

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTATitle: **Wednesday, May 20, 1981 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 53****The Partnership Amendment Act, 1981**

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to introduce Bill 53, The Partnership Amendment Act, 1981. Bill 53 deals with the matter of limited partnerships, a subject which has long been a part of The Partnership Act of Alberta, makes certain changes in regard to the registration of limited partnerships formed outside the jurisdiction, and describes requirements in regard to registration.

[Leave granted; Bill 53 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if I might have the indulgence of the House to interrupt the daily routine. I notice the arrival of a distinguished guest from overseas. I believe the hon. minister would like to make an introduction.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly His Excellency the Ambassador of Belgium, Jan Vanden Bloock; the Consul General posted in Vancouver, Mr. Xavier Van Migem; and the Honorary Consul in Edmonton, Mr. Bill Henning. Would those gentlemen rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Speaker, it's an honor to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly the former MLA for the constituency of Innisfail, who is seated in your gallery. I would ask Mr. Cliff Doan to rise, please, and receive the warm welcome of the House.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS***(continued)***Bill 231****An Act to Amend****The Municipal Government Act**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 231, An Act to Amend The Municipal Government Act.

The purpose of this Act is to establish a legislative framework to permit amalgamation of municipalities through provision of plebiscites. These amendments would remove decisions on amalgamation from cabinet

control and recognize the clear will of the people affected by the amalgamations.

[Leave granted; Bill 231 read a first time]

Bill 50**The Colleges Amendment Act, 1981**

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 50, The Colleges Amendment Act, 1981. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

The purposes of this Bill are numerous, but in large part relate to establishing a consistent method of dealing with collective bargaining for academic staff associations at the colleges. That consistent system of collective bargaining procedures will be and is part of The Technical Institutes Act filed yesterday, and will also form part of The Universities Amendment Act and The Banff Centre Amendment Act, which will later be filed with this Assembly.

I should say that this Bill will as well permit the addition of a member on the Lakeland College board from outside the province of Alberta, namely to accommodate the joint function of the Lakeland Colleges with the province of Saskatchewan.

[Leave granted; Bill 50 read a first time]

Bill 51**The Universities Amendment Act, 1981**

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being The Universities Amendment Act, 1981. In addition to the matters referred to with respect to The Colleges Amendment Act just introduced and given first reading, this Act will make common with other postsecondary institutions matters relating to appointments to universities' boards of governors, their termination, and reappointment and, in addition, will deal with certain aspects regarding the senates at the universities in the province, having been requested by the senates.

[Leave granted; Bill 51 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the 1980 annual report of the Environment Council of Alberta. I've made arrangements to have copies delivered to all members of the Assembly.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. MACK: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my great privilege and pleasure to introduce to you, and through you, members from the city of Edmonton anticipating a very active debate this afternoon. Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, they are the eminent lawyer for the city of Edmonton, Mr. Ackroyd, the legal counsel who made the major presentations to the LAB, chaired by the hon. Mr. Milvain; Mr. Fred Windwick; Mr. Bill Bagshaw, from the Focal Group; and Mike Manett, city planning department. I would ask that they rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the Stehelin elementary school in Barrhead is continuing its very active interest in the affairs of the province of Alberta. This afternoon I'm very pleased to introduce to you and to all members of the Assembly 80 smiling, enthusiastic grade 6 students, accompanied by three teachers, Miss Lori Agro, Mr. Marvin Sheets, and Mr. Baldev Parmar, and one bus driver, Mr. Manfred Strauss. They've been in Edmonton since about noon, have enjoyed a tour of the Legislature, and will be going home after the question period. I would ask that they rise and receive the traditional welcome of the House.

MR. WOO: Mr. Speaker, I too have a number of distinguished visitors from the county of Strathcona who, I think, have an interest in the proceedings of the House this afternoon. It is my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, the following persons. We have with us this afternoon Reeve J. D. Morrow; Deputy Reeve Warren Thomas; and Mr. Albert Klapstein and Mr. Ralph Horley, councillors of the county of Strathcona. I believe we also have with us Mrs. Iris Evans, chairman of the board of education, and member Linda Black; Mrs. Heather-Belle Dowling, director of the municipal library; and Mavis Sand from the county administration. I would ask these distinguished guests to rise and receive the warm welcome of this House.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, in 1978 Canada's first native operated and administered senior citizen lodge opened at Gunn in the constituency of Barrhead. Ota-Wigetak Lodge consists of 33 suites, and today is a most happy time for the residents. This morning the Minister responsible for Native Affairs presented the lodge with the keys to a new van which will be used by the residents. Total cost of the van is approximately \$14,000, and the provincial contribution was some \$7,000. Two other organizations also assisted in the funding of the van: the Jasper Place Canadian Legion, with a grant of some \$3,000, and Mr. Sam Sinclair, president of the Metis Association of Alberta, with a grant of \$500.

This afternoon I am pleased to introduce to you, sir, and to members of the Assembly the board of directors of Ota-Wigetak: Mrs. Marg Massey, president; Mrs. Hermine Anderson, vice-president . . . unfortunately Mrs. Anderson is ill and can't be here this afternoon; Mr. Gordon Hornby, secretary-treasurer; and Mrs. Judy Hilbert and Mr. Herb Belcourt, directors. With the group is Mr. Frank Wilkins, first vice-president of the Jasper Place Canadian Legion. I would ask that these people, plus the visitors and residents of Ota-Wigetak who made first use of the van this morning, rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly 27 grade 10 students from the David Thompson school. They are accompanied by their group leader, Mr. Bill Foster; Mr. Russ Parr, their bus driver; and Harley Culford, their student leader. They are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Interest Rates

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Provincial Treasurer is one we've raised once or twice before in this Legislature about the high interest rates. After review of treasury branch policy in the last week, could the minister indicate at this time whether any changes are going to be recommended to the Legislature? Or does the minister foresee some changes coming in the immediate future?

MR. HYNDMAN: Not at this time, Mr. Speaker. But we continue to monitor the situation day by day.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. One of the policies is for the treasury branch to track the current high interest rates. Will that policy continue?

MR. HYNDMAN: That policy, which benefits a significant number of Albertans, will continue for the moment, Mr. Speaker, and is kept under review.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the Provincial Treasurer indicate specifically whether any type of arrangements or considerations are being given to persons renegotiating home mortgages so these persons could receive reasonable interest rates for those mortgages through the treasury branches?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think that subject was very adequately dealt with on May 8 by my colleague the Minister of Housing and Public Works. Certainly the extent to which individuals will wish to renegotiate on certain time phases and the arrangements they will make with their various lenders will vary, and from time to time the treasury branch will review the situation. Mortgages which are issued by the treasury branches have a very useful feature, in the sense that there is a provision which is beneficial in terms of providing stability and predictability for those who have mortgages with the treasury branches.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary question to the Provincial Treasurer, on behalf of the government. Does the Provincial Treasurer or another minister intend to present to the Legislature a total or more comprehensive program of provincial attack that would assist Albertans in times of high interest rates? Is a program that can be useful to Albertans being prepared by the minister to be presented in this Legislature?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, that comprehensive program was outlined by the various ministers on May 7 and 8 in the question period in this Legislature. Certainly, as we indicated at that time, the basic problem is at the federal level where the monetary and fiscal levers reside. When the federal government puts in order its economic house, and when there is a practical energy plan and a workable economic plan for the country, then I see we can possibly have the interest rates assisted.

DR. BUCK: You have that speech down pat, Lou.

MR. R. SPEAKER: The hon. Provincial Treasurer can blame it on the federal government, and certainly they are

responsible.

In light of the fact that interest rates are increasing significantly each week, what specific programs is the minister looking at? Is the minister preparing to involve his office or himself in the debate on interest rates on Thursday afternoon and present the up-to-date position of the government?

MR. HYNDMAN: Again, Mr. Speaker, the five or six unique initiatives which rifle-in support for small business men and farmers in this province have been discussed. They will be, I'm sure, and we look forward to discussing them tomorrow in the debate.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Well, Mr. Speaker, same story.

Agent General's Residence — London

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question on a topic I raised earlier with the Minister of Housing and Public Works with regard to the Agent General's residence in London. Could the minister indicate whether he was aware for some time that the lease on the former residence and office accommodation was to expire on April 5, 1981?

MR. SPEAKER: A question of that precise detail would seem to me to be eminently fit for the Order Paper.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, certainly there wasn't any detail. It was whether the minister was aware of the date for some period of time. It's not detail; it's knowledge that only the minister would have.

AN HON. MEMBER: He should have.

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I'm quoting from memory, and I'd be happy to check my files and verify this, because we certainly want to the factual. But to the best of my knowledge, some nine years were remaining on the Hill Street residence, but that was terminable at that time; in other words, non-renewable after the nine years. I went into this the other day, so I don't want to bore the House with repetitive detail. But when one looked at the condition of the residence and the cost of renovations, it was apparent that it wasn't justified to put that money into renovations. We are in the process of subletting that. We expect to be able to do that for the remaining nine years and obtain full cost recovery.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister indicate whether the present new lease arrangement has been completed and whether the sum of \$770,000 has been given to the lessor of the property in London?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I could say that certainly the agreement has been consummated. The Agent General is now living in the current residence; I believe he moved in on April 7.

As to whether the dollars have been transferred at this point, I'd certainly be happy to check that file. If they are not, I would assume that it would be in the process.

Hazardous Materials — Transport

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Transportation. It's with

respect to the recommendation of the Environment Council of Alberta that commercial vehicles hauling wastes and hazardous goods be subject to regular, compulsory inspections. In view of the fact that the 1980 truck inspection report indicates that 44 per cent of these vehicles were rejected as unroadworthy, what consideration is now being given by the government to the implementation of the ECA report with respect to compulsory inspection?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that we are concentrating a committee made up of people representing various departments, the minister in charge of Disaster Services, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, might want to comment on that.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I could say to the hon. member that as members are aware, the federal legislation involving the transportation of dangerous goods was passed in the House of Commons some time ago. Since that time, we have a committee chaired by the former director of Disaster Services, Mr. Ernie Tyler, who is working with several government departments in Alberta and negotiating with the federal government and other provinces on a program that will involve this province administering regulations with respect to the transportation of dangerous goods that would be similar right across the country. It's our view that it's unreasonable to expect our transportation or manufacturing industry to operate under half a dozen different sets of guidelines and rules.

Indeed, until we have concluded those negotiations and all the things that will govern the transportation of some 3,000-odd different categories of dangerous goods are put in place, it's impossible for anyone to identify, in every case, what kind of transport is carrying dangerous goods, and what kind isn't. In fact, it is difficult, as well, to identify what constitutes a dangerous good under the terms of the Act.

Mr. Speaker, it's my expectation that we probably will have completed our negotiations with the federal government by this fall and be in a position early next year to begin developing the enforcement procedures necessary to effect the agreements reached.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Bearing in mind that C-18 passed the House of Commons on July 16, 1980, the minister now advises that the government won't contemplate being able to enforce this Bill on a provincial base until 1982. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether agreements have been reached between any of the other provinces and the federal government? Have there been any undue obstacles in reaching an agreement, considering the fact that it was passed last July?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, my information is that no agreements have been reached with other provinces. In fact, my most recent information from officials of the government of Canada is that they're looking to the agreement now being considered between the government of Alberta and the federal government as the example that might be followed by other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, I would just have to conclude by saying that in terms of the negotiations, in addition to involving the different provincial governments in Canada and the federal government, it is also necessary to have a close liaison with our neighbors to the south, and indeed with

other countries, because the matter of packaging goods and so on comes into play. It's just not possible for our industry to perform properly or for our consumers to have access to goods if we have different sets of regulations in a substantive way between us and the United States.

So the process of negotiation is long. It's encumbered with a lot of talks that have to go on between us and the federal government, and between the federal government and Washington. I for one don't view the process, in the length of time it's taken, as inordinately long. This government is not holding the matter up at all.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Bearing in mind the minister's comments about the Alberta agreement setting the pace for the rest of the country, have the negotiations between the Alberta and federal governments included compulsory vehicle inspection as recommended by the Environment Council of Alberta, as well as some kind of regulation right across the country that would make drivers aware of the kind of hazardous materials they are carrying and the type of action they could take if an accident occurs?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, certainly the negotiations have involved the kind of regulations that would be put in place relative to equipment, whether it be highway equipment, rail, or whatever. It is to be put in place for the transportation of dangerous goods and, indeed, the kind of training that individuals might have. But I'm not now able to elaborate on those conditions. Indeed, the recommendations the Minister of Transportation has made me aware of as well with respect to compulsory testing of vehicles carrying hazardous goods will be taken into consideration. There's no question about that.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. During the current negotiations, has any representation been made to the federal government with respect to increasing the number of rail inspectors dealing with dangerous commodities? My understanding is that currently there are only six inspectors for the entire country, only one of whom is located in Alberta. That person is located in Calgary, even though the heavier load of dangerous commodities tends to be in the Edmonton area. Has there been any formal representation? There appears to have been a cutback in federal commitment to dangerous rail concerns in that area.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, from my point of view, the attitude of the governments of Canada, Alberta, and other provinces involved in this matter, is not one of trying to patch up an existing system which really doesn't exist to the extent it should, rather an attitude of developing a new and concerted inspection procedure with respect to the transportation of dangerous goods by all modes. There have been discussions relative to the role Alberta would assume in that and the costs in terms of who would bear them provincially and federally. To this point anyway, there haven't been specific discussions, at least at my level, with respect to increasing the number of inspectors per rail. Indeed, we're looking at different methods of inspection that may involve regions and districts where inspectors will cover both rail and transport, but specifically zeroing in on the transportation of dangerous goods.

So the end result, Mr. Speaker, is not something I can elaborate on now. But I can say to the hon. member that

there's no question that the end result, when it comes to the transportation of hazardous materials, will be a beefed-up inspection service with respect to all modes of transport.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. What discussions have taken place between the minister and his cabinet colleagues in Alberta with respect to relocation of the CN and CP marshalling yards in the city, in view of the concern expressed by some people in this city about their current location?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, until we finalize a number of other matters, I'm not at liberty to indicate to the hon. member what discussions I've had with my cabinet colleagues.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has any representation been made to Canadian Pacific with respect to the reduction of their three-man crews to two-man crews, something CN apparently hasn't done? Again, the Canadian transportation union has expressed concern that hazardous goods carried by rail exposes the public to unnecessary hazard. Has any representation been made to Canadian Pacific on this matter?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I think I've answered that question by saying that we're not now in a position to elaborate on whether or not we might be tinkering with the existing system by getting into CN's or CP's rail operations. When we have finalized the manner in which we are going to work with other provinces and the federal government in the control and inspection areas of the transportation of dangerous goods, we'll be able to provide more information. But until then, I can offer nothing further. It may be that the Minister of Economic Development or the Minister of Transportation have had some discussions with CP Rail, but certainly I haven't on those matters.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question to the hon. minister. The minister indicated that a new approach was being negotiated. At this stage, has there been any review of the funding of this approach? Rail inspectors have normally been funded by the federal government. The whole question of fiscal arrangements is now subject to review. Is the government in any position to advise the Assembly today as to where things stand on who would in fact be picking up the costs, and what the cost burden would be between the federal and provincial levels of government? Has there been any negotiation on that matter at this stage and, if so, is the minister able to advise us as to where it stands?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is either unable to hear or doesn't want to hear. Not more than three questions back I indicated that indeed the matter of sharing inspection costs was one of the things under consideration that had not been finalized. I guess all I can do is repeat that.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs in his responsibility for Disaster Services. In light of the fact that it's now public information that CN and CP have been talking about re-routing and crossover in the Fort Saskatchewan area, can the minister indicate if he's been involved in those

negotiations to shunt CN traffic over the CP line, then bring it into the city of Edmonton? Has the minister been involved in those discussions?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, I haven't been involved directly in any discussions with either of the rail lines in that regard. I would refer the question to the Minister of Economic Development.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, we've had ongoing discussions about the inter-lining for CP/CN on a common set of tracks into Fort Saskatchewan. As the Member for Clover Bar is aware, CPR is now going before the Canadian Transport Commission to apply for an alternative route into Fort Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, the result is that no matter how it happens, the material coming out of Fort Saskatchewan will end up in Edmonton for trans-shipment from there on either main line.

Vandalism in Recreation Areas

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. Minister of Recreation and Parks has to do with the problem of vandalism in provincial parks. Is the minister in a position to indicate how extensive the problem is? Is he considering banning alcoholic beverages, as recommended by a member of the minister's department?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, the vandalism problem is not that great at present. We meet with the RCMP on a yearly basis, and we have ongoing discussions with them. We have taken a number of actions to prevent vandalism.

As for alcohol in the parks, we're looking at the situation this year. If it seems to get worse over the course of the year, we might be recommending to my colleague, and of course to the Legislature, that we make some changes. But at present we hope to go along with the policy as is.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. It seems rather incongruous that we're just introducing booze to ball games, and now we're going to cut out booze in parks.

Is the Minister of Transportation in a position to indicate if vandalism on highway campsites is a serious problem?

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, it's always a problem, but I haven't been informed that it's increasing. We have ongoing difficulty, of course, but I've had no reports indicating that it's on the increase.

Heritage Savings Trust Fund

MR. MANDEVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. Could the minister indicate whether the return on the \$1.2 billion lent out to other provinces under the heritage trust fund is all fixed, or are some of them up for renegotiation before the term's up or on floating interest?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, my recollection is that certainly the vast majority of them are at a rate of return fixed for the duration of the loan at the commercial market rate at the time the loan is consummated.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the Provincial Treasurer indicate what rate of return the government is targeting for future

investment under the Canada investment division of the heritage trust fund?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, in light of the very volatile market in North America, and indeed the world, over the last year, I doubt if anyone would speculate on future rates of returns. Certainly the rate of return on the heritage fund itself has been satisfactory and equal to or better than a similar fund. But this is an exercise I think we should probably discuss in greater detail when the heritage fund committee meets this summer.

MR. MANDEVILLE: One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister consider putting money out on, say, a five-year term and not for the term of the loan, so they can renegotiate every five years like some mortgage companies are?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, the suggestion was that we're dealing in mortgages here. That was not the import of the original part of the question. But certainly all the various options which might result in maximization of the investment return of the heritage fund are being explored and are constantly under review.

Odyssey Project

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Associate Minister of Public Lands and Wildlife follows a question I posed a number of days back regarding the Odyssey project near Nordegg. Is the minister in a position to indicate to the Assembly what conditions in the agreement will guarantee that a hotel strip or a new town won't be developed in the area adjacent to where the Odyssey project is being developed?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I'm gathering the information the hon. member asked for, and I'll have that for the Assembly tomorrow. This will be part of the package I will present.

MR. R. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. Not to prejudice the information the minister is going to make available — and I appreciate that — but can the minister assure the Assembly that in the conditions granted to the Odyssey project people, there is in fact a condition which will protect against the development of a population centre in the area adjacent to the project?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, according to our Eastern Slopes policy, this specific area, which is not on the Kootenay Plains but apart from the Kootenay Plains, is designated as a development area for the specific Odyssey project as proposed.

MR. R. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. Mr. Minister, with great respect, that isn't the question. Can the minister assure the Assembly that a population centre will not develop in the area adjacent to or near where the Odyssey project is being approved? It isn't a question of arguing about the approval of the project. We want some assurance that a population centre won't develop there that will detract from Nordegg and Rocky Mountain House, and is certainly not in keeping with the overall Eastern Slopes policy. All we want to know is: can we get that assurance from the minister?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, it's not our intent to establish a Coney Island in this area. In fact it will enhance the viability of Rocky Mountain House and Nordegg.

MR. R. CLARK: Then, Mr. Speaker, why can the minister not assure the Assembly today that a population centre will not be developed adjacent to the Odyssey project area? Is it because the minister is still collecting the information, or has no assurance been gained from the Odyssey people?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, in regard to the Odyssey project, that's a specific project that we have granted these people permission to develop. It's subject to the hearings held when the Eastern Slopes policy was being developed.

MR. R. CLARK: Oh, balderdash! You've let those people down, Bud, and you know it.

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, if the Kootenay Plains become an ecological reserve, will this development in any way affect the standing of the Kootenay Plains as an ecological reserve?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the area the hon. Member for Camrose is talking about is presently designated as a natural area, and consideration is being given to make part of it into an ecological reserve.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works would like to deal further with a point raised in an earlier question.

Agent General's Residence — London
(continued)

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I thought perhaps I should supplement a question from the Leader of the Opposition. I believe he asked me about the lease on the Hill Street property. It is nine years, as I indicated.

He may have been wondering about the rental. The rental is reviewed every three years, and it was due to be reviewed this June, which was part of the economics of the transaction.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister. Does the minister have the information as to whether the \$770,000 has been paid to the lessor of the house presently being used by the Agent General?

MR. CHAMBERS: Yes. I checked on that, Mr. Speaker, and actually on March 6 the transaction was paid to the solicitor for the people we made the purchase from.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Member for St. Albert revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**
(reversion)

MRS. FYFE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce through you to members of the Assembly some visitors from the constituency of St. Albert. I know that some of them are seated in the members gallery. I would ask them to stand after I read their names: Mayor Richard Fowler and his wife Mrs. Fowler, former mayors Ron Harvey and Richard Plain, city manager Tom McKie, and a large number of citizens from the St. Albert citizens' committee who are in attendance or will be shortly.

I'd like to be able to introduce the very large number who participated in this whole question, and who I know are not able to attend today. But would those representatives please stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

1. Moved by Mr. Moore:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly give consideration to the Local Authorities Board Order, Report and Recommendations on Annexation to the City of Edmonton.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to begin a debate this afternoon on a subject that has been of a great deal of interest to citizens of Edmonton and the regions surrounding Edmonton over the last several months. I want to divide my remarks over a number of areas: first of all, to review specifically the process we've used in arriving this far in terms of a decision with respect to the municipal boundaries in the Edmonton region; and then go on to speak briefly about a number of other matters — planning, the delivery of certain services such as water and sewer, agricultural land, and the conclusions we can reach from the advice provided to us through the course of the last several months and this debate today.

In terms of considering the process we've been involved in, if I could begin briefly with some reference to a meeting held on July 12, 1978, chaired by my colleague the now Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, then Minister of Municipal Affairs, involving and in attendance the municipal district of Sturgeon, the county of Parkland, the city of St. Albert, the city of Edmonton, and the county of Strathcona. Mr. Speaker, I've recently had an opportunity to review the minutes of that meeting, held to see if there was some room for accommodation, in terms of the municipalities involved sitting down and working out together a restructured boundary with provincial assistance. As outlined in the minutes, the conclusion of that meeting was that indeed there was some room to explore the possibility of coming to an agreement on boundaries among municipalities without resorting to making applications to the Local Authorities Board in the normal process. That was in July 1978. It was my understanding that very shortly after that, if not during that time, the city of Edmonton began a detailed study of its own with respect to annexation.

I wanted to mention that because the suggestion from some that no effort was made, either by this government or by the parties to municipal government in the region, to come to some conclusion before moving to an application to the Local Authorities Board, is incorrect. On the other hand I want to say that given the nature of the issue at hand, without someone such as the Local Authorities Board independently hearing the views of all those in-

volved and the provincial cabinet making a decision, it's unlikely there could have been an accommodation of the problem without that involvement.

If I could, Mr. Speaker, I want to move from there to the application by the city of Edmonton in 1979. When that application was made, I made it clear that while the Local Authorities Board would hear all parties — both the city of Edmonton and the reasons behind their application, and others who were involved in the region — it would be the cabinet, the government of Alberta that would ultimately make the decision. I want to emphasize that, because I think it would be less than fair to suggest that on an annexation application of this magnitude, this government would pass its responsibilities on to an appointed board and say, whatever they decide is what we will do. Whether we like it or not, local government and local government boundaries in this province are the responsibility of the government of the day, operating in accordance with the legislation passed by this Legislative Assembly. When you get an application of that nature, it is not a matter that should be decided in its finality by an appointed board.

If I could move to the establishment of a special committee: I recognized, as I believe did many of those involved, that it was not possible for the then three-member Local Authorities Board to carry on a detailed hearing of this nature while doing all their other work, and at the same time give the kind of fairness in terms of attention that was needed to the application by the city of Edmonton and the intervention by the other municipalities. I therefore moved to appoint a former chief justice, a well-respected jurist in this province, Mr. Val Milvain, as chairman of a special committee, put some thought into who else would assist that individual, and felt that a former reeve of a county in this province, Mr. Ralph Brown, would do an admirable job in presenting a balanced point of view. I further appointed Mr. Tom Lauder, who was then a member of the Local Authorities Board — the expertise he would bring.

My instructions to that group were to make sure that everyone had the opportunity to be heard to the fullest possible extent. Having concluded 106 days of hearings, I don't believe that anyone was able to say they didn't have the fullest opportunity to present the facts as they saw them and to outline, sometimes in some repetition, one behind the other, the information they wanted to present to that board and make public.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Mr. Milvain, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Lauder for the fair way in which they managed to conduct that hearing, and to say that it has helped me and other members of our government a great deal, to be able to get an overview of the various positions presented without having to go through that very long process ourselves.

If I could move to what has happened since that time: November 1980 is the date on the Local Authorities Board report and recommendations to the government. That's more than 200 days ago. And believe me, over the course of the last 200 days, so far as I am concerned, there have been at least another 106 days of not hearings perhaps, but listening. I've had representatives from every corner of the province, but most notably from Edmonton city, from the municipalities of Sturgeon, Parkland, Strathcona, and the hamlets and communities represented there. Mr. Speaker, in every case I believe those representations have been made with the sincerity that people in this region, including Edmonton city, generally put into their representations to this government, with an

expectation that we would not pass our responsibilities on to some other body but would make a fair decision.

In terms of this decision-making process, if I could make some reference to what has occurred in the past. During the course of the hearings before the Milvain commission and during the course of correspondence and discussions with me and others, many people have made reference to the former studies done with respect to the various boundaries that might be considered appropriate for the city of Edmonton. I refer specifically to the McNally commission and Hanson reports. Those reports were both asked for by the government of the day with a view that the result might be something that they could put in place quite quickly and, in the words of some, end forever the problem with respect to planning and municipal jurisdiction in this province.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the thing that was wrong with that approach was that there was no finality to it. They asked for a report, but then simply sat on it and weren't required to do anything. It would have been quite easy for this government to have said to the city of Edmonton in the spring of '79, no, we don't want you go through the Local Authorities Board hearing process; we'll appoint a royal commission to write another report; they'll take a couple of years, and then we won't necessarily be obligated to take any action. We've chosen the route that requires the government to respond in some way or other to what the Local Authorities Board has said: to say we either accept the report in total or we reject it in total, in which case it's my belief that we have to provide some alternative. So unlike the two previous studies, this one at least is going to lead to a conclusion by the government of the day that will put to rest the discussion about boundaries for some considerable years to come.

One other thing I could say about the Local Authorities Board decision, recommendations, and report to this government is that I asked the board to consider all the economic and political factors as well. But I did say to the board chairman and its two members that after having received this report, it was the government's responsibility to give much greater consideration to the economic and, in particular, the political aspect of the decision that had to be made. In other words, Mr. Speaker, I wasn't anxious to have the committee spend a great deal of time assessing people's reactions to the recommendations made by the city of Edmonton and the subsequent recommendations made by the Local Authorities Board.

On that note, as you might know, for some months now our cabinet and government caucus have had under consideration this whole matter of whether or not you can move local political boundaries to do away completely with two municipalities; whether you can do that against the will of the people, with the proposal to them that it's for their economic good down the road. I want to simply say that when it comes to making these kinds of decisions, members should recognize that national, international, and political boundaries of this province, this country, and the world, are not often decided by economics alone. Most likely those decisions are political and geographical decisions, or related more to geography than economics. If it were otherwise, Mr. Speaker, it could well be that the major boundary between the United States and Canada would run north and south rather than east and west. When it comes to a matter of economics, I should say as well that there are some — and we do it as individuals — who choose to be masters

of a smaller house even though it may cost a little more to keep the roof fixed. Mr. Speaker, in concluding on the process, I think it's been a good one that was worth the time and effort of everyone concerned and one that, if I were able to choose how to do it over again, I don't believe I would change.

If I could then move to review some of the important matters we must address in this decision. Page 88 of the report contains the first recommendation, which I guess is the major recommendation of the whole report: the expanded boundaries as seen by the Local Authorities Board panel. Without indicating whether or not members should support the recommendations in the report, let me just say this about them. Without question, a need has been shown by those participants to the hearings for an adequate long-term supply of industrial and residential land attached to the city of Edmonton. It is not this government's intention now, nor do I believe it should be in the future, to restrict the growth of this metropolitan region to the extent that they don't have good competition amongst landowners for developing both commercial and industrial land, and residential land as well. It's my belief that there needs to be a greater supply of land than we might have thought was the case years ago, particularly when you consider the rapid growth over the last few years in our province. Ten years ago, one probably could not have expected the kind of growth occurring today or likely to occur in the future.

If I could move from there, Mr. Speaker, to talk briefly about the matter of planning. There have been statements of doom and gloom about how the Edmonton region has been planned over the course of probably the last 10 or 20 years. Let me say that no province in Canada has more adequate provincial planning legislation than we have in Alberta. That planning process was not started by this government; indeed, it was started many, many years ago. It's been improved upon to the extent that governments from other parts of North America frequently come to Alberta requesting advice and assistance with respect to how they might develop similar planning. Having said that, I recognize that it is always our responsibility to review the planning process we do have and to improve upon it where we can. As communities grow and prosper, and population shifts, responsibilities for providing services change. Therefore it's my view that it was useful for us to take into account all the representations made with respect to the manner in which the region is planned. It seems to me that from time to time we need to review the concept of regional planning, the membership, and the input our major urban centres have in an area like the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission.

However, I want to mention that I have some concerns and indeed some doubt about one or two aspects of the report that's before us in terms of that matter. Page 158 of the Local Authorities Board report says:

The municipalities surrounding Edmonton do not apparently feel this principle should be adhered to as demonstrated in their opposition to increasing City of Edmonton representation on the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission to majority representation.

Mr. Speaker, the Local Authorities Board committee was referring there to the principle that there must be representation by population, and suggesting that that's the cornerstone of the system in which we operate. All that is correct until you come to any regional system. If you have a regional system of planning, or of delivering water and sewer or libraries, one party cannot dominate the

regional board, no matter how great the population. It simply won't work if you do that, so I have to say that we can't move to a situation where the city of Edmonton is part of a larger region in geographic municipal boundaries but dominates, by way of a majority, the board that is making decisions in the region. That fact has to be recognized if you're going to have any kind of regional form of decision-making.

One other matter I think members should concern themselves with in this debate is the costs and method of providing clean, potable water to our residents, the delivery of that water, and the taking away and disposing of sewage. We no longer live in the happy, comfortable world where we can take water out of one side of town and dump the untreated sewage into the other side. We must now involve ourselves in some very costly water treatment facilities and some very costly sewage treatment disposal facilities. The very nature of the fact that you've got a community of half a million people sitting on a major waterway in this province demands that much more than just that community ride herd on how that water is treated and where it goes. If the Minister of Environment has an opportunity, I know he would want to expand on these remarks. But it is simply a fact of life that in Alberta in 1981, in addition to the municipal governments being concerned about water and sewer, it is a prime responsibility of the government of Alberta to ensure there is adequate protection for those downstream in terms of the disposal of sewage, and to ensure there is adequate opportunity for people who are downstream to have good supplies of clean domestic drinking water. In my view, Mr. Speaker, that demands that we give more and more attention to regional systems with respect to water and sewer. We're now looking at the probability that we will be piping water from Edmonton city, on the North Saskatchewan River, as far as Vegreville. That obviously does not lend itself to a single municipality but to several. In this decision-making process, I think it's incumbent upon members to think about the aspect of regional delivery of a specific service that is so important to the future of every single community that exists in the watershed we're referring to.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to make some comments about good agricultural land. I've had a lot of representations throughout the last several months suggesting that a way must be found to avoid urban development on good agricultural land. Indeed, having spent almost all my life farming and having spent four years as Minister of Agriculture, I don't believe that too many are more concerned about the destruction of prime agricultural farmland. But I want to make a couple of comments about some of the representations that are being made and how valid they are, and perhaps begin by saying that the quality of the soil, the top six inches of soil we keep hearing about, in terms of whether or not you can grow a crop, rates about fifth or sixth in line of the necessities required. If I could put it this way: the most important aspect of producing crops — given the tools to sow the crop and harvest it, and given some reasonable markets — is climate. You obviously need adequate supplies of rainfall and water, adequate heat units by way of sunshine, and adequate frost-free days. The second most important quality after you consider those matters is the kind of drainage you have with respect to the particular land you're involved in. Mr. Speaker, a number of other matters occur that I have passed over because they are not as important, but finally is the soil quality.

The facts of the matters are these. The Edmonton

region has the kind of climate that's conducive to growing good crops in almost every quarter section that one could conceivably suggest the city could expand to. It has the same kind of rainfall, the same kind of heat units, except that in the river valley there are increased heat units; generally speaking the same kind of frost-free days; with some exceptions, there are good drainage and subsoil conditions conducive to agricultural production. Having concluded that there isn't really a place where you can move the growth of this region onto poor agricultural land or land that can't produce food, what we can do is take into consideration the other matters we have at hand to improve our position.

Before going into those, Mr. Speaker, I'd just say that before members get soil maps and start quoting soil qualities in the region, although that's useful, in addition they would be advised to get from our Minister of Agriculture the kind of ratings that exist in the Edmonton region from the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation, which is soil or land productivity ratings. Then they will find that all the land surrounding the city of Edmonton on four sides rates in the top 20 per cent of all the agricultural land in the province of Alberta. With all due respect, all of it is better in terms of crop producing than most of the land in the constituency of Chinook, represented by my hon. friend the Minister of Transportation.

So that's the kind of problem you're faced with. I think we need some determined effort to ensure that when we do utilize land that can produce agricultural crops for urban expansion, we minimize that loss by ensuring that developers are required through our environmental laws to move the topsoil to other places where it will improve the soil. After all, if you're only looking at topsoil and the other conditions I mentioned — rain, sunlight, frost-free days, and drainage are adequate — we can improve our position if we don't bury that topsoil under concrete.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that this report is a massive expansion of the city of Edmonton. I don't make any apologies for having asked my colleagues to think about it very carefully, and to take on a lot of representations before making a decision. I earlier thought we might come to a decision a great deal earlier, but obviously the representations had to be made, and it was necessary for us to listen and listen very carefully. My final conclusion is that a way can be found to maintain a sense of community spirit and pride in both Edmonton city, for the residents who live in this great city, and for the residents who live in the surrounding communities of St. Albert, Sherwood Park, Strathcona, Sturgeon, and Parkland. I believe that where there's a will there's a way. With the assistance of members of this Assembly and their input to the debate, the government can come to the conclusion that will satisfy, solve, and provide future direction for the next 25 years for Edmonton and its region.

[Two members rose]

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the hon. Member for Clover Bar caught the attention of the Chair first. But might I ask the indulgence of that hon. member and the permission of the Assembly for the hon. Member for Edmonton Belmont and then the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**
(*reversion*)

MR. MACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, a very distinguished guest this afternoon. Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is the president of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Eric Geddes. I ask that he rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly.

MR. KOZIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, temporary visitors in my constituency from the province of Quebec. They're here on a six-week English immersion course that they're taking at the University of Alberta. They're accompanied by their host-mother, Miss Sylvia Rouleau. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the members of this Assembly.

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**
(*continued*)

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part in the debate this afternoon, I would like to commence by amending the motion. [interjections] Don't be anxious, you'll get a chance to vote.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to amend Motion No. 1:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly give consideration to the Local Authorities Board Order, Report and Recommendations on Annexation to the City of Edmonton.

And the amendment after the word "Edmonton":
and recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that no part of either the County of Strathcona or the City of St. Albert be annexed to the City of Edmonton.

In commencing debate this afternoon, I would like to compliment the Minister of Municipal Affairs for his reasonableness, because I believe that in an issue that affects many people, we should all be reasonable. Mr. Speaker, I would be making the same speech in this Assembly if I were representing a constituency 400 miles from here. But I'm making my representation to the Assembly this afternoon, number one, representing my constituency and, number two, representing my conviction. I have gone to public meetings in the affected area, I have gone to meetings with representatives of the city of Edmonton, I have spoken to my constituents, I have spoken to Albertans, and I've sent questionnaires to my constituents. I'd like to say that I am pleased the Premier carried through — and I knew he would — with his letter of intent to me before the last election that a debate would take place in this Assembly. On an issue as important as this, I think it is important that we have a debate in the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to address several points. The first is, bigger is not necessarily better — the theme of decentralization versus centralization, how seriously we as politicians should take public opinion, and the fact that the Edmonton annexation proposal is not your typical application. I'm not convinced that 'unicity' is the answer, and I'm not fully convinced that the need has

been established. Another point is that in the report there was very little addressing to the problem of educational and recreational realignments if this annexation were to proceed.

The proposal of the city of Edmonton alters effective functioning of municipalities in the Edmonton region in four significant ways. Firstly, it affects both the structure and the ability of municipalities to be responsive, accessible, and sensitive to residents. It also affects presently constituted intermunicipal agreements and contracts, and eliminates two established municipalities: the city of St. Albert and the county of Strathcona. Secondly, it changes the urban planning process and land-use patterns, bearing heavily on locational choice, housing costs, and transportation patterns. Thirdly, it alters the ability of municipalities to plan and provide services in such areas as water supply, sewage, roadways, and public transit. Fourthly, it will affect the level and types of municipal expenditures, taxation, and utilities charges.

Generally the Edmonton proposal runs counter to public interest, as evidenced by several local surveys. Mr. Speaker, in speaking with and surveying my constituents — a petition has been tabled in this Assembly by the hon. Member for Sherwood Park and the hon. Member for St. Albert, indicating very, very strongly and very, very clearly an overwhelming "no" to the recommendations of the Local Authorities Board. The government appears to make a case for centralization, which is opposite to this government's pledge of decentralization. In fairness to the government, I too and we as a party support the government's philosophy of decentralization.

The city of Edmonton has failed to satisfy the burden of proof for annexation. Edmonton has not shown that annexation will be beneficial to its own citizens, let alone to the residents of the areas proposed for annexation. The city of Edmonton has not proven that there is jurisdictional or institutional fragmentation which could inhibit or prohibit integrated planning and management. Annexation removes the diversity of choice for residents. Present co-operative, multimunicipal agreements are working well and, in spite of what the Minister of Environment said, the provision of the first regional water supply line went from the city of Edmonton to the town of Fort Saskatchewan, through the municipality of the county of Strathcona, and on to Gibbons and Redwater. Mr. Speaker, it can be done, and it has been shown to work.

Edmonton has not proven that elimination of the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission and of two established municipalities is required to create an appropriate form of jurisdiction over regional growth. As I indicated before, the city has failed to prove that the existing multimunicipal system does not serve residents well. The city has not proven that there is an ongoing or impending government crisis in the subregion, the region I serve. It has not proven that the unitary form of government, which has been adopted by Winnipeg, would work well here. When we have looked at other forms of government, I have not been convinced that we could take that, transplant it here, and it would work efficiently. In fact the county of Strathcona proved that the solutions to Winnipeg's problems are unique to that city and, in many cases, Winnipeg's restructuring program is questionable.

Mr. Speaker, the city has not proven that the annexation proposed can be achieved without peril. It will not occur in that orderly manner. In fact it is probable that the entire surrounding area was treated in a superficial and, I hate to say, possibly a manner that could be

interpreted as selfish. The negative impacts were either underestimated or ignored in the city's proposal. The city failed to refute evidence that a well-informed public opinion in the surrounding area rationally and overwhelmingly rejects the annexation proposal. The mounds of evidence show that the city feels bigger is better. That theory has been refuted by evidence produced by the county of Strathcona, the city of St. Albert, the county of Parkland, the MD of Sturgeon, the town of Fort Saskatchewan, the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, Strathcona Industrial Association, citizens' groups, and scores of individuals. As the hon. minister indicated, the evidence clearly shows the region is evolving in a desirable manner through decentralized, orderly growth. The application has failed to prove that projected urban population growth warrants the extent of the proposed annexation. Mr. Speaker, the system . . . [interjection] Just wait, Dick, you'll have your turn.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at regional services, the minister recognizes that some of these services must be shared. Central sewage disposal, regional waterlines, common removal of garbage: some of these problems can be done on a regional basis. The system is here now, and the system is working well. It is not something that has to be thrown out.

In speaking about this not being a typical annexation proposal, a typical annexation would achieve one of the following results: obtain lands with a potential for growth to meet demonstrated needs within a reasonable time frame; secondly, amalgamate a central city with impoverished surrounding areas lacking in basic services and amenities in order to upgrade services within the expanded areas — that is not the case — and; thirdly, bring into a central, impoverished city, high-income surrounding areas to equalize and redistribute revenues and expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, Edmonton's annexation proposal will result in the elimination of existing, viable municipalities. As far as I can tell, this is the first time a city would be annexed by another city without common consent. If there's any way that I think a marriage should never start, it's with an unwilling bride. That's basically what would happen.

Secondly, the city of Edmonton would be given a massive territory which is not required for future urban growth within a reasonable time, nor does it lend itself to long-term planning control. So often we hear that we must have planning control. The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs indicates that we have excellent planning. That's true. But must we subjugate citizens' rights and their opportunity of freedom of choice just in the name of great and excellent planning. To me, Mr. Speaker, people are more important than planners.

Next, it would adversely affect both municipalities from which the land is taken, and will have a major impact on other municipalities in the subregion. Lastly, it will not solve the "myriad of problems" paraded before the Local Authorities Board by the city of Edmonton's witnesses. All the aforementioned impacts are examples of what a typical annexation is specifically designed not to accomplish.

The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs indicated about the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission. I agree with the hon. minister that a commission is never established so that one group can have power over another. A commission is established to solve mutual problems. The people, either appointed or elected, are there to serve the common good of all people. They are not there to show

power. If there needs to be revamping of the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, I think that can be done without having to throw the whole system out.

Mr. Speaker, the will of the people: some of the surveys that have been done indicate that 73 per cent, to 81 per cent, to 92 per cent of the people in the affected area do not wish to be annexed. In my pre-session survey and questionnaire, 92 per cent of the people who returned that questionnaire, and this stack of letters, indicate a vehement and unquestionable no.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member is entitled to be heard in silence.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the area of what should be done. We in the county have been accused of this being an emotional issue. Well it is an emotional issue. If the people in the area feel that their life style, their form of municipal government, and their opportunity to be heard by their elected representatives are removed, no wonder it's an emotional issue. Because what we'll be doing is not listening to the will of the people. So we as a party, and I as a legislator, feel that the decision, either by this Assembly or by those people out there who will be affected, should be made in public.

Mr. Speaker, I'm convinced that bigger is not necessarily better. 'Unicity' has not convinced me that it is better than what we have: a large metropolitan centre living in close harmony with its neighbors, sharing regional water supplies and many services. If this recommendation is accepted, it would not go along with the government's pledge of decentralization. And once again I would like to commend the government on their philosophy of decentralization. If we were to accept the recommendations of this report, it would be just the opposite. The Premier stood in his place in this Assembly, and I can't quote verbatim but he said something to this effect: I would sooner have 10 Red Deers than one, I believe, New York City — anyway, one huge megalopolis. Once cities get between 500,000 and 1 million people, my contention is that they are ungovernable, unlivable, and unserviceable. In looking at what will happen to the educational system and the recreational facilities in the present jurisdictions and municipalities, these areas were not addressed by the report. I could go on for hours, but I do wish to give other members the opportunity — I guess at least 30 minutes.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we in this Assembly are elected by the people. We are here to serve the will of the people. And the will of the people in my constituency, and in the municipality of Sherwood Park, the surrounding counties, and the city of St. Albert, indicates a no to the plebiscite. They have spoken through petitions, plebiscites, and public rallies, and I am endorsing their wishes. Therefore I have proposed the amendment, and I look forward to the debate.

MR. KING: One of the good things about an amendment, Mr. Speaker, and certainly the only good thing about this amendment, is that it provides anyone who speaks to it the opportunity to speak twice. So I would like to serve notice that it is my intention to speak again on the main motion, following disposition of the amendment. [interjection]

That's the most political thing I have heard from the hon. member opposite in 20 years. In exchange for that piece of political advice, I'd like to give some advice to the hon. member who just spoke and made the amend-

ment. It would be that he should ask the same researcher who drafts his amendments to work on his speech notes. [interjection] I think the thrust of the argument might have been approved if the debate had corresponded to the amendment, which I found to be self-serving and selective.

The hon. member is not recommending that we should reject annexation to the city of Edmonton altogether, but that we should reject annexation to the east, south, or northwest of Edmonton. Yet the arguments he made would presumably have equal application to the municipal district of Sturgeon or the county of Parkland. If the hon. member does not believe there should be annexation, then let us have an amendment that recommends no annexation. If the hon. member believes that annexation is a viable option, but that it should not be in particular directions for particular reasons, then let his argument limit itself to those directions and reasons. What we have is the hon. gentleman from the east of Edmonton saying, don't annex to the east and, for another reason, don't annex to the northwest, but other than that I really don't care what you do.

There are four reasons for considering annexation, and I don't think they were seriously addressed by the hon. member. The first is that a community, in this case the city of Edmonton, requires land for the purposes of human development, and requires land sufficient that balanced development can be carried out. Is he arguing that that should not be provided to Edmonton? If he is, I didn't hear the nature of those particular arguments.

The second concern is that there should be the opportunity for appropriate planning. In this day and age, appropriate planning is not a time span of four or five months and is not a matter of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Appropriate planning is conducted through periods of five, 10, or 20 years, and involves millions or hundreds of millions of dollars. The decision the government must make will reflect that necessary constraint on the activity of the city of Edmonton. That wasn't addressed by the hon. member. The third consideration is that there must be the means to implement the plan. Admittedly he touched on that, briefly and inadequately. The fourth consideration is that there must be an opportunity for diversity in the plan and in the achievement of the plan and for equity. That was not addressed at all by the hon. member.

What is required from this Legislature is debate which provides constructive advice to Executive Council. What is required is flexibility in responding to the challenge. Neither is provided by the debate and the amendment of the hon. member opposite.

Thank you very much.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could also address a few words to the amendment. Although I guess in the Assembly one does not dwell upon the sort of manifestations of the intention of the hon. member that arrive in other ways, such as via the media and the like, this does not accord with some of the ventures the hon. member thought he might undertake a number of days ago in respect of this debate.

I put it in that context, Mr. Speaker, to reflect upon what is being proposed in the amendment the hon. Member for Clover Bar has put forward. Really the only thing introduced in the words of the amendment, which is not already fully accommodated by the motion, is the idea of a specific recommendation to the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Let us just look at that for a

moment. The hon. member suggests that it's important that the Assembly make a specific recommendation to the Lieutenant Governor in Council. It's been made well known by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and by other members of the government that the process being followed at the present time is of the greatest importance to the citizens of Edmonton and the citizens surrounding Edmonton; that is, that in addition to input from the formal structures of the municipal governments involved in the city of Edmonton and in the area, and in addition to the representations that have been made in regard to the hearings chaired by Mr. Milvain, the members of the Legislature should also have the opportunity to express views as to what should be done, as the hon. member has done just now. He has expressed his views and, in a sense I suppose, those are his recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Mr. Speaker, I for one don't consider that the process can be terminated, in regard to these recommendations, without hearing from other members. The hon. member has wanted to lead us to the point where a decision would be made by the members collectively as to what their recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council should be, rather than allowing the time of the debate to proceed and to hear those views from members, no doubt from the city of Edmonton and from the areas most directly affected. I want to be a little more specific, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the balance of the motion. I wanted to make those remarks in regard to the proposal that a specific recommendation be made, and that is part of the proposed amendment.

The balance of what I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, is that other than the idea that a specific type of recommendation be made, the proposed amendment introduces nothing new whatever. The question of the status of St. Albert and of the county of Strathcona is clearly an example of the type of issue that can and will be dealt with in the remarks made by members. Under the motion as it appears on the Order Paper, those and others are the very things that can be discussed. I think that's very important that the amendment should be defeated and that members should have the opportunity to return to the broad, general issues. No one can say that the broad, general issues of the motion do not include the issues the hon. member raised. So by way of an amendment, he's raised something we're in a position to discuss in any event.

Mr. Speaker, on that basis I think the amendment should be defeated and would urge hon. members to do so. Certainly in making the remarks that I have, there is no intention at this point to make any observations in regard to the specifics of what has been put forward or to the usefulness of the suggestions the hon. member made in his remarks, as distinct from the ones that are explicit in the proposed amendment.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak to the purpose of the amendment before us. The amendment certainly focuses the debate. There's no question about that. I think we on this side of the House get a little tired of the government being able to play games with the people of this province, hide behind closed doors to make the decision, and not make it on the floor of the Legislature. The backbenchers want to be able to hide behind the skirts of the cabinet, and that's why this resolution was as general as it was. The amendment before us, Mr. Speaker, brings us directly to the issue at hand: do we support the annexation of the other areas by the city of

Edmonton, or do we not? That's what we're saying at this point in time.

In the main motion, Mr. Speaker, we're also saying that if a person wishes to speak in general terms and not commit himself, stand up for what his or her constituents believe, then in the main motion, amended by our amendment, that person can talk in generalities if he or she, as an MLA, so desires. I'd like to point out that in *Beauchesne*:

a motion, is a proposal moved by a Member, in accordance with certain well-established rules, that the House do something or order something to be done or express an opinion with regard to [the same] matter.

Mr. Speaker, we feel that in accordance with the rules, the motion really wasn't putting this Legislature's position clear, and giving some direction or some action. That was one of the purposes of our amendment. The second purpose was certainly to place on the record the position of the Social Credit Party, and of the hon. Member for Clover Bar, representing our caucus, as to how [we] felt about the matter at this time, and support the amendment accordingly. Mr. Speaker, we have done that. That is the responsible thing to do. We are doing our business in public and in the open. We feel that is necessary at this time.

Certainly we can argue the merits of annexation or not. We have taken a position. We have told the people of Alberta where we stand with regard to annexation. We have shown them that we respect the fact that when people live in a municipality, have a jurisdiction for which they are responsible, in which they vote to elect people to do certain things for them, that they have a right to determine their future. We feel that that's a necessary step. The process we have seen taken by this government, whereby to avoid the issue it was referred to the Local Authorities Board, millions of dollars were spent on the process of hearing the public — there's nothing wrong with hearing the public — but at the time a decision has to be made, the cabinet, the government withdraws into the backroom and comes out with a decision, or they talk about it in caucus. An MLA can say, I said this in caucus, I said that. We don't know what they say in caucus, or where they stand. Then they try to go out and protect each other to be elected next time. I think we're elected to stand up and take some positions. The amendment of my colleague focuses the debate, and I think we should urge the members of this Assembly to support it for exactly that reason.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, entering the debate very briefly, I certainly concur in some of the sentiments expressed by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, particularly with respect to the need to make the decision in public. We're talking about the governance of some 650,000 or 700,000 people. That being the case, as I see it, there's no question that this Legislature should simply talk about receiving a report. What should take place, when the government is in a position to have their position clear this summer, we should have a special session of the Legislature and debate it at that point.

Mr. Speaker, while I agree no to 'unicity', while I don't think that bigger is better, and while I couldn't agree more that decision-making should be in public, the amendment before us is the question at hand at the moment. The amendment says,

and recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that no part of either the County of Strath-

cona or the City of St. Albert be annexed to the City of Edmonton.

With greatest respect to the mover of the amendment, I find that I can't support the amendment as it is presently written.

While I think the city of St. Albert must be maintained, after reviewing the Local Authorities Board report, after taking some time to review some of the representation, and attempting to resolve this in my own mind and also working with my colleagues in the New Democratic Party, I don't believe it is going to be possible to even begin to deal with the problems of planning in the Edmonton metropolitan area if we say a flat no to any expansion into the boundaries of the county of Strathcona. I'll be getting into my own suggestion, in terms of separate status for Sherwood Park and a system of moving Edmonton's boundary to the inner limits of the extended boundaries around the city, when we enter the main debate. But at this juncture I don't believe that no to any annexation of Strathcona is practical. I've looked at that, but I just don't think it's feasible at this stage.

Mr. Speaker, rather than getting into a fairly detailed outline of some of the specific proposals I intend to make a little later on, I just want to make those comments briefly at this point. I do not think I can support the amendment as it stands, but the concern, some of the sentiments expressed by the Member for Clover Bar and the Leader of the Opposition, especially with respect to who makes the final decision, making that decision in the open in the Legislature, are very valid I think. But unfortunately that is not the amendment before us. The amendment specifically says no to St. Albert, no to any annexation of any part at all of Strathcona county. Frankly I just don't think that a long-term assessment of the development of the Edmonton regional area will allow us, in good conscience, to say no to any expansion of Edmonton's boundaries into at least part of Strathcona county.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, it's a rare occasion indeed that I find myself at least partly in agreement with the arguments put forward by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, in his opposition to the amendment put forward by the Member for Clover Bar. I too find difficulty with the specifics of the amendment raised for discussion and for our vote in this Assembly.

There's no doubt that it does not take a financial wizard or anyone else to realize that in the past number of years the city of Edmonton has expanded and will be required to expand in the future. It will need land in order to accommodate the tens of thousands of people who will be coming to this city to take part in the development of this province. When looking at this very difficult question, it will be necessary for us to be able to accommodate the expansion needs of the city of Edmonton, both from the point of view of residential housing and from the point of view of light industrial, industrial, and commercial.

In specific, the difficulty I find with the amendment proposed by the hon. member — and he may not be aware of that fact — but the county of Strathcona has a boundary which is coterminous with the city of Edmonton; for example, all along the southern boundary of the city of Edmonton. I would find it difficult to exclude any expansion of the city of Edmonton along the southern boundary, as suggested, for example, by the amendment to the resolution put forward for our consideration this afternoon. As my colleague pointed out earlier in re-

sponse to this amendment, he would channel the direction of the city in one direction only. That would not assist us in moving towards providing for the type of competition in the land development business suggested by the Minister of Municipal Affairs in his opening remarks.

I was amused by the comments of the Leader of the Opposition when he concluded forthrightly that the party he represents in this Assembly had reached its conclusion on this very important issue. That's very interesting because in the 35 years they were in government, and 10 years in opposition, it's taken some time for them to reach that conclusion. Before jumping to that conclusion after 45 years, I would like to wait and study at least one more afternoon and perhaps an evening, to hear what my colleagues in the Legislature have to say.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question on the amendment?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

[Three minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Buck	Fyfe	Speaker, R.
Clark, R.	Mandeville	Woo

Against the motion:

Anderson, C	King	Pengelly
Appleby	Koziak	Planche
Batiuk	Kushner	Purdy
Borstad	Leitch	Reid
Bradley	LeMessurier	Russell
Carter	Little	Schmid
Chambers	Mack	Shaben
Chichak	McCrae	Stevens
Cook	McCrimmon	Stewart
Cookson	Moore	Stromberg
Crawford	Musgreave	Thompson
Diachuk	Notley	Topolnisky
Fjordbotten	Osterman	Trynchy
Harle	Pahl	Webber
Hiebert	Paproski	Weiss
Hyndman	Payne	Young
Johnston		
Totals:	Ayes—6	Noes—49

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on Government Motion No. 1:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly give consideration to the Local Authorities Board Order, Report and Recommendations on Annexation to the City of Edmonton.

This is a very important topic, Mr. Speaker, as we all know. It's unfortunate that we just lost half an hour on technicalities and got nowhere. The hon. opposition leader participated in that type of tactic just to get some limelight. As a matter of fact, when I hear what has been said in a very narrow way, he doesn't even know what the MLAs are going to say and what direction they're going to take. He mentioned nothing about planning and regional development, and he certainly made no mention of the size of annexation that may be necessary for the city of Edmonton. So I am very disappointed in that regard.

To start, Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the special committee of the Local Authorities Board, which I feel has done a very good job. I'd like to say to them that although the report is a good job and they've heard well, in fact I would echo the comments of the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs that the elected members, the Executive Council, must make the final decision. This is the way we operate; this is the way the statute states it is, and everybody knew that in advance. That's not to say the appointed board members didn't do a good job. As I said earlier, they have heard well. But since that time, and hon. members are aware of that, we have heard much from many, many other people, certainly in particular from the surrounding areas. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Edmonton Kingsway, I can tell you and members of the Assembly that the letters were 100 to one from surrounding areas versus those from Edmonton.

Today we're hearing more again from hon. members of the Legislature to indicate to the Executive Council some of our thoughts and ideas crystallized from what we have heard in homes, out in the streets, in meetings. I have attended many of those, Mr. Speaker, and I'll try to reflect on them if time permits. Both privately and publicly we have made representation to the Executive Council about our concerns for and against. In either case, I'm trying to make the point that the buck stops with the Executive Council, and a decision will be made. I'm pleased to see so many interested members in the gallery, representing the surrounding areas and the city of Edmonton.

What are we dealing with here today, Mr. Speaker? We're dealing with annexation: to join, to unite one area, usually smaller, to another, which I have made public statements on, and other members also. Within the meaning of The Municipal Government Act, it changes the jurisdiction over the annexed or united territory to that of the annexing authority; in this case, Edmonton. In other words, the individual ownership of land, home, whatever, is maintained, but jurisdictional changes occur. The legal power, the authority to govern, to make rules — if you wish, to control, and that is important — that changes. We know annexation is an essential element. Why? To cause planned development of the annexing authority, namely Edmonton. The hon. Member for Clover Bar didn't even mention that, or mentioned it in a very cursory way. It's to provide for regional decisions of the surrounding area, whether it be St. Albert, Sherwood Park, Winterburn, Ellerslie, or Ardrossan, what have you, as in the report. It's a means, Mr. Speaker, to satisfy a need for land, whether it's for the annexing authority, Edmonton, or for developers: a key point to remember.

Members of the Assembly, I'm saying there is no argument that annexation is necessary, for Edmonton in particular. The LAB report offers one of those ways. After careful and lengthy consideration, they have made their recommendation. But I suggest to hon. members that is only one way. It is not the only way; there is another way. Mr. Speaker, Edmonton Kingsway and Edmontonians agree that more land is needed for Edmonton. But I suggest Edmontonians do not want to impose their growth on St. Albert and Sherwood Park, communities that are so well developed. I've heard this so many times not only from the surrounding areas, where one would expect to hear that kind of notion, but from citizens in Edmonton. Citizens know Edmonton expansion or annexation can be accomplished without taking in St. Albert and Sherwood Park in the annexation propos-

al as it's recorded. Representation from St. Albert and Sherwood Park has been intense and determined. As an MLA, I must acknowledge and recognize that. I'd be irresponsible, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest anyone here who would not recognize that would be irresponsible.

I also suggest that Edmontonians are uneasy about the extensive proposition in this particular Local Authorities Board recommendation. Because we know the inherent problems in bigness: the management problems, the high cost, the policing, and so forth. Mr. Speaker and all the members of the Legislature know very well the difficulty big cities are having right now, be it Edmonton, Calgary, or what have you, for managing the size they have.

No one can argue that Edmonton needs land. But how much? It needs planned development for itself and the area which must be annexed. This of course is true in a broad general way across the province for all areas. Edmonton needs more land for residential, industrial, and commercial development so the developers can get on with the job of providing serviced lots so that residents, industry, and commerce can come to this fair city. Make no mistake when I talk about developers. From time to time I hear members from some quarters indicating there's something wrong with developers. We're speaking of entrepreneurs, risk-takers, free-enterprisers, of those moving forces in business, farming, gas exploration, and so forth. These people are of great importance to us to bring land onstream for whatever purpose. I think it's necessary to lay that on the table. As an Edmontonian, born, raised, and educated in Edmonton, I certainly recognize the need for expansion for Edmonton and region, the need for land, and for jurisdictional authority to allow for good planning in the short, medium, and long term.

Mr. Speaker, some elected officials — I'm referring to the city of Edmonton — have indicated from time to time that the MLAs do not recognize the need for Edmonton's expansion. I consider that sheer nonsense. That's not so. We all recognize it, and we recognize an expanded need. But we have to take a very careful view, as has been indicated by some of the members here on the government side, and review everything over the months to be sure that this is the direction or posture we should take. We recognize the need. I for one would not view the city of Edmonton as antagonists or adversaries of the surrounding area. I don't think the special local authority board viewed the participants in an adversary position. The intent is to resolve, solve, satisfy, compromise, accommodate — to adjust, if you wish — to reach a decision by mutual concession, to blend the qualities of the communities of St. Albert, Sherwood Park, and surrounding areas with Edmonton, and in that way bring about a decision, a direction that will hopefully satisfy the vast majority. This is what we're doing today, Mr. Speaker, as we debate and bring out the points for the Executive Council to consider, as has already been done over weeks and will be done for the next few weeks.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Edmonton annexation issue has resulted in antagonism, anger, concern, and conflict. That is very, very unfortunate because it is a very important issue. I recognize that, and I'm sure all of us do. These facts are unavoidable because many citizens are involved. However, we know that reason will prevail. St. Albert and Sherwood Park residents do not want to be annexed. This is abundantly clear. They have said this over and over again with determination, as I've indicated, and with force.

Mr. Speaker, there are those who believe there is only

one way — I hope the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs is listening very carefully, and he is — their way, the way of the Local Authorities Board, the Edmonton way. Well, I for one, being the MLA for Edmonton Kingsway, representing the city of Edmonton, indicate again to the members that, born, raised, and educated in Edmonton, I don't think there is only one way. I cannot afford to take a narrow, parochial view. As an MLA, having been elected in 1971, re-elected in '75 and '79, I have learned very quickly that there are options, and they must be weighed carefully and sincerely, and a compromise can be reached to provide the balance, Mr. Minister, that all people respect and know in Alberta. With that comes respect and acknowledgement of other people's concern, whether it be St. Albert, Sherwood Park, Strathcona, or other communities or jurisdictions which, I suggest, results in harmony, justice, and fair play: something we understand in the west, and certainly understand in Edmonton. Certainly the members of the government, who are trustees, servants of the people, will acknowledge that particular fact.

How easy it would be, Mr. Speaker, to take one direction, and say that because one side said so, one side claims so — I'm talking about the LAB report and Edmonton's position. One side truly made a case; a technical case, if you wish, well documented. But it only makes sense if you don't review the other side. As I see it, Mr. Minister and members of the Executive Council, there is another side and it must be considered very carefully with full sensitivity.

St. Albert indicates very, very strong resistance to the proposed annexation to Edmonton. Why? They say, we have a longer history than Edmonton, as a matter of fact one of the longest histories in Canada. It's true. They emphasize cohesion of their people, and that's true too. They emphasize unity of their people, and that's true. They emphasize special quality of life, and that's true, Mr. Minister and members of the Executive Council, and they emphasize community. There are those who would say that's all emotional, because you can have it anyway. I do not buy that. When I live in my community, and I have a style, quality, unity, and cohesion that I feel, no one can convince me that it can be changed. It's not emotional; it's a reality.

Mr. Speaker, too often in North America, because it isn't economically realistic, we are destroying communities by high-rises, roads, and other industry without any thought or consideration of what the people feel and think. In conclusion, I say that St. Albert has a case, and I hope we hear it well. What do the proponents say: it's emotional; the LAB report is the way. A case could be made that way, but I don't agree. I think St. Albert is right. What about Sherwood Park hamlet? In many ways they say the same thing as St. Albert, very similar. They're against being annexed. Of course the proponents of annexation give similar reasons why they should be annexed. In other words, there are good reasons for not annexing St. Albert and Sherwood Park, and there are good reasons to annex. I'm of the mind and position that we should not.

Recognizing finally that a case can be made for and against the Local Authorities Board report, and the decision will be made by cabinet as it should be — the rules are now in force — I object to the notion that cabinet must accept the Local Authorities Board *carte blanche*. A compromise can be brought in that will accommodate and satisfy elements of concern of Edmonton and Sherwood Park and St. Albert. From now on when I speak of

Sherwood Park and St. Albert, be clear that I'm saying they should remain as local, autonomous bodies and allowed to grow to at least the geographic boundary, say, of St. Albert, which is more or less the growth pattern I could see with some limitation, whatever the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs might want to bring out. Any decision we make or that Executive Council makes in the next few weeks or months is not forever. Even this Legislature is not forever. Future legislatures and communities, be it St. Albert or Sherwood Park, may change their minds. This is my first proposition. [interjection]

The hon. member had nothing else to say. He was just talking about Sherwood Park and St. Albert. No wonder he only spoke for 5 minutes. In addition to that, I have other things that are very important. Now we're going to speak about Edmonton, and this is what it's all about. Mr. Speaker, Edmonton needs more adequate residential, industrial, and commercial land for long-range planning. What am I saying here? How much is that? I'm suggesting as an MLA — the hon. Member for Clover Bar doesn't even want to hear; he wants definitive recommendations and public commitments. Well he's getting that today, if he'd be a little more patient and allow some members to speak without trying to capture the limelight.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that Edmonton requires more land, and my constituents recognize it: not the big land grab, if you wish, as has been coined by somebody, but at least to the year 2000, as a round figure. At that time the population projection — if the hon. member in the opposition had done his homework — will be about 1 million, 1.5 million, probably 1.2 million or 1.3 million. That would indicate to me that we need approximately two times the size of Edmonton, providing we only consider the number of lots that are necessary. We're going to need 1.3 million housing units in Alberta in the year 2000, and one-third will be in Edmonton, plus schools, roads, industry, hospitals, and recreational area. With the information I have, my best calculation would be about double the size of Edmonton right now, without St. Albert and Sherwood Park. Keep St. Albert and Sherwood Park, and allow them to expand in a limited way. There's the second proposition.

Regarding St. Albert, Mr. Speaker, it's a viable community and should be allowed to grow. Hopefully, enough land will be allowed for them also to increase their population to about the year 2000. I'm making the assumption that nothing dramatic is going to happen in St. Albert, where there'll be an outburst of population growth there. I understand their population is about 30,000. Projections show that it would grow to about 80,000 or 90,000. From my research, I believe their present boundaries would probably accommodate that very well.

As we all know, Sherwood Park is in the county of Strathcona. I'm not going to comment about the hon. opposition member because it's not worthy of any more time. But, Mr. Speaker, the county of Strathcona has a tax base. This is a very important point, and I hope the heavy industry area around that area will be maintained at least in part. It's elementary: if the Executive Council removes that tax base from Strathcona — and in every way Sherwood Park has urban characteristics with roads, servicing costs, schools, and so forth — the question is, where are they going to get their money? If Edmonton takes that over — and I caution the hon. member about this unique case — then I suggest that he provide provincial support to augment that tax base because I don't think they'll be able to survive. If we're making an

assumption — or I'm making the plea, if you wish — that Sherwood Park should survive then, damn it, they better have a tax base to go with it, in part at least.

We have that heavy industry row. It's a unique situation, and in all sincerity I ask the hon. minister and Executive Council to consider the uniqueness of that area. They must survive. Whatever the decision, I hope Sherwood Park is maintained because of their strong community desire, [like] St. Albert. But the uniqueness of their tax base and their requirements probably merit a unique decision. Mr. Speaker, to stay on that point for a minute, it would be very easy to request taking the heavy industry area right to Edmonton and leaving Strathcona high and dry with Sherwood Park. I think that would be irresponsible, and I think very careful consideration should be made there.

So Edmonton would have not only expanded residential land for a population of 1 million to 1.5 million by the year 2000, but land for medium industry, and could properly develop as the gateway to the north. There's ample opportunity to develop an industrial tax base that they require, as any other large community requires. But I want to be clear again, I underline it — I know I'm repeating myself in many of these comments so there will be emphasis: not the big land grab indicted in this report; not to the extent of the Local Authorities Board report, but adequate land till the year 2000. I'm saying 2000, and I should have used years: 30 to 40 years. That would be more appropriate. I was using the year 2000 throughout the discussion because of the population growth to that time.

Another point regarding heavy industry in the county of Strathcona. I understand that if annexed to Edmonton, the heavy industry would cause serious stress on Edmonton to supply power and water. As I understand it from my information, not only would it put a strain but frankly I don't know if Edmonton could handle it. If they could not handle those power and water needs, it would create another issue that the minister or Executive Council would have to consider. In summary, unique consideration is needed for Sherwood Park. If Edmonton gets heavy industry from Strathcona, the consideration of provincial support for Strathcona will be necessary. I think a balance can be reached in this area.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, let me review some of the other issues and a possible compromise solution. I've already indicated that Edmonton and area has experienced extensive growth which will continue, considering the economy, et cetera, to a population of 1 million to 1.5 million. So Edmonton needs space. I suggest that such land be provided for a growth period of 40 years plus, if you wish. During that period of time, review will occur whether or not the government of Alberta wants a review. The communities will indicate what they want.

Incidentally, for members of the Assembly, I suggest that point alone will provide such an abundance of land that if that land were serviced and came on stream, there could be an expectation that residential, commercial, and industrial land costs would go down. I suggest providing such land without annexing St. Albert and Sherwood Park, but allow St. Albert and Sherwood Park to at least double their populations. Let's get on with the job of living, developing, and planning the new guidelines and parameters. Let's set those as quickly as possible. Apart from the emotional upheaval it's caused over the past few months, the uncertainty is causing a lot of distress.

Mr. Speaker, regarding the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, Edmonton has 80 per cent of the

population of the area now under the commission. Obviously this is out of balance. In a very definitive way, I'm recommending that we provide 50 per cent of the membership by Edmonton in a new Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, or whatever it's going to be called, but not the present 3 out of 22. So again I'm suggesting here that a compromise can be reached. I think it's obvious that it would be just. I agree on this point with the hon. Member for Clover Bar: Edmonton should not have the majority on the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission. For if it did, it would not work, as other municipalities would in fact be neutralized if they were in a minority position. A regional planning commission should be guided by representation from the region and not be exclusively dominated by one, and yet be more equitable than it is now, recognizing the population of Edmonton and area.

Regarding planning, Mr. Speaker: having done this — we have Edmonton increasing its size over the next 40 years, Sherwood Park and St. Albert communities with their autonomous governments but geographically limited in size — we now have to acknowledge for planning that fragmentation of agricultural land, urban sprawl, and uneconomic highway strip levels are all issues. I'm now asking Executive Council, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, or whoever wants to take it upon himself, to develop a regional plan by new rules, regulations, and guidelines that will consider water, sewer, transportation, electricity, recreation, fire, and what have you, that may be introduced into that. The question here is, what are those rules and parameters? Do we need new legislation? Do we need guidelines? I'm suggesting that we do. But whatever those rules are, they shouldn't be special for Edmonton region. They should be applicable for the rest of the province. And it should be clearly who pays, who is responsible, and who is included. Because the problem occurs for Edmonton having to service these areas.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs spoke on agricultural land. What else can I say? It's a difficult problem. Our pioneers have chosen to settle on fertile land in Edmonton, with the beauty of the river and the importance of food production. I just don't know what suggestions I can make, unless we stockpile such soil. Somebody mentioned that. I hope he looked at other cities to see what, if anything, they've done. But at least preserve the river valley. Frankly, I don't know if we can hop. If we hop over the agricultural land from this area to another area, we'll get into the same situation, because all of the land around Edmonton and area is very fertile.

Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, regarding taxation: residential taxation is not enough. St. Albert needs an industrial tax base. I've spoken about Sherwood Park. Edmonton needs a tax base. If the decision was made by Executive Council, I hope that Edmonton would have ample land for the next 40 years not only for residential lots, but able to develop an industrial tax base. Of course, the concept of decentralization — but I'm going to make a plea: please, let's not take anything more away from Edmonton. Let's decentralize by putting something else there and adding to the small communities, but not take it away from Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, what have the council, the mayor, and the city of Edmonton said? They said, taxes will be going up. Indeed they will. There's concern. This is due to inflation, extensive uncontrolled spending, and lack of restraints. I'm just going to make one comment regarding that area, because it always comes up with respect to St. Albert and so forth. I'm making a plea that restraint be

practised, not for those things that are needed but for those things that are not needed. People are becoming very resistant to unnecessary and extreme expenditures. I'm pleased that the mayor recently indicated that he was restraining regarding the massive expansion of city hall. But I have an uncomfortable feeling that it's still going to cost a lot of money.

I know the difficulty of holding down expenditures. We know it's difficult to hold down expenditures in the home, the family, the Legislature, and in elected council chambers. When the President of the United States, the bastion of free enterprise, is cutting back, then maybe we should take heed, not only in the Legislature but the federal government, municipalities, and school trustees. Because I'm afraid we're begging for Proposition 13's if we don't take heed.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard from the mayor and council, and they've made a number of comments. They've said Edmonton needs more industrial land, and I agree with that. This is of course one of my propositions. Edmonton transportation is hard to plan unless we have annexation with a lot of land, and I agree with that. The proposition I'm putting forward would indeed do that for the next 40 years. They're not sure what benefits would accrue if the average Edmontonian accepts a larger area, and I agree. They're very uneasy because larger and bigger is not necessarily better, and they recognize that there are costs. They're concerned about the manageability of all these things.

I want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that from the surveys I have, it's frankly not a big issue in Edmonton. From the citizens of Edmonton — whether they approve or disapprove of Edmonton's annexation proposal — they way they've read it, they said no. Sixty nine per cent say they don't even approve of it. It's a very interesting series. Do Edmonton taxpayers feel that the bordering communities are ripping off Edmontonians? Again the majority doesn't think that's so. So there are a lot of myths. I'm not going to go through that because of the time frame, and I want to conclude my remarks.

As a provincial MLA living in Edmonton, Mr. Speaker, we have to do unto our brethren as they would have us do unto us. Edmonton and the mayor — and I have known the mayor since childhood days, and I know he has done a sincere and good job, and he has Edmonton at heart — are to be congratulated for bringing these items up front and centre for action. Although I'm very disappointed that only one direction was put forward by Edmonton, I'm confident that Edmonton intended either another direction or a reasonable alternative, as I've suggested. I offered such an alternative here today. I hope cabinet will find the alternatives I've suggested acceptable, or something similar to that, with the various elements I indicated I was concerned about. I'm sure other hon. members from Edmonton will indicate other concerns.

So concluding, Mr. Speaker, the Executive Council will hear the MLAs today, tomorrow, and probably the next day. Over months they have heard from many, many people privately and publicly. They have heard from the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway privately and publicly over and over again. They have heard from Edmonton council and the citizens of Edmonton, St. Albert, and the surrounding area. I conclude by saying that I hope and trust that after a decision is made by Executive Council, I can go out to Edmonton and the surrounding area and say this to the citizens: they have made a fair and balanced decision. I hope and trust I can say they

recognize that Edmonton needs land for 30 to 40 years for proper planning, et cetera, to meet industrial, residential, and commercial [needs]. I hope and trust that I can go to St. Albert and Sherwood Park and say to them: you are a strong, local autonomous, community, as you chose; you are permitted to grow within a geographic limit. I hope I can go to the county of Strathcona and say, you have a reasonable tax base; but if you don't, the government is helping you. Finally, Mr. Speaker, nothing is permanent except change itself. With that I rest my case.

Thank you.

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the opportunity to take part in the debate this afternoon. Unaccustomed as I am to having to vote with the government — a habit that I assure the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs will not be practised very often. I wish to change the pace a bit and just comment on some of the initial statements made by the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs when he introduced the resolution this afternoon, advising us of course that in the minister's view there had been a very active role by this government, disputing some of the concerns that have been expressed by members inside the Assembly, but also by quite a number of people outside the Assembly, that in fact the government of Alberta has essentially been playing a non-role on this important matter.

The minister cited a meeting that occurred in 1978, under the auspices of the now Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, at which an effort was made to reach agreement over the table. But one meeting on something as complicated as the governance of the metropolitan Edmonton area is hardly proof positive that the provincial government has been taking a very effective role. When one looks at the record of both this government and its predecessor, the fact is that there has been essentially a drift.

In 1956 we had the McNally report. Since that time, the city of Edmonton has repeatedly requested that the provincial government give serious consideration to the problems posed by rapid, large-scale development in the metropolitan Edmonton region. The city has argued consistently for a methodical, wide-ranging, and planned approach for further growth in the region. With only minor exceptions, such requests from the city have been greeted with indifference. In this regard, it's interesting to note that the 1979 annexation proposal was born of the government's refusal to act upon a city request in 1977 that the province set up a public inquiry commissioned to investigate the problems.

The minister noted that and says we don't need another royal commission. The fact is that this had been a request, along with a number of other recommendations that I'm going to come to in a moment. Considering that this is now the 10th anniversary of the Tory ascent to power and we're now getting around to this issue, to suggest that this government has been playing a very active role is frankly a case of searching desperately to find some silver lining to cover up a rather cloudy government record in this area.

Mr. Speaker, while I have some sympathy for the concerns of the city of Edmonton in dealing with this problem, I can't accept either the proposal the city made to the Local Authorities Board or the recommendations of the board. When I spoke on the amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar, I frankly had to come to the conclusion that 'unicity' isn't practical. In a

few moments I intend to outline what I consider to be a number of reasonable steps that I'd like to see this government take in dealing with the Local Authorities Board recommendation. But before we get to that point, Mr. Speaker, I think certain underlying principles should govern our approach to growth in the Edmonton region. I'd like to list them.

I think the preservation of agricultural land is first, second is a revenue-sharing scheme, third is some meaningful action on assessment sharing, fourth is the co-ordination of regional services, fifth is the principle of representative government — I think that's an important one — sixth is the preservation of community identity, and seventh is the expansion of mass public transit, which is going to be of critical importance as energy prices rise and the cost of gasoline goes up.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with the most important of those seven principles, the preservation of agricultural land. I must say I was a little concerned at some of the remarks of the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, suggesting that the quality of the land is only one factor. Of course we all know that. We don't need to be told that it's only one of the factors. Climate is a factor; one could list a number of other items as factors. We can look at the records of the hail and crop insurance board. But notwithstanding the recitation of the various other elements the minister suggested, the fact is that at the root is the quality of the soil.

If we're going to say it really isn't that important, then any effort being made elsewhere in North America to preserve agricultural land — the same basic arguments that the minister presented today, trotted out so assertively: the climate being a factor . . . That would mean we wouldn't have a preservation of agricultural land policy in British Columbia, where, for example, the Fraser Valley is going to be protected from urban expansion; or the need that all members would recognize in Ontario, where the fruit-growing areas should be protected from urban expansion; or in the Edmonton area, where there is a difference in the quality of the soil. Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is acceptable to take this kind of *blase* approach. I'd be interested in the approach of the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry, in view of the Bill he presented to the Legislature, as to whether or not it is his view that we should sort of side-step that issue and say, well, the quality of the soil is just a marginal factor, just one of the factors we look at.

Mr. Speaker, if this question of annexation and the governance of the metro Edmonton region is going to be relevant at all to the debate in 1981, then I think we have to look at the question of preserving agricultural land. If you just set that aside, it means absolutely nothing as an issue. It just becomes something we give lip-service to but don't pay any serious attention to in the determination of public policy. So in my judgment, that has to be the number one underlying principle.

I want to move from there, Mr. Speaker, to look at some of the other principles that I think have to be addressed. The question of some kind of provincial/municipal revenue-sharing scheme: why do we have the moves being made not only here but elsewhere in the province? One reason is fiscal requirements. The hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway made some good points when he talked about the industrial base and who gets what revenue. I argue that one of the two central factors that led to the Edmonton annexation proposal, and perhaps the most important in determining the size of the area incorporated in the proposal, is the fact that

no unconditional, automatic form of provincial/municipal revenue sharing currently exists.

In addressing this question, I would say that it isn't good enough for members of the Assembly to say, well, that's another department; we'll get around to that one day; someday we'll look at it. Or maybe we won't even do that; we'll continue to investigate the subject. Heaven knows, we've been investigating it for a long time. Or some members may say, no, it's not fair even to raise it, because look at the debt reduction scheme we brought out just before the last provincial election, when all the people had an opportunity to go and vote. Then it's a one-shot affair, once every four years. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that as we approach the next provincial election, another one-shot approach will be dragged out just before the people go to the polls. The fact is that the municipalities have been arguing — especially the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association — have been arguing very effectively for the introduction of some kind of provincial revenue-sharing scheme. Unless we deal with revenue sharing, we're not going to tackle any of the issues the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway addressed a few moments ago.

I want to move from there to another principle, and that is some kind of more equitable approach to the distribution of tax assessment. That's part and parcel of this same issue. If we take over refinery row, what does that do to the county of Strathcona? Will it be possible for a new town of Sherwood Park to exist on the tax base it has at the moment? What about some of the services that the city of Edmonton provides but, on the other hand, doesn't have the tax base to pay for? What about the growing evidence that more and more of the burden for certain services will be shifted to local government, to the property tax base?

We already have some evidence of that in the area of social services. We have the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care telling us that perhaps there should be local requisition to pay for the costs of operating our hospitals. Mr. Speaker, if that's going to be the case, we have to look at some meaningful form of assessment sharing right across the province, but we might as well start right here when we tackle the Edmonton question. I would argue that in this province we've had — because the winner takes all; the community that has the industrial assessment gets that base — a destructive rivalry among municipalities for business assessment plums that, in the long-run, doesn't really do any good for the citizens of the municipalities involved.

The fourth principle, Mr. Speaker, is the regional co-ordination of services. We have the current patchwork municipal service delivery system in the Edmonton metropolitan region, which is far from efficient and often downright wasteful. I want to deal with the fifth point, and that's adherence to the principle of representative government. In my judgment there is a very strong case here for communities such as St. Albert, which has an identity, a city council. It's important in any structure for municipal government that there be a substantial element of citizen control through representation. In my judgment the 'unicity' concept is going to get away from that. There's no possible mechanism we can develop through some form of 'unicity', which will give people in outlying areas the kind of democratic representation they now have in the county of Strathcona, Sturgeon, or in the city of St. Albert. This is a fundamental principle of democracy, and I don't believe it can be bartered in the interests of efficiency, no matter how much we may try.

Mr. Speaker, the sixth principle is the preservation of individual community identity. Notwithstanding that some people say Sherwood Park doesn't have an identity; I don't agree with that. I think it does. Certainly St. Albert does. How can one argue anything else than that St. Albert has an identity, considering its long-standing and proud history as a separate community. That kind of community identity is a positive factor in the lives of the people of the region, and contributes significantly to people in the Edmonton metro area.

I want to deal with the seventh point, and that is the expansion and integration of mass public transit. For many years in this province, we've had the general approach of placing emphasis on roads. But with gasoline becoming more expensive, we're going to have to look at a co-ordinated mass transit system that involves moving people rapidly from the smaller centres around the city into the major part of the area. So in our view, planning for the implementation of a greatly expanded and integrated mass public system in the Edmonton metropolitan region should be a major feature of any regional model. Mr. Speaker, those are some of the principles that I believe should underscore the basis of the government's decision.

Let's take a look at the LAB report itself. One of the things that concern me in looking through the report is that no effort was made — that's not entirely fair, a minor effort here and there — no major effort to really reconcile conflicting data and some of the fundamentally different assumptions that predicated the submissions to the report. There was no discussion on the fate of the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission. As the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission remains the most formal and formidable body in the region, this omission is rather incredible. No question about the preservation of agricultural land. No serious discussion in the report — and I underline "serious discussion" — of the alternatives to annexation presented by the city of St. Albert or for that matter the county of Strathcona.

I look at several other recommendations. Recommendation No. 18:

That there be established around Edmonton, a territory five miles wide for mutually approved development

a MAD area

where the city of Edmonton could approve or through its representatives on the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, could cause any proposed development to be taken before the Provincial Planning Board for approval, such board to have final approving authority for such development. However, if the Provincial Planning Board ultimately approved the development, they would be required to commit, from a special fund established for the purpose, sufficient funds to mitigate the adverse financial impact

Mr. Speaker, that's a very interesting proposal. I'm sure the Provincial Treasurer would be interested in that proposal, because we would be committing very considerable sums of money. If this recommendation were implemented, in my judgment it would be reasonable to assume that at the very least Edmonton would be tempted to appeal any development proposed for the MAD area, if for no other reason than simply to assure it would not have to pay to service any such development eventually approved by the planning board. As well, Mr. Speaker, the MAD concept already exists, to all intents and purposes, under the provisions of the current provin-

cial planning legislation. But the key is that under this particular recommendation, as I see it at least, we have a fund which would be drawn upon and would even lead to a good deal of possible litigation as a consequence.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move from there to deal with several other omissions in the LAB report. The Member for Clover Bar noted that the board really didn't deal with the issue of education, beyond saying that school boards are outside the scope of the board's jurisdiction. But if we're going to talk about the governance of this area, surely we have to address the question of education. The board is mute on the vital question of regional mass transit that I mentioned a moment ago. So as a consequence, after discussing this with a number of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party and reviewing the LAB report, we've come to the conclusion that in our judgment the report as presented should simply not be implemented by the government.

It's fine to say that. What should be done? What approaches should the government consider? I want to harken back to just one point that the Leader of the Opposition made. I think it needs to be repeated again. Yes, technically the government can have this debate in the Legislature. We can all say our piece and then on July 1, 2, or 3, whatever the case may be, we have the big announcement, and headlines are grabbed. Technically that would be legal. No question about it. It would be proper in a technical sense. But I don't think it would be right, because we are dealing with perhaps the most important question of local municipal governance that, to my recollection, has been dealt with in the history of the province.

I would say as sincerely as I can to the members of the government, that in a situation like this, once the government has established its position — perhaps they're going to take some suggestions from the Member for Edmonton Kingsway, perhaps some from the Member for Clover Bar and other members in this debate — the appropriate course would be to call a session of the Legislature and present it to the members of the House, so there could be public debate in the open in this Assembly, not just a case where we pass a few comments, then behind closed doors we're going to make a decision that, once made, is final.

I think the Leader of the Opposition is quite right when he says members can go out and say, oh, in caucus I fought for this but I lost; tough battle, but I lost; I did my best. I think what is important, once that position is developed, is that it be presented to the House and that members have an opportunity to debate it and attempt to amend it if they want changes made. I admire the Member for Edmonton Sherwood Park and the Member for St. Albert today for voting for the amendment proposed by the official opposition. It's the first sign of a little bit of zip and life that I've seen in that caucus in a long time. I'd recommend it to some of the other backbenchers as well. Mr. Speaker, the key issue is that it should be decided in the Legislature. None of us is that busy that we cannot come back in the summer for a few days, a week or so, whatever it takes to give this kind of decision the kind of public debate that it deserves.

Now I want to deal with the specifics that I think the government should consider. First of all, our proposal is that the city of Edmonton's boundaries should be expanded to the inner limits of the restricted development area. There's no doubt — here I agree with the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway — that the city of Edmonton does need additional land. But in my judg-

ment the land that was demanded in the request to the LAB is beyond what is reasonable. Every opportunity I've had to assess the facts leads me to the view that if we extended the city boundaries to the inner limits of the restricted development area, we would have sufficient land to meet the needs to at least the year 2000 and probably beyond that.

The second proposal I would make, Mr. Speaker, is to establish Sherwood Park as a municipally autonomous town, but on the clear understanding that city status would be conferred in the future. If we can have city status for St. Albert, then in my judgment we have to move towards city status for Sherwood Park. In saying that, I just want to harken back to one other point I made. This cannot be compartmentalized from some of the other proposals, most importantly the need for a municipal/provincial revenue-sharing scheme and some kind of systematic approach to assessment sharing in this province. I remember when the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs was Minister of Municipal Affairs. Every second month we would have another statement about what we were going to do on assessment sharing, but we still haven't got anything done. If we're going to be serious about the question of dealing fairly with local government in Alberta, we're going to have to do something on that.

The third point is that I think we have to have some kind of bridge financing for the county of Strathcona. You can't take away refinery row, you can't extend the city of Edmonton to the inner limits of the restricted development area, and leave the county of Strathcona high and dry. I think there has to be some kind of bridge financing, if you like, to allow that transition period. In this case I think special assistance would be warranted.

The fourth point is that we have to revise the representation on the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission. I think the number of proposals could be examined. I don't believe that because Edmonton has, I believe, either 80 or 85 per cent of the population, it is reasonable that it have 85 per cent of the representation on a regional planning commission. I don't often agree with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, but you're not going to be able to make a regional planning commission work if one municipality has total control over it. But we don't need to go to total control. I don't think there's a difference between three out of 22 and what in fact would be 19 out of 22. I suggest we can move to 50 per cent representation, and that the proposal by the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway has some merit. If we had 50 per cent representation on the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, there would be more input from the city but the surrounding communities would still equal the city representation. That would give Edmonton an effective veto over substantial changes in the regional plan, but would at the same time recognize the reality of the outlying municipalities' dichotomy on the commission.

The fifth point is that I believe we should expand the functions and authority of the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission to include the planning and operation of water, sewer, waste disposal, mass transit, and transportation services. In other words, instead of going to some form of 'unicity' or the alternative of metro government which has been mentioned — perhaps we're not ready to make that jump at once, and perhaps the obvious mechanism we have in the Edmonton area is a reformed Edmonton Regional Planning Commission with the 50 per cent representation which would then have some of these expanded powers to deal with obvious

issues that have to be handled in a metropolitan region.

The sixth point, Mr. Speaker: there should be the question of solidifying the authority of the regional plan. At present the regional plan currently being prepared by the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission is subject to many limitations in its implementation. To be effective, the regional plan must embody and give effect to an overall development strategy. This is essential to ensure location and growth within the region on the basis of other municipalities that may come to balance Edmonton's current regional preponderance, and thus prepare for workable metro government. However, the Edmonton regional plan should not be finally approved prior to the proposed revision of representation on the commission which would grant Edmonton 50 per cent of the seats. So I think we have to look at the revision I've mentioned, but get on with the job of solidifying the regional plan. I think it's worth noting, Mr. Speaker, that some work has already been done on that particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, in the moments I have left to me this afternoon, I want to come back to what I think is perhaps the most important question. We can get into assessment sharing and talk about all the other items that have been raised, but I don't think that the purpose of the Bill of the hon. Member for Glengarry, or the Bill I have subsequently presented, of preserving agricultural land will be achieved if we fail to recognize that in this crucial issue a clear priority must be given in the whole decision-making process to the preservation of agricultural land. We can listen to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs all we like, and hear his comments. But the fact of the matter is that if we're not going to deal with that question now, in the context of this decision, we'll never deal with it. It will never be anything other than paying lip-service. Mr. Speaker, that isn't good enough. And so, in the remaining moments of my remarks today, I'd like to move this amendment, adding to the resolution the words:

... and in so doing, urge the government to make the preservation of agricultural land its principal priority when arriving at a final decision with regard to the Local Authorities Board Order, Report and Recommendations on annexation to the city of Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, I have copies of the amendment for members of the Assembly. I hope that over the next few hours, between the adjournment of the debate this afternoon and the resumption of the debate tomorrow night, perhaps we can recognize the importance of making that the principal priority in the determination of this very vital issue.

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Speaker, there are just a few minutes left in the debate before the amendment is distributed. I would first like to apologize that I missed introducing Alderman Liesbeth Bakker, who was here this afternoon from the city of St. Albert. I did want to recognize her as a member of that council.

Second, I would like to give a qualification or caveat on the support I gave to the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition, in that I support it on the basis of either. I did not support the motion on the basis that I thought all growth should take place in the municipal district of Sturgeon and not in Strathcona. I want to ensure that my constituents in that area do not feel that I have deceived them in my support for this motion.

I would like to make a few comments related to the Member for Spirit River-Fairview, who suggests we should come back this summer and further debate the

issue of annexation. I am sure all the affected municipalities, including the city of Edmonton, will agree that the time for debate is nearly ended and it's time for some decision; it's time for some action. So many issues and concerns are affected by this annexation question — questions related to the school boards, municipal management administration, regional utilities: the list can go on and on. Along with all the affected parties, I am very anxious that we have a decision quickly. I'm sure this debate lends itself to every member to participate to bring forward their views. I am sure there would be little if any support for bringing this back later on this summer.

As I have quite a number of other comments I would like to make, and we will be carrying on this debate at a future time, I would like to beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. MACK: Mr. Speaker, on a point of personal privilege, I'd like to revert to Introduction of Special Guests, if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

(reversion)

MR. MACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I'm delighted to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, His Worship Mayor Cec Purves, of the city of Edmonton. He is seated in your gallery, and I ask His Worship to rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:29 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 5, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]

