pretty knowledgeable about their operations. Once again, it isn't a subject I've discussed at any length with the staff at this point in time.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I raise it for the minister as my observation at this time, and the observation of the various county and town members on the Oldman planning commission. I thought it was a point that maybe the minister should look this summer and when he visits some of the commissions. The only thing that will happen when the minister goes is that the cases will most likely have a lot more substance. Possibly the same thing won't happen that happened when I visited them.

But I would like to give the minister those specific examples, and we can do that privately.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, just one short question on this. In some of the smaller, fast-growing towns the regional planning commissions don't have the manpower to help with planning, subdivisions,

and so on, and they hire their own personnel. Does this vote make any money available to some of these towns to hire their own personnel for planning?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I do not believe this vote has any grants for those purposes. But we have what we call the Alberta Planning Fund in Vote 4.2, Co-ordination and Administration of Community Planning. Some dollars from the Planning Fund are used for special planning projects at the discretion of the minister, on recommendation from the Alberta Planning Board. We utilize that from time to time in fast-growing areas that have a special planning problem and want to do some extra work. So there is a fund. It's not extensive, but there is a possibility in a community that has a planning project. It's not designed for assistance to provide for yearly staff salaries, but a particular planning project.

Agreed to:

4.1 — Grants to Regional Planning
Commissions

\$5,113,270

4.2 — Co-ordination and Administration of Community Planning

MR. SINDLINGER: Mr. Chairman, a question please. I note the objective of this program is "To regulate and direct community growth to ensure planned and organized community development." My question to the minister is: does this apply to small communities or groups of communities within cities?

MR. MOORE: That really applies, Mr. Chairman, to every region of the province, whether large or small.

MR. SINDLINGER: I'd like to make some comments in regard to the program, Mr. Chairman, if I may.

These estimates are kind of new to me. As I go through them, more things fascinate me and take on some interest, especially this one, for my riding of Calgary Buffalo. We in Calgary Buffalo certainly need some direction in regard to community growth. We certainly need some planning and organization. Calgary Buffalo is in the inner part of Calgary, and it's kind of old. Some of the schools aren't full; they don't have 100 per cent capacity. However, they're still operationally viable in the sense that there's educational viability. They're also economically practical to operate.

However, because of certain conditions in the outlying part of the city, the Calgary board of education has decided to close down seven schools in the riding. This doesn't help very much when you consider the fact that the city of Calgary has a plan which says that they want to rejuvenate and revitalize the city core. It's kind of difficult to do that when the Calgary board of education is closing down schools on the one hand, and on the other hand provincial and federal governments are providing funds to rejuvenate and revitalize that city core.

So I am sure hon. members can recognize right away that there is some need for co-ordination in the riding of Calgary Buffalo.

AN HON. MEMBER: Leadership. What happened to the former MLA?

MR. SINDLINGER: Well, the former MLA did provide that, and I'm trying to carry on in that tradition, sir.

I notice that under 4.2, \$2.7 million is planned for this, and I wonder where that \$2.7 million goes. After you tell me where it's going, certainly my question would be: do you think we could have some of that in Calgary Buffalo?

AN HON. MEMBER: You've already got the Calgary Stampede.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, the vote covering Co-ordination and Administration of Community Planning provides for the special Planning Fund which I spoke about earlier, and for the operations carried out in the northeast region of the province that we talked about a while ago and all that area of the province that isn't covered by a regional planning commission. So the major portion of those funds goes to planning work carried on outside regional planning commission areas. But an amount somewhere in the order of \$400,000 is involved in this special planning fund. It's available, on request of municipalities after review by the Alberta Planning Board and a recommendation which has to be approved by me.

I can't answer the question whether or not Calgary Buffalo would rank high, low, or at all on the list. I'm not aware whether or not the city of Calgary has made any requests for special planning assistance in that particular area. If they do, and if they have, of course it would be considered as all others are. I have to say, however, that the fund is there for planning, not development. So we're not going to solve some of the problems the hon. member is referring to. If there were some assistance in this fund, it would only provide assistance for planning.

MR. SINDLINGER: A supplementary, Mr. Chairman. The minister has indicated that the funds are available to municipalities upon application. But I'm not too certain that's the place the funds ought to go, and I'll relate why I feel that way.

Some years back a couple of schools were closed down in Calgary Buffalo. The first was the James Short school, and the citizens in the community wanted that space as a park area, a green area. It was in the downtown core area, and there wasn't any open space. So the school board transferred that property to the city of Calgary, which guaranteed to the citizens that it would be maintained as a park, a green, open space. However, today if you go to where that school was just a few years ago, you'll find a bus depot and a parking lot.

Now I don't know if you can trust the Calgary board of education any more than you can the city council, because another school was closed down as well. The school board learned its lesson from that last one. They said, we're not going to give the city any more school sites, because they're just going to build parking lots and bus stations. But they kept the site, being in the downtown core area as well, and even though the public wanted it as park space the school board decided to build a couple of high-rise apartments on it.

The third actor in this whole thing is the public. They're saying, we want to have this space for open areas. They're the people who really need it, yet you have the city council building parking lots and the school board building high-rise apartments.

So I would suggest that rather than giving that money to the municipality, the city council, or the school board, some mechanism ought to be devised whereby the citizens and community groups can take some of that money and use it . . .

MR. TRYNCHY: What are they going to build? [laughter]

MR. SINDLINGER: . . . for planning and co-ordination. I wonder if there could be some way those funds could be transferred to the public for that type of use, rather than giving it to the city council for a parking lot.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, the answer is that the present legislation and operation of this fund provides only that it be provided to municipal governments. The suggestion the hon. member makes may be worth while, but certainly this year it isn't envisioned that this particular fund be provided to other than municipal governments.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister a couple of questions under this vote, please. I see supplies and services are up 29.5 per cent, which seems fairly high to me. I realize the price of supplies seems to be at least 12 or 13 per cent, but I wonder if the minister could indicate exactly what comes under that item to cause those increases? The second question is: what evaluation process is built into the grants supplied under this vote?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, perhaps some other hon. members having questions could go ahead. At the moment I can't lay my hands on the reasons for the supplies and services increase being as high as it is. My recollection is that it relates largely to costs involved in respect to regional planning in northeast Alberta, largely in the Cold Lake area, where we have staff living and a lot of technical work going on in the general plan. I referred to Cold Lake region — it's much larger than that.

As members know, when we passed the provincial planning Act in 1977, the requirement was to develop the general plan, hold hearings, and have that plan put in place, within two years I believe. In addition to the Cold Lake region, we have a significant amount of additional expense in the Fort McMurray area for developing a general plan.

Aside from the normal increase of 8 or 9 per cent that might be considered, most of that increase relates largely to those areas.

MRS. EMBURY: I'd like an answer to my second question too. In view of these programs, I'd like to know what the evaluation process is that indicates how this money is spent?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, the questions are getting tougher all the time.

I don't think there's an evaluation process in that particular area, unless it comes out of the planning work these people are doing. As I said earlier, this vote largely provides for planning done by the planning branch of the department in areas not covered by regional planning boards. They're out there doing their thing, holding meetings, laying out plans.

We're having public hearings in some areas already with a view to developing an overall general plan that can eventually be approved by my office. In addition they'll be required to put land-use plans in place in every regional planning commission area.

I suppose the only evaluation, Mr. Chairman, is whether those plans as they're developed and put in place can be approved by the provincial planning board and by my office, and how effective they are. We're largely involved here in paying for people and the supplies and services they use. It's not a program that we have any choice about if we're to follow the 1977 Planning Act. There is a requirement to put these plans in place. The effectiveness of the people we have working on it of course is assessed by the assistant deputy minister in charge of planning services, the director of the planning branch, indeed the deputy minister, and hopefully a good assessment by the minister as well, when I have the time.

I don't know if that's a sufficient explanation, Mr. Chairman, but I really don't think that that type of vote is one where you require a specific method of evaluating whether or not you are getting a dollar for your money, as opposed to some other programs where indeed you're doing things you might stop tomorrow if you have an evaluation that tells you they're not worth while.

MR. SINDLINGER: Mr. Chairman, for clarification I'd like to ask the minister a question. Rather than the municipality, would it be possible for individuals or citizens to apply for funds to support citizen interventions in community development?

MR. MOORE: The answer is no, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SINDLINGER: A supplementary. I'd like to suggest there is ample precedent for things of this nature, not only in community development but also in regional development. The most recent good examples of these types of support for citizen interventions deal with pipelines. The first one was the trans-Alaska pipeline. At that time the U.S. federal government supplied funds for citizen intervention, most notably the Indian groups in Alaska. Through the supply of those funds, they were successful in having an award of \$1.5 billion given to them. I remember that one particularly. I was watching television in Washington at the time. Cher, the singer, came on TV and said, if any of you people anywhere in the United States once lived in Alaska and are at least one-quarter Indian, what you ought to do is phone this number and we're going to divide up all this money. So I think it's quite successful.

There was also a lot of citizen intervention with regard to the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. But when it began the citizens who were intervening were overwhelmed by the staff, the money, and the support put in by the large oil companies.

The same thing is happening right now in terms of community development. Developers are coming in and proposing schemes, city councils are going one way, school boards another, and we have a great deal of citizen objection. Yet all they can do is run around in circles and scream, shout, and wave their arms in the air, because they don't have the resources behind them to substantiate their case or at least come up against these other people who have large resources. Develop-

ers have a great deal of resources in their hands, city councils and school boards have all their planners, and the poor citizen is left out there to do nothing but weep and wail.

I think it would be good if this government gave consideration to providing funds for citizen intervention in matters that directly affect community development and community life style.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Chairman, this must be the day when I take an opposite stance to the new members of the Legislature. Frankly, I'd be appalled if you adopted that suggestion. As a member of an elected council for seven years, what you're suggesting in effect is that we have anarchy in our communities. What do you do? You elect a local council to look after the affairs of your community. They collect taxes, and hire experts to look after your community by way of planners, engineers, architects, whatever. Now if you're not happy with the kind of hearings you're getting, the obvious persons to thump are the politicians.

The Liberal government, long gone now, had a program called the Company of Young Canadians. They had no responsibility for doing the things they did. They had money from Ottawa to go into the community and stir up the people. In some countries they call these people anarchists. You know, down with orderly government, down with the elected people who are doing all the work — we're going to go in there and shake up city hall.

Now I agree with what the hon. member says: sure the developers are better organized. They have lots of talent. And the oil companies are organized too. But the important thing is for the people to get to their elected representatives. I'd be very shocked, very unhappy, if the minister listened to that proposal from the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo.

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Chairman, I also would like to speak against the suggestion that's been made, on the basis that as elected people we have to be very concerned about public dollars. When dollars are collected in taxes or in a variety of ways that are made accessible in the province, through royalties, they are dollars that belong to all Albertans. When we ask that money be made available for planning purposes, I think it has to be done through a duly responsible group. Having served in local government and having had community groups approach that local government for public funds, I have a very strong feeling that those groups must be responsible for any moneys they receive and that planning does take place through a properly set out process, through legislation.

There is a very large emphasis in the new Planning Act for community and citizen participation under the planning process. I think it's important that we adhere to those principles and that we be very concerned that tax dollars be distributed in a very responsible manner. I certainly could not support the suggestion that we should make money available for community groups, because I feel there is ample opportunity for them to participate in planning.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the minister, but first I feel moved to comment on the three previous speakers: the hon. Member for St. Albert; my good friend, the hon. Member for Calgary

McKnight — my apologies, she's definitely a good friend as well.

The hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo raised an interesting point with respect to his constituency that has as part of its philosophy: today's paradise is to put up a parking lot — a phrase I've heard somewhere before. With respect to the two hon. members opposite, indeed there are problems associated with the philosophy that suggests that we as a government provide some funds for citizens' groups. I don't think any of us would suggest that we allow anarchists, as one hon. member suggested, to organize our communities and cause uprisings in our municipalities. But one has to recognize that indeed you have to get to your public representative, and some people do it more effectively than others. With due respect to both hon. members who are former councillors, I think our society is becoming complex enough that we must now move to ensure that all citizens have equal access to their representatives. That's equal access in all ways. I think the suggestion of the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo is one we should consider. Indeed it is something we shouldn't jump into without restrictions, directions, and very tight criteria. But it has a lot of merit, and I think we should consider it very seriously.

My question to the hon. minister is somewhat along those lines. Would the minister indicate what social planning components are involved with the planning programs taking place in the communities he's speaking of; whether we do provide for some in-depth study into what the problems will be and how we can best locate the buildings, the industry, and so on in those communities to ensure that the people's social life is looked after as well?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we could have the final rebuttal by the Member for Calgary Buffalo before the minister answers the question.

MR. SINDLINGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the hon. Member for Calgary Currie has expressed my sentiment quite well. However, I'd like to point out that I'm equally appalled by some of the comments made by the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight. I see no reason why that suggestion should be termed "anarchist" or anything of that nature.

I'm also a little concerned that he's forgotten that he was a member of the government at the time it authorized the Public Utilities Board to pay interveners. If he was a participant in that, I see no difference from this.

I agree with the Member for Calgary Currie that there are people in our community who have legitimate concerns about what's happening to them from municipal development plans, school board plans, or provincial development plans, but they don't have the ability to articulate those concerns. I'm not suggesting funds be given to them to replace the routine and regular planning process. But certainly they ought to have funds to give them the capability to participate in that planning and decision-making process.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Chairman, could I just comment on the hon. member's remarks. First of all, I'd like to point out to the Members of the Legislative Assembly that I'm in good company in being concerned about the kinds of people — and I mentioned the Company of Young Canadians. The former Pre-

mier of this province, Mr. Ernest Manning, was most unhappy with the Company of Young Canadians and their activities in our communities. If hon. members would care to check the record, they would see that on many occasions he expressed dismay at what they were doing.

Now as far as the hon. member suggesting that I was part of a government that gave money to interveners in a public hearing, that doesn't mean to say I necessarily supported it. Now that he's a member of our caucus, he knows quite well that our arguments don't always end up in unanimity.

MR. SINDLINGER: We don't argue there.

MR. MUSGREAVE: The other point I'd like to make is this, Mr. Chairman. While I was on city council we had a controversy. For those who are here from Calgary, all I need to mention is 40th Avenue. I ended up with \$90,000 worth of lawsuits from that controversy. Believe me, the people of Calgary have lots of opportunity, and they make their views known quite easily. They don't need any public funds. It only costs, unfortunately, 17 cents these days to write a letter. Most aldermen are in the phone book. They can get to their representatives quite easily. To suggest that we should be giving money . . .

Unfortunately when you're sitting there, you see the same people all the time. You know, they lived in one area, Victoria Park, for a while. They achieved all they thought they wanted to do there, which essentially was to do nothing. Then they moved to the Hill or Sunnyside. Next thing you know, they were over in the west end of Sunalta. After a while you began to think, are these community workers? Are these concerned citizens who are worried about their homes? Or are they people who are moving from one part of the city to another on federal grants? Their way of life was to protest what the elected people of the community were trying to do.

MR. APPLEBY: It might appear that the members from Calgary might consider calling an early caucus.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, just to add a rural perspective to this inner-city discussion. I appreciate the concern of the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo. I also respect the remarks made by the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight.

But I have one concern with the suggestion by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo with regard to local autonomy and decision-making by our municipalities. As worthy as his proposal is, I would suggest that perhaps the people in the jurisdiction in which these concerns are being raised should make a decision as to whether funds should go to a citizens' advisory group or a local community group to make representations to them or a board in their community. The municipal jurisdiction concerned should decide whether funds should be provided. I don't think we as a provincial government should be providing funds to citizens to make a case before a municipal jurisdiction.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to support that point of view. I think that is basically right. The local planning commission or the local jurisdiction should have that capability of allowing funds to be used for representations being made.

I'd also like to mention to the hon. Member for

Calgary McKnight that he should visit with some of the inner-city groups of Edmonton and Calgary. About a year and a half ago I had the opportunity to sit down with a number of the various groups in the inner cities: welfare groups, native groups, unemployed groups, people concerned about their schools, about the homes in their communities, and about community and recreation facilities.

One of their big concerns was the ability to communicate with their elected officials, through to their planning officials, and even through to the provincial government. I raised that concern in an earlier Legislature. But those people's capability was certainly restricted by their ability to present their case in an organized manner and in being able to have people on hand to give them good advice, because they just didn't have that financial capability in the responsibilities they took on in their daily lives. So there is some merit to what the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo offers to this Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the minister would answer the question from the Member for Calgary Currie before we lose sight of it in the debate.

MR. MOORE: Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman. Until tonight, the efficiency and knowledge of a minister was always judged by the length of time it took his estimates to go through. [laughter]

I would like to make one brief comment with regard to the debate as to whether or not local municipal governments are making responsible decisions. It's a comment I've made verbally and in writing a number of times in the last three months; that is, municipal elections will next be held in October 1980.

With regard to the comments on whether or not planners take into consideration social matters, the answer is yes, without question. In fact, the major role of a planner is to understand the needs and wants of a community and the social and cultural as well as economic aspirations. They're all interrelated. Certainly some have a better ability to point out to communities the different routes they may go and the end result they may expect. But certainly social concerns have to be a major concern of anyone working in planning. I'm only hopeful that all people who work on our planning staff, as well as those working for regional planning commissions, take those matters into consideration. Without question, I'm sure most of them do.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Can he indicate what citizens' participation mechanism there is for that kind of social planning to take place?

MR. MOORE: I could give the example of regional plans which are just now being developed. The regional planning commissions develop a draft plan, publish it, as in the case in the Edmonton region three or four months ago, try to get broad public discussion on it, and then have hearings. The Edmonton Regional Planning Commission began their hearings about three weeks ago in this region, I believe in Spruce Grove. On the first evening of those hearings, nobody was before them when they sat at 8 o'clock. On two occasions since then, no one has appeared at a sitting of those hearings. That is the avenue for citizens, citizens' groups, people involved in social plan-

ning, and so on, to make their case.

I only mention the fact that no one appeared in some of those — and of course I suppose the reasons are that people appeared at other times. But I do think much more attention could be paid to those hearings by individual citizens' groups and so on, because I know what will happen: down the road we'll get the regional plan laid out, I'll approve it, and then we'll start getting letters saying, we don't like it. Yet I don't think the opportunity, which has existed over the past three weeks in this one particular case, has been taken advantage of by individuals as well as it might have been.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, a further supplementary for clarification. I assume by the minister's comments that there is no active process to make sure that there is a proper cross section of representation at such hearings but rather a passive one that merely allows anyone to appear before it. Is that correct?

MR. MOORE: No, it's not really correct. The planning commission has advertised the hearings extensively and encouraged people to come out. They're not paying them to come, but certainly there's no reluctance on behalf of the commission. As far as I'm aware, they are welcoming comments that might be made to them. That may be in the middle of what we're talking about, but no one is trying to stifle participation.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, just one final supplementary. I didn't mean to suggest that any officials would attempt to stifle conversation. But there is no attempt to ensure that there is a correct cross section of representation, that there isn't a group left out that may not be active enough to get organized and get there, but that should be heard from?

MR. MOORE: I think it would be unfair to say there is no attempt to hear from those groups. Yes, those attempts are made in various ways. Indeed, it's the responsibility of elected people at the municipal level and, if they have a concern, at the provincial level as well, to go out and help organize individuals or groups to appear before such hearings. I think the responsibility is really on the citizens.

In the case of the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, they published a brochure, which was widely distributed, outlining what was in the draft plan, and they did various things to encourage people to participate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've had considerable discussion on this subvote. If other members wish to speak, I trust they'll be brief.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Chairman, one brief comment. I'd like to respond to the remarks made by the Member for Little Bow. It's always a pleasure for me to be able to make this remark, because I like to refresh his memory. He mentioned the fact that I perhaps should go downtown to the inner city of Calgary and look around to see what the problems are. I'd like to point out to him that I lived there for 12 years, so I have a little feeling for it.

The other thing I'd like to mention, and I always like to refresh his memory, is in August 1971 we sat in the Bowlen Building and tried to persuade the hon.

minister that he should give us money so we could build a centre, I think it was on 4th Avenue West. A geophysical building had been abandoned. We asked him for money under the PSS program to put our Meals on Wheels program in a central location so it could do the job for the community. He suggested, why don't you work out of the Y, and why don't you let the fire department deliver the meals? So much for listening to people with inner-city concerns.

I'd like to mention two other things. There seems to be some suggestion that I don't support the idea of giving money to inner-city groups or to people who are not able to speak for themselves. I would like to point out that I was part of a committee on city council that gave money to the Indian friendship centre in the city of Calgary when it was not the fashionable thing to do. Today it's a great thing to help the Indians, as the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo mentioned. He pointed out this example in northern Alberta. In that day we gave these people money to keep their little organization alive. Again I point out to the hon. Member for Little Bow, last summer I, along with some other Calgary MLAs, met with a committee that was concerned with the development of a new Indian friendship centre in the city of Calgary. I think it was rather interesting that the committee was headed by a Chinese gentleman who was speaking on behalf of the Indians.

I think Calgary MLAs are quite concerned with inner-city problems and are doing our part, as we said we'd do when we were elected.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I'm very pleased to have that enlightenment, because I really wasn't aware of that. The only comment the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight made was that he was aware of the CYC. That was a federal government program; we had nothing to do with that at that time. They weren't even from Calgary. I'm talking about people in Calgary who live there day after day, have responsibilities, and carry on the inner life of Calgary. If the hon. member is aware of that, that's good. The hon. member indicates that maybe I didn't quite see all of his ideas at one time. You know, after a period of time you become more aware of things and understand them a little differently, I'm very open-minded to do that.

Agreed to:

4.2 — Co-ordination and Administration of Community Planning	\$2,715,559
Total Vote 4 — Support to Community Planning Services	\$7,828,829

Vote 5 — Administrative and Technical Support to Municipalities:

5.1 — Program Support	\$1,137,891
5.2 — Administrative Assistance to Organized Municipalities	\$501,949

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, if I might be permitted to comment. I've been approached by a number of our smaller municipalities or villages with regard to assistance which might come to them from the Department of Municipal Affairs. The particular problem I think we find in a number of our smaller municipalities is in the qualifications of their secretary-treasurers and people in that area. They have great

difficulty getting adequately trained personnel in that area. I wonder if the minister and the department have considered sponsoring a training course for secretary-treasurers and municipal administrators, to give them a basic outline of what their responsibilities are. A lot of these positions are part time, and I think there's a real need to give assistance to our municipalities in that area so they can have qualified staff at not too great an expense.

MR. MOORE: An important question, Mr. Chairman. I as well recognize we do not have the qualifications we need in a fast-growing province like ours to fill all the positions in that area. In that regard I have had discussions with my staff, who in turn are discussing the matter of municipal administration training with the office of central personnel. In addition to that, I've had representations only very recently from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, which is interested in establishing a municipal administration course. While I cannot give any definitive answer with regard to what, if any, action may be taken, trying to beef up, if you like, the ability of persons to obtain training in municipal administration is presently under review.

Mr. Chairman, a short answer is that we're looking at it very closely.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm very pleased to see that's taking place.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, my concern is almost the reverse of that of the Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest. It almost seems that some of these administrators are getting to be too well trained. I'll try to get to my question as quickly as possible.

In Hinton there was a feeling by the mayor and town council that people living in mobile-home parks were not paying sufficient taxes. Council apparently decided the equalized assessment basis for mobile homes wasn't sufficient, and the taxes paid altogether by the owner of the mobile-home park on the mobile home and the land that it sat on were not sufficient to reimburse the town for the services it provided. About three years ago, they decided they had found a way around this problem. The method was to slam a business tax onto mobile-home parks completely different from that on any other business in the community. It just so happened to work out to exactly \$100 per year per mobile-home lot. Quite naturally, there were a lot of appeals by the owners of the parks, and they lost. Then the owners of the parks wanted to put the \$100 through as an expense. By that time we were into the rent control Act.

So the individual owners of mobile homes got together and went to Mr. Cavanagh's committee. After a lot of discussion, Mr. Cavanagh decided he couldn't do anything about the business tax. He decided that if the business tax was legal, it was then a legitimate expense of the mobile-home park. It was therefore passed on to the owners of the mobile homes.

It just so happens that Mr. Cavanagh made the decision about February 14 this year. As well as interesting the owners of mobile homes in Hinton, it interested me and every other candidate in the recent election. We had some very hot discussions with the owners of those homes.

My concern is that with Vote 5.2, if we are really

giving Administrative Assistance to Organized Municipalities "in managing the affairs of the municipality by providing information, inspection, and management assistance", if we are going to produce this result by giving them that assistance, I'm not really too sure I approve of giving them any more money than they got before. I see it went up by 6.7 per cent. I wonder if the minister has any comments on the results of his programs.

MR. APPLEBY: Perhaps the hon. Member for St. Albert would like to ask her question or make her comment now.

MRS. FYFE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to comment on training for municipal employees. I think it's a very important item that has been brought up, and I'm very pleased to hear the minister's answer that there is a concern to beef up some of the programs already in existence. It's important to look at these not as one-level programs; there are many levels of municipal administration. I know that the universities have been looking at increasing their course level for business administration specializing not just in public administration, but in public administration relating to the municipal level of government. Traditionally, senior levels of government have picked up many people who have gone into the public administration field.

Also a very worth-while University of Alberta Extension program was offered by correspondence. I think it filled quite a gap for those municipal administrators or people employed by municipal governments who were not in a position to take time off to attend a postsecondary school fulltime. I think this is another area that could do with some considerable assistance in trying to increase the level of competence at the municipal level.

It's also of note that Extension, with the co-operation of Municipal Affairs, has provided municipal refresher courses each year at Banff that have assisted not only those persons who are employed but elected persons. I think it's important to understand some of the legislation, and the applications and implications of legislation in their elected roles. Too often persons are elected to municipal government — and an election does not make an instant expert, the same as it doesn't when you win a provincial election. It takes a lot of hard work to understand the legislation and its importance.

So I think any areas where we can assist in improving the competence and level of administrative skills in the local government area will be worth while in the long run.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, very briefly in regard to the comments of the hon. Member for Edson. It's not our intention to provide assistance that would result in local governments moving away from the intent of our legislation and putting an undue burden on a certain class or segment of people. Those things happen from time to time, but certainly this vote isn't designed — but I appreciate the point the hon. member made.

Agreed to

5.3 — Administration of Improvement

Districts

5.4 — Administration of Special Areas

\$1,668,787

\$1,558,270

5.5 — Assessment Services	\$5,818,725
Total Vote 5 — Administrative and Technical Support to Municipalities	\$10,685,622
Total Vote 6 — Regulatory Boards	\$647,123

Vote 7 — Co-Ordination of Northeast Alberta Programs

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the minister, if I may. Mr. Minister, a 42.6 per cent increase is budgeted for this department this year. I'm concerned that of approximately \$221,000, over \$210,000 is being allocated to supplies and services. Would the minister please advise this Assembly where the supplies and services for that amount would be in that department?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, those supplies and services almost totally are dollars required for studies that will be contracted with respect to development in the northeast region. Members know that consideration is being given to the development of new townsites. A number of things need to be done during the course of this fiscal year with respect to the proposed Alsands development there. While it appears under the supplies and services vote, it is intended, at least, to utilize most of those funds for professional work that might be done in that area. I suppose some of those funds could just as well have been provided for under other votes of the department, but it was work that has been done under the jurisdiction of the northeast commissioner's office, and it was our feeling that that work would have to increase this year.

MR. WEISS: A supplementary question to the minister. Is he saying that the money is being allocated to a study for a proposed or contemplated new town specifically for the Alsands?

MR. MOORE: No, Mr. Chairman, I didn't say that at all. I made reference to the fact that consideration was being given to the location of new employees, whether in a new townsite or in Fort McMurray, and a number of other matters that relate to the possible development by Alsands of a third major oil sands plant in that area. I'm not in a position at this time to indicate exactly where or how that work might be carried out, but we do know that a considerable amount needs to be done.

Agreed to:
Total Vote 7 — Co-Ordination of
Northeast Alberta Programs

\$741,860

Department Total

\$133,840,149

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I move that the estimates of the Department of Municipal Affairs be reported.

[Motion carried]

Legislation

Agreed to:
1.0.1 — Administrative Support
1.0.2 — Members' Indemnities and
Allowances
1.0.3 — Speaker and Deputy Speaker —

\$836,506

\$1,851,391

Office Services	\$93,540
1.0.4 — Government Members' Services	\$249,989
1.0.5 — Opposition Members' Services	\$348,512
1.0.6 — Legislature Committees	\$100,000
1.0.7 — Legislative Interns	\$71,269
1.0.8 — Hansard	\$533,687
1.0.9 — Legislature Library	\$426,645
Total Vote 1 — Support to the Legislative Assembly	\$4,511,539
Total Vote 2 — Auditor General	\$4,542,628
Total Vote 3 — Office of the Ombudsman	\$464,073
4.1 — Administrative Support	\$271,544
4.2 — Electoral Support	\$225,000
Total Vote 4 — Office of the Chief Electoral Officer	\$496,544
Department Total	\$10,014,784

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I move the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the following resolutions, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again:

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of Municipal Affairs: \$3,359,286 for departmental support services; \$76,438,363 for financial support for municipal programs; \$34,139,066 for Alberta property tax reduction plan — rebates to individuals; \$7,828,829 for support to community planning services; \$10,685,622 for administrative and technical support to municipalities; \$647,123 for regulatory boards; \$741,860 for co-ordination of northeast Alberta programs.

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for Legislation: \$4,511,539 for support to the Legislative Assembly; \$4,542,628 for Auditor General; \$464,073 for office of the Ombudsman; \$496,544 for office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the report and the request for leave to sit again, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow after question period it's proposed that four Acts requiring Royal Assent by June 30 be given Royal Assent. After that, government business would be to go into Committee of Supply, starting with Housing and Public Works and, if that is completed, Recreation and Parks and possibly Treasury.

[At 10:20 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]