

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Tuesday, November 4, 1980 2:30 p.m.

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to introduce to the House this afternoon Mr. Justice Sayeed of the high court of Madras, accompanied by his daughter, Dr. Danial. May the House welcome them in the usual way.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 79

The Labour Relations Act

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 79, The Labour Relations Act.

The Labour Relations Act applies to the organization of employees and employers for the purposes of collective bargaining. In this respect it replaces portions of the present Alberta Labour Act. The Labour Relations Act amends the present form of government intervention in collective bargaining disputes to enable government to assist with a mediator and/or a disputes inquiries board.

The Act also provides for the establishment of a Labour Relations Board, operating in a manner similar to the present Board of Industrial Relations. The Labour Relations Board will deal only with matters arising from collective bargaining and the resolution of questions from the manner in which parties organize to bargain collectively. In that respect the Labour Relations Board will have increased capacity to deal with questions of unfair labor practices and related matters.

[Leave granted; Bill 79 read a first time]

Bill 80

The Employment Standards Act

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 80, The Employment Standards Act.

The Employment Standards Act applies to the relationships between the employer and the individual employee. It sets out certain minimum conditions and constraints on this relationship, especially in respect of wages, hours of work, vacation, holidays, notice of termination, and related matters.

The Employment Standards Act, in combination with its companion Bill, The Labour Relations Act, will replace the existing Alberta Labour Act. The Employment Standards Act provides for a more expeditious umpire system to resolve disputes between individual employers and employees. Through the proposed umpire and court system, it enhances the ability of employees to collect wages owing when employers, for whatever reason, have failed to pay those wages. The protection of the Act is

extended to agricultural and domestic workers in respect of notice of termination and recovery of wages.

This Bill incorporates the elements of many regulations which have been established over the years by order in council. This is therefore a more complete statutory expression of employment standards in Alberta. It also takes into account the recent trends in the workplace for a compressed work week and flexible working hours. Policy decisions which formerly rested with the Board of Industrial Relations are hereby returned to the Executive Council and/or the Legislature.

[Leave granted; Bill 80 read a first time.]

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and other Members of the Legislative Assembly 64 grade 5 students from the Wildrose school in the constituency of St. Albert. They are accompanied by their teachers Ardis Johnson and Dave Rush. They're seated in the members gallery, and I ask them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 75 Canadian Union College grades 10 and 11 students from the Lacombe constituency. They are now taking special instruction in Canadian government, and I'm sure they'll find the deliberations this afternoon very interesting. They're with their teacher George Goodburn, and their bus driver. They're in the public gallery, and I'd ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, Mr. and Mrs. Dean Kerr of Mount Pleasant, Iowa, the parents of Kathy Garrison, whose husband Gary is an editor for *Hansard*. With them are their 3-year-old daughter Elizabeth and their second daughter Jennifer, who happens to be a 75th Anniversary baby. Of course they all make their home in Edmonton Mill Woods.

Mr. Speaker, although I understand Jennifer made the sort of complaints that only a baby can make about not receiving a medal for being a 75th Anniversary [baby], her parents assure me that they love it so well here that she'll be around for the next presentation of medals. So I wonder if you would join with me, if they would stand and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Postsecondary Students — Employment

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the first question to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. The question really results from the announcement by AMOCO today that they've stopped hiring in all Canadian colleges and universities, and this primarily affects geology, engineering, and business students. What indication does the minister's department have from the postsecondary educational institutions in the province as to announcements such as AMOCO's on the job opportunities for graduates from our universities and colleges?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, at this stage I've had no indication from any postsecondary institutions on matters of this nature. I have not heard until now the information supplied by the Leader of the Opposition, but of course this is one of those factors that will have to be carefully considered in the ensuing months.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, having regard for the fact that AMOCO hired 130 professionals from across Canada last year and this summer had 72 summer employees. Certainly it's my information that a number of other companies regrettably will find themselves in the same situation, primarily as a result of the federal budget which came down a very short time ago.

My question to the minister: is it the intention of the minister and his department to check with the institutions that the department reports to the Assembly for and ascertain the effects of not only AMOCO's announcements but other announcements that have been made with regard to employment opportunities for graduates next year?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think this certainly reflects the concern of many people, and certainly of this government, with respect to the actions taken by the federal government in its attack on the oil industry. It is one of the consequences that may very well flow from that particular course of action. I will certainly be in discussions with those people at our postsecondary institutions to review and evaluate the results of individual decisions made by companies as a result of this very serious decision on the part of the federal government.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. In light of the fact that many of the employment opportunities and courses offered at such an institution are directly related to the resource industry, can the minister give an indication to the Assembly at this time whether the government is still committed to moving ahead with the technology institute which would be, if I could use the term, a companion institute to NAIT in the greater Edmonton region? Is the government still planning to go ahead with that institution? I would hope so.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is certainly our intention at this time to proceed. As I have reported to the House earlier, when the hon. Leader of the Opposition was absent, the decision is proceeding in its current timetable. At this stage we have made no decision to alter that timetable.

Kratzman Commission

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the second question to the Minister of Labour. It could be to either the Minister of Labour or the Minister of Education, but I note the minister is not here today; in fact I'd hoped he would be.

The question deals with the Kratzman commission, which was established at the time of the rather prolonged teachers' strike in Calgary. Is it still the intention of the commission that the sessions will be closed to the public?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, to the best of my information, which I believe is as recent as about five days ago, the Kratzman commission had received a very large number of letters and other representations of a written

form. It had also undertaken to hear certain of the representors, and to do that in the confidence the commission felt was necessary in order to have some of those people express themselves as freely as they wished to. Further, my understanding is that with one possible exception, all the groups which were going to have a hearing and an exchange with the commission in addition to making written presentations have been completed. I believe there is one, possibly two, still to be heard, and I think one of those is for the second time.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Can the minister indicate to the Assembly whether groups making presentations to the commission have been advised not to release their briefs to the public until the commission reports to the minister in December? My indication is that that's factual. If that's the case, was that done at the minister's request, and for what reason?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, it certainly wasn't at my request, because I didn't in any respect give the commission any instructions related to how it conducted its activities. I have simply questioned them from time to time in order to be somewhat updated, because due to the delay in getting started, there was a question of whether the time schedule originally outlined could be achieved. I cannot therefore respond whether or not the commission may have requested parties to do that, but I would think that is a matter the party and the commission would have to decide.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, just one last question. I note that the Minister of Education has returned, so I'll make my supplementary very short with the hope of getting on to asking the minister a question later.

Very quickly then, a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour. Mr. Minister, no action was taken by the minister's office to ask the commission to have all briefs presented to the commission kept in confidence until the minister receives the commission's report. Is that accurate?

MR. YOUNG: That's correct, Mr. Speaker. There is no instruction and no request on my part with respect to the disposition of submissions that would be received by the commission. My understanding is that when the commission completes its work, it will turn them over to me as a part of its report or as an appendix to its report. What it does in the meantime is up to the commission and the parties.

Alberta Human Rights Commission

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Labour. It is a follow-up to a question put to the minister yesterday with respect to the Human Rights Commission. I would ask the minister if he could clarify the role of the commission's staff now. Will they in fact be a branch of the Department of Labour? In particular, is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether the director of the Human Rights Commission will be reporting to the minister, to the chairman of the Human Rights Commission, or to the deputy minister of the Department of Labour?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, if that's the question as I understand it, the Alberta Human Rights Commission

staff relates to the Department of Labour in much the same way as the staff of the Board of Industrial Relations. Both have quasi-judicial or judicial interpretive functions and policy-making functions to perform within the limits of their legislation. In that respect, for organization and staffing purposes and for control over the financial and operational aspects, if you will, they report, in the case of the director of the Alberta Human Rights Commission, to the Deputy Minister of Labour. In terms of policy interpretation, that is a report which goes to the Alberta Human Rights Commission primarily. The commission also receives report on the efficacy of the work of the commission.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister. In view of the administrative structure being significant to the work of the commission, what role will the commission itself have in determining some of the administrative decisions which normally were the purview of the commission and gave the commission some independence? Will there be any role for the commission in that, or will it be restricted exclusively to policy matters in a broad sense, as opposed to the staffing of the commission itself?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview alluded to, there has been absolutely no change in the independence of the commission in the sense of its abilities to make recommendations and to make policy within the legislation as provided to it; that is, for the commissioners who make up the commission.

With respect to the relationship of the director of the commission, who is a staff person, and the persons employed to assist the director in carrying out the functions of the commission — handling complaints and those types of situations — any overall changes as to the form or organization of that staff are reviewed by the director with the deputy minister who, in turn, reviews that procedure with the chairman and myself.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly that the chairman and the members of the commission will have not just consultative powers but in fact the normal powers one would expect of the commission, dealing with the staffing issue? Because the staffing issue is very important to the function of the Human Rights Commission. Or will it essentially be just a reflective role, after the decision has been made through the normal course of the departmental operations?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, absolutely, the commission will have the normal role afforded to commissioners in terms of the staffing and organizational operations of the commission. Those are quite different from policy-making. Those roles and procedures are carried out having regard to the public service legislation and regulations of the province, and in the normal procedure that any board or agency would have to operate in. In that respect the commissioners' main concern has to be with having staff who can appropriately and effectively execute the responsibilities that fall within the purview of the commission, and to make sure those challenges and responsibilities are carried out courteously, on time, and in a way to render good public service. That is the division of responsibility.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. What role will the commission itself have in proposing to the government, to the minister in particular, and to the department, the budget proposals for the commission, and the staffing, in order to make the commission operable?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I've never inquired into the budgetary process in detail. My understanding is, and my one experience has been, that the director, with his senior staff, draws a budget based on the nature of the workload, reviews that with the commission for their information and suggestions, then takes it forward to the deputy minister, from whom it goes through the co-ordinating process in the Department of Labour where all budgets are brought together. It then becomes related to the larger departmental budget.

I can't advise the hon. member whether the deputy minister sees it before the commission, vice versa, or whether they see it at the same time. I do know that every effort is made to be sure there is a co-ordinated approach, and that there is a meeting of minds on the question of the adequacy of staff and budget. If the hon. member will recall the last report of the commission for the year 1978-79, the chairman of the commission expressly stated that the government had provided all the funds necessary. In fact the commission had been well funded.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the minister. Mr. Speaker, is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether it will be the government's intention to table the report of the private management consulting firm that examined the commission? Further, since that report commented favorably on the education and research divisions of the commission, is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly what, if anything, has been done to fill the vacancies that occurred in those two divisions?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, in his question the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview has advanced information to the Assembly which, unfortunately, isn't accurate. As I understand it, the consultant in question proceeded in stages in his work with the commission and produced a series of partial reports, including some — I'm not sure they could be called reports — preliminary observations. The final report contains no such observation as the hon. member has made.

If it is the wish of the members of the Legislature, I would certainly take under advisement the possibility of tabling the report of the consultant, Mr. Speaker, but I would have to check to make sure that in no way reflects on any individuals in a manner as to affect their future.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the minister. Is he in a position to advise the Assembly where things stand on the question of recruiting people to fill the vacancies in the areas of both research and education, in view of the importance of those two obvious functions to the proper operation of the commission?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I would have to take the question as notice if the hon. member wants a report of information based on the last few days.

Federal Budget — Alberta Response

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My

question to the hon. Premier is with regard to the slight remarks the Prime Minister made yesterday that there's a possibility he might be prepared to negotiate with our Premier with regard to oil and gas issues for the province of Alberta from the budget, also on the oil sands development. Could the Premier indicate whether he's prepared to respond to that offer the Prime Minister made yesterday?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's any useful purpose in responding to the question. As I said yesterday to a question from the hon. Member for Clover Bar, I believe that any discussions between the two governments would perhaps have a better chance of some degree of progress if they were initiated at the official level. I think we should have a breathing space, and have the opportunity to complete our order pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly last evening. When that order has been completed and under way, I would like some time to consider it further. But as I mentioned yesterday, I do believe it would be better to have such discussions develop at the official level.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Premier with regard to oil sands development. What areas does the Premier consider open for negotiation as far as oil sands and heavy oil development are concerned?

MR. LOUGHEED: Again, Mr. Speaker, I don't think it would be constructive to respond to that at this time. I do think discussions of this nature would be better if they were undertaken initially by officials of the two governments.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. With regard to the first answer to my colleague's question, the indication was that you didn't feel discussions would be appropriate or worth while until the order resulting from the motion last night had been completed. My supplementary question would be: at what time does the Premier see that business being completed? In the Premier's initial answer, did that answer prevent discussions at the official level starting until that period of time?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, all I can do is refer to the Prime Minister's answers in the House of Commons last Friday that the nature of the notice granted by the province of Alberta relative to its response gave a breathing space, and the breathing space should be effectively utilized.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Is he in a position where he cannot indicate to the Assembly whether that period of time Alberta will need, according to the Premier's first answer today, would be one month or might be a period longer than that before at least discussions at the official level can commence?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe any useful purpose is served in attempting to make a guess as to what time frame would be involved. The essential period that is involved will be the notice period that emanates from the order. It will arise from the resolution approved by the Legislative Assembly yesterday.

MR. R. CLARK: Are you telling us that on this matter, as important as it is, the Premier can't tell us today in the Assembly whether that period of time the government will need to take the necessary steps to follow up the decision of this House last night, will be one month or perhaps five months? All we're asking is some kind of indication, so that not only we on this side of the House know; it would seem to me the people of this province deserve to know when the government feels it could have the situation in order to start negotiations again, even at an officials' level.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's any way one could put a time element on when the evaluations can be effectively completed, in the complexity of the document. I see no useful purpose served by attempting to guess at it.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to either the Premier or the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Pursuant to the motion passed last night, when is the cabinet going to make a decision with respect to the first 60,000 barrels-a-day reduction, the 90-day period? Have we set a tentative date yet? When will that be set?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I believe two questions were asked by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview: one, when the order in council contemplated by Resolution 21, passed last night, might be dealt with by Executive Council. I would expect that to be done sometime this week. The second part of his question, as I heard it, would be the date the production reduction would begin. That is a decision that hasn't been made but would of course be made at the time Executive Council dealt with the order.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to either hon. gentleman. Is the Assembly to understand that further discussion at the officials' level — I underline the officials' level, not between members of the government — would not take place until such time as we have formally announced the date on which the cutbacks would commence? If so, could we expect that discussions at the officials' level would begin shortly after that date is announced?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I believe it's the same question I was asked by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, and the answer stands.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. One of the concerns I have is that it's not clear to me at this point in time who should be calling whom to get the negotiations — or the discussions, even if they are not negotiations — between Alberta and Ottawa started. Could the Premier clarify that step with regard to Ottawa's or Alberta's strategy?

Secondly, it seems as if communication between Ottawa and Alberta is through the press. Would the Premier be willing to give the press the phone number and accept a collect call from our Prime Minister? I say this with seriousness, not in an attempt to be light: we're willing to hear from the Prime Minister through a collect call to get this thing on the road and, hopefully, solve the problem.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't think any useful purpose is served in having the discussions carried on

through the press. Certainly I don't think anything falls on who calls whom. That's just a matter that will evolve. As I said in answer to the question yesterday from the Member for Clover Bar, I think we should have the cooling-off period get under way, then give it some time and carefully consider the process.

Employee Relations Board

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Government House Leader is with regard to the Public Service Employee Relations Board, as the Government House Leader would be responsible for answering for that board in the Legislature. At the present time that board has refused to certify the Professional Association of Interns and Residents as a bargaining agent with the hospitals and the Alberta Hospital Association. I wonder if the minister could clarify the reasons for that and what steps may be taken to alleviate the concern of the professional association at this time.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not able to give any information to the hon. member at this time on that point. I think I should say to him, though, that the correct view of the duties of the Public Service Employee Relations Board under their legislation establishes them as a quasi-judicial body, with the required authority to make decisions. My role would be as may be required by the House, perhaps to provide copies of decisions or something like that. But to begin to take sides on any of the things that come up there from time to time is something I would not do.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has the minister had the opportunity of meeting with representatives of the interns association or the Alberta Hospital Association, with the view of possibly averting any kind of work-to-rule campaign or, potentially, any strike of doctors?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question is a real puzzle. I think he probably knew that when he asked it. He directed the question to me on the basis of the fact that the Public Service Employee Relations Board, which operates pursuant to The Public Service Employee Relations Act, happens to report to the Assembly, as it must, through some minister; it happens to report through me. I don't think I am in the position, in my role as either House leader or Attorney General, to be involved in any of the matters raised in the hon. member's question.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Under the present circumstances, you as minister, or any other minister, wouldn't be involved in the question that is arising between the board and the professional organization?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I can only emphasize the importance, where there is a board that has the statutory responsibility of making decisions, of allowing them to do so. If at some point this Assembly is at the stage where it's not satisfied with the structure of the arrangements that are in place for determining these decisions — in this case the Public Service Employee Relations Board — that may be a matter for legislation, then it would be determined here. But as long as the legislation is in the form it is, I foresee no change. The structures

would remain the same, and the board will simply carry on the duties it should perform.

Governments of Canada Publication

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I raise the question primarily as a result of the comments made yesterday in the House when the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources talked about propaganda and misleading information having become more and more a part of the war of words in which this country is engulfed. The question I pose to the Minister of Education is the result of the circulation of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund booklet for grade 5, entitled *Governments of Canada*, which I'm sure the minister and members are familiar with.

Will the hon. minister indicate to the Assembly why, on page 53 in this book on governments of Canada, where the pictures of all the prime ministers of Canada are set out, the picture of Pierre Elliott Trudeau has been left off the page? [interjections] Is this part of the negotiations that go on between Alberta and Ottawa? Is this what we're trying to teach Alberta young people, that this is the list of prime ministers this country has had? I make it jestingly, but also seriously. This book is funded by the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. It sets out the pictures of the prime ministers of Canada. Whether we like the individual or not, when we're teaching our young people the history of this country, why is the picture of Pierre Elliott Trudeau left out of this document?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I really think we are dealing here with a tempest in a teapot. I know there is a concern in one particular school jurisdiction. To be frank, I have very little sympathy for it. If the hon. member opposite would read the description beside those pictures, he will see it identifies former prime ministers of Canada. While that may be our devout wish for the Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, he is not the former Prime Minister of Canada. There is another picture of the Prime Minister campaigning, and he is identified as the Prime Minister of Canada.

If we're going to come in a moment to the questions about the pictures of provincial politicians, I'll answer those questions when they are asked. There was no political input in the editing of that book. It was done well and conscientiously by dedicated professionals, and it ranks among the very best learning resources available in the schools in the province.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question after a rather pompous answer, to say the least. We won't argue about the former, the present, the past, or the future. Might I then simply say to the minister, who defends a publication that I think is very shabby on this particular . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Has the hon. leader a question? If so, might we hear it. If there's going to be a debate about the book, might it take place outside the question period.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, it likely should. The question to the minister then: can the minister explain to the Assembly why, when officials of the Crowsnest Pass School Division contacted officials of the department about the point I just raised, from the assistant deputy minister down they were told that "we know nothing, we

see nothing, and we can do nothing" about this publication; and the fact that the omission had been drawn to the minister's attention before the thing went to press, and the minister did nothing about it?

MR. KING: The last point is not correct. That was not drawn to my attention before the book went to press, and I want that to be perfectly clear. The first point about my department knowing nothing, seeing nothing, or . . . What was the other aspect of that? That may be the interpretation of one of the staff of a local jurisdiction, but you can take my word for it that that's not my understanding of how the department operates.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is the minister in a situation to indicate to the Assembly that before any additional prints of the publication are made, the rather glaring omission will be corrected?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: We hope so.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat that the text identifies the pictures as being pictures of former prime ministers of Canada. I will do everything in my power to ensure that the Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau joins that august company. [laughter]

I'll also do everything in my power to create a vacancy on the page by taking off the picture of the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark and giving him a full page as Prime Minister of Canada.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. minister agree that likely the Minister of Education and his government did a great deal so that from their point of view the present Prime Minister's picture is not on the page? [interjections]

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Education contemplate offering remedial reading lessons for leaders of opposition and superintendents of school boards?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary McKnight wishes to deal further with a question which I believe was asked yesterday.

Alberta Research Council

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, in answer to a question from the hon. Leader of the Opposition yesterday, I would like to confirm that Dr. Eastman has resigned from the Alberta Research Council.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. member. Would the member be in a position to indicate whether, in the course of Dr. Eastman's resignation, a final settlement was made to Dr. Eastman by the Research Council? Or did Dr. Eastman in fact leave on his own, and there was no settlement when he left?

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. leader may or may not know, the Research Council has structured its board of management in such a way that the responsibility for the employment of our staff is that of our president. He reports to the executive committee on positions in senior management and who is to occupy those positions. He consulted with the executive group of the Research Council, and they affirm his position in this

matter. As far as I'm concerned, I would suggest that the hon. leader should direct his question to the president of the Research Council.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. gentleman. I would point out to the hon. gentleman that the responsibility he holds is to report to the Assembly on the operations of the Research Council. Let me rephrase the question or place a supplementary question to the hon. gentleman. In the course of Dr. Eastman leaving the Research Council, was financial remuneration in addition to his monthly salary given to Dr. Eastman before he left, or was there a lump settlement when he left to encourage him to leave?

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, the arrangements between Dr. Eastman and the Research Council were worked out by him with the president. As far as I know, they are satisfactory to both parties.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. gentleman. Is the hon. member who reports to the Research Council indicating to the House that the hon. gentleman is not aware whether there was a financial incentive for Dr. Eastman to leave? What I really want to know is: how much did we pay the gentleman to leave, or did we?

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I think I've answered the question as fully as I'm going to answer it. I tried to indicate that arrangements having to do with personnel are the business of the management of the Research Council, and we have faith in the management.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, with regard to notices of motion, the government would ask that motions for returns 127, 130, and 131 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper. With regard to Motion for a Return 128, at the time that is called I would raise a question of order as to that matter. With regard to 129, an amendment will be proposed.

[Motion carried]

129. On behalf of Dr. Buck, Mr. R. Clark moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all documents in the government's possession relating to the specific aims and provisions of the government's eight-year program for research and education in the area of workers' health and safety, together with a detailed breakdown showing how the \$10 million budget will be allocated.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? I realize that we've skipped over 128, but we can come back to that.

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to make an amendment to Motion 129, that the motion read as follows:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return

showing a list of the specific aims and provisions of the government's eight-year program for research and education in the area of workers' health and safety, together with projection showing how the \$10 million budget is proposed to be allocated.

[Motion as amended carried]

CLERK: Motion for a Return No. 128: Mr. Notley.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I move Motion . . .

MR. HORSMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Before we move to this motion by way of debate, it is the position of the government that the motion is out of order in its present form, in that in two places it asks for an assessment by the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. Speaker, under *Beauchesne*, No. 390 with regard to the subject of questions, reports and returns, it is pointed out that:

The principles governing Notices of Motions for Productions of Papers [are]

(1) To enable Members of Parliament to secure factual information about the operations of Government to carry out their parliamentary duties and to make public as much factual information as possible . . .

There are a number of other matters relating to questions, both written and oral, which relate to the subject of seeking an opinion.

Mr. Speaker, we believe what is being asked for in this motion to be clearly out of order in that it asks for an assessment. An assessment is in fact an opinion. Therefore, we would seek your ruling on the order based upon that objection.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, just speaking on the point of order, as a matter of fact I would be quite prepared to ask to withdraw and simply reword it, because my recollection is that the wording of this was based on a motion for a return which was passed some years ago, which the government agreed to. But I don't have any major quarrel with the issue that has been raised. In the motion for a return, we're actually requesting information, so I will simply withdraw it and reword it, if that's agreeable to the members.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: There may not be any need for me to deal any further with the point of order, but I would have to agree with the hon. Deputy Government House Leader that if the assessment does not exist, of course it may not be asked for in a motion for a return. On the other hand, I would be less ready to agree that all assessments are matters of opinion, because I think some of them, of course, contain factual information.

However, there will be no problem with it. I'm sure that the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview will rephrase it, and it will come before the Assembly again.

MR. NOTLEY: I look forward to the support of the government on it.

head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

203. Moved by Mr. Isley:

Be it resolved that this Assembly urge the government to have an independent study carried out to determine what impact

- (a) the appointment of superintendents of schools by local school boards has had on classroom education, in general, and curriculum implementation, in particular, and
- (b) the Alberta Education regional offices have had on education in the province.

[Adjourned debate April 1: Mr. R. Clark]

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part very briefly in the debate on this particular, checking back this morning when the hon. member Mr. Isley proposed the motion to the House, if my recollection is accurate, the discussion on this particular matter took place on April 1 of this year. Simply to refresh my mind and those of my colleagues, what we're basically discussing here is the idea of setting up a study to look at the effectiveness of locally appointed school superintendents and also the idea of the regional offices.

When I spoke the last day that the matter was being debated, last April 1, I simply wanted to make one more point. Before getting to that point, let me simply say that as I stated on April 1, I have no objection to the assessment that's going on, but I make the point again: I don't believe an assessment of locally appointed superintendents and regional offices is one of the most pressing matters as far as education in the province is concerned. On that occasion I outlined a number of matters that I thought were more important.

I would give credit to the Minister of Education, in that since last April there have been at least some steps taken — albeit rather small — to help deal with this problem of the non-academic junior high school student in rural jurisdictions. I know now of some jurisdictions which have been able to commence rather meagre — but at least a positive step — non-academic programs for youngsters who are not academically successful in high school. I would be less than fair if I didn't say that was a step in the right direction.

The point that I wanted to add today is, when we're looking at this motion before us — and I assume that the motion will in all likelihood be passed. But in passing this motion, let's not assume that this question of the assessment of superintendents and regional offices is the most pressing problem facing education. I think one of the major issues we have to address is the question of the imbalance developing between that amount of money from the province and money from local taxpayers, to pay for the cost of education. It's my intention to vote for the resolution today, but I simply want to make the point with members. The cabinet ministers who were in my constituency heard considerable representation on this point in their recent cabinet tour of central Alberta, that we're seeing a larger and larger portion of the cost of education being borne by local property tax in the form of supplementary requisitions.

I simply wouldn't want us to pass this resolution today and to let either the Minister of Education or the Minister of Municipal Affairs off the hook. Because in the Speech from the Throne this spring, there was reference to a look at the educational finance program, the founda-

tion program — I forget the exact terminology — but there was a commitment in the Speech from the Throne that we'd look at the means by which education is financed in the province. I think all members in this Assembly, and many people outside, assume that to mean that a larger portion of the cost of education will come from the province, and that we will see a sizable reduction in the cost of education that local property tax payers put up through supplementary requisitions. I think that's a matter of considerable importance. If we don't do that quickly, we're going to find the imbalance between a number of rural boards and wealthier boards in the province grow even greater than it is today. That will simply mean that any legitimacy there is in this idea of an equal education across the province in the 1 to 12 system would be thrown even further into imbalance.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. MAGEE: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly the hon. member would permit the Clerk to draw the attention of the Assembly to the next order of business.

212. Moved by Dr. Buck:

Be it resolved that this Assembly support in principle the movement away from mandatory retirement and urge the government to abolish mandatory retirement for public employees and consult with industry to develop alternatives for extended employment in the private sector.

[Adjourned debate April 3: Mr. Magee]

MR. MAGEE: Thank you for that correction, Mr. Speaker.

I welcome the opportunity today to continue speaking to Motion 212, introduced some five months ago by the Member for Clover Bar. While sympathetic with the intent of his motion, Mr. Speaker, the broad subject of retirement should be studied. However, the Member for Clover Bar makes three positive statements in his motion which, if approved by this Assembly, would be far too precipitous, and rapid action in this field could certainly be construed by everyone as this government going off half cocked.

I consider three points to be entirely inappropriate, and would urge hon. members to consider changes only after very careful study of their impact on the economic and social structures. They are broken out of the motion in this way: one, "support . . . movement away from mandatory retirement"; two, "urge the government to abolish mandatory retirement for public employees"; and three, "develop alternatives for extended employment in the private sector".

Can one imagine the turmoil such a policy would create if instituted quickly? Mr. Speaker, mandatory retirement is the kind of issue which needs much study and consideration; a kind of issue which should be dealt with in depth. For instance if we had an institute of gerontology, this could be an assignment this institute could accept and study, in which experts from many fields, possibly from other countries around the world which had had experience in some of these types of matters, to analyse

the impact such a radical move would create in this country.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

Further to these three initiatives suggested in the hon. member's motion, the entire tone would tend to indicate that this government is not doing anything in this field, and that here is a new idea being proposed that needs urgent action. Rather, Mr. Speaker, that we plan and proceed more slowly with wise and considered moves. To this end, it has been documented that studies should be done to provide for retirement age flexibility in which retirement options be part of preretirement planning promotion, so the individual's age of retirement could be designed based on a whole range of criteria, not the set age alone. In some cases the upper age limit should be considered to allow some individuals to work longer than the accepted age of 65, if it suits his or her wishes.

Another point to be considered: in order to overcome prejudice toward older people in the work force or taking early retirement, an educational program should be instituted. I'd like to draw hon. members' attention to the fact that The Individual's Rights Protection Act would have to be considered, as it does not now protect against discrimination of persons in the work force over the age of 65.

A whole range of alternatives to full-time work should be considered. No doubt many older people would like to carry on on a part-time or reduced hourly basis, but present company and government policies generally do not provide for this circumstance. I would like to qualify my last statement about government policies, however, because there is a section in the personnel regulations governing the selection, appointment, and transfer of employees. Section 10 states in part that when it is considered desirable that the service of a salaried employee be continued after he reaches age 65, an application for extension of employment must be forwarded to the Public Service Commissioner. Any extension or re-appointment shall be for a one-year period, not exceeding one year, although it is my understanding that again, it could come up for reassessment and a further extension be given for another year. But I suggest to hon. members that this is not truly a change in retirement policy, as it is simply very short term and does not enter into many other factors on which a person would decide on his life style, wanting to change the number of years he was employed in the work force.

Mr. Speaker, that is not to say we should not be moving ahead. In fact some months ago Senator Croll introduced in the Senate a report called Retirement Without Tears, in which he recommends that the federal and provincial governments take leadership in doing away with mandatory retirement at age 65 in the public pension policies, despite the fact that for well over 50 years our systems have been predicated on building up pension plans based on the magic retirement age of 65. So change is indicated, and not only from the federal government. Many grass roots people in advisory positions in this province are starting to give their considered opinion that planning should commence in a serious way by establishing an institute of gerontology to study the whole area of aging and the process which brings aging about faster in some people than in others.

Retirement policy and the question of doing away with mandatory retirement is a complex issue. There are no easy answers. It is necessary to consider the norms deal-

ing with the quality of life in one's retirement years. Of major concern is ensuring a minimum income level in order to prevent poverty in old age. However, expectations have changed. Retirement now is viewed as a time to do things which time did not permit when employed. Numerous on-the-surface studies have indicated that the timing and method of retirement are important to successful retirement satisfaction, as are adequate planning, income, and good health. Mr. Speaker, one really has to come up with alternatives in policy which have a good chance of ensuring a higher quality of life, if our norms are drastically changed. An institute of gerontology where in-depth studies are made and experts address themselves to the issues, could provide many answers.

While I concur with those who feel an institute of gerontology is a prime need to direct our collective attention to the problems of aging, it really comes down to the level of retirement income for individuals, which determines the quality of life a person will have when he or she retires.

Since 1972 this government has accepted the responsibility to provide income supplement to the federal programs to enhance income to low-income seniors aged 65, the normal time when most employees accept retirement. At one time so few people had no pensions at all, Mr. Speaker. With the minimum income supports and benefits, destitution could in fact be a very common fate unless we had moved in this direction. Even now over half the persons receiving old age security are eligible for the guaranteed income supplement and the Alberta assured income plan. If government continues, all people will have enough to keep the wolf from the door.

What should be the responsibilities for those who want more than the necessities of living? Surely it is the responsibility of the individual, labor, and management to work together to provide an additional income, both for old age and for retirement pleasures, with a good quality of life at whatever age that retirement should take place, if it is agreed that a flexible age for retirement is to be established. Certainly pension plans would have to have a good deal more flexibility than those at present establishing a level of benefits. Some things to be considered are: the years spent in the work force, actuarial reductions in insurance companies' pension plans and so on considering early retirement, actuarial calculations for increased benefits for those who work beyond the age of 65. Horrendous calculations are required to meet this wide variety of options.

Mr. Speaker, no doubt retirement pensions have become part of the social fabric of this country and are not to be tampered with lightly. With mandatory retirement comes a significant number of problems which still create havoc in people's lives and present many problems for agencies of governments and for volunteer organizations that continue to struggle to help seniors. Some things they presently have to deal with are: abrupt income drop, the loss of social status and social roles; the restriction of opportunities, the psychological stresses while in the process of retirement, loss of self-respect and self-esteem, loss of purpose and usefulness; loneliness, suicide and alcoholism, and the problems of adaptation to unlimited leisure time.

Now these eight problems I have cited, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure need more study and better solutions at this time. If we add another dimension of dissolution of the mandatory retirement age of 65, I'm sure turmoil will take place. This will no doubt upset many of the now established and accepted patterns in our perceptions of

retirement. In my opinion, an institute of gerontology should be established and charged with the responsibility to find some of these solutions and advance recommendations before any further dramatic changes are made to our systems.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I appreciate the sentiments of the Member for Clover Bar in presenting his motion, as he is onto a worth-while issue. If he had instead suggested that a careful review, an in-depth study, should be embarked upon, then my response today would have been more receptive to his motion. I am against his motion as stated, but certainly am for the in-depth study of the impact such a move would have on our aging population and our economic and social norms.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, as many hon. members will be aware, I've had a long-standing interest in this subject. Others may recall that in the 1979 session of this Legislature, I introduced a private member's Bill that in fact was a proposed amendment to The Individual's Rights Protection Act, and in part would have implemented the intent of Motion 212.

I'm sure many of my colleagues in the Assembly would agree that there are many persuasive arguments in support of the position that mandatory or compulsory retirement at age 65 should in fact end in Alberta. In debates on this concept in 1978 and '77, other members of this Assembly spoke at length about those persuasive arguments in favor of the abolishment of mandatory retirement at 65. I'm not so sure it would serve a useful purpose today for me to specify some of those, but I feel two or three are significant, and I would like to mention them today.

Some are obvious and some are somewhat obscure but become clear after extensive study of the subject and the problems associated with forcing those who are 65 to retire. The first obvious one; of course, is that those in the work force don't become mentally or physically unproductive all at the same age of 65. For some, that occurs early in life; for others, very late. The other obvious consideration, of course, is that with compulsory retirement the services of many people who are still very productive may be lost. This was certainly the case with my own father. It was the impact of compulsory retirement on his life that triggered my thoughts on the subject a few years ago.

If employees are allowed to work as long as they are productive, regardless of their age, the cost of the pension plan can be substantially lowered. Some or all of this saving can then be used to provide more adequate pensions for employees who become unproductive sometime before the traditional retirement age of 65.

Just a comment on mental retirement as opposed to physical retirement. Anticipating their compulsory retirement, senior people within an organization oftentimes lose the spirit of enterprise; their get-up-and-go, frankly, gets up and goes. The result is mental retirement, which can occur years before the compulsory retirement age.

Just a couple of psychological observations, I suppose: older members of our work force, older Albertans, want and need to remain active participating members of society. A number of editorials I've read in recent months have pointed out the implicit cruelty in forcing those who are physically and emotionally fit to be unable to continue in the workplace. The enforcement of retirement of someone who is still useful, active, and productive in fact diminishes the ability of that person to remain in contact

with the workaday world, the day to day interpersonal contacts that are just so much a part of life and of measuring one's self-esteem. For many, being usefully employed is the most acceptable proof that that individual does have a place in society.

Just one last philosophical comment, I suppose, and that's the element of choice. There's a fair amount of statistical documentation now to make the case that many in the workplace, many in Alberta, who retire willingly long before 65. They then argue, why do we need such a provision as contemplated in Motion 212? In my view the response to that in part relates to the question of choice. I, for one, don't plan to work until the age of 65; I just have lots of things I want to do in my 60s. But I most certainly want to have the choice. It's that element of choice that so many of our aging Albertans feel has been denied them.

Those are just some of the persuasive arguments — and there are many — which I suppose would lead one to ask: in view of such an array of persuasive arguments, why don't we just do it? As is the case with so many legislative questions that are posed before the Members of this Assembly, unfortunately, there is another side to the coin. I've been reluctant to look at it because I have been so busily engaged as an advocate of the abolishment of mandatory retirement. But an examination of that other side of the coin has revealed some questions that I feel simply have not been answered in Alberta at least, and perhaps in many other jurisdictions. I would hope that those participating in the debate today on Motion 212, or indeed on any other occasion, would address themselves to some of these nagging concerns that I might put forward today.

For example, the abolishment of mandatory retirement at the age of 65 would force the restructuring of pension plans across the country and other employee benefit programs. An article in the Canadian publication, *The Financial Post*, earlier this year raised the tricky question of the loss of a tidy way, as it said, to get rid of the deadwood. That is to say, if you lose that tidy way to get rid of the deadwood, you have to replace it with some kind of complicated mechanism to decide when a worker has to go. Of course, whatever that mechanism is, it would then create the possibility of a stigma being attached to those who are let go, and those who are may quite justifiably feel inferior to others who in fact may be retained. With the introduction of this concept, I think some companies would feel within the corporate heart an obligation to find second careers for professional and managerial people so they would continue to be productive in another work setting.

As a manager who at one time has had to address this very question, it's sometimes unpleasant to decide who's productive and who isn't, especially when it involves employees who have had many years of service or who are close to or in fact part of management. Mandatory retirement, Mr. Speaker, provides a practical administrative procedure that is objective, impersonal, and avoids charges of discrimination and favoritism.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, mandatory retirement maintains open channels of promotion, ensuring more upward mobility for those at the front end of the work force.

Well, Mr. Speaker, despite these nagging questions I have, despite these potential problems I see with the abolishment of mandatory retirement, as I look at developments in the United States, in Europe, and elsewhere in Canada, and indeed within Alberta, I am forced to conclude that the abolishment of mandatory retirement at 65

is inevitable.

A reflection of the inevitability was an *Edmonton Journal* headline earlier this year that read: Forced Retirement Fast Becoming Key Civil Rights Issue. I submit that that is the case in a number of jurisdictions and here within Alberta. Another indication of its inevitability, I suppose, is a statement made by the Canadian Human Rights Commission chairman, Gordon Fairweather, who recently predicted that the mandatory retirement age of 65 will be abolished in Canada in the next 10 years. Other members on previous occasions, and perhaps other members today, will be able to recite developments in a number of jurisdictions, Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia, Quebec, and New Brunswick, that force me to the conclusion that the abolishment of mandatory retirement is indeed inevitable.

In view then of its inevitability, its complexity, and the arguments both for and against such a major development, Mr. Speaker, I would like to propose to the Assembly today that we perhaps consider the establishment of a mechanism similar to a select committee, with the resources, time, and facilities to probe the unquestioned complexities of the issue.

Now in making that suggestion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to emphasize that I support the intent of Motion 212. But I do differ in the techniques of implementation of that intent, and as to the question of which is the most appropriate next step. Particularly, I differ with that part of the motion that would indicate abolishment of mandatory retirement at 65 for public employees. Such a major action, I submit, is unwarranted and ill-advised until a great deal more study has been given the subject, particularly here within our own province. A select committee could be one of a number of potentially useful ways to analyse this obviously important subject for the 1980s.

Thank you.

MR. LITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a personal interest in this particular motion, being a paid-up member in good standing of the order of the golden handshake, or as it is otherwise known, the order of the frozen boot.

Approximately 100 years ago, Mr. Speaker, Count von Bismarck created the first pensions for workers in Germany. He is the individual who came up with this magic number of 65 years of age. In retrospect, I suppose many think it was a very humanitarian effort. In effect, Mr. Speaker, it was nothing of the kind. The chances of the German worker's living to age 65 was rather remote in that at that time the average life expectancy of the German worker was 33 to 35 years of age. However, we have managed to stay with that number.

Incidentally, a dentist friend of mine in Calgary, Dr. Upton, has done a great deal of study in genealogy throughout the world, and found that at approximately the same time, a century ago in England, numbers of people died in the hospitals, and the reason for the death was given as old age: 40s and younger.

However, there have been some rather dramatic changes in the age patterns, in that the '70s are now more the rule than the exception. I would like to quote to you from Garson Kanin's book on aging:

At the turn of the century, about one-third of America's workers retired at age 65. Today, two-thirds do so. The reason for this dramatic increase is the growing custom of forced retirement

and, of course, longevity. Retirement, of course, can be a traumatic experience and can precede a rather speedy

decline in both health and motivation. In his book, Garson Kanin said there should be only two reasons for retirement: one, the personal desire to retire, or secondly, that the person has failed to function in modern society. Garson Kanin himself has some rather important claims to longevity. In his late 70s he is still directing films in the American industry, and his wife, Ruth Gordon, in her 80s, weekly commutes between New York and Hollywood in the production of films.

Once again Kanin gives us a rather dismal outlook about early retirement:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics [for the United States] has revealed two alarming figures. One: that the life expectancy of the average male after retirement is no more than thirty to forty months. Two: that one-third of all marriages are shattered following retirement.

The suicide rate for retired men is twelve times that of those who are employed. For many of them, there is no alternative. They have been told by society, by the government, by law, that they are finished. So many of them decide, why not make it official?

Well as I said a moment ago, Garson Kanin states that there are only the two reasons for retirement, and in his book he quotes literally hundreds of distinguished citizens of the world who have had their most productive years in the last years of their lives, which have been very lengthy careers; for example: Kanin himself; Arthur Fieldler; Somerset Maugham was still writing in his 90s; P.G. Wodehouse, in his 90s; Sigmund Freud; Einstein; Albert Schweitzer; Thomas Edison; and a book that I'm sure that many of the entrepreneurs of this Assembly have, written by Nickerson. Nickerson claims that those with interest in life live productive lives, live longer, and live healthier: Nickerson's book on investment and real estate.

These names I have read to you and as pointed out by Kanin, have a significant difference from the general work force: these people were not employed by an organization; they were self-employed. Mr. Speaker, no one has to accept retirement. He may have to accept mandatory retirement in the organization which employs him, but he may go on and on constructing career after career after that particular mandatory retirement legislation has been enforced.

I was in a walkathon in Calgary with Dr. Grant MacEwan about three years ago. As many of you know, Dr. MacEwan is working on his fifth or sixth career. He said, if you want to do something useful in the Assembly, bring in legislation that allows any individual to spend only 10 years in a particular career, so that he may go on with other careers and other careers after that. I think it was a useful statement.

The present situation of mandatory retirement with the pension plan is a very, very useful procedure. In our lifetime pensions have increased from 5 and 10 per cent of income to frequently 60, 70, and even 80 per cent, so those who don't wish to work any more can live out their lives in dignity. As I say, it has a very useful purpose, in that it also provides for upward mobility within the organization. It would totally destroy the promotion process if persons at the top of the structure were allowed to stay on and on and on, with increased extensions to the labor period. Mr. Speaker, the important point is that there is no compulsion to retire. This is a free enterprise country, and careers can extend indefinitely.

In fact I would suggest even from a personal standpoint, that maybe mandatory retirement is a favor to the person so affected. There's a time for everything, as the

Good Book states. Mandatory retirement is frequently helpful, and with the types of pension plans we have today, it can be a dignified period in life. After 65, after the pension period, is the time you do the things you want to do in life. This is important.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the motion.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to speak to this motion today. At the beginning, may I say I am very much in favor of the intent of the motion proposed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar, and would like to congratulate him on the intent. I would like to congratulate the hon. members for Calgary Fish Creek and Calgary Bow, who in previous years presented Bills to this Legislature which would have had the same final result as the motion, if through a different means and system.

My prime reason for supporting this particular motion today is that in my opinion people should have an option to choose between retiring at a given age, moving into another occupation, as the hon. Member for Calgary McCall has suggested, or to continue in the employment they are in. That option is available both to those individuals and their employers, depending on the particular circumstances involved.

This afternoon I'd like briefly to go through the arguments in favor of abolishing mandatory retirement, by taking a look at the historical perspective. I think most of us recall and are aware of some of the impacts of the post-war baby boom, when all of a sudden, the soldiers returned and there was a great number of young people in our society.

MR. L. CLARK: Why is that?

MR. D. ANDERSON: I won't explain the problems to my hon. colleague in this House, but if he wants some consultation after my speech, I'd be glad to give it to him.

AN HON. MEMBER: He's from Drumheller.

MR. D. ANDERSON: The results of that post-war baby boom were seen in the mid-60s when those babies became young adults moving into our work force and substantially changing the kind of society that had evolved. We noted in the 60s that individuals, such as the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry, evolved a social conscience which tried to change the nature of our society and the way we operated. It was during that period that mandatory retirement became popular as a social move. The reason given for that was the desire to allow individuals who had reached the age of 65 — or another arbitrary age, which varied depending on the individual suggesting it — to retire and gain their rightful place in our society in leisure. Indeed, on the part of many individuals at that point, and perhaps in some way on the part of our society, the motivation was positive, responsible, and motivated by social conscience.

However, I have to think there was another reason for that move at that time: the economic impact that was going to take place. We had all these young people moving into the work force, and spaces had to be found in our society and our work force. And I might say that not only the MLA for Edmonton Glengarry, but I was a member of that group. Those individuals trying to move up the ladder had to have ways of moving ahead. So together with the social conscience, which said that individuals who had worked for our society for so long

deserved a rest, there was the motivation that it allowed for places through which other individuals could make a contribution.

I think now we have to look at the impact of that on today's society, when the post-war baby boom is having a significantly different impact than it had at that time. In our society we now have the highest average age in the history of mankind. The evidence is that within the next 50 to 75 years that will increasingly be the case. So if we go back to that economic impact, the first question is: what are going to be the problems associated with that in our society today? If we look at pension plans, we already know that many of them are depleting at a rapid rate; that our society as well as various companies are having a great deal of difficulty paying to individuals who have retired, the amount of money required out of those funds. With respect to public institutions, there is a great deal of concern that they will be unable to keep up with the demand in years to come if we increasingly move toward more and more people retiring at an earlier age and with the compulsory retirement suggestion. As is becoming true today, in future years there is going to be an increase in needs for medical support, hospital services, and social programs for an increasingly older population. Of course we're going to face a lack of operating capital resulting from less people contributing to the overall tax base we have in terms of government, and indeed a decrease in our ability to be productive as a nation, and in this case as a province, because we won't have those people contributing to the work force on an ongoing basis, but rather living from the tax base and the pension plans established in the past.

Mr. Speaker, those are some of the economic impacts, some of the very practical reasons why in the immediate future we have to consider moving away from the possibility of mandatory retirement.

However, I would suggest that the more important reason, in an emotional sense, is the impact on the individual. Indeed they are interrelated, because an individual incapable of working in future years of course shouldn't be there. First of all, I'd like to deal with the impact on an individual reaching 65, in a medical sense with respect to work, and briefly quote from the American Medical Association study, which says:

Considerable medical evidence is available to indicate that the sudden cessation of productive work and earning power of an individual, caused by compulsory retirement at the chronological age of 65, often leads to physical and emotional deterioration and premature death.

In an emotional sense, I think the hon. Member for Calgary McCall dealt well with some of the impact of mandatory retirement for people who don't know how to deal with that circumstance. I'd like to emphasize that by quoting from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs report:

One of the most important factors which press on the aging individual and give rise to frustration and emotional deprivation is the loss of earning power through forced retirement, illness or reluctance of employers to hire older persons [with the definition of "older" constantly being lowered in some highly industrialized and competitive societies to the point where an individual over the age of 40 years begins to be considered an economic handicap].

The ability to work in society was dealt with in a series of studies and surveys carried out by the Canadian Department of Labour, the New York State Commission

on Human Rights, the Gerontological Society, and several universities. Their conclusions, Mr. Speaker, were the same in a number of areas:

- (i) employees from 65 to 70 and even 75 years of age can generally perform jobs as competently and productively as younger employees, as long as the jobs do not impose unusually heavy physical demands.
- (ii) advancing years bring no significant decline in learning ability.
- (iii) older employees are likely to have greater experience, more mature judgment, and better records of attendance, punctuality, and safety [concerns].

These are some of the reasons why I think we as a government should move in the immediate future to try to phase out mandatory retirement and all the problems incumbent with that. I think it is time for that move. It is time economically, because of the circumstances we face with the increasing average age of our population, and I think it is time because of the rights of the individual to have a choice to determine whether he or she wishes to continue in the work force or indeed to retire to a different and more leisurely life style. For those reasons, I support the intent of this motion.

However, Mr. Speaker, I would take some exception to the urgency this motion suggests, and would support and endorse the points made by the hon. Member for Calgary Fish Creek and several other members who spoke this afternoon, when they say that an immediate move in this respect on the part of this government would cause a great number of difficulties, not only to the government in attempting to do that but also to the individuals involved, in terms of helping them adjust to the change and to the options that may well be available in their lives. I would support very much the suggestion made that a select committee of the Legislature may well be the mechanism we require to look at this situation. I think that now is the time for us to sit back, take a look at that, and come up with some further action.

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn this debate.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree that the debate be adjourned?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

215. Moved by Mrs. Fyfe:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to consider expanding public health programs to ensure that handicapped children be identified at the earliest possible time and that all children so identified be referred to appropriate remedial programs.

MRS. FYFE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I bring forward Motion 215 today, it comes as a result of discussions with parents and with associations, particularly within my constituency. At the onset of the discussion, I would like to clarify firstly that I am in no way trying to criticize the work that has been done by the many volunteer parents and associations and by the Department of Social Services and Community Health, together with the funded community health services throughout Alberta. Instead I bring this motion forward as a complement to the existing community health, and support to the families.

I have been interested in programs that assist the dis-

abled, and in trying to understand the programs and the various organizations, I have found it is a complete maze. So I have a lot of sympathy for parents faced first with learning they have a handicap with one of their children and then trying to determine the direction they must go.

If we go back to the term "disabled", figuratively it means any disadvantage that renders success more difficult. That in itself is a subjective term, but it does cover a very wide variety of disabilities and ailments. I think one thing that is eminently clear is that early detection is essential to overcoming any possible disability. Disabled, as we know, applies to conditions resulting from hereditary and congenital factors, complications in labor or pregnancy, injury, and disease. It may affect mental or physical capacities. Many times there is a multiple disability.

Concerns brought to me from parents often relate to the frustration in identifying a disability. I'm sure we have all heard many times of mothers who have had the feeling that something is wrong; they have searched trying to find an answer, but because medical science is not precise, they must often go to many sources trying to identify something they know is not quite right.

Secondly, when identification is made, often there is frustration in finding an appropriate program. I would like to read a short quotation taken from an excerpt in preparing teachers to work with multihandicapped children. I think it says something rather important dealing with this subject.

Efforts to meet the needs of the multi-handicapped child require close co-operation and co-ordination among a wide [variety] of professionals. These efforts must begin very early in the child's life. There is a great need for infant stimulation programs, pre-school and recreation programs which are able and willing to include multi-handicapped children. Physicians need to be aware of the role of stimulation in the early months and years of the multi-handicapped child's life.

Mr. Speaker, community health services is a preventive, province-wide program that has contact with virtually all infants born in Alberta, at least the percentage of contact with newborn infants is extremely high. The contacts by nurses include: post-natal home visits, well child and immunization clinics, contacts with day care centres, and contacts with early childhood services.

Due to the work done by a former deputy minister in the Department of Social Services and Community Health, the late Dr. Jean Nelson, a program was developed under her auspices to identify handicapped children as early as possible. It was modelled on her program entitled The Edmonton Preschool Child Screening Project, 1972 to 1975. As a result, there was a development of guidelines entitled The Comprehensive Preschool Health Surveillance Program, which I will refer to later on simply as the surveillance program. This system is based on family contact with community health units at certain key ages of child development. These age assessments included a history of the child, development assessment, hearing assessment, visual assessment, and measurement of height and weight. The surveillance program was triggered by the physician's notification of birth, which provides community health units with health information on both mother and child. On receipt of this notification, contact is made by the public health nurse with the family before the newborn infant is six weeks old; so that the child can be assessed by the local community health nurse and enrolled in the community health unit surveillance pro-

gram. Certain infants have high-risk factors in their social or health history, as a result of complications during pregnancy, or any other related cause. The names of these infants are then recorded in the at-risk or observation registry, which is kept at the community health units. At 1 year of age, if no problems have been identified, these high risk children are removed from this registry and are treated as any other children in the public health programs.

The key ages for assessment are firstly, one to six weeks, where there is a postnatal home visit by a public health nurse; at the age of three months there's a clinical development assessment, followed through by assessments at the age of 6 to 8 months and 12 to 14 months. For those children who remain within this high-risk registry, there are a further assessments at 18 months and three years, and then all children are assessed at four and a half to five and a half years. The intent of this program is to provide parents with support and advice on the growth and development of their children.

As those of us who have had children know, children within the same family develop at different stages. If it's a first child in the family, a new mother and father may not be aware that the child is progressing more slowly than he should in a particular area, and if he is developing more slowly, that this may not be anything to become alarmed about. Secondly, an intent of the program is to identify as early as possible children with developmental delays which may later result in a handicap. As we know, identifying a handicap in an infant is a very difficult thing to do, but also I'm sure we are all aware that the earlier the identification, the more successful the child will be in overcoming that handicap. The third intent of the program is to identify children with sensory impairment — that means hearing and vision, of course — and that, once again, this should be done as early as possible.

When a baseline survey has been completed by the department, consideration will be given to having these guidelines universally applied. At present, health unit boards and boards of health in Alberta are funded completely by the provincial government. At this time, I believe five programs outside the city of Edmonton have developed this surveillance program, and another five receive funding through services for the handicapped and do have a program of sorts.

All children are not covered through the province. This is one of my concerns, that we do develop a program to apply to all children in Alberta so that this detection at the earliest possible time would be complete. On failing an assessment, a child is referred — I don't know if failing is an appropriate word, but not meeting the mark of the so-called average range — a child falling below this range would be referred to an appropriate treatment facility, usually through the family physician and the outcome is not always — I don't intend that this should be done by the public health nurses. It is considered essential to know what happened to children who have been referred. I would see that an extremely important role of the public health nurse is to be able to follow up where a referral has been made, whether it's outside the community or a program within the community, to ensure that the child is still working at follow-up exercises at home, that it has the total support of the parents, or whatever situation may arise.

Communication problems are increasingly being recognized as the cause of school difficulties for many children. A special project has resulted in the development of a speech development screening test for preschool age

children, which has become available to health units in Alberta this year. This preschool speech screening [test] will be complemented by the development of screening testing for school-aged children in a two-year project which has just commenced. It should be recognized that the child with an obvious physical handicap is usually identified through the medical community, and appropriate referral takes place through that route. The children who have a high risk potential, or the parents, could be helped through this program, firstly in trying to prevent situations where there may be a handicap, or secondly, where it's so important with the child with the low birth rate, followed up at regular clinics or regular programming to ensure that they're not simply left.

The types of referral programs in place through the community health programs are, firstly, speech therapy programs that are available in health units across the province. Secondly, the health unit services branch is presently considering expanding the early intervention program for infants with developmental delays, provided in community health units. This is the program I referred earlier which is not province-wide, but they do have programs in place in some health units. Next, the revision of the system to register handicapped people in Alberta. This causes many people some concern. The main concern relates to the confidentiality of the information that is provided. On the other hand, I think it's appropriate to say this registry would greatly assist children who move in our very mobile society. If a registry were available that could follow up and assist parents, we likely would have less gaps in treatment programs for many children.

By covering just the very bare bones of this surveillance program, I hope to demonstrate that Alberta basically has an excellent model for early detection of disabled children. But as we have discussed previously in motions and resolutions in the Assembly, programming is never at a static point. Something more can always be done. In the area of the disabled and the handicapped, there always seems to be just an immense area that still has to be accomplished. Nevertheless, I feel we have come a significant way in early identification, and that certainly is a great step forward.

We have moved dramatically in other areas that have encouraged the handicapped to stay within their own homes. In areas or communities where we have home care. I think the effect has been very positive. Home care has been able to assist families in caring for individuals who in previous years and decades would never have been considered to be handled or cared for within their home. Where PSS is in effect, this program has been particularly successful, but as PSS is a program shared by provincial and municipal governments, many municipalities still don't have PSS. Consequently, care of many of the handicapped within the home is affected by the lack of province-wide PSS.

I hope the announcement the minister made earlier this year will encourage those municipalities that have not moved in this direction to do so, because certainly there is the need from the handicapped community, from those who are affected by some disability.

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be appropriate if I read the wording of the motion for the record.

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to consider expanding public health programs to ensure that handicapped children be identified at the earliest possible time and that all children so identified be referred to appropriate remedial programs.

I would like to clarify the wording and the intent of the motion. Firstly, I think the motion attempts to provide a province-wide vehicle whereby parents with infants have a community resource that will work with the parents as a team, not as a resource that comes in and demands or refers in a mandatory way — in bringing this motion forward, that certainly is the furthest from my mind — but to work with the parents, to assist, to co-ordinate and to follow up. A person who is familiar with appropriate remedial programs, whether it be the early childhood services hearing program, or a program that relates to recreation . . . I think this is the type of programming that is so essential for many children, yet the parents or the physician may not be aware that some of these programs exist. My intent is to have one person within the community who is accessible to every family in Alberta — public health nurses are accessible to every family in Alberta — who would be knowledgeable in the appropriate programs, a person who has access to information through the community health programs, who has access to information that would normally be confidential, but who has access and has first contact with the family and the child. I do not try to remove any responsibility from the normal route of the physician who would refer medical cases to appropriate programs such as the Glenrose hospital or the Southern Alberta Children's Hospital.

The intent of the motion is not to usurp this authority. But I am troubled by a situation within my constituency that came to my attention a few weeks ago where a young child was identified some years ago as having a learning disability. Instead of one person who could work with that family to refer that child to an appropriate early childhood program where that type of disability could have been largely overcome during those very, very important formative years, advice came from one professional in the community that the child should be kept home to mature. The parents in this situation did not accept that, and rightfully so. I feel that the addition of this one professional, this public health person, while she's not going to be an expert in all areas, would certainly have acquired a lot of knowledge as to what is in place, and perhaps in some of the rural parts of the province particularly, what should be in place.

I envisage that this program would work with other agencies and with the parents to ensure that these very critical years are the most productive years, and to help these children who so desperately need to utilize that time to overcome a limitation.

I would like to see this program apply across Alberta. It can be done because the bare bones, the vehicle, is already in place. We have moved in many dramatic areas to assist children with learning disabilities through the public health programs, and I think this is a very natural expansion of what's already in place.

Before I close, I simply commend the Minister of Social Services and Community Health for the work he and his department have done to date and the very significant moves they made. I look forward to the comments of the other members of this Assembly on this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, the motion regarding children and the handicapped certainly is a very important item in our society. Since taking office in 1971, it's been of particular importance and concern to me. I would like to believe that as the representative for Edmonton Kingsway, I've contributed to the improvement of the

situation in our province in some small way.

Like the Member for St. Albert, I congratulate the Minister of Social Services and Community Health and the previous ministers dealing with this problem, because since 1971 I think all of us in this Assembly and the public out there recognize that a lot has been done, and there's lot to be done.

Mr. Speaker, speaking on the specific motion the hon. Member for St. Albert introduced today — and I have to commend her for bringing in the motion, because I think it's timely. It's always going to be timely to talk about this problem until it's resolved to the optimal level. Frankly, we know very well that we have a way to go, although we've improved significantly over the years.

So speaking in favor of the motion; that is, to ensure that children's physical and mental handicaps be identified at the earliest time, and then be referred to appropriate programs, surely merits the highest degree of support from all members, from all sides of the House. I am pleased that the hon. member who introduced the motion clarified the words "ensure" or "assurance". I would like to use the words: increase probability by expanding public health programs so that in fact the individual or child would get the probability of some assistance to the degree possible.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

I support the direction, Mr. Speaker, although I realize many issues or activities in this area are presently being carried out in this province and across the country. We know that these activities, whether in this province or in other provinces, certainly merit applause, but at no time should we sit back and say that further examination and action and expansion of the program would or should not be necessary. I'll mention some of these programs later on in my comments if I have the opportunity, time permitting, because a lot has been done. There should be no misunderstanding about that, and no misunderstanding by the members of the Assembly that my remarks are to be taken as a form of criticism in the purest sense, as an observation that something more can be done and should be done.

Why, Mr. Speaker? Why is this so important to us? Very simply put, and very importantly: because our future is our children. Delay in early diagnosis may result in delay in resolution of a physical or mental problem to the optimal level possible at the time. Delay may result in the inability to resolve that problem to an optimal level at a future time. Again, delay in diagnosis of a handicap in a child will, in most instances, cost many, many more dollars to our society, as well as the fact that the child, the future adult, may as a result of such a delay, have a handicap that could have been treated successfully, but now probably could not reach that optimal level. In a simple way, it's a tragedy to have missed a resolvable, treatable handicap problem in a child. A child, that future adult, may as a result of that delay of early diagnosis treatment, be less productive and therefore less of a benefit to all, including that individual. I'm sure hon. members of the Assembly could give many more reasons, but clearly the most important is to correct the handicapped to the degree possible for that individual, for that child, whenever, however, and to the best extent possible, at the earliest possible moment, not only by public health programs but with an informed, aware family, where the responsibility still lies, first and last.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if our society used our

health programs and knowledge — and over the years I've spoken of this item before in the Assembly — and applied such knowledge to the fullest extent, many of the problems we have regarding the handicapped would be avoided or largely corrected.

But we have to be realistic, Mr. Speaker. We don't divert all our energies to one direction or another. We realize that. We've spent billions of dollars going to the moon and back and, as we all know, there is suffering on the face of this earth. Apart from the philosophical point of view, I think it's true that since 1971 we have done a lot more than ever before. The sad part, though, is that our system of care in this area — what should and could be done more effectively is in fact ignored to a large extent, because it's a basic philosophy. This is not true of Alberta but across the country. This applies in general public health care as well as the treatment of handicapped. We can correctly boast that we probably have the most expensive health care system in all North America, and certainly one of the best, if not the best, health care systems in the world. So who are we to criticize? But I think this government has always been free enough to self-criticize if there is criticism to be made. Certainly it's prepared to evaluate and re-evaluate its position if corrections can be made. So that's what we're doing here today, recognizing there's reality in all this and that maybe some ideas may come out; that changes are occurring and maybe they will occur a little quicker.

Mr. Speaker, if there's a deficiency in the provision of prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and education; in my opinion, it is because there is lack of co-ordination, and the delivery of health care. The many programs that exist are all excellent. They're worth while and doing a very good job. I think all members will attest to that, because in their respective communities I'm sure they have programs with their volunteer groups that are so important in assisting these programs and doing a first-class job. However, in my opinion, until the individual, family, and society are alerted to the great importance of very, very early diagnosis, treatment and the benefits which are very much greater if treatment is early — the correction and the action that would have to be taken earlier may be lost, and there is some loss to our society.

The individual and family must know and understand the variety of programs. I think the hon. Member for St. Albert alluded to that. It's just not good enough to have the programs in place. We all recognize that. If the individual and family are expected to utilize those programs for our children, then they must be aware of the programs for prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and of course education. Furthermore, our whole system, from the time prior to conception of the child, to the period prior to entering school, must be intensified in order to reach that optimal level of prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of our children: a very critical period of prevention, Mr. Speaker. Before the child is even born, the potential mother and father should know of the hazards and risks associated with childbearing; and of course the mother who is carrying the child, and the very early years of the child's growth.

I'm saying here to members of the Assembly that the younger the child, the greater opportunity of success for treatment. Generally, one year lost in treatment of a child with a handicap problem will in fact take up to three to five years to recover to that level. Prevention in the first instance should be the guidepost needing significant aug-

mentation. As a society, Mr. Speaker, we take too much for granted in this area. If professionals know the programs and what prevention means but the public does not know, it just won't work and does not work. This has been shown over and over again. If the public does not know where to get this knowledge and reassurance, then again, it won't work.

Yes, prevention cannot be taken for granted and assumed. It must be applied with vigor and a strong, hard-sell public relations program and education in the schools, churches, public health units of course, the media, the community, and the household. I have no doubt that the importance of preventing handicap problems in our children, as well as general health, could be significantly improved by such public relations programs going on throughout our lives. Mr. Speaker, I say this because there are those who believe that if we have too many public health programs on television, the mind is blunted and they don't respond to it. I just don't believe that. If that were true, surely the advertisements for liquor and so forth would have been stopped a long time ago. In either case, they seem to go on and on and on.

So I believe not only as a legislator but as a medical doctor — and I understand one of our members who is a nurse is going to speak on this area and will explain her position. It's a very important area: to improve our state of health. I think it's very relevant that our public relations program be improved via the media and throughout our society, so our children, individuals, families, mothers and fathers, and the future mothers and fathers will understand what they can do in a wide range of areas to prevent handicaps.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the public health programs require co-ordination so that the individual and family can readily follow through on prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation, and receive the necessary education. The professionals require co-ordination themselves, in order that they may use that team approach and know where in fact the various programs are. I'm suggesting here — not as a criticism of our professionals — but our educational system unfortunately has not been complete when it comes to a team approach for medical care or certainly for the care of the handicapped. With that improvement in the team approach and the education of our professionals, I'm sure the care of the handicapped, the children, and prevention of the problem will improve significantly.

In my opinion the programs should be in place to identify all the problems of our children. What I'm saying here is: screening, identification, and then action, if prevention has failed. Let's be honest, Mr. Speaker. In most cases where we have a handicap problem, some degree of prevention has failed. Our society has failed either to inform, or there's been an accident. Mind you, we don't know all the problems that cause handicaps, but we have to assume prevention has failed. If it has failed, we should certainly follow and have a careful program that will provide the treatment, rehabilitation, education, and a follow-through by a member, or two or three, of that health team, but not let that child drift for one minute, because the mobility of our society has resulted in a lot of children — as we all know, as adults — moving around the province and the country and being lost to the treatment program. One year lost is three to five years lost to reach that level.

Mr. Speaker, the best effort has to be the maximum effort, if problems with our children are to be minimized. The maximum effort for success will be to assure that

public health programs in every community across the province offer clear, co-ordinated, follow-up programs; screening our children for handicap problems before and in school with the parents' co-operation, never taking away the parents' responsibility to initiate and carry that through. To that extent, we extend the arms of the public health programs right into the households in any way possible, not only by public relations.

The variety of Alberta programs is good. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, they are very, very good. And they're very, very, very good compared to some of the other provinces and certainly compared to some areas of the United States. That doesn't mean the programs don't require augmentation, improved co-ordination, extension to every community, and an ongoing evaluation and re-evaluation.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to review some programs that have been carried out since 1971. I'll be brief because there's no way I could cover all the programs in the short period of time allocated to me, and I'm sure other hon. members would like to speak on this topic. Regarding waiting lists for Michener Centre in 1971: some 600 were on the waiting list, and 300 were classified as emergencies. There were plans to construct an additional 800 institutional beds for these, 400 each in Edmonton and Calgary. One of my concerns at that time was the emergency cases that were waiting out there and required some therapy.

Mr. Speaker, we established the services for the handicapped branch in 1972, and new branches were set up across this province in six regional areas. Community residential spaces, infant development program spaces, and child development and day training spaces were increased since that time. Vocational training spaces have increased significantly. An additional 140 beds have been developed in department-operated institutions in Edmonton and Calgary; for example, the Eric Cormack Centre and Baker Centre. Hon. members will remember that one of the issues I ran on was to change the old Misericordia Hospital to the Eric Cormack Centre, and I'm very proud of that centre. I wish we didn't have any children there; I wish they were all well and at home. Unfortunately, that isn't possible. We have a behavioral management service for children which was started in Edmonton in 1975 and provides residential services.

Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, as a result of these developments, funds allocated to services for the handicapped program have increased from \$14 million in 1972 to a projected \$54 million in 1979-80. Of more important significance is the proportion of the annual budget for this program for the handicapped, which has shifted dramatically from the ratio of 23 per cent community and 75 per cent Michener Centre in 1972, to 52 per cent community and 48 per cent Michener in 1978-79.

We established the handicapped children's services program in 1974, improving the availability of services for handicapped children in Alberta. Mr. Speaker, this program administered by the child welfare branch has entered into agreements with the parents of more than 3,500 handicapped children, and provides financial assistance to parents to assist them with the costs of special health and social services required by the child.

The hon. Member for St. Albert indicated health units in the boards of health, Mr. Speaker. I had the honor to be one of the founding members of the health units association when it was formed. They're doing an excellent job. However, they are clearly appointed and directed by local municipal councils. Yes, the province of

Alberta has taken over complete funding of local boards of health, which I feel is a positive direction. But because it is under local jurisdiction, there is some inconsistency. In other words, as we all know, one public health unit may provide a service and another will not.

Mr. Speaker, in our schools there is regular testing of eyes, teeth, hearing, and speech. Referrals are made through these to the proper services. We have increased the preparation of teachers to work with the multihandicapped. This has been expanded very significantly.

As hon. members sit and hear what we've done — and this is only brief and only part of it — they may ask, why all this activity? Well, Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that 2 to 3 per cent of the school-age population of Canada is in full-time, special education placements. A further 8 to 12 per cent of children need additional help. What does this mean across Canada in numbers? Members of the Assembly, 1 million children in Canada can be said to have some degree of handicap. That's important and consequential.

What else have we done, Mr. Speaker? In 1973 we established early childhood services for children four and a half to five and a half, and special funding for handicapped children to three and a half years; funds from \$4.7 million, to \$15.5 million in 1976. The funds have increased significantly since that time. We've established grants for special education teaching positions: \$5,000 in 1972; now \$12,000 and more for 1976 [-80]. Teachers in special education from 700 to 1,100 in three years, 1973-76, and now there are more. In 1972, 5,400 students were in special education; in 1976, 17,000: a consequential jump, indicating we are doing everything possible under the circumstances to provide improvement for these children.

The educational opportunity fund for remedial reading, mathematics, and so forth, has increased from \$4.5 million in 1973 to \$7 million in 1976-77. We increased funding 21 per cent for private schools that deal with the handicapped. We're supporting sheltered workshops by way of operational and capital grants, and of course with the assistance of volunteer groups, who are doing an excellent job at the activity, vocational training, and rehabilitation levels, Mr. Speaker.

The day care standards we announced just recently I think will be of consequence. Improving the teacher/pupil ratio as well as the standards of the facilities and the education of those who will take care of children in day care, I think allow an excellent opportunity for screening our younger population and picking up the problems at a very early stage. The hon. Member for St. Albert indicated the decentralization of care for the handicapped to the homes and the community level.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, there are many more: child development services, infant and child development programs, the genetic service run by the health units, which assists doctors in identifying genetic diseases and therefore potential handicap problems, and the screening of children for dental problems that is ongoing. I'm not going to speak about the Alberta School for the Deaf, which is doing an excellent job. Suffice it to say that the purpose of the Alberta School for the Deaf is to provide education and special related services to deaf children aged 3 to 18, and doing an excellent job again.

So, Mr. Speaker, action for the handicapped has increased in a very dramatic and significant way. Some of the comments I may have made should not be interpreted as criticism; it's an observation. I know this government has always refined and fine-tuned its programs. When it

addresses its mind, as it has on an ongoing basis, I'm sure the improvements will improve again. And I haven't even mentioned the assured income of \$450 a month, which has been dedicated to the severely handicapped.

But consistency, Mr. Speaker, clarity of the programs, and extension of the programs with co-ordination are musts. Maybe we've done so much that there is a degree of confusion out there. Maybe we need a regrouping so that people, so the professionals, will better understand it and utilize those services to the fullest possible extent. Truly, I believe that via public health programs, health professionals, volunteers, and families, there should be a vigorous expansion and refinement of this very, very important area.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to participate in the debate on Motion 215 this afternoon. I commend the Member for St. Albert for bringing this issue before us. It's very timely, with 1981 being the international year for the handicapped. It gives us all time to reflect on the concerns we, as members of the Legislature, have presented to us in each of our communities. It also gives us a chance to look back on many of the programs that have been developed and to look at some newer trends or innovative ideas that may be utilized to improve services for the people of Alberta.

The Member for Edmonton Kingsway certainly did an excellent job of presenting a summary of many of the programs already in place in Alberta. He started back in 1971 and spoke, in order, about each of the programs and what services they offered to the handicapped population in Alberta. One of the points that he alluded to very strongly was the need for co-ordination. I want to talk about a very special project that has come before us from the city of Calgary, because I think it shows an innovative approach in the sincere efforts and hard work of many, many Calgarians.

The Member for St. Albert talked about the parental problems and concerns, the frustration of trying to reach or find a correct diagnosis for the particular problem, and also the parental frustrations with treatment. Again, someone alluded to the fact that we want every one of these citizens to reach an optimum level of functioning. I think we have to pause and look not only at what is already in place but where our knowledge base is in society. If you truly look back and realize, it hasn't been that long ago that we didn't have any separation of children that were not functioning at a normal level. They were all lumped together and probably considered either mentally retarded or mentally ill. We've come a long way now in separating out these problems and looking at the special categories and the types of programs that are best for the individual child.

The particular program I alluded to is presented by the Calgary Society for Students with Learning Disabilities. This is actually a community-based consortium representing the Alberta children's hospital in Calgary, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Calgary Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, the Calgary Board of Education, the Calgary Catholic board of education, the Calgary Board of Health, the Kinsmen Club of Calgary, and the University of Calgary. I think that's an excellent cross section of parents and citizens who belong to associations, who are working together to achieve ultimate objectives.

The actual beginning of this consortium was back in May, 1975. Then the proposal was known as the Kids'

Centre Project. They were very, very fortunate to receive a grant of \$130,000 from the Kinsmen Club of Calgary to establish a learning disability centre. So many of our projects do start in our communities, and it's through the hard work of our service clubs that will raise the money and donate it to a worth-while cause.

The purpose for this learning disability centre grew out of many concerns. One of them certainly was that a severe deficiency of services was recognized at all stages for people with learning disabilities. There is also a need for a lot more research in this area. There is also a concern that the delivery of the services is very severely fragmented and that individuals must be dealt with in a very unique and individualistic way. The Member for Edmonton Kingsway alluded in his comments to the fragmentation of services as they are offered by individual professionals, instead of truly looking at an interdisciplinary approach.

I think this is one of the advantages of the university's being involved in the learning centre. This is an excellent opportunity for students from all disciplines — education, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, and physiotherapy — to get together while they are students and learn to work together as an interdisciplinary team.

While research has been going on in this area, one problem that has occurred is that there is very little research in longitudinal studies. There really haven't been too many of them. They are even looking at longitudinal studies as being necessary to cover beyond one generation in a family.

There is also a serious gap in the training of professionals in the area — and this is interesting to note — even when you consider the long educational programs, not only of our medical practitioners with the specialties they have but also in psychologists, social workers, school teachers, principals, counsellors, and probation officers. A lot of education is still required to appreciate and understand the many concerns of children with learning disabilities. The problem in this area, of course, is that be they specialist or volunteer, they are counselling families that have a learning disability problem in the family, and unfortunately there is sometimes misinformation, or they're not well enough informed to really, truly carry out the goals of counselling.

So, out of the concerns identified by this learning centre, we find they developed the overall goals to attempt to evaluate the whole person. I guess this is one reason I am very proud to speak to this motion today is that one of the basic philosophies of the nursing profession is not to consider only one aspect of nursing care for a person but to look at the total person, each person as a whole being and an unique individual. One of the goals here is to look at the socially, medically, educationally, and psychologically integrated approach and therapy for every individual, and to provide a means whereby research of the treatment and remediation of the learning disabled can be implemented and evaluated, and new programs and strategies developed. As you know, this is an area where we are learning more and more every day. There is a lot of new information, so as has been mentioned before today, it's very important to see that these programs are constantly evaluated, and possibly new strategies are developed. Another objective of the learning centre is to provide successful strategies for the use of classroom teachers through teacher training programs, and also to develop functional programs that can be operationalized in the regular school system. Lastly, to maintain community involvement through the general

public and parent education and support; I think this is really an important area for people to be kept up to date. Goodness knows, with many of the theories presented through literature and the multimedia, parents are truly confused as to what may be causing the behavioral problems in a child. A lot of people are well aware of the concerns with some of the chemical additives in our foods and really believe this has a great effect. Other parents will say, yes, we really did restrict the diet of our child and have seen marked improvements. This was preschool and also into the school years. There are many theories that are not always supported by professionals, and so it is very confusing for parents to know which way to turn.

One of the main purposes of this learning centre is that it has a strong community base and a strong community participation. As mentioned before, one of the goals is communication and co-operation, and we've learned how vital that is through our debate today.

Many resources are already in place, particularly in the city of Calgary. Of course we're very, very proud of the new facilities being developed at the Alberta children's hospital. This is probably one of the most outstanding centres we have in regard to diagnosis and treatment. There's a very dedicated staff there. One of the problems that has come through time and again is that it's one thing to diagnose some of the problems we have in regard to learning disabilities, but if no adequate facilities are available for treatment, it creates a lot more problems.

The particular concerns of the Calgary Board of Health are early identification of children with learning disabilities and increased education of mothers during pre- and postnatal periods to prevent learning disabilities. I think this is a very important aspect. While most of the public is aware of the value of prenatal classes, visiting a doctor very, very early in pregnancy, and being monitored throughout the pregnancy, I don't think people are really aware of the significance of those visits in the prevention of learning disabilities.

The University of Alberta Senate task force presented many recommendations relevant to the prevention and detection of learning disabilities. At present there is neither adequate research support nor developed systems to begin to implement prevention and early detection on a major scale. Before we can say exactly what course of action we're going to take, they strongly suggest that this particular area needs further research and development. It is a great concern to the Calgary Board of Health that learning disabilities contribute significantly to family breakdown in all its forms, including manifestations of child abuse and suicide. I think that's another very important factor for us to remember. As members of the Legislature, most of us are very, very aware and concerned about the social problems we have in each of our communities, the stresses on families, and the breakdowns in our families. So any added programs in this area hopefully could contribute to alleviating those concerns.

Mr. Speaker, in closing my remarks I'd like to point out some of the concerns brought to my attention through my constituents, fellow professionals, and also friends in other areas, people who have been directly involved in this particular area and I might add, have worked very, very hard over the years to develop the learning disability association so parents can help each other. I mentioned one before, but I think it bears repeating because it's very, very important. We have a lack of treatment centres for handicapped people who have learning disabilities. We also have a great lack of qualified

people in this area. I think that is another major concern. We also have the lack of the integrated interdisciplinary approach to children with these problems.

Another concern brought to my attention was the great difficulty in funding all the resources required. I think it's of great concern to us as legislators, because we want to see equal opportunity right across the province for people and children who have these problems. To make these resources available is not a very easy job. I suspect that's one reason the motion was brought before us in the manner it was; it was identified that the public health nurses, or community health nurses, are spread throughout the province. So this would be one aspect that would reach all citizens in all the communities.

Another concern that came to my attention was our rapidly increasing population and the transient nature of our population. I found it interesting that that was brought as just another problem for co-ordination and continuation of treatment for children with learning disabilities.

I have alluded to the need for education of professionals in this area. Of course, primarily there is a lot of up-to-date research; it's research that is not always agreed upon between professionals. However, there is more and more knowledge professionals need to look at and try to utilize in their practices. It has come to my attention that in my own field of nursing, community health nurses really need a lot more education in assessment skills. The amount of detail nurses need to be able to truly assess programs has probably been identified for a long time in baccalaureate programs in universities.

One parent raised the concern that identifying these children by a public health nurse and whisking them off to some resource, would label the child. Parents don't want their children labelled with a learning disability. If you've had the rewarding experience of knowing a child whom one might have thought was slightly hyperactive, but in conversation with the parents, you discover the child has been on ritalin for many, many years, and actually over the years learns to adjust and functions very, very well in the integrated school system. There are some children who have been treated very well and can cope in the ordinary system. So some parents are concerned about the fact that children would soon be labelled.

Difficulty is also involved in accurate assessment of certain types of problems. I think I have alluded to this before, but again it is quite a concern to parents that this may be an inaccurate assessment. The main concern is in that preschool age. While the task force from the University of Alberta strongly recommends that children should really be very carefully assessed postnatally and hopefully at that time some of the concerns may be picked up, there's the period up to kindergarten age that is very, very difficult to identify and diagnose if it is truly a learning disability. So again, that is not easy to do. This proposal would certainly make it very, very difficult for professionals like nurses, who really don't have the education or background, to totally assess these individuals. It is not a nursing responsibility to diagnose. Nurses have maintained the position that their responsibility is to identify a deviation from the norm. When that is done in the assessment process, they can then be referred to other agencies. Also, the attempts at early assessment may result in either very positive feelings for parents and give them a lot of hope or, conversely, very negative, false hopes for the parents.

Amazingly enough, people are also saying they really

want to be consulted on whatever is to be proposed if this motion is passed. We're hearing more and more from people that they want to be involved before decisions are made. So this was a strong plea: that all parents who have some special knowledge or interest in this topic would be consulted on this particular motion.

A special tribute has been paid to Dr. David Shift and Dr. Lillian White in Edmonton, who are in the sixth year of an eight-year study in this area. I think they have contributed greatly. Obviously a lot more will come out of their study in the last two years of it.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like just to listen to the other people who will debate this motion before us before I make a stand on whether I would vote for the actual wording of this motion. I have concern about it, but I wanted to take time to present the proposal from the group in Calgary, because I think it shows a lot of initiative and hard work on their behalf.

Thank you very much.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a few words on this resolution. First of all, I'd like to commend the Member for St. Albert for bringing it to the House. I think it's important that members such as she bring these concerns to our Assembly, so that people who normally do not have a spokesman will have someone to speak up on their behalf.

I'd also like to commend Dr. Paproski, the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway. While he was a member of our health and social services committee for four years prior to '79, he was always a strong advocate of preventive medicine and, in particular, health units and the concept of grass roots service.

Mr. Speaker, I would like just to mention something to members today that would tell you why I'm supporting this resolution. As chairman of the science policy committee, I've had the good fortune to be studying a proposal being developed by certain departments of the University of Alberta, the Cross Institute in Edmonton, and several engineering firms. They are trying to develop in the city of Edmonton an ion accelerator that, among other things, would provide an opportunity to study new fields in physics. It provides for successful treatment of certain terminal cancers without the harmful side effects of radiation or chemotherapy. Finally, it develops short-life isotopes that can be used for early detection of such diseases as diabetes and certain forms of mental retardation.

Now the advantage of these early diagnoses is that when a child is born, within hours of birth, using these isotopes for diagnosis, a medical specialist can determine whether the child has the ability to develop certain forms of mental retardation that can be prevented simply by changing the diet in the first two years of life. I think that from this concept alone, the suffering and tragedy that often falls on families that don't know how to cope with or help handicapped children, would certainly be great. The other advantage obviously is to help young people not to have to spend their lives in institutions. I think anything we can do in this regard is commendable.

I must confess, though, Mr. Speaker, that this facility is very expensive. Some members of the Legislature had the good fortune to visit with me a similar installation at the University of British Columbia. The cost to build it will be in the neighborhood of \$60 million to \$70 million, and it will cost roughly \$10 million a year to operate. But it's going to mean a great new field of technology and science for this province and for Canada. I hope that

when the studies are completed, members of the Legislature will support it.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would urge members to support this resolution for the many good reasons advanced by the members in the Legislature this afternoon.

Thank you.

DR. C. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise to speak to Motion 215. I commend the Member for St. Albert for presenting it. It deals with the expansion of public health programs in the identification of handicapped children as early as possible. Once identified, these children need to be referred to the appropriate remedial programs. So far we've heard a lot about the identification and some of the programs, but I haven't heard anyone mention how these programs or services may be given to one group of citizens within the province that isn't covered by PSS: our native population. I think we have to expand our role to find a delivery mechanism that will also include native citizens.

Mr. Speaker, on the basis of the time and what I would like to say, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as to tomorrow's business, we propose to call Motion No. 20 in order to refer the estimates of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund to the Committee of Supply, and following that, second readings. We would return to Bill No. 75, The Liquor Control Act, [1980] and depending on the time that's left in the afternoon, following that we'd deal with Bills on the Order Paper for second reading, except it's not intended this week to call any of the five following Bills: 6, 34, 60, 71, and 84.

Mr. Speaker, there may be some questions about that, but I could deal with hon. members later in that respect.

DR. BUCK: Those would not be called?

MR. CRAWFORD: Yes, those five I named would not be called this week.

I'm sure that makes a full afternoon. It's not intended to sit this evening, Mr. Speaker.

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