

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTATitle: **Wednesday, March 31, 1982 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 27**
Jury Act

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to introduce Bill No. 27, the Jury Act.

To a very significant extent, this Bill is a re-enactment of the traditional provisions that appear in our provincial statute law in regard to juries. At the same time, it wouldn't be re-enacted as a matter of course without a considerable amount of updating, which is also being done.

Some of the very significant changes are in respect of exemptions from service on juries. Just out of interest, at the present time we have an extremely outdated situation, where persons such as licensed ferrymen, mail carriers, and millers can't serve on juries. The whole situation will change so that only those having been elected to office or holding positions in respect of the administration of justice and a few other allied areas would be barred from service on the civil juries. The same situation obtains in regard to criminal juries, I might add; that's not affected by this legislation.

There is an updating of fines for breaches of provisions in regard to any defiance of summonses or the like, or counselling someone to resist his duty to serve on a jury. The other important aspect, and perhaps the last one, would be the administrative simplicity added. The manner of drawing up lists of prospective jurors is considerably updated and modernized.

[Leave granted; Bill 27 read a first time]

Bill 226
An Act to Amend the Alberta
Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce a Bill, being an Act to Amend the Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act.

The intent of this Act is to appoint an independent investment analyst for that particular fund.

[Leave granted; Bill 226 read a first time]

Bill 228
An Act to Amend the Alberta
Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act (No. 2)

MR. R. SPEAKER: As well, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a second amended Act for the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

This Act would set up a special department, within the

audit department, to look after investments and other expenditures of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

[Leave granted; Bill 228 read a first time]

Bill 232**An Act to Amend the Alberta**
Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act (No. 3)

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce a further Act amending the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

The purpose of this Act is to have the investments of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund come under greater scrutiny and control of the Legislature.

[Leave granted; Bill 232 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the 1981 annual report of the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee. Copies will be delivered to all hon. members.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, today it's my pleasure to introduce 41 grade 6 children from Viking school. I had the pleasure of spending the morning with these students while they worked in their class. I can assure you that their teachers, Miss Erickson and Mrs. Evans, are an inspiration to this hard-working group of students. Their bus driver, Mr. Daugherty, is with them as well. I would like them to stand and receive the traditional welcome of the House.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Speaker, this afternoon it is my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 65 students from Rocky Mountain House junior/senior high school. They are accompanied by bus drivers Mrs. Fink and Mr. Bill Nelson, and by teachers Pat Houghton and Mike Whitby. They are seated in the public gallery, and I ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 10 girl guides from the Griesbach area of Edmonton Calder. In order to earn their citizenship badges, the girls are visiting the Legislature today and attending the session this afternoon. They are accompanied by their leaders Jackie Rice and Melissa Lee. They are seated in the members gallery, and I ask them to rise and receive the traditional welcome of the House.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Department of**
Advanced Education and Manpower

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table a report entitled Theory, to Practice: Report of the Committee to Evaluate the Extended Practicum Program at Alberta Universities.

Some of you may recall that in 1977, extensive discussions took place among representatives of the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the three universities involved in teacher education, and government officials, regarding the implementation of an extended 13-week practicum as an integral part of teacher preparation programs. These discussions resulted in a decision by government to provide a special grant of \$1.5 million per year for four years, for a total of \$6 million, to assist the universities in implementing this extended practicum. The original four-year approval ended in 1981. At that time, we decided to continue the special grant at the same \$1.5 million level for an additional year, on the condition that an evaluation of the program would be undertaken.

To undertake this evaluation, a committee was established jointly by me and my colleague the Minister of Education, in June of 1981. The committee was chaired by Dr. Reno Bosetti, from my department, and included the following members: Mr. Fred Alexandruk, representing the Alberta Teachers' Association; Dr. Larry Ferguson, representing the Alberta School Trustees' Association; Dr. Owen Holmes, representing the universities; Mr. Harold Jepson, representing the Conference of Alberta School Superintendents; and Dr. Steve Odynak, from Alberta Education.

Their report provides an historical overview of the development of teacher preparation programs, a summary of research findings and recent trends, and a series of recommendations. Detailed information on research studies which were undertaken is included in a separate appendix to the report.

Over the next few months, we intend to review the findings and implications of the report and discuss them with the various groups involved in teacher preparation. We will be circulating the report widely, and we will be pleased to receive views on the report and its recommendations.

I would like to thank the members of the committee for their work in preparing this report, and trust that the report will provide a basis for further development of teacher preparation programs beginning in September of this year.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Oil Sands Development

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, and is a continuation of yesterday's questions. With regard to the \$4 million being contributed to the consortium by the province of Alberta for the month of April, could the minister indicate where those funds will come from: the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, special warrant, or some other source the government can reach into?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, those funds would come from the general revenues. The exact mechanism for providing for them has not yet been determined, because the commitment was made only a few days ago.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate what substantive criteria he used in making the decision to proceed with this \$4 [million] expenditure?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, the substantive decision was made on the basis that we want to do all that is possible and practical, from Alberta's point of view, to endeavor to ensure that the project proceed. We believe there is the possibility of making changes during the course of the next month that would enable it to proceed. Frankly, I don't know whether the hon. Leader of the Opposition is saying: you shouldn't try any more; you should have let it end at the end of March. If that's the position he's taking, I think it helpful for us to know that.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I'm not saying that at all. I'm saying: we're spending \$4 million; what substantial evidence shows that the project has a chance of going ahead? Given statements made since yesterday's question period by various consortium members, which indicate that the progress of Alsands is dependent on government action, could the minister indicate what the government will do, in terms of new proposals, to attract other private investors? What substantial pieces of evidence are before us in this Legislature?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure the hon. Leader of the Opposition hasn't rolled two questions into one. If he's asking what changes might be made in the proposals considered by the consortium some time ago, that is obviously not something we can do until after the event. We will be in discussions and negotiations and, until we've completed those, we can't give the details of those proposals or discussions.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. At the present time, it's not clear who will make Alsands successful. The consortium is saying, government must do things. The government is waiting for the consortium to make certain offers. The consortium partners are saying that if the government hasn't done something by April 30, they're going to pull out. Could the hon. minister indicate who is leading the strategy, hopefully to make Alsands successful during the month of April? Is it the responsibility of the government or the consortium to assure people in Alberta — private business men in Edmonton and northern Alberta — that someone has their hand on this development so that if something can happen, it will happen? Who is leading the strategy: the consortium or the government?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that during the course of the discussions that will take place during the next month, new proposals will be put forward by the government of Alberta. I would certainly expect suggestions as to changes to come from consortium members as well.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I notice that in the report on Alsands by the ERCB, the estimate of the reserves is 150 years, not the 25 years outlined by the consortium. What is the basis used by both the government of Alberta and the government of Canada, in terms of the estimate of minable reserves, as a consequence of the ERCB report?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, that's an item of detail I'd want to check on before responding.

[Two members rose]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Having started, it would seem that the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview should have a reasonable opportunity to pursue his line of questioning.

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the reserves and the time in which the operation can carry on are obviously going to have some impact on the economics and viability of the project, and since the minister has already indicated that perhaps government is looking at the feasibility of investing on an equity basis, at this time is he in a position to supply the Assembly with any information on what reserves are contemplated and the life-span of the project, as a consequence of what seems to be a contradiction between the 1979 ERCB report and the position taken publicly by the consortium?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I think we may be talking of two things. There can be the lifetime of the plant, which may be determined by the physical characteristics of the plant, and the lifetime of the reserves, in the sense that the reserves could provide the feedstock for a plant over a longer period of time. I don't have the details of either of those items in my mind today, but certainly it's information I can make available to the Assembly. I will do that.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Can the minister assure the Assembly that there is in fact a common statistical basis? The reason I ask the question is that on the question of the energy agreement, it took two years to get a common statistical basis. At this time do we have a common statistical basis, in terms of the reserves, between the federal and provincial officials, as well as the consortium?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I take the hon. member's question to be whether the Alsands consortium, the federal government, and ourselves are all using the same reserve numbers. I don't know that that is the case. I expect it's like any other estimate in this area. Once you have two estimates, you get two answers. But I'm sure the numbers are relatively close, and I doubt that the reserve estimate is the key factor.

What we're really talking about is the lifetime of the plant and to ensure that we have sufficient reserves to provide the feedstock for the plant over its anticipated lifetime. If there are additional reserves at the end of the lifetime of the plant, they would certainly be available for refurbishing the plant, continuing its operations, or for some alternate plant.

MR. KESLER: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The hon. minister mentioned that the project is certainly economically viable. Could he indicate how much the Alsands consortium says it requires, in dollars per barrel, to make the project viable?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, the forecast used by both the consortium and us involved a price forecast which was equal to inflation, plus 2 per cent real growth per year.

As hon. members of the Assembly are aware, a number of changes in the world economic situation in recent months, such as the general downturn in the economies of industrialized countries and a softening of international prices, have had a direct impact on the Alsands project. Apart from that, the price projections and forecasts being

used by the consortium and the Alberta government were essentially the same. I think the difference was not in real price growth; rather, inflation calculations led to some difference between the forecasted prices being used by the consortium and by the government of Alberta.

MR. KESLER: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I'm talking about a direct return per barrel. Have the consortium participants indicated what dollars-per-barrel return is necessary for them to continue in the project?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, not in a dollars-per-barrel forecast. That was not essentially the way we've been looking at the project. We've been looking at it on the basis of a rate of return, and that is determined by the cost of the project, the operating costs over the lifetime of the project, and the price of the oil. Of course, the dollars-per-barrel return can be arrived at by using all those numbers. But essentially we were looking at a rate of return and tying that to both the operating and capital costs of the project and the anticipated prices over the lifetime of the project.

MR. KNAAK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding — and I think the House is aware — that the fundamental economics of the projects have changed, with world oil prices dropping. One other aspect is that some companies that do not have taxable resource revenue may be interested but would have a lower return than the return that's been talked about. As well, companies that are not in the resource field and have taxable income in another area may not be able to write off a sufficient amount to bring that return up, to make it viable. Is the Alberta government, in co-operation with the federal government, examining ways of making this investment and project more attractive to the two types of companies I've mentioned?

MR. LEITCH: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, with regard to what I call a stalemate. At the present time, the consortium is asking the government for certain types of incentives, and the government isn't providing those incentives. Could the hon. minister indicate to the Assembly whether the stalemate that seems to be there can be broken during this month? Is there greater flexibility in the negotiations at the present time? And is the government prepared to come forward with some different incentives to break the stalemate before us?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, it seems we've just had a reworking of the elements of two or three questions that have been recurring fairly frequently on this topic. I respectfully ask the hon. leader if he might come directly to the question, without burdening it with that sort of thing. But under the circumstances and in view of the topic, perhaps the hon. minister would wish to reply briefly.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, could the hon. minister indicate whether one of the priority items of debate or concern is the incentive to the consortium, so they can proceed?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I don't know that "incentive" is an accurate description, but certainly the com-

mercial terms are an item that is under discussion and will be under discussion during the next month.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Bearing in mind the instability in world oil prices alluded to by the Member for Edmonton Whitemud, has there been any suggestion or discussion, by the consortium or by federal and provincial officials, of the possibility of a fixed set of prices which may be higher for oil sands oil from Alsands, as opposed to world oil prices?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question really gets into the details: what are the negotiations, and what are the items in the discussions? As I've indicated on a number of occasions, I don't think we can usefully discuss those matters in the Assembly while the discussions are going on.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question. Can the minister assure the House that there has been no suggestion of a guaranteed price schedule that could in fact be in excess of world oil prices?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, that's the same question in a different cloak.

MR. MACK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, with respect to his previous reflection on inflationary factors. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether the value of the inflationary factors would be national or regional?

MR. LEITCH: Primarily national, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I hate to leave that question, because we really haven't got any answers ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

Federal Transfer Payments

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my second question is to the Provincial Treasurer, with regard to transfer payments. Earlier the hon. minister indicated that there was a possibility of court action being taken against the government of Canada, in its decision to eliminate the revenue guarantee from the transfer payment package. Could the hon. minister indicate the status of any kind of court case, or reasons the government has decided not to proceed in that manner?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, that was not my recollection of what was being examined. However, the Bill introduced into Parliament in Ottawa — I believe it's now under committee study — is being examined. We haven't yet completed that examination with respect to its status and jurisdiction.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the hon. minister indicate whether one of the options, after examination of the Bill, is some type of legal action? Or will the minister be making presentations to the federal government as to the provincial government's concern?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, we will have to see what law is finally passed by Parliament, whether it's amended, whether it's in its present form, or modified. As I indicated in the past: if there is reason to believe that the Bill intrudes into Alberta's jurisdiction, we would be prepared to follow a number of courses.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister sounds as if he has not examined it at all. On behalf of Albertans, has the hon. minister examined that Bill to discover the implications to Albertans and to the tax revenue of this province? If so, what can the government of Alberta potentially lose as tax revenue?

MR. HYNDMAN: As I indicated, Mr. Speaker, it is being examined. The fiscal arrangements legislation is a complex document. We want to be sure we have the definitive situation, when we've completed the review.

Over the last 15 months, the numbers have been changing from the original federal government budgets and subsequent statements and negotiations at which Mr. MacEachen was present. So those are being examined as well to try to come as close as possible to a number on the five-year picture, with respect to the dollars Alberta would not be receiving which would otherwise have been the case had the old five-year agreement been extended.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Does the hon. minister or a representative of the Conservative cabinet intend to intervene with regard to this Bill prior to or during committee stage study of the Bill in Parliament?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, at the recent meeting of first ministers, some major interventions were made by not only our Premier and assorted Alberta ministers but also nine other premiers of the country. As appropriate, I and the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs will monitor the progress of this Bill. If it's appropriate and we can make representations and try to make changes, we'll do so.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. Indication was given by the government, I think through the Premier, that no programs in Alberta would suffer from the change in any transfer payments. Does that policy still hold? If fewer funds are derived from this change in legislation, would the government of Alberta pick up the difference?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Premier's statement is certainly wholly correct.

Small Business Assistance

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Tourism and Small Business. Given the apparent intent of the Governor of the Bank of Canada, Mr. Bouey, and the federal government to wage the battle against inflation on the backs of the working men and women of this country, could the minister indicate ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. A preamble is a preamble. I realize there's been ample precedent for it in this

question period and in others, but perhaps we could get back to the ordinary form of questions.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, could the minister indicate what specific new initiatives are under consideration by the government to ensure that during these very difficult economic times, the small business base of this province is not seriously eroded? To be even more specific, could the minister indicate whether consideration is being given to the concept of the small business development corporation, which has been implemented with some success in other provinces in the country?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, to address the last part of the question first, the small business development corporation concept, used quite successfully in Ontario in recent months, is being looked at by officials in the department, to see whether we can develop a program that may be consistent with that particular one.

In relation to the general area of concern relative to small business people, the business analysts and representatives in the Department of Tourism and Small Business are daily handling, on a one-to-one basis, a number of areas, in attempting to assist those who seek assistance from the department, if we can provide it: how they may look at retrenching; what other avenues may be open to them; and looking at their inventories and management practices, in the sense that they may have been overlooked in previous years when we had conditions a little bit better than today's.

I would say that generally we have been able to help quite a number of the small business community, albeit we are in a situation where, to a degree, supply and demand takes over. The ability to succeed, also the right to succeed, is qualified as part of a program where you also have the right to fail. That is the difficult part of trying to arrive at some method of assistance.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In addition to that kind of managerial assistance, could the minister indicate whether consideration is being given to a specific program that would provide some kind of financial assistance to those businesses that can clearly demonstrate that their financial difficulty is solely a result of the extraordinary interest rates facing them today?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, to some degree we have instructed the Alberta Opportunity Company to look at requests for refinancing, where it can be determined it is a result of high interest rates and a number of other factors. In areas of the province where we may be getting a request to look at some help — and I can use the particular areas of Grande Prairie, Grand Centre, Cold Lake, Fort McMurray, Brooks, and Drayton Valley — we have specifically suggested to them that they take that into consideration when they're dealing with applications that may come from those regions.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, again on the subject of small business assistance. Could the hon. Provincial Treasurer indicate what specific plans or initiatives the government has in mind to put forward, now that we have control over the Alberta corporate tax system? Could he provide us with some sort of specific time line when these initiatives might be brought forward?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, as indicated in the budget, in the weeks and months ahead there'll be more information on phase two of that program, having brought the corporate tax Act under our own jurisdiction here in Alberta. A recent initiative to benefit thousands of small businesses in the province is in the Budget Address, with respect to the waiver of paying monthly income tax.

On the question of further programs with respect to small business, originally raised by the hon. member, in considering those, we have to remember that that would mean greater red tape and extra public servants. So new programs will have to be considered in that light.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Provincial Treasurer. Could the minister indicate whether consideration is being given to a program that would be essentially a simple tax reduction, which should involve a minimum of red tape?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, over the past years, there have been these very straightforward and beneficial tax reductions. I wouldn't want to close the door on anything like that in the future.

Oil and Gas Industry Incentives

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. Could the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources provide the Assembly with a specific time frame by which the government expects to announce some programs of incentives to the oil and gas industry, given the extremely critical situation they're facing?

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, that's a question I've responded to on other occasions in the Assembly. I pointed out that we're unable to give a specific time frame. But we are certainly working hard at it, and expect to be able to make decisions and announcements in the near future.

University Degrees

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. It is my understanding that the federal government has introduced a new Bill in Parliament, which eliminates the discretionary power of the federal Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs in allowing any Canadian to incorporate a university and thereby open the door to the degree granting/selling business. Has the minister received any representation from Alberta universities on this particular issue?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, last evening at the University of Alberta and again by telephone today — I think today it was a result of a report — I received some advice from the president of the University of Alberta, who is also chairman of the Universities Co-ordinating Council, that the universities in this province would be very strongly opposed to that particular provision being enacted in the federal legislation. The president quite clearly indicated to me how he would like our government — and me in particular — to take a stand against that type of development in Canada. I was able to point out to the president that our legislation in Alberta provides a provision that the Universities Act would prohibit the granting of such degrees within this province by such shell-type or hollow-type universities that might be contemplated under that type of federal legislation.

MR. HIEBERT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. For some time, the Canadian Association of Universities and Colleges has expressed serious concerns to the federal minister about the new legislation, apparently to no avail. Could the minister advise this Assembly as to what further representation will be made to the federal minister directly on this matter?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I intend to consult my colleague the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs further on that matter, but I have had some preliminary discussions. Subject to those consultations, it is my intention to make representations, not only directly to the federal minister responsible for that legislation but to my colleagues in the Council of Ministers of Education for Canada. It certainly would be very unfortunate to have the high standard of university degrees, which now exists in this country, undermined by the establishment of this particular type of postsecondary institution, under federal charter.

MR. HIEBERT: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I missed it in the original response, but could the minister indicate what specific safeguards are in place provincially, to prevent this type of incorporation of storefront universities?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. member is asking for legal advice, of course the usual problem arises with a question of that kind. If he's asking about government initiatives, perhaps the question would be quite in order.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to repeat exactly what I said earlier, but I think I did indicate that there are now provisions in our legislation, the Universities Act, to prevent that type of institution operating within the province of Alberta and granting degrees in this province. But the legislation will be reviewed very carefully, in light of this development at the federal level. Certainly, if the federal government is not prepared to make changes to that legislation that we think will be necessary in order to continue to secure the quality of university degrees in Alberta and Canada, we may indeed have to take legislative steps. At the present time, it's my understanding that our legislation is satisfactory to protect the integrity of Alberta degrees.

Emergency Planning Order

MR. KESLER: Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, as the minister in charge of disaster services. Prior to the publication of the emergency planning order, was there any consultation between the federal government and the provincial government on the issue of regulations for emergency planning? And prior to its publication, did the federal government give Alberta a chance to react to the order in council?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, first of all the hon. member needs to understand that the emergency planning order he's referring to is strictly a federal document and can in no way infringe upon the rights of this Legislature or this province. Mr. Speaker, in that regard there was no consultation.

There was consultation with respect to some proposed federal legislation which, if passed by the House of Commons, might have had the effect of interfering with

provincial jurisdiction during peacetime. It was that proposed federal legislation that I objected to very strongly at a meeting in Ottawa on June 5 between me, other provincial ministers, and Mr. Pinard, the federal minister.

After that meeting I returned to Alberta, consulted with the office of the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and wrote further letters to Mr. Pinard, one of which I tabled in this House last week, again objecting to any move to federal legislation that might interfere with provincial jurisdiction. Since that time, there have been several meetings between officials of the federal government and Alberta Disaster Services, with regard to that proposed legislation.

My information at present is that legislation that might have interfered with the jurisdiction of this province has now been shelved by Ottawa, but we are constantly in communication with anyone in that area who might think otherwise. Mr. Speaker, I believe it's fair to say that the matter is well in hand, in terms of Alberta's representation with respect to the entire matter of emergency planning.

MR. KESLER: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps we're closer to independence than I thought. I always thought Alberta was under the jurisdiction of federal orders in council, with respect to that particular Bill. I think it indicates that in fact . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Would the hon. member please come directly to the question.

MR. KESLER: Aside from the letter of August 19, 1981, has the hon. minister made any representation to the federal government that deals specifically with the contents of the emergency planning order?

MR. MOORE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, but I hasten to add that the federal emergency planning order, a federal order in council passed by the federal cabinet on May 27 and gazetted on June 10, does not interfere in any way with the rights of people in this province. It was an order indicating to various federal ministers that they should have their departments undertake certain plans that might become effective during times of emergency, in both wartime and peacetime. Those plans cannot become effective in this province unless there is new federal legislation that would allow them to become effective here. That is the area in which we have made strong objection on several occasions, both verbally and in writing, both at my level and at the official level, from Disaster Services to Emergency Planning, Canada.

I conclude by saying that the hon. member is mistaken about the effect of the federal emergency planning order, and I'd be pleased to clear up any other matters he's concerned about.

MR. KESLER: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the hon. minister guarantee this Assembly today that that order in council will not override provincial legislation, as it did at the time of the Quebec situation?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, whether one piece of legislation or one order in council overrides another or overrides anything else is very, very clearly a matter of legal opinion. According to long-established custom in the question periods of practically all the parliaments of the Commonwealth, I suppose, legal opinions are not sought or given during the question period but are ob-

tained in the usual way from legal advisers who are consulted directly.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, that is indeed correct. I would not purport to give legal advice. But my understanding of the situation, which I believe to be entirely accurate, is that the order does not have any effect with respect to provincial jurisdiction. I wanted to say that, because the hon. member has been suggesting it has. I think the people of Alberta have a right to know the facts.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister, with regard to the effectiveness of the order. Is the minister saying that the effectiveness of the order only takes place after certain provincial legislation is passed, or that the actual order itself has no effect in Canada until other legislation is passed by the House of Commons?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the facts of the matter are that we've been working for some time now to try to encourage joint planning between all provinces in Canada and the federal government with respect to disasters that may occur during peacetime and, indeed, to ensure that we play the appropriate role in the event of wartime activities. In that regard, we have been having a series of meetings with the federal government, at the official level, to make sure we had prepared peacetime emergency or disaster plans that would ensure that we all knew the role of various agencies — for example, the armed forces, federal police forces, or what have you — during peacetime emergencies. In addition, we wanted to be sure that we were playing the appropriate role in the wartime emergency plans which were developed in this country many years ago and have been updated from time to time.

During the course of these discussions, we learned of the passage of the emergency planning order directing federal departments to make certain plans that might be put into place in peacetime. That emergency planning order passed by the federal government, directing their departments to undertake to do certain things, could not be effective unless the House of Commons proclaimed federal legislation which, in effect, would override provincial law during certain declarations of emergency or disaster.

Mr. Speaker, the question is: does it take provincial legislation? No, there was never any suggestion of provincial legislation. There is in place a provincial Disaster Services Act, which this Legislature passed in 1972, that in our view provides all the legislation required to deal with disasters or emergencies during peacetime.

That's the point we've been making with the federal government. There is no requirement for federal legislation to take care of emergencies or disasters during peacetime. However, there is a requirement that we will continue to work on, to make sure we have co-ordination between the federal government and the province during either wartime or peacetime disasters or emergencies.

MR. KESLER: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the hon. minister indicate to this Assembly what an imminent emergency is?

MR. SPEAKER: We're back into the question of getting a legal opinion. As the hon. member undoubtedly knows, when certain terms are used in laws or orders in council,

the interpretation of those is a matter for the courts. Mind you, it's agreed that interpretations could be given beforehand by legal advisers, but those wouldn't have the same binding effect. So if we're going to get into the question of defining terms in any legislation or orders in council, may I respectfully suggest to the hon. member that he seek legal advice in the ordinary way.

Cruise Missile Testing

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Premier. Has the government of Alberta, as a provincial government, developed any position with respect to the question of the testing of the Cruise missile delivery system in Canada along the Alberta-Saskatchewan border? I ask this in light of expressions of concern by the government of Saskatchewan, as well as the statement by the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona, indicating his opposition.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, we've clearly considered it a federal matter. I believe statements have been made by the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, which he may wish to elaborate on when he returns to the House.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister in charge of Disaster Services.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order for clarification, so there's no indication of a government position being made by the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona. I believe the Member for Spirit River-Fairview was speaking about the statements made by a member from another House, representing a constituency of the same name. That would be the Member of Parliament for Edmonton Strathcona.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I certainly welcome the correction by the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Of course, that's absolutely correct. It's Mr. Roche, the hon. Member for Edmonton [South] in the federal House of Commons.

One of the aspects of the framework agreement is a compensation agreement for people who might be affected if one of these things goes in the wrong place. My question to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, in charge of Disaster Services, is: what assessment has been made of the compensation portion of the agreement, in view of the possible impact on Albertans?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, that's not a matter I've dealt with. I'll have to refer it to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs when he returns.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. Has the government of Alberta, as a province, developed any policy with respect to the Operation Dismantle plebiscites now being put on the ballot by many municipalities in the country? I ask the question because last night Vancouver city council decided to hold a plebiscite on the question of general disarmament. The government of Ontario has indicated opposition. Has the government of Alberta developed any policy with respect to whether or not municipalities would be able to pursue those plebiscites, should they choose?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, various routes for municipalities to undertake to have plebiscites among their voters are covered in the Municipal Government Act. Beyond that, there is no proposal for a change in legislation or anything before the House. I'm not sure I'm answering the hon. member's question, but there are routes municipalities can use. I'd be pleased to try to elaborate on them.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a brief word of elaboration. A number of referendums have been undertaken by municipalities in this country. Last night, Vancouver city council chose to put the question on the ballot when they next have a civic election; so have the cities of Ottawa, Toronto, and a number of other municipalities. It's my understanding that the government of Ontario had some reservation about whether a municipality should in fact have a referendum on a matter of jurisdiction beyond the scope of municipal responsibility. Mr. Speaker, my question was whether or not the government of Alberta had developed any policy with respect to the appropriateness of that kind of referendum.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, our policy is that municipalities are free to place before their electorate questions they may wish to get an opinion on, as is provided for in the Municipal Government Act, but not beyond that.

Career Development for Women

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Minister responsible, for Personnel Administration, regarding women in the work place and the personnel planning and career development unit. Would the minister confirm to the House whether the objective of that particular unit — namely, to advise women to become aware of the opportunities of careers and the development of careers in the public sector — continues to be an important priority?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I can confirm the comments of the Member for Edmonton Kingsway. That has been, is, and will remain a high priority for our government.

DR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. minister also indicate to the House whether he has information to indicate whether the service is well utilized or just used in a modest way?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, a number of programs have been developed. I don't have the statistics at my fingertips but, from preliminary assessment, I know that in the last year the number of applicants for the various programs has increased tremendously. The success rate of persons who have taken the programs has also been a very helpful indication of their interest and the awareness of supervisors throughout government that all persons should have opportunity for advancement.

DR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister further indicate to the House whether the unit's objective — namely, to provide that service — is disseminated directly to women's organizations or directly to women in the household or in careers?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if I follow the question correctly, but the program is basically aimed at

the employees of the provincial government. It is also identified in literature, through work experience programs, to schools. It's also identified in recruitment and training programs that those programs are available for those persons who obtain employment with the provincial government.

DR. PAPROSKI: That's exactly the question I asked, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased with that answer.

Would the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower indicate whether information regarding career development for women is disseminated through his department to high schools and postsecondary institutions in some way or another?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, a very extensive career development program is under way through my department, with career offices throughout Alberta. Specifically, I can assure members of the Assembly that every effort is made to try to treat both sexes equally in the distribution of that information and, in particular cases, to provide specific attention to the interests of female members of the work force or people proposing to enter the work force for the first time.

DR. PAPROSKI: Thank you, Mr. Minister. A final supplementary. Would the minister indicate, in a general way, whether he has information that women are taking up the traditional male apprenticeship programs, such as roofing, heavy duty mechanic, electrician, and so forth, and whether it has increased or decreased over the past year.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, that information came to my attention just the other day. I guess I can't put my finger on it exactly. But in fact there has been a dramatic increase in the number of women entering apprenticeship programs in Alberta. I will try to provide the precise figures for the hon. member in the next period of time, and circulate it to all hon. members. I will actually take the question as notice.

DR. PAPROSKI: Just a final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could either minister indicate to the House whether any other new programs or policies are being developed to encourage women for careers in the work place?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, a new book called "It's about time. . . to start thinking about your future", a publication in my department, has a great deal of information in it with respect to all programs and job opportunities. We're making a very real effort to make sure that both sexes are treated equally. I recommend this document to all hon. members of the Assembly, if they don't have it. This time I'll make sure they get it.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for the question period has elapsed, but if the Assembly agrees, I've already mentioned the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud. Perhaps we might have time for a brief question and answer.

I believe the hon. Minister responsible for Personnel Administration would like to supplement some information previously given, if the Assembly agrees.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to supplement the information of my colleague by saying that in addition to the efforts of his department, in the Personnel Administration Office we have a career newsletter that is being distributed among all public service officials, aimed particularly at developing and attracting skills and new training for female employees.

Constitution

MR. KNAAK: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for allowing this question. My question to the hon. Premier arises from the confusion that seems to be developing in Alberta regarding the Constitution Act, 1982, the British North America Act, and the rights of Albertans pursuant to those two Acts.

Will the Premier consider developing a booklet that can be ready on April 17, the date of proclamation — this government works fast; we've heard it before — that clearly sets out the relationship between the Constitution Act, 1982, just passed by the House of Commons, the British North America Act, and how the rights of Albertans are affected pursuant to those two Acts? April 17, being the date of proclamation, would be the appropriate time for every Albertan to have one of those.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, we are considering having a debate in the Legislative Assembly on this matter, which we certainly welcome. In addition to that, there have been some thoughts with regard to communication. I realize we work very quickly in matters of this nature, and we won't discuss the color of the brochures, but I'll give some consideration to the hon. member's suggestion.

MR. KESLER: Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible] . . . consideration to the hon. member's suggestion, could the Premier indicate whether those funds that will be made available for the Conservative propaganda will come out of general revenue?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member's question is out of order by a country mile on several accounts.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. chairman of the Committee on Private Bills would like to revert to Tabling Returns and Reports, if I understand the suggestion correctly. Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MR. KNAAK: Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Standing Committee on Private Bills, I hereby report that Standing Order 77, respecting publication of the nature and object of the private Bill in question in newspapers and the *Alberta Gazette* has been complied with by the following: the Lethbridge Country Club, for the Lethbridge Country Club Amendment Act, 1982; the city of Edmonton, for the Edmonton Convention and Tourism Authority Act; and the city of Edmonton, for the Edmonton Economic Development Authority Act.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor will now attend upon the Assembly.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair]

head: **ROYAL ASSENT**

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order! His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

[The Honourable Frank Lynch-Staunton, Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, took his place upon the Throne]

MR. SPEAKER: May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly has, at its present session, passed certain Bills to which, in the name of the Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

CLERK: Your Honour, the following are the titles of the Bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

No.	Title
3	Department of Government Services Amendment Act, 1982
7	Planning Amendment Act, 1982
9	Cancer Treatment and Prevention Amendment Act, 1982
10	Law of Property Amendment Act, 1982
26	Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1982

[The Lieutenant-Governor indicated his assent]

CLERK: In Her Majesty's name. His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor doth assent to these Bills.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order!

[The Lieutenant-Governor left the House]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

Department of Education

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to address a few remarks to the minister. As I believe the minister is well aware, schools and education are very important in the constituency of Calgary McCall. The recent report of the chief returning officer indicates an 89 per cent increase in population in that constituency; that is, an 89 per cent increase in adults. I'm sure the children increased even more. Since I have represented the constituency of Calgary McCall, I've attended in excess of 30 school openings, which I'm sure is a record in this province. Indeed, Mr. Minister, during this last winter and spring period, I've attended five. In every one of these school openings my wife has accompanied me, and that makes

an even better impression than having their M.L.A. attend.

One disturbing note, however. I have a report that over 50 per cent of students attending school in my constituency come from single-parent families. I'm sure we all appreciate that this has the potential for real problems.

Mr. Minister, I want to bring to your attention today a letter I received from one of the teachers in the constituency. It concerns the Alberta heritage learning resource project, which is funded by the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. This teacher is high in his praise of the program generally, but he expresses some concern about the future of the Kanata Kits:

As an aid to teachers who are implementing the new Social Studies Curriculum, Kanata Kits have been produced. These kits [provide] a wide variety of instructional materials including: textbooks, audiotapes, videotapes, student masters for duplication, projection transparencies, posters, and other materials.

He states:

I am a teacher of Social Studies and have used these Kanata Kits at the grade 7, 8, and 9 levels. I have found a number of these kits to be of excellent quality and they have been invaluable in the instruction of my students. The grade seven kit: *Cultures in Canada: How Different Should We Be?*, and the grade eight kit: *Canada's Political Heritage* have been especially effective and in constant use in our school.

However, Mr. Minister, the concern expressed by this teacher is the normal wear and tear on the textbooks and other materials, and that there is no provision for replacement either by the school board or the department. He expresses great concern that when the present supply of materials is worn out, if there is no provision for replacement, this most excellent program will simply die. Could the minister give the teacher, the constituency, and the citizens of Alberta some indication of his plans for this program?

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make several comments. First of all, I noticed last night that at least one of the members raised the question of school busing costs. I'd just like to take a moment and explore that question with members of the committee.

During my pre-session tour, I met with officials of the Peace River School Division, the Spirit River School Division, St. Thomas More, and the Fairview School Division. In all cases, the trustees raised the issue of school busing costs. Several years ago the funding arrangement was such that, at least in the examples I've cited, approximately 80 per cent of the cost of operating the bus fleet was recovered from provincial funds. However, Mr. Minister, that has sharply declined, and of the divisions I met with the average was in the neighborhood of 65 per cent.

That decline of 15 per cent of the cost of operating the bus fleet is a rather significant matter of concern to trustees in the north. The maintenance cost of operating the school bus fleet in northern Alberta is generally higher. First of all, gasoline prices are higher than in other parts of the province. Secondly, roads tend not to be as well looked after, in places at least, and longer distances are required. I would say to the minister that we have to take a close look at the school busing formula.

I might say to the minister as well that in the latter part of May 1981, area one of the School Trustees' Association met, as they normally do and have done every year,

with members of the Legislature. Without question, the problem of school busing costs is not only a matter of concern in the three divisions I know quite well — because I deal with them all the time — but is a matter of concern throughout the northwestern area of the province and, I suspect, the province in total. At least I gather that from some of the comments other members made last night.

The problem with 65 per cent of the cost of the school bus system being recovered from the province and the other 35 per cent having to be raised elsewhere, is that we are taking dollars that should be used for educational purposes and having to shift them into operating the bus fleet. For divisions that have in the neighborhood of 80, 90, or 100 teachers, when you've got a loss of \$100,000 or thereabouts in your school busing system, that's the equivalent of 5 per cent of your teaching staff, a significant number of teachers.

I know the minister will respond by saying — and I read his remarks last night when we began committee study — that a major review of school finances is under way. But quite frankly, Mr. Minister and members of the committee, we have gone this route before. The matter has been studied and studied. I remember meeting with the trustees in zone one in the fall of 1971. Without exception, the representation trustees made at that time was that, first of all, the costs of operation are higher in the rural areas, and they tend to be higher in the northern than the southern rural areas because of the more adverse climate.

That being the case, Mr. Chairman, we have had quite a number of years to address this problem, and we're still just studying it. It's fine to say that we're looking at the question of equalizing educational opportunity, but it seems to me that we have to have a fairly clear agenda for action. As I look at the target dates, it worries me that this report on school financing is going to be completed and presented to the minister late this fall. Assuming we have an election when we normally do in this province, and assuming the Premier follows his usual course of changing all the ministers, we're going to have a new Minister of Education after the next election. It worries me that we're going to have a major set of recommendations, but a new minister will have to study the recommendations. So instead of getting on with the job of making some pretty fundamental changes, we're going to have another few years of further study.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to compliment the Minister of Education between 1971 and 1975. Because at least before the 1975 election, three important programs were introduced by the government. One was the small schools grant program, the second was the lower assessment program, and the third was the declining enrolment program. None of the three went far enough, but they were a sort of minor start. But the fact of the matter is that that was seven years ago. I'd like to get some commitment from the minister, when he responds, that we're in fact going to see a very early response to that study, in the form of specific changes in the grant structure. Because if we're going to study the study, we're going to get into the Mackenzie King strategy of piling a parliamentary committee on a royal commission. Frankly, Mr. Chairman, I just don't think that's good enough, because the problems of financing rural divisions are tough enough that we have to look at some of these problems with a real sense of urgency.

One of the other areas brought to my attention was the cost of what you might call interim financing by school

divisions, and I was really quite surprised to look at some of these figures. Without giving the division which supplied me with the information, two years ago the interest payment to the bank that had to be made on short-term funding — the kind of borrowing required so that you can pay your teaching staff — was \$13,000. Last year it was \$39,000. Well \$39,000 is almost equivalent to two teachers, certainly one and a half. Whether that is justifiable in a very small division with between 80 and 100 teachers, it underscores the point I want to leave with the committee: the need to move quickly on the recommendations for a fundamental restructuring of our education finance systems.

There is no doubt that we owe tremendously to the school foundation plan in rural Alberta. There is absolutely no doubt that without that plan, the quality of education in this province would not be nearly as high as it is or has been over the last number of years. Of course the school foundation plan was brought in by the former government. It's basically a good program, but no program is so good that as we review it in light of practical experience, we can't make improvements.

It seems to me that one of the areas we have tended to follow with a lot of these programs over the years has been to equalize the yardstick and not the end result. Equalizing the yardstick is done by having the same kind of per capita grants. But if the costs in one area are 20 per cent higher than in another area, you don't have an equal result. I believe one of the members pointed out last night that in the rural divisions where you have schools with very small numbers of students and you want to carry on a program, you don't have the flexibility to reach even the 20:1 pupil/teacher ratio recommended by the Alberta Teachers' Association as well as by the report recently tabled as a consequence of the dispute in the city of Calgary.

Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to make a couple of other observations. Last spring, teachers expressed a lot of concern about changes in the Teaching Profession Act; the proposal which had been floated at the time to separate the ATA as a bargaining organization from the professional role as a body of teachers in the province. I think members will recall getting a tremendous amount of correspondence. Apart from metrication, gun control, and some other issues, I don't remember an issue that elicited quite as much correspondence as the proposals of the Minister of Education on the Teaching Profession Act. I'd like to know where things stand on the Teaching Profession Act at this stage.

I'd also like to know — and in his comments last night the minister talked about not apologizing for floating trial balloons. Fair enough. But where do things stand on comments that would at least raise the possibility that compulsory education as we know it may be, if not eliminated, at least modified? I say to members of the committee that while parents have rights, so most definitely do children. I would greatly fear any move from the very solid commitment on the part of the Legislature of this province, through the School Act, that between certain ages young people must go to school.

I know it's a difficult issue. In a democratic society, where do the human rights of parents end, and where do the human rights of children begin? Where do the rights set out in the Individual's Rights Protection Act and the Human Rights Act stop, and where do the obligations to the School Act set in? Notwithstanding some of those difficult questions, I for one have some very serious reservations. More than serious reservations, I would

oppose any move from compulsory attendance, for at least a given number of years, in Alberta schools.

I'd like to apologize to the minister in advance, because I have to slip away and I may not be here for his response if other members participate in the debate. But I will read it carefully in *Hansard*.

Mr. Chairman, I want to conclude by underlining again my concern about where things are going on the question of educational financing, because I don't think there's a more important issue in our province today. I know it isn't the one that gets the headlines, unless the minister flies a new kite or floats a new balloon, but usually not even then. But the funding of education in the province is probably one of the most crucial [sections] the Committee of Supply will consider. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, we can't successfully fulfil our responsibilities unless we are assured that we are providing equal opportunity in our system for every child in the province, regardless of where that child lives. In order to achieve that laudable goal, it's my assertion that some pretty major changes have to be made in the school funding formula.

The minister well knows, in his visits to rural schools in particular, that we have divisions in this province that practically cry when they sit down with the trustees, because they aren't able to supply many of the services available as a matter of course in our larger urban divisions. The money isn't there. One of the reasons the money isn't there is that the costs of operation are higher in rural areas. Even with the programs I alluded to, the grant system still doesn't cover that difference. There is a limit to what the local property tax payer can pay. As I've talked to divisional trustees, almost without exception, I've seen them go back to the well, if you like, and make the case to local ratepayers for a higher supplementary requisition. But, Mr. Minister, with a slowdown especially in rural Alberta, with a tight situation in most towns and villages, and with the farm economy being at best questionable over the next few months, I'd say that we have to move quickly on those recommendations. I am optimistic about the results of the inquiry, and that we'll have a set of recommendations that will go some distance in rectifying inequities in the financing system. But I would underscore my concern that we not tarry any length of time but move quickly when we get the report.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Chairman, prior to getting into my comments, I would like to take the liberty of saying a word of appreciation and farewell to our outgoing deputy minister, Dr. Earl Hawkesworth, a gentleman I was first associated with some 20-odd years ago. I have developed a high respect for his ability and contributions to the administration of education in this province. I think that that respect changed from initial apprehension, when I was principal of a grades 1 to 12 school in Altario and he was a high school inspector. He probably gave me my first counselling on how to bend rules, as opposed to breaking rules. I express some thanks to him for that, and wish him well in his retirement years. I'm sure we'll see him back, involved in education in one way or another. At the same time, I would like to offer my congratulations to Dr. Reno Bosetti, who was appointed to the position. I'm sure he will find it a challenge. We expect some great things in the '80s.

Mr. Chairman, I wasn't going to speak in this debate; I had full intentions of sitting quietly and listening. But the hon. Member for Lethbridge West motivated me with his comments last night. I see that he's not here today, but I

am going to say what I feel like saying and convince him to read it in *Hansard*. Basically, I would like to do three things: offer some commendations to the minister, make some comments and express a couple of concerns on education, and contribute to the education of the hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

With respect to activities in my constituency, I have to evaluate the minister as having done an excellent job over the three years he's held office. Initially he played a key role in reorganizing a rather cluttered administrative structure, consisting of about seven different school boards, and at their request co-ordinating them into two boards with coterminous boundaries. That had to be a tremendous achievement, if you understood anything about educational politics in northeast Alberta. I also compliment him on his continued responsiveness to those two new boards, and the guidance he has given through the difficult decision-making times of how to prepare for a boom that may not be a boom. On behalf of both school boards, I extend their appreciation to the hon. minister.

In general, I would like to acknowledge the contributions he has made to education for the handicapped in this province. I'm sure his term will go down in history as one that recognized and was very responsive to the needs of the handicapped, and also for the recent moves in improving computer technology in education.

With respect to my concerns and a couple of questions, I share two concerns that the hon. Member for Edmonton Gold Bar alluded to last evening. One is with respect to the pendulum swing or shift toward private schools and the degree of public funding that should flow to those schools. Mr. Chairman, I agree that parents in this province should have the right to send their children to a private school. I have a little difficulty when they come back to the public purse and say the public is responsible for financing it. I think we are going to have to grapple with the question as to how far we go in providing public funds to private schools. I would have no problem with the ratepayer saying: look. I've made a direct contribution through taxes to education, and that should flow over to the school I've chosen to send my child to. I think that's fair pool. But once they come back and start asking for funding equivalent to the public system, we're facing a rather sensitive question. The public system must accept all students; the private systems I'm aware of tend to be rather selective in which students they accept. Mr. Minister, I suggest that's an area of concern we will have to address.

The other concern expressed by the Member for Edmonton Gold Bar, that I share and support, is with respect to business education equipment. I can recall opening a high school in 1971 and, with the initial capital funds, setting up a very well-equipped business lab, which at the time did an excellent job of turning out young people trained to go directly into the business world. But 10 years later that school is still using that equipment, and the technology in business education is changing. I think the same problem existed in industrial arts and home economics, and we came up with a program to address it. The same problem exists with many of our science labs. We are going to have to develop some sort of mechanism to replace capital equipment to keep it up to date. Otherwise I suggest we're doing students a disservice, training them on antiquated equipment. That is one area I would like the minister to comment on.

My third point, contributing to the education of the hon. Member for Lethbridge West — first of all, I would

have to say he was wrong in his statistics when he stated that 11 members of this Assembly have, at some point, been teachers. My count, which I verified, tells me there are 12. I can't help but wonder if the hon. member decided that one of us was deadwood and eliminated our certificate. If so, I'm looking for a response from him.

He made some comments about spending money on education, and suggested that Education had exceeded the Social Services and Community Health budget and was on its way to the Hospitals and Medical Care one. I'm not sure in my mind that Education belongs between the two. The point I would like to stress, and attempt to convince the hon. member of, is that you don't spend money on education; you invest money in education. It's an investment in the youth of the province to prepare them for the world out there. At times I wonder if we are making a great enough investment.

I look at the costs — and I would call them costs — of where the educational system has failed our youngsters. I look at the high cost of retraining adults. I look at the high cost of upgrading programs. I look at the high cost of our penitentiary system. Do a little research and I think you'll find it'll probably cost you 10 times as much per year to keep a person in a penitentiary as we pay to educate a high school student. I look at the high cost of rehabilitation programs. I can't help but wonder that if we direct a little more effort into education — educational research, educational programs, and teacher/student relationships — we could prevent some of these costs to society later on.

I suggest — which I have done before in this House — that maybe we should be taking a very hard look at the junior high school level of our education, where I think many of the problems develop, many of our students start getting turned off and go down the wrong paths. Is the structure, the environment we're teaching those children under, proper? Is the curriculum proper? Are we creating an academic bottleneck and teaching people to be failures, or at least convincing them to the point that they're failures? I don't know the answer. But in my mind the problem is at the junior high level. I for one wouldn't mind seeing a little money invested in trying to determine if that's where the problem is, and what we can do to resolve it. In the long term, it would save some tremendous costs to the public of this province.

Mr. Chairman, with that I thank you, and await the minister's response.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I'm glad the Member for Bonnyville spoke before me, because he said many of the things I would like to say, and I won't repeat them. I do concur in the remarks he made.

In that line, I'd like to talk about the brilliant students for a minute. I've always felt that we lose the brilliant students in our schools. They are bored with either the system or the challenge, or plain fed up with being fed pabulum in a system where they are ready to go on to future challenges. They become under-achievers. It does happen in the junior high. We lose the slow learners from grades 1 to 4, because we don't have enough aides in the elementary or the primary grades. We then lose the brilliant students from grades 4 to 9, because they become bored with the system and no longer work. I certainly encourage the minister to really take a look at what we can do to keep the brilliant students challenged and achieving. It's very important to the future of this province and this country to keep those students in the school system and not have them become dropouts because

they're bored to death with it.

The second point I'd like to make is in support of the small high schools. I have a number of small high schools in my constituency. I believe there are definite advantages with them. They certainly may not have curriculum choices that they have in the larger high schools, but in my estimation the overall education is better. Students learn more responsibility, co-operation, and certainly participation. In a small high school, every student must participate, or many of the activities in the high school would fall by the wayside.

They have an opportunity to achieve and become president of the students' union. They have an opportunity to take part in sports, whether they're particularly athletic or not. They have to learn tolerance in those small high schools, because they have to accept the students for what they are. Small high schools are more personalized, and the teachers certainly give greater consideration to meeting the needs of the individual students and of the school collectively. It's impossible in a high school where you have hundreds of students you do not know intimately or are unable to become really well acquainted with during the year.

One of the programs I'd like to mention is a life styles program, which was initiated at Winfield and for which four teachers won the Hilroy scholarship award, as an example of meeting special needs of rural students. I brought the program to the attention of the minister, but it hasn't been picked up. It is a program whereby they try to meet the needs of rural students trying to adapt to the urban centres after they leave high school.

My request is for consideration of funding in support of these small high schools, particularly taking into consideration the distance the counties have. For instance, instead of the superintendent driving across the street or across town, he may have to drive 80 miles to the high school. This poses a problem. I think the Member for Spirit River-Fairview probably was talking about the same kind of problem.

Of course school busing has been mentioned a number of times. I certainly hope the study the minister has under way will have some resolutions for this particular problem. I really believe it's a problem in rural areas. The other school busing problem that is of particular interest to me and of concern to bus drivers is the 80 per cent load factor. The Member for Cypress mentioned it earlier. We can do something about that without costing the government any money, and certainly it will help the bus drivers and the counties if we can be more flexible. I realize that regulations are there for a purpose, but they don't have to be adhered to by the letter. Surely we can use some flexibility in meeting the needs of particular areas and constituencies.

I'd like to commend the minister on the many programs to meet the needs of special students with special problems. If a special problem doesn't fit in one area, if you go back, there is a program that will fit almost any problem. I found the department willing to sit down and take a look at which programs students with special needs will fit under.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, a few questions for the Minister of Education. The first deals with the move of the Alberta Correspondence School to Barrhead. As all members know, construction for the new facility is well under way. I appreciate very much the action and attention of our government to this relocation project.

One question to the minister, perhaps inviting him to comment to a greater degree with respect to the availability of staff and the commitment of present staff with the Alberta Correspondence School currently located in Edmonton. I'd like the minister to fill me in, in terms of his assessment right now of the number of men and women currently working in the Alberta Correspondence School who indeed have committed themselves to the move to Barrhead. What is his best projection in terms of the availability of good, competent people to fill the vacancies that might be created by men and women deciding to follow another career rather than moving to Barrhead? On the basis of a recent housing survey done by employees of the Alberta Correspondence School, my understanding is that of 104 surveyed in February of this year, 50 committed themselves to the move, 29 indicated they were not prepared to make the move, and some 25 were undecided. The minister's overview with respect to the move would be very much appreciated.

The second question I would like to raise with the minister is one that I raised last week when his colleague the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower was up with his estimates. It has to do with a unique little problem that confronted me last week: eligibility of appeal exams administered by Alberta Education for the Alberta heritage trust fund scholarships, namely the Rutherford scholarships. It's my understanding that officials on the Students Finance Board — and I appreciate this is a department other than the one the Minister of Education is responsible for — have ruled that marks obtained in appeal exams administered by Alberta Education are not eligible for the Rutherford scholarships. I'm very disappointed in that. I've asked the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower to review that, because I think it's very, very erroneous. It's my understanding that appeal examination marks count as eligibility marks for entrance of secondary students in our schools who are going on to postsecondary institutions in this province, whether it be technical schools or universities. I simply cannot comprehend why those marks would not be eligible for Rutherford scholarships.

Mr. Chairman, those are essentially the two areas of questions I wanted to address to the Minister of Education. Thank you.

MRS. EMBURY: My comments will also be very brief, I hope, but I did want to follow along with the Member for Calgary McCall. I certainly can't compete with his record of new school openings, although I also represent an area of Calgary that is growing very rapidly. I have attended only two openings, one in Silver Springs over a year ago that was extremely significant because it was named the W. O. Mitchell school. For members of the Legislature who have had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Mitchell and hearing him speak, it's truly a delightful experience. I think the Silver Springs community is indeed very honored to have a public school named after this gentleman.

This past year, I had a unique opening in my constituency: Ranchlands community school. It was truly a delightful evening, with hundreds of parents and children at the opening. I know there is great appreciation for the designation by the province, making Ranchlands a community school. Some degree of frustration arose with members of the community going through the total designation process both at the local and provincial level, which is bound to happen when constituents are involved in a new process like that. One part of the process

disturbed me slightly, and I would like to bring it to the minister's attention. I know it's a difficult area to deal with, but at the time I felt some of the assistance very willingly given by the province in the designation process was, unfortunately, viewed as a threat or a method of not being co-operative and consultative in the process but more or less totally inhibiting the process. I'm sure this is just a matter of what we hear so much about at the communication process, but somehow I wish we could address that issue. I know that isn't the view of members of the Department of Education, but unfortunately that is the perception out there.

Speaking generally to the educational system, I can't believe it is all bad. I really appreciated the opening comments by the minister, in which he explained his philosophy and beliefs, and what hopefully is being carried out by the Department of Education. I have a lot of teachers in my constituency, and I know they are dedicated and experienced. A great deal of credit should be given to these teachers for what they achieve on a day-to-day basis, with the many frustrations and concerns we now find in the teaching process. When you speak with the young children and young adults you meet in your constituency around Calgary, again you can't believe that the educational process is all that bad. There are very fine examples of what the children are learning, and how they will ultimately contribute as citizens of this province.

In Calgary, I suppose we still cannot totally negate what happened in the past with regard to the teachers' strike and the many issues raised during that time. There was a great deal of anger and a total disregard for the minister and the Department of Education. I feel that this perception is indeed very tragic. Again, I'd just mention that unfortunately it's not viewed as one of co-operation and consultation; there still seems to be a terrific threat that what the department does is not enhancing the educational process but actually inhibiting it.

The Alberta Teachers' Association certainly has a terrific grapevine, or what was known as a moccasin telegraph system. This was very evident during the strike, when they could communicate instantly with all their members. Again, I would urge the minister to consider the communication process somehow. I know it involves all of us, and it's our responsibility too. What I've tried to do in the past year or two is send out the many press releases the minister issues. I've had many comments from members of the teaching profession on how much they appreciate the flow of information that comes right down to that basic, grass roots level. I hope to continue this process, but I also hope that somehow it could be looked at and studied to improve general communication with all teachers.

I know the Department of Education, as other departments in this government, wants to and does respect local autonomy with regard to issues. Other than the actual budget allotments to the public school system in Calgary, I would like to ask the minister if he might comment on his communication with our public school trustees in Calgary. I believe they went on record as saying they were going to initiate recommendations of the Kratzmann commission. From the minister's point of view, I would like to know if they are carrying this out, or what parts of the report they are acting on.

Thank you very much.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, very briefly, I'd like to compliment the minister on the activity he's been carrying out in the department. I think most citizens, certainly my

constituents, are very pleased with the department's performance in the past year.

I'd like the minister to comment on computerization in our school system. I know he made some comments yesterday. Unfortunately I was away from the House, due to another meeting, but I realize that this is a very important and very special field in teaching. I know that literacy, knowledge, and the teaching of computerization is now on its way in our school system. I think the committee recognizes the importance of this in our society, recognizing that in the next five years, at least 65 per cent of businesses will be using computers to some degree.

I'd like the minister to clarify how teachers are acquired for this very special, important field. Are there now, or is the minister considering or contemplating, any special grants or support for teachers with computer experience going into this area of teaching? Will there be in-service training, and who will be training them? If a teacher now in a postsecondary institution or presently teaching wants to take that particular field, how will he or she acquire that? I would like to hear about concerns he may have regarding that particular area, because I have had citizens express concern that for some students it has become somewhat of a toy. Unfortunately that is not the intention of that particular area of teaching.

Those are my brief comments, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If there are no further comments, perhaps the minister would like to respond.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to begin by responding to the observations made by a number of members. Mr. Hyland's comments come to mind, as do those of Mr. Harle, Mr. Batiuk, and Mr. Borstad.

A very important contributing factor to the general well-being of the educational system in this province has been the co-operative attitude displayed by all the people involved in education. I would certainly like to associate myself once again with the appreciative comments about some of the activities of the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the Conference of Alberta School Superintendents, the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations, and many others. We simply wouldn't be where we are today if it were not for the fact that, by and large — and I acknowledge that there are some particular issues on which we differ — there is an important co-operative spirit throughout the whole educational system.

A couple of specific examples were cited. I think the ATA took a very commendable initiative when they invited members of the Legislative Assembly into the classroom for a day to see what teachers experience with children. I want to say that I appreciate the fact that a number of my colleagues took advantage of that invitation during Education Week, and I understand that others have declared their intention to take advantage of that invitation before the end of the school year.

Similarly, someone made reference to the legislative handbook prepared by the Alberta Teachers' Association. I agree. I think it's probably one of the very best reference documents of its type available in Canada. It is certainly the best reference document of its type, relating to the government of Alberta, available in Alberta.

At the same time, reference has to be made to some of the initiatives of the Alberta School Trustees' Association. It's important to remember that we have almost 1,000 people serving as school trustees throughout this

province. We have elections every three years, and there's a turnover of almost 30 per cent in each of those elections; which is to say that every three years, 300 people, having served as school trustees, retire into the general life of the community, and 300 people who have no experience as trustees enter that role.

Over a period of time, the role of trustee has to be recognized as one of the most important training grounds for public community leaders in this province. Recognizing that, the ASTA, in some of its recent activity, has developed some very important initiatives for the purpose of training those trustees to be effective in their responsibility and to make a larger contribution to the life of the province. I want to recognize that contribution by the Alberta School Trustees' Association.

While it is local in its effect, I'd also like to recognize the contribution made by the Northern Alberta Development Council, particularly in support of the review of educational finance. They have recently completed a study of the cost of living in the north and the cost of life in the north. That study is going to be very helpful to the Department of Education, and I expect it will be helpful to other departments as well.

Other examples of this co-operation that I think is important, are the community early childhood services operations mentioned by the hon. Member for Calgary Currie, who has been one of the most ardent supporters we have of the community ECS operation. It is obvious that the policy of the government reflects his position: we support the operation of early childhood services programs under the umbrella of the public or separate school systems and, in many cases, ECS is delivered that way.

We also support and encourage the operation of the community non-profit early childhood services program. They are most common in Calgary. I think they are most common in the Calgary Currie constituency. They serve a vital function, not only in Calgary but throughout the province, in that they provide a means by which we can compare the achievement in the publicly operated system. As well, of course, they obviously involve the parents in a major way. That's a very important consideration for the well-being of the early childhood services program.

DR. PAPROSKI: All government members support it.

MR. KING: All members of government support it. There's no question about that. In my comments, I'll identify some members who have been particularly ardent about one activity or another, but our success in all these things depends upon the general support of the members of the Legislature.

Community schools: the question was asked, what are our intentions now? I think it would be fair to say that we are pausing to integrate our experience. Last year we funded 35 community schools throughout the province. This year we intend to fund 55. We have in excess of 80 applications for support. There is some pressure for a great expansion in the program; no question about that. But for a number of reasons that I'd like to remark upon, I think it would be a mistake to enter a major expansion in the program right now.

When we talk about community involvement in education, different phrases are used, and mean different things to different people. In other words, there is not yet a common understanding in the community of what we are trying to achieve or how we're trying to achieve it. People refer to the community use of schools, they refer to the

community school, and they refer to community education. What is required is that we develop a range of experiences throughout the province, depending upon what happens in the local community, and that we learn from that.

I have said on other occasions that I think it would be ironic in the extreme, and probably arrogant, for us to attempt to impose a community school policy from the top down. The Department of Education is not going to tell the people in Magrath or Stettler what a community school means. We are going to depend on the people in those communities deciding for themselves what a community school means to them. On the basis of a wide range of experience, we are going to do what has to be done to support the local community in that kind of activity. The community school policy of this province is going to grow from the grass roots up; it is not going to be imposed from the top down. That requires that we make haste slowly, which is what we're doing.

Mrs. Embury commented about frustration.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's "the hon. member" . . . [inaudible]

MR. KING: It's "the hon. member" when we're in the House, but it's "Mrs. Embury" when we're in committee, [interjections]

DR. BUCK: Mr. Minister, I think you should use "the hon. member".

MR. KING: The hon. member commented about some frustration as people relate to the Department of Education. I think that concern is not well founded, knowing at least one of the people who are doing the work. But in the event that it is, in the event that I misunderstand the style of this particular individual, I want to go on record as saying that because this policy is meant to grow from the grass roots up, the position of the department and of the staff of the department is clearly meant to support what happens in the local community. It is not our intention to inhibit the enthusiasm or initiative of the local community. If in fact that's happening anywhere, then I as minister would like to know about it.

A number of comments have been made by various members with respect to program offerings of the educational system. Bishop Carroll is a good example. I think that ideally what we do provincially would be meant to support the opportunity for different types of programming in different communities, depending upon decisions made locally. It will always be our requirement that the local school board demonstrate that what they propose to do is sound, and has the best interests of the child at heart. If they can demonstrate those two things, we are quite open to having one board do something differently than some other board does. We are quite prepared to respond on the basis of local circumstances. Indeed we're prepared to respond on the basis of program offerings in one part of a system being different from those in a different part of the system, if the board can demonstrate that from an educational point of view it is sound, and that it has the best interests of the student at heart.

In that connection, I am called to make an observation about something called the Carnegie unit, which is the basis on which we organize high school education in this province. You get one credit for 25 hours of instruction. There is a misunderstanding throughout the province that that obliges each student in each course to take 25 hours

of instruction; that he doesn't get one credit unless he takes 25 hours of instruction, and doesn't get five credits unless he takes 125 hours of instruction. That is not the basis of the Carnegie unit. The Carnegie unit guarantees that a child will have access to at least 25 hours of instruction, because that's said to be the norm; an average child would need that in order to master the material sufficiently to merit the credit. But there is nothing that obliges any school board to commit each and every child to 25 hours of instruction, for one credit. If a student can master the material faster than that, the school system is quite at liberty to organize its system more flexibly so as to allow the student to move more quickly. The 25 hours is a guarantee of a basis that will be available to every child, but it is not a minimum to which every child must be committed.

With respect to native education, I would once again like to recognize the very significant contribution made by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican in providing assistance as to the appropriate policy that would guide the development of programs for native education in Edmonton and Calgary. We now have a program of financial assistance to the Plains Indian Cultural Survival school, the Ben Calferobe school in Edmonton, and the Awasis program. That financial support is the direct result of the contribution made by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

In addition to that, however, three other important activities are under way at the present time, or just recently completed. One is the review, by a lawyer, of the province's jurisdiction with respect to the education of Indian children, both on and off reserves. As soon as it is printed, it will be made available to the public for review and consideration by interested parties. Secondly, we have just received, and will be releasing in the next few days, a review of all existing curricular material from the point of view of racial stereotyping. We are going to make available this examination, which considers whether there is any racial stereotyping in all the material used in the schools. Thirdly, the curriculum policies committee is just undertaking some work with respect to the presence of native people and the native community in our curriculum generally.

With respect to the social studies curriculum, I appreciate the commendation we have received for the Canadian content as well as for the in-service program. I think the successful completion of that social studies in-service is another example of the co-operation which exists within the system. I appreciate the comments made by the hon. Mr. Hyland.

The comments are well taken about the need to provide further support for business education. A proposal has been developed within the department, and is presently under consideration. That leads us to the question of computers, an important question on which I would like to spend just a few minutes.

The educational system is behind the community generally — certainly it is behind the business community — in accommodating itself to the impact of computer technology. If we fail to recognize that, our children, more than ourselves, will suffer. For example, it is a fact that as recently as last year, oil companies in Calgary were hiring high school graduates from Vancouver, British Columbia, because those graduates had some access to computer education in high school, which was not available to the graduates of Calgary's high schools. To me, that typifies a problem we do not long want to live with: that industry in Calgary goes outside the province to hire high school

graduates because they are not satisfied with what the students are learning in Alberta's high schools. That circumstance is changing very quickly, because boards have been responsive. I only use that as an example of our having been behind. Nevertheless, we've got a lot of catching up to do.

Catching up has a number of elements. First of all, there is the hardware, the software, and the in-service. The fact of the matter is that of the three, hardware is relatively least important. In the longer term for education and for the general use of computers, software — the instructions given to a computer telling it what to do — is the vastly more important consideration. It's the software that we have to know about, develop, and be able to use. But the fact of the matter is that you only get at the software via the hardware. The hardware is like a door you have to get through in order to get to the golden apple on the other side. The hardware is relatively least important, and that's why it's fairly easy to make a decision about hardware. The technology is also changing very rapidly. If we were to wait for the perfect configuration, we would be waiting forever, and I wasn't prepared to do that.

So we come to the question of how we made the decision about the hardware configuration. We travelled to different jurisdictions, including Utah, Dallas, and San Francisco; we corresponded and communicated by telephone with other jurisdictions, including British Columbia, Ontario, Minnesota, West Virginia; and we had reference to knowledgeable people in the university community, particularly the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary. In consideration of all that input, we arrived at a list of important considerations.

One of them was the current availability of software. While we want to develop our own software eventually, we want to begin by using a machine for which there is already a lot of software. We want to be able to take what is currently available on the shelf as an interim measure. The second consideration was what is called the upward compatibility of hardware. As improvements are made, older models should be compatible with the more recent models. The third was the versatility of the machine itself. The fourth was its reliability. In consideration of those four elements particularly, the decision was made that we would adopt what is referred to as the Apple standard or the Apple format.

Having made that decision on the basis of the criteria I earlier listed, there are only two suppliers. One of them is Apple Canada and one is Bell and Howell, which basically buys its computer from Apple and puts it in a different case. We received written proposals from both Apple Canada and Bell and Howell. Hon. members will recall that both those written proposals were tabled in the Legislative Assembly last fall, and are available for the information of the public. The fact of the matter is that the proposal we received from Bell and Howell was more cost effective than the proposal we received from Apple Canada. On that basis, we entered into a contract with Bell and Howell. Without going into detail, I want to repeat, as I have on other occasions, that the price we received from Bell and Howell is cost competitive with any other offer that has been described in this province. There's no question about that.

We're going to offer a 48K Bell and Howell computer with single disc drive and an 11-inch Panasonic color monitor for \$2,518. I invite you to compare that price with any other information being circulated to school systems or to others in the province. In addition to that,

and on an optional basis, an integer basic card, a clock calendar card, and an extended warranty will be available. In addition to that, our agreement with Bell and Howell provides an in-service component available to the purchasers of these machines, and authoring and program packages.

I said a moment ago that, relatively speaking, the hardware was the least important consideration. With the Apple technical standard, we will begin to evaluate existing educational software or courseware in this fiscal year. We'll take what's on the market and evaluate it to see how well it conforms to our expectations for this province. However, that is an interim measure, and in the not too distant future we expect to be in the position of being able to encourage the development within this province of educational courseware tailored to correspond to our own curriculum.

In-service: we are having discussion with representatives of the universities and the colleges for the promotion of summer, winter, and intersession courses which would be available for students going into the Faculty of Education. We also want to provide the same range of courses for those who wish to return to the university or college campus for in-service education. In addition to that, both on the basis of our own resources and as a result of our agreement with Bell and Howell, specialists will be going to schools throughout the province to provide in-service to teachers in the smaller communities and, in some cases, right in the school where they teach.

With respect to both software and in-service, I'd like to comment about another concern that has been expressed: that the configuration we purchased, the hardware we purchased, is too sophisticated, too rich for the needs of the schools. If, for example, we are concerned with teaching computer literacy to kids in grade 2, our configuration is too rich for that single task. The fact of the matter is, however, that we didn't choose the configuration for that single task. We chose it to be suitable for a wide range of tasks within the school system, from grades 1 to 12, and we chose it to be useful for some tasks that don't directly relate to the child in the classroom. We would like to have a computer available in Wainwright or St. Paul, which an enthusiastic teacher could use early in the morning, at lunch time, or after school, first of all to teach himself or herself the operation of that computer and, secondly, to learn how to program.

If we want to get into software, it's a real bootstrapping operation. We have to take advantage of the potential offered by teachers throughout the province. One way we take advantage of that is by making available to those teachers in as many schools as possible, a good piece of hardware they can use for more sophisticated applications than simply drill and practice of arithmetic with grade 2 children, or teaching basic computer literacy. With this sale, we want to distribute throughout the province as many computers as possible that will be useful not only in the classroom, but for self-teaching of teachers and for enthusiastic teachers who want to push themselves in this new direction. We believe that if microcomputers are available to such teachers throughout the province, we will reap substantial dividends for it in the longer term, although all of us are going to face an upfront cost that isn't directly related to what happens in the classroom.

With respect to educational finance, I, like another hon. member, would like to commend the previous administration, because when the School Foundation Program Fund was established in 1960-61, it was undoubtedly

ly a model for educational finance in North America. I have no hesitation in saying that. However, 20 years and changes in the nature of the community reveal that we have to make changes in the educational finance plan. Some of these changes may not be significant when we get right down to them. Some of them will be more significant. The time has come for a major review, but the need for a major review does not detract from the fact that 20 years ago, that plan was a model for North America.

In conducting the review, the government is committed to the idea of equity of opportunity for every child in the province, whether they live in Edmonton or the smallest community, whether they attend a large or small school. We have already demonstrated our commitment to the idea of equity by establishing certain programs that have been very, very helpful: the small jurisdiction grant, the small schools grant, the declining enrolment grant, and the supplementary requisition equalization fund. The establishment of those programs demonstrates that this government is committed to equity of opportunity. The operation of the review demonstrates that we recognize that with the passage of time, even the best of programs needs to be reviewed and improved on, in the light of changing circumstances.

The review of the educational finance plan brings us face to face with what I was talking about last night when I referred to change. Mr. Hyland has been the advocate of a small community of people in Aden valley, down against the American border. They have seven children under the age of 6. The closest Canadian school is 75 minutes away, one-way on an express bus, and there's an American school 15 miles across the border. There's a community of parents who say: we will not put a 6-year-old child on a bus for two and a half hours every day, in order to go to school in Foremost. I have to tell you that I agree with them. The fact of the matter is that you cannot solve the problem of providing an education in Aden valley, if you're going to insist on doing it the way we have in the past. For Aden valley there has to be a new way of providing education that will respond to the interests of those parents and children, and we are going to find it.

The same is true in a community like Two Hills. Sometimes the problems of educational finance are related not to the circumstances of the community, but to the circumstances of artificial boundaries imposed by units of government and changes of enrolment within those boundaries. The hon. Mr. Batiuk knows that for five or six years, the county of Two Hills has been experiencing a decline in enrolment that has been 5 to 7 or 8 per cent per year. You can't treat Two Hills in the same way you treat some of the other counties that exist south or east of Edmonton, very large units with a very different economic base.

With respect to the educational review, I think I already recognized the contribution of the Northern Alberta Development Council which, as I said, is going to be significant for us. I was asked whether I would make a commitment to an early response when this report has been received by the government. I can make a commitment of an early response. I can't make the commitment as to what that response will be, but I do not believe in having things sit on my desk. I am sure all my colleagues would support me in saying that when we receive that report, we will attend to it quickly because we consider it important.

With respect to established program financing, the fact

of the matter is that it has a negligible impact on the operation of the basic education system. It has a massive impact on the operation of the postsecondary system, but virtually none on our operations. However, it is a good signal of what might be the federal government's intentions with respect to some of their other programs that are important to us. I think of the bilingualism in education agreement. The federal government, as is their habit, financially encouraged all provinces of Canada to begin a certain kind of programming. The provinces got into it, and when we were all solidly involved, the federal government said: now we're going to stop our financial support, or at least limit it. In 1981, against a claim of \$4,085 million, we will receive a payment of \$2,267 million from the federal government. In other words, last year there's a shortfall of almost 50 per cent against their contribution. That tendency is going to get worse. That's the kind of problem we face.

I should say, though, that Albertans can always turn adversity or compulsion to advantage. The federal government's direction in this regard encouraged us to come up with a program by which we support language instruction wherever a sufficient number of the community would like that instruction in a language other than English. I believe it is to our credit that in Alberta today, we are providing instruction in six different languages: English, French, Ukrainian, Hebrew, German, and Cree. In addition, four more communities are exploring the possibility that instruction might be provided in their language: Italian, Chinese, Polish, and Arabic. In that respect, Mr. Chairman, this province is the undisputed leader in Canada. It is good not only for our educational system but for the community generally.

With respect to bridge financing, the comments by the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray were valid with respect to the Fort McMurray experience. But you will be pleased to hear that since Fort McMurray went through its last burst of growth, there have been a number of changes in the finance plan that I think have remedied a number of the problems Fort McMurray experienced. For example, the school buildings program has been changed in the meantime.

Apart from the changes already introduced, I don't think it would be wise to generalize a policy for bridging development in high-growth areas, because I think it's in the nature of those situations that each one is unique. Today in Edmonton, you couldn't establish a policy that would be useful to a variety of different developments in northern Alberta in the future. I think we're a lot better off responding to each of these situations on an individual basis, as we did in the Lakeland area, for example; Bonnyville, St. Paul, and Cold Lake.

The split in assessment between the public and the separate school boards: I can say it is the policy of the government to support the completely equitable treatment of separate and public school boards operating in the same community. We have made a number of significant improvements in the situation of separate school boards in the last five years, and those improvements are familiar to the hon. member. Maybe more improvements can be made, but one of our problems is that there are constitutional constraints. At some point, you are pushing against the constitutional constraints. We will push as hard as we can, relying on the best legal advice we receive. You know it is the policy of this government to push as hard as we can to achieve that equity, but obviously we're not going to push so hard as to breach the provisions of the constitution, the Alberta Act, or the

British North America Act.

With respect to a review of regulations, I agree with the concerns expressed by hon. members. In response to those concerns, we have established a committee to review all regulations of the department. I want to advise that this committee, unlike some other committees, has members from the school business officials of Alberta, the Auditor General's department, and the Provincial Treasurer's Department. So it will not be the people who made the regulations who will review whether they are necessary. The review will be conducted by the people who bear the brunt of the regulations: the school board secretary-treasurers, the Auditor General's office, and the Treasurer's office. We expect to get very valuable advice from that committee.

On behalf of the department, I would like to express my thanks to the hon. Member for Lethbridge West for his very kind comments about the operation of the regional offices. In my travels across the province, I have found that the Lethbridge regional office is typical of them all, and I believe they are providing a good and valuable service to the school boards and the electors of the province.

Mr. Hyland is undoubtedly the most dogged proponent of a better rural student transportation system.

MR. HYLAND: Because I used to drive one.

MR. KING: It must be because you have practical experience. In discussion, not only with Mr. Hyland but with others, it doesn't appear that our problem is with the formula, itself, but with the numbers we plug into the formula. In other words, desiring to make maximum use of buses is a good thing, desiring to recognize basic costs is a good thing, and desiring to recognize additional costs resulting from travel is a good thing. The formula seems to be good and equitable. The problem is with the numbers we plug into the formula. Taking Mr. Hyland's representations into consideration, I can say that I will sit down with him and with one of the staff of the department who is much more knowledgeable about busing than I, and we will review the loading factor and the ineligible radius. I can't make a commitment as to the outcome of that, but I will sit down with you and with the staff person, and you will educate me.

Northland has gone through a trying period. During that time I have appreciated, as I am sure the staff of Northland School Division has, the interest and support of the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray, the Member for Lesser Slave Lake, the Member for Peace River, and the chairman of the Northern Alberta Development Council. The thing is only going to be resolved on the basis of careful attention by concerned individuals. Northland is certainly receiving careful attention from concerned MLAs. The transitional period of two years may or may not turn out to be the right period. But it did seem important that we set a time certain for the transitional period. If you don't set a time certain, then what you call transition becomes the status quo. If, when we get close to the end of that two-year period, it turns out that more time is required, we will accommodate that. If it turns out that less time is required, then we'll move on to the next stage.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to private schools, I would like to take this opportunity to comment on our policy, because I have an announcement to make that will be important to private school operators. I think it is fair to state the policy of the provincial government in this way.

We would obviously prefer that the public educational system be sufficient to meet the educational needs of every child in the province. If we could achieve it, we would like the public system to be the means for the education of every child. But we recognize that for a variety of reasons the parents and/or the child may judge that the public system is not appropriate to the needs of the child. If they make that judgment, we support a right of choice. The policy of the government is that if the needs of the child cannot be accommodated within the public school system, we support the right of parents to exercise a choice and to arrange for the needs of their child in an alternative private school.

In support of that policy of providing choice, we also provide limited financial support. This year it is 75 per cent of the per pupil grant paid under the School Foundation Program Fund. I describe it that way first of all, because that's how it's commonly described, and that causes confusion. We are not providing support at 75 per cent of the level that public schools get, because the public schools get a lot of other grants, none of which private schools may access. What is called the 75 per cent level is actually about 45 per cent of the per pupil per annum operating grants available to a public school. So it is more correct to characterize our support as being at the 45 per cent level rather than at 75 per cent. Of course, it's important to remember as well, that that is support for operating costs only. We provide no support whatsoever for capital costs.

Earlier, my predecessor Mr. Koziak said this support would likely increase in increments of 5 per cent per year until we reached 80 per cent, at which time a study would be done of the role and effectiveness of private schools in the province. I would like to advise members today that as the result of consideration by cabinet, that study will be undertaken one year earlier — that is to say, this year — and support will remain at the 75 per cent level until such time as that report is completed and considered by the government. In other words, there will not be another 5 per cent increment next year, at least not unless the report on private schools has been completed and the government has had an opportunity to consider it.

With respect to the Alberta Heritage Learning Resources Project, arrangements have been made with a publisher for the re-publication of some of the Kanata Kits alluded to by one hon. member. Five are being re-published right now, and will be available in 18 months. If the sale of those five is successful, an additional five will be re-published subsequently.

With respect to the Rutherford scholarships, I can advise the hon. member that the department will be reviewing that circumstance with the administrators of the scholarship fund. With respect to interest costs, as a result of a number of changes that have been made, our information is that school boards are actually in a positive rather than a negative situation with respect to interest. In other words, because of the cash flow from the province to the school boards, they're getting the money in the beginning of the year more quickly than they spend it. They earn more interest on our money on deposit than they pay when they borrow money against short-term obligations.

The Alberta Correspondence School will be fully staffed by committed staff when it moves to Barrhead. There will be no question of that. I can't answer specifically the question the hon. member raised, and I'll provide that information for him.

Mr. Chairman, I believe I have covered the substantial items raised by the members. Thank you.

Agreed to:

1.01 — Minister's Office	\$250,600
1.02 — Deputy Minister's Office	\$447,105
1.03 — Finance, Statistics, and	
Legislation	\$1,984,800
1.04 — Educational Grants to	
Individuals, Organizations, and Agencies	\$710,000
1.05 — School Buildings	\$1,374,685
1.06 — Planning and Research	\$2,807,280
1.07 — Personnel Office	\$257,800
1.08 — Student Records and Computer	
Services	\$2,530,850
1.09 — Communications	\$171,505
1.010 — Field Administration Services	\$554,400
1.011 — Library Services	\$408,239
1.012 — Educational Exchange and	
Special Projects	\$194,228
Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support	
Services	\$11,691,492
2.1.1 — Provincial Contribution to the	
School Foundation Program Fund (SFPF)	\$761,625,000
2.1.2 — Supplementary Requisition	
Equalization Grants	\$26,600,000
2.1.3 to	
2.1.23 — School Regulation Grants	[\$87,458,100]
2.2 — Grants to Private Schools	\$10,273,800

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I don't wish to hold up the work of the committee, but with regard to an announcement the minister just made regarding private schools, I'd like to ask: will the 5 per cent increase which was anticipated not be made? I'd like to ask the minister if the private school people have been led to believe that in fact it would happen. If discussions have been held with them, they obviously would be pleased that the study on the private school question will be held a year earlier. I'm sure the minister is aware that those private schools which receive no capital funding at all are paying record interest rates, which has resulted in very high capital cost payments.

Would the minister entertain a consideration that they get something similar to other schools; that is, some assistance with regard to interest rates for the capital projects. That would in no way affect the operating side, but indeed continues to affect in a serious way parents who, to use the minister's words, in their judgment do not find what they should in the public school system for their children, and have opted for that other way. Is the minister in a position to comment whether he would urge the Minister of Municipal Affairs to give consideration to some assistance with regard to sheltering the interest rate?

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, I should be clear that we have increased the grant for this fiscal year by the 5 per cent that was indicated by our previous policy. Today I am giving private school operators notice of an intention of the government with respect to the fiscal year '83-84, 12 months away. They have not previously had an opportunity to discuss that with me. But I believe that in giving them 12 months' notice, there will be sufficient opportunity for such discussion to occur.

With respect to the possibility of assistance for capital construction, I would have to say that that is obviously in the hands of my colleagues in government. The policy at

the present time has been expressed that we would not broaden or extend our range of support for private schools until we had received the report of the private school study, and had a chance to consider future policy on the basis of the information contained therein.

Agreed to:

2.3 — Early Childhood Services	\$46,335,100
2.4 — Educational Opportunity Fund	\$19,310,400
2.5 — Special Assistance to School Boards	\$44,209,500
2.6 — Learning Disability Fund	\$3,867,900
Total Vote 2 — Financial Assistance to Schools	\$999,679,800
 Total Vote 3 — Regular Education Services	 \$14,778,403
 Total Vote 4 — Special Education Services	 \$14,483,838
 Department Total	 \$1,040,633,533

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

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to adjourn debate.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, I'm a little confused about what just occurred. Did we have a vote on the motion that the vote be reported?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, we agreed to the motion.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, there is still time. The vote was not taken. I rose before the vote was called.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. I'm sorry. I didn't get the question of the hon. Member for Clover Bar. But I didn't call the final to see if anybody was opposed, so we can have a question if you wish.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, in light of the time, I would like to adjourn debate on the estimates of this department.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I don't believe a motion to adjourn debate is in order while we

are in committee. The hon. member is certainly free to ask a question, and to have the clock run until 5:30, or he's free to ask me to move that the committee rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again. But I believe a motion to adjourn debate in committee is out of order.

DR. BUCK: That's fine, Mr. Chairman. In that case, I'll make a speech for a minute and a half. I can ask a question, make a speech, or I can ask the Government House Leader or the Minister of Education to have the committee report, [interjections]

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. APPELBY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, before moving adjournment of the House, I would advise that tomorrow afternoon being private members' day, the business will be private members' resolutions, followed by public Bills other than government Bills. Because of the annual dinner with the Alberta Teachers' Association, the House will not sit tomorrow evening. The House will continue with consideration of the estimates of the Department of Education and the Department of the Environment in Committee of Supply on Friday morning.

DR. BUCK: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Can the Acting Government House Leader indicate what the third estimate might be, just in case we finish Education and the Department of the Environment?

MR. KING: Yes. It will be followed by Energy and Natural Resources and, on Monday, by Executive Council.

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