

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

Title: **Thursday, April 7, 1983 2:30 p.m.**

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm tabling the annual report of the Alberta Securities Commission for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1982.

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

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**PRAYERS**

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through to the members of the Assembly, 75 very bright and enthusiastic grade 8 students from St. Cecilia junior high school in my constituency. We had a good chat a little earlier this afternoon in the Carillon Room. They're here to see their Legislature and government in action. I ask them to rise and receive the very warm traditional welcome of the House.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**head: PRESENTING REPORTS BY
STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

MR. STILES: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83, I have taken under consideration the petitions for private Bills which have been received by the Assembly and wish to report that all those petitions have complied with Standing Order 77, with the exception of the following petitions: (5) the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute Amendment Act, 1983; (10) Alexander Le Fleur Minerals Title Act; (11) Edmonton Canadian Insurance Company Amendment Act, 1983; (13) Koney Island Sporting Company (Limited) Continuation Act.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I know that you and other members of the Assembly are very familiar with the work of the women's institutes throughout Alberta. Today it's my privilege to introduce to you and to other members of the Assembly the Westbrook Women's Institute, a group of eight citizens from the area north of Cochrane. Their group leader is Ellen Buckler. Would they please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the Private Bills Committee has had under consideration the question of those petitions which did not comply with Standing Order 77 and recommends to the Assembly that the provisions of Standing Order 77 with respect to the deadline for the completion of advertising be waived, to permit those Bills to be dealt with once the proper advertising has been completed.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, today it is my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly 20 grade 6 students from the Youngstown elementary school, with their teacher Mr. Hetherington. Mr. Speaker, the students came well armed with questions for me, and one of those had to do with how many volumes are in the library. They'll be closely watching the question period this afternoon. I ask that they rise and be given the usual welcome of the House.

In addition, the Private Bills Committee has taken under consideration the petitions that were not dealt with by the Legislative Assembly in 1982, solely on the grounds of the dissolution of the Legislature prior to the fall sitting. The committee recommends to the Assembly that the application fee provided for in Standing Order 78, paid by the following petitioners in 1982, be refunded to them: the Alberta Wheat Pool, the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute, and Calgary Jewish Centre. I request the concurrence of the Assembly in these recommendations.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**Court Decision**

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur in the recommendations? Do you wish to deal with the matter now or at another occasion?

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the hon. Attorney General. It's with respect to the administration of justice, and it concerns the well-publicized Neustaedter case. Can the Attorney General outline to the Assembly the policy of the government with respect to commenting on people who have been acquitted by various courts? In particular, can the Attorney General advise the Assembly why, in late December [last] year, the hon. minister referred to Mr. Neustaedter as a person who had committed an indictable offence, after acquittal from the Alberta Court of Appeal?

HON. MEMBERS: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you all agree?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall the occasion in respect of the reference made in December 1982.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

In response to the main part of the question, comments on matters that are or have been before the courts are always a matter of some delicacy, and there are several factors involved. One is that there can be no lack of respect for the result as determined by the court. Another is that if the case is one that is in the process of appeal at the time . . . In my view, there is a period of time between a trial decision and an appeal decision when the matter is not before the court, so commenting on what has already occurred can be done within proper limits, and I don't think the limits are very restrictive. But once a matter is under appeal and is again before the courts, then I

MR. STILES: Mr. Speaker, the Private Bills Committee has made a further recommendation, in which I do not presently seek the concurrence of the Assembly as it should probably be dealt with as a motion on notice. Standing Order 77 be amended by striking out the words "commencing not earlier than eight weeks before the opening day of the session of the Legislature at which the petition is to be presented" and substituting "commencing not earlier than January 1 in the year which the petition is to be presented."

consider the matter to be one upon which only a very limited amount of comment should be made — perhaps the known grounds of appeal, perhaps the general thrust of an argument, but never what a court should or should not do.

The references are also important if they involve individuals, of course, and that is raised by the hon. leader's question. In commenting on individuals, I think the most important test would be to deal with findings of fact, which are available to the public and are reported in any event, and perhaps give some explanation of any legal principles that may be involved.

Mr. Speaker, I should conclude what is really quite a general question by noting that it does vary in specific cases, the circumstances of a specific case. Indeed, although we would that it were not so, sometimes the amount of public attention attracted by a case also, of necessity, affects the extent to which comment is made.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I might just indicate to the hon. Attorney General that the letter I'm referring to is with respect to December 30. Out of courtesy to members, I table with the Assembly three copies of some background material on this information.

Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the hon. minister is a follow-up to the first, with respect to the general policy. Has the Attorney General issued officers of his department any instructions on the question of commenting unfavorably on decisions by the courts, specifically with respect to the Neustaedter case? On January 26, 1982, we have the acting assistant deputy referring to Judge McDonald's decision as "ill considered". Does that fall within the guidelines set out by the minister?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, there are guidelines of necessity. There's a certain amount of flexibility, and there are no guidelines in writing. There are the ordinary guidelines of prudence and common sense in respect of what should be said about matters involving the courts. I have mentioned the reasons for that in the answer to the first question, and I'm sure those reasons are fully and well respected.

I might add that I do know a considerable amount about the circumstances of the Neustaedter case. It was certainly a very controversial one. There were a number of issues, which were widely publicized. Numbers of representations were made to me, including representations from Members of Parliament and other interested parties as to what should be done in the Neustaedter case. In respect of the reference the hon. leader raised in both his first and second questions about a comment I made about a person having been convicted, I think it's perfectly clear that in the Court of Queen's Bench, he was. Of course, that was changed on appeal. So I think any remark that was made would have to be taken in that context.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Would the minister then correct the impression left in the letter of December 30 that I referred to in the first question, in view of the fact that Mr. Neustaedter was acquitted by the appellate court and then the Supreme Court of Canada upheld that innocence, and one now must presume that he is innocent? I refer specifically to the comment in the hon. minister's letter that he "committed the indictable offence".

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would be much assisted by having the letter before me. In reading from it, I wonder if the hon. leader is actually quoting a portion of the charge that was laid in the original case, which may well have been quoted in some detail in my letter. That would be part of the court record, of course, and any person can quote that if he wishes. I will be glad to see the specific correspondence the hon. leader raised. I wrote many, many letters in respect of the Neustaedter case, and received many.

In one respect, I think the hon. leader may have overstated the case when referring to the role of the Supreme Court of Canada. My legal officers made an application for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada, and that leave to appeal was denied. There is a suitable extent of discretion on the part of the Supreme Court of Canada as to which cases they do hear. Therefore, they as a court did not consider the question of the circumstances of the particular case. They concluded only that it need not go beyond the Alberta Court of Appeal.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, with respect to concern about what might appear to be unequal application of justice. Can the minister advise the Assembly why no decision was made to lay charges against what Judge McDonald as well as the Alberta Court of Appeal described as a vigilante group who, according to Judge McDonald's judgment, "committed in my opinion at least six criminal charges"? Why were no charges then laid by the Attorney General's Department against these people, given the fact that charges were laid against Mr. Neustaedter?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I believe the circumstances of the case require some elaboration. The number of people — a half dozen or eight, as I recall — who were involved in a disagreement with Mr. Neustaedter were involved in that disagreement because Mr. Neustaedter was an overholding tenant on the property of one of them and had not complied with a court order to leave. The people who supported the landowner in moving some furniture out of the house Mr. Neustaedter was overholding were unarmed. Mr. Neustaedter was armed, waving a loaded shotgun. In those circumstances, we came to the conclusion that any charges laid against the other citizens would fail.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. My question with respect to this issue is: what evaluation does the Attorney General's Department give an assertion of an honorable judge of the court as well as the Court of Appeal, in which the term "vigilante group" was used in both cases, and specifically, in the case of Judge McDonald's decision, the assertion that criminal offences had been committed? What evaluation is given by the Attorney General's Department of what one can only describe as damning information, in the judgment of a judge?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the information available is what would become evidence in the case, and that is: what the circumstances are, who the witnesses are, and what the witnesses are likely to testify to. I can assure the hon. leader that in all cases of criminal prosecutions and, the nature of the system being what it is, in the more serious ones, even greater attention is given to the time and investigation necessary to be sure that a matter is being properly made the subject of a charge before it goes

ahead.

But it all really depends upon whether or not, in the interests of justice, any charge should be made. One of the interests of justice is whether or not a charge could ever succeed. It was the view of certainly more than one — in such a case, I would think that up to four senior legal counsel examined the evidence and the police investigation. In order that it will be dispassionate and assure the due administration of justice, the policy is very rigorous and is very closely and conscientiously applied by the legal officers. If it is our belief that a charge will surely fail, then despite other comments that may have been made, having regard to what we would know to be the evidence that could be presented, a charge should not be laid in circumstances where we know it could not possibly succeed.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary on this.

MR. NOTLEY: In addition to being able to confirm whether any investigation was undertaken of the complaint that the RCMP in the area had been forewarned by the group referred to by the appellate court as vigilantes and that the RCMP had also failed to respond to several calls for help from the Neustaedter family, is the Attorney General able to confirm whether he has any information relating to this complaint and whether or not it has been investigated by the department?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I do not have information in respect of that particular complaint. There have certainly been differences between some members of the RCMP in the area and Mr. Neustaedter, relating to matters which I cannot tell from the hon. leader's question whether they really relate to the same thing. There is no difficulty ever about inquiring into the conduct of the police in any situation. I would be glad to look into that matter further. It is no doubt in respect of an event which occurred a number of months ago, and my guess would be that there would be an available report on it.

Hospital User Fees

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, my second question is to the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It's with respect to the subject of user fees and also with respect to reports that the minister had indicated that some Albertans are using Alberta hospitals as baby-care facilities, I believe. Having perused the hospital utilization report and not finding that observation in it, is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly what concrete evidence the government has discovered to back that assertion?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd invite the hon. member to visit some of the places I have and speak to the people involved. I made those comments in response to some members of the media yesterday, who asked me to comment on examples of abuses of the hospital system.

Hon. members can visit just about any nursing home in the province and find several examples of aged parents who have been put there by families because the families no longer wish to have the responsibility of looking after those people. The same thing applies in most of our active hospitals, where you'll find aged parents waiting to

be discharged but no family members willing to take them. I've also had cases reported to me by employees of hospitals, particularly in the smaller rural ones, where families will arrive with the kids on a weekend, ask for them to be admitted into emergency on Saturday night, and come back on Monday morning, after the party is over, to pick them up.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In view of the revelations discovered by the minister, is the government in a position to outline to the Assembly why this information was not picked up by the Hospital Utilization Committee commissioned by the government to examine the utilization rates in Alberta hospitals?

MR. RUSSELL: The commission dealt with utilization rates and profiles of physician practices, occupancy levels, et cetera. Mr. Speaker, I don't know to what extent they delved into the details as to why some beds may or may not have been occupied by patients who were there because of human interest or family reasons. But in point of fact, the circumstances I have described are there, and I repeat that any hon. member of the Legislature can visit such places and talk to those people.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Beyond the personal visits the minister made, has any report been commissioned or any statistical evidence compiled, other than opinion, which the minister can share in this Legislature to back the assertions made outside the Legislature?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker, and the reason for that is obvious. I've had telephone calls and visits in confidence by employees of various hospitals throughout the province, who have reported these circumstances to me.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

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

MR. NOTLEY: In examining the contingency plans of the government of Alberta, has the minister been in a position to ascertain the legal standing of Albertans, should the federal government insist that this province is in breach of the agreement? I realize that's a hypothetical question, but what isn't a hypothetical question is whether or not the government has examined the options, undertaken a review of the risk, and whether the risk includes the possibility that should Ottawa say no, Albertans would then have to pay full hospital fees in other provinces because of the portability of the agreement under the federal legislation?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker, the possibility of that happening is very remote. It just wouldn't happen.

Young Offenders Legislation

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Solicitor General is with regard to the requirements under the Young Offenders Act for 16- and 17-year-olds. Could the minister indicate what plans are in place at the present time for the Alberta government to take the responsibility, and has the minister designated persons or

a person to take care of the administration that will be required by the province of Alberta?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I expect to be making a statement on matters involving the Young Offenders Act, perhaps in a few days.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Would that statement that will be made to the Assembly include an outline of the facilities that will be required to house the 16- and 17-year-olds who may have to be housed for a period of up to three years?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, not at this time.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Will the minister announce details with regard to the various programs that will be entailed in carrying on the Young Offenders Act in the province in Alberta, such as the pre-trial diversion programs?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, there is a great amount of work yet to be done with regard to implementation of the federal legislation, and there are a number of people working on it. Obviously, a statement at this time could not go into those sorts of details.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. Will the department or private groups in the province be doing studies with regard to implications of the Young Offenders Act? And would those studies, if any, be tabled in this Legislature?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any studies at the present time. Over the last 10 years, of course, a number of studies have been done by groups that are interested in young offender problems. I'm sure a great amount of material is presently available.

Municipal Services Legislation

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs when the cabinet plans to proclaim the Regional Municipal Services Act?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I was recently asked that same question at the meeting of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties. I replied there that it is my intention to reach a conclusion that would be brought to the attention of my colleagues in cabinet by the end of June. A few meetings have been set up that I would like to conclude before reaching final decisions.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. What growth figures were used when determining the viability of an Edmonton regional municipal services commission?

MR. SPEAKER: It would seem to me that unless the minister happens to have some general information on the topic, that would be something suitable for the Order Paper.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, I'll go on to another supplementary, then. In light of the government's enunciated plan to limit the growth of the outlying communities to 25 per cent of the total growth area, does this mean that a

member of the Edmonton regional municipal services commission might expect substantial increases in the cost of providing commission services?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I imagine I will be receiving comments along that line from the people who will be meeting with me. I'll be interested in hearing those comments, then analysing them.

MR. PURDY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the establishment of the Edmonton regional municipal services commission force members to adhere to the regional development and growth patterns as set out in the government report dated June 8, which is a report and decision concerning the Edmonton annexation application?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I think what must be kept in mind is the split in population the hon. member refers to, 75:25, is in fact historic information. It reflects the growth of population within the Edmonton metropolitan area and is a carry-forward.

I would be concerned if the approach to that type of concept were too ironclad. I would hope the question posed in the House this afternoon wouldn't suggest, as some have suggested in their objection to the split, that actual noses would have to be counted in communities to make sure that there wasn't one more than provided for in the regional plan. There is no intention whatsoever of having that type of strict interpretation on that guideline.

MR. PURDY: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the Edmonton regional municipal services commission was actually established before the 75:25 concept through the annexation order of June 1981, is the minister considering scrapping the whole idea of a regional services commission?

MR. KOZIAK: No I'm not, Mr. Speaker.

Library Grants

MR. FISCHER: Mr. Speaker, I would like clarification from the Minister of Culture, with regard to indexing library grants for the 1983-84 fiscal year.

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, at this time of restraint, there are sufficient dollars in our budget for libraries but insufficient dollars for indexing our library grants.

MR. FISCHER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister explain to the House why this policy is not being continued?

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, this is not a policy; this has been a practice since 1978, when the financial picture in Alberta was quite different than it is today.

MR. FISCHER: Mr. Speaker, I would also like clarification from the Minister of Culture on the municipal finance report with regard to block funding.

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs if he'd like to comment on that question.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, we were having a little subcommittee meeting. [laughter] I caught the block funding aspect of the question but not the former part of it. Perhaps that could be amplified upon, and I could respond further.

MR. FISCHER: Clarification from the Minister of Culture on the municipal finance report with regard to block funding.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, that wasn't the block I was thinking of.

As hon. members are aware, the report is public. The Urban Municipalities Association and the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties, as well as the association of improvement districts, have this matter under consideration. I have taken the position that it would probably be better for me to await the final recommendations from those groups before comment.

MR. FISCHER: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the libraries receive any other funding from the Department of Culture in the 1983-84 fiscal year?

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The library branch has signed letters of agreement with 11 of the major libraries in the province of Alberta for information services, and in turn they will be paid for any services given to all the libraries throughout Alberta.

Calgary Olympics — Ski Site

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Recreation and Parks. Can the minister indicate if he has had any discussions with the Calgary Olympic committee and if the minister and that committee have had any discussions with the International Olympic Committee as to site selection for the Olympic games that will be coming to Alberta?

MR. TRYNCHY: Not recently, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate if any concern has been expressed by the International Olympic Committee as to the deadline for a site selection for the downhill being awfully close to being an irreversible condition?

MR. TRYNCHY: No, Mr. Speaker, I haven't had any comments or discussions with the International Olympic Committee. My understanding is that the Olympic committee in Calgary has stated that if we proceed within the next year, there is still sufficient time to have all the facilities ready for the 1988 Olympics.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Premier. I am sure the Premier would like to answer this, because there have been some rumors around about the fact that there was some coercion used in the selection of Mount Allan as a possible site. Can the Premier indicate to the Assembly if there's been any directive by the Premier or any member of cabinet to "use Mount Allan or else"? Can the Premier enlarge upon that statement?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't have to enlarge upon it; I can just advise the hon. member that that never occurred.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister responsible for — Don, what is yours? — Public Lands and Wildlife. Can the minister indicate what studies his department has done as to the alpine sheep at the Mount Allan site?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, the department has drawn up maps showing exactly where the habitat is: where they stay, where they winter. All that information has been given to the committee working on the project.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a short supplementary. Can the Minister of Recreation and Parks indicate if there has been any directive or any plans by the government to build an alpine village at the base of Mount Allan?

MR. TRYNCHY: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. I don't have any information on an alpine village at the base of Mount Allan. I know we have plans for an alpine village site at Ribbon Creek. That's been ongoing, and I've discussed that in my discussions with the House on Kananaskis County. That's the only site I'm aware of.

Family and Community Support Services

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Would the minister indicate if at present there are any guidelines establishing criteria to be met by groups funded through family and community support services that exclude ethnic senior citizens' groups from receiving such funds?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, there are no guidelines that would exclude such groups of senior citizens. However, some weeks ago the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo brought to my attention that there may be some confusion on the parts of several senior citizens' groups in Calgary. As a result of that, we are making some changes in the family and community support services handbook, and all holders of that handbook will be notified of the changes to remove any confusion that might exist. But really there is no intention of any exclusions whatsoever.

MR. LEE: Another supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister have any intention to advise not only municipalities but those senior citizens' groups that have perceived that they were excluded from application because of their membership, that they may now apply in the future?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the problem seems to be a local one in Calgary. Since the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo has brought it to my attention, certainly the copy of *Hansard* could be submitted to those groups he's concerned about. If any concern exists elsewhere, however, we'd be happy to hear about it. If there is, we would let these groups know. Certainly all the holders of this handbook will receive copies of the amendments.

Social Allowance — Senior Citizens

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Could the minister indicate how many senior citizens are affected by the recent decision to put through the offset for senior citizens when the federal guaranteed income supplement benefits are increased?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. member, questions in Oral Question Period really should not deal with statistics. Those are ordinarily sought by questions on the Order Paper.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, then. I'll ask it a different way. If I may help the minister out, the Edmonton Social Planning Council indicates that 3,500 senior citizens are receiving the allowance. [interjections] Settle down puppets, you'll get your chance again.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MARTIN: The minister's new policy calls for a personal review by social workers. In view of the facts that the minister has said that they will have to do this and that we're cutting back in social services, how does he think the social workers will have the time to accomplish this?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the new policy for the changes in social allowance as it would affect senior citizens — the numbers that I recall are much fewer than the ones the member refers to. In fact, they're about one-fifth that number, if I recall correctly.

As I previously pointed out in the House, the change is to remove an anomaly that arose a number of years ago. The changes that are in place will correct that anomaly. Also, as I pointed out, the social workers will contact the individuals affected to reassess their needs, to make sure that there's no senior citizen who will be receiving benefits less than what their needs may be.

Certainly I recognize the heavy case load that many social allowance workers have. We have taken steps — and it's in the budget — to assist the social workers with increased assistance in terms of clerical and technical kinds of assistance. So I've no reason to think that they will not be able to carry out their responsibilities.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Can the minister indicate whether he or the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs have had any discussions with Madam Begin about the effect on them? Was there any discussion before they went ahead with this?

DR. WEBBER: There were no discussions with the federal minister. As far as I can see, there was no need for any discussions with the federal minister on that particular point. The only change that required any communication with the federal minister was the one involving unemployment insurance changes or adjustments. I have contacted the federal minister responsible, Mr. Axworthy, and I've not heard back from him.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Is the minister saying there's no danger of any retaliation by the federal government with regard to this policy?

DR. WEBBER: None that I'm aware of, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Can the minister outline why the provincial government will not only reduce payments to Alberta senior citizens as a way of cutting into the deficit but will be using federal increases in benefit payments as a way of reducing provincial expenditures? Is this a deliberate government policy?

MR. NOTLEY: Shame, shame.

DR. WEBBER: I really don't follow the question the hon. member is asking. If he's referring to the specific adjustments and changes that have related to senior citizens, I would like to point out once again that no changes will occur that will prevent any senior citizen from receiving benefits less than their needs.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the hon. Minister of Housing advise the House if he has experienced any unusual holdups with regard to the senior citizen home renovation program announced recently?

MR. SPEAKER: I have a little difficulty connecting the supplementary with the main question.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Could the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health advise the House if he is prepared to proceed this spring with that exciting new Bill 26, the Widows' Pension Act? [interjections]

DR. WEBBER: I agree with the hon. Member for Lethbridge West that it is an exciting Bill. The intention is that the program would begin on May 1, 1983.

School Year

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Education. In view of the continuing publicity surrounding certain statements pertaining to extending the school year and school day, I wonder if the minister could identify the sources of these particular proposals and what advantages, if any, are seen by the proposers in these proposals?

MR. KING: To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, the suggestion originates with some members of the public, of whom the hon. Member for Lethbridge West would be an excellent example, in that he recently asked me a question in the Legislature about the proposition. To repeat my answer at that time, the proposition that the school year or school day should be lengthened is not under consideration by the Department of Education, and I am not the one who advocated it. In response to a question, I did say that if there was interest in that proposition among the public, then it would be one of the issues considered in the context of the review of the School Act. But the interest apparently comes from the public and, as servants of the public, we will of course respond to their interest.

MR. JONSON: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Do these proposals have any relation to the possible need to accommodate the scheduling of possible future mandatory exams?

MR. KING: In answer to a question that was earlier put to me by the media, I responded that that was a possibility. But again I'd have to say that the department had not considered lengthening the school year as a part of the evaluation program. If a reporter, or indeed any other member of the public, makes that suggestion to me, it's one I'm prepared to consider.

Court Decision
(continued)

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Attorney General. It's a follow-up to a question I asked earlier with respect to the Neustaedter case. The minister indicated that in laying charges, the government has to determine whether or not, in the view of the department, a conviction is possible. However, my question is not with respect to the opinion of whether or not a conviction is possible by the department but the policy with respect to allowing an individual to swear an information, and specifically whether it is still the position of the government of Alberta that the department would exercise its discretion to stay any proceedings should Mr. Neustaedter swear such an information.

MR. SPEAKER: It really seems to me to be a very hypothetical question: if an information is laid, will the department stay the proceedings?

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, then I won't make it hypothetical at all. My question is: is the outline of the government's position on this case, dated March 16, 1982, in which the regional agent indicates that a stay will be sought, still the position of the government?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I missed just a little part of the detail the hon. leader was giving in referring to a specific direction of one of the Crown agents in respect of a stay, but I can certainly answer as to the policy. I will try not to do so at too great length, but it is a subject which is steeped in history and in the traditions of the administration of justice, something which has behind it centuries of tradition in the role of the Crown in regard to criminal prosecutions.

The hon. leader asked, for example, whether the government made a determination in respect of a prosecution. The government never does that, Mr. Speaker. A prosecution is conducted by the Crown, a different entity from the government. There is not a role for the government as such in respect of whether or not an individual should be prosecuted. It's an historic role performed, perhaps in the abstract sense on behalf of Her Majesty but by law officers of the Crown. The principal law officer who has the responsibility is myself, and I make decisions in that role. I make them as holding the office in a government, but not because of any approach the government has to prosecution policy. As a matter of fact, prosecutions are never discussed among colleagues. I just add that; it should be obvious. In looking at the history of it, I think hon. members know that must be so. Otherwise criminal law becomes a political matter, and that can't be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, that part of the answer is relevant to the second part of the question. What is an information, when sworn by an individual who doesn't happen to be a peace officer or some other person employed in the administration of justice? It is a document which comes to the Crown, alleging certain circumstances but not based upon a right that that individual has to pre-empt the Crown's rights in respect of prosecutions. So whatever the origin of it, whether it be from a peace officer or from a private citizen, that information is in effect the property of the Crown. In the interests of the administration of justice — I say that with emphasis — that type of determination as to whether or not a matter should proceed has to be made with consistent guidelines being

applied and the same rules of application in each case. There's only way to do that, and that is to give the responsibility to the Crown.

I conclude simply by saying that those individual determinations are normally made by Crown counsel, Mr. Speaker, not by me personally. The more serious and complicated the case, the more senior the Crown counsel who will make that determination. Obviously some cases come to me, out of a quarter of a million cases a year, not all of them.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary.

MR. NOTLEY: Then is the Attorney General saying that it is very rare, almost never, that an information can in fact be laid by an individual, which is then followed up by the Attorney General's Department in the name of the Crown, and that the staying is a process which invariably occurs? I want to be clear on the position of the Crown on this matter.

MR. CRAWFORD: That's a very important question, Mr. Speaker, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify it. The complaint or information filed by an individual may well proceed to prosecution, but it's the assessment of that and the evidence that is available in respect of it, no doubt after investigation — it's the proposed charge and the evidence available in respect of it that is assessed. What I'm underlining for hon. members is that a completely dispassionate view is taken of that, no matter what the source. So given appropriate circumstances, a stay may be entered as well, no matter what the source, whether a person made a complaint originally in his own capacity or whether it originated with a peace officer or some other person associated with the minister of justice.

Teachers' Retirement Fund

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my one question to the Minister of Education regards a commitment the minister made last May, with regard to amending the Teachers' Retirement Fund Act to accommodate teachers who now have their pensions based on the years of service after age 30 rather than their total years of service. I wonder if the minister intends to bring that amendment into this spring Legislature.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe an amendment to legislation is required in order to achieve the end that is suggested by the hon. member. I think a change in the regulations would be sufficient, and I have not at any time made any commitment that the regulations would be changed. I have made a commitment to the Retired Teachers' Association of the ATA that I would put forward a proposal to my colleagues, and that is in the course of being done at the present time. I have advised the Retired Teachers' Association of the ATA that that is being done.

At the same time, the member has to appreciate that what is being proposed is a retroactive change in a program and that this retroactive change, not available to many members of the retired public, would be made available to approximately 950. So while I believe it is worth putting forward, I think we should be aware that it contemplates a retroactive change in a program and that it contemplates a change which would benefit only a very small number of the retired citizens of the province. That

puts some weight of responsibility on all of us to consider its implications carefully.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

129. Mr. Martin asked the government the following question:
- (1) What is the present average case load serviced by on-line social workers employed by the Department of Social Services and Community Health at its district offices maintained under the department's social services branch?
 - (2) What is the present average case load serviced by on-line social workers employed by the Department of Social Services and Community Health, in each case, at the following district offices: Brooks, the average of the seven Calgary offices (excluding the family maintenance and court services office), Drayton Valley, the average of the six Edmonton offices (excluding the family maintenance and court services office), Fort McMurray, Grande Cache, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, and Wetaskiwin?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I propose that Question No. 129 be amended by replacing "social workers" with "a) social allowance workers, and, b) child welfare workers" in both parts (1) and (2) of the question. I have copies of the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: I suppose the House, in its wisdom, may amend anything. But I'm somewhat unfamiliar with a process whereby a question may be amended by the House. It seems to me that we amend motions, but the question is not of the nature of a motion. Perhaps the matter could be dealt with more orthodoxally, if that's a good word, by having the minister suggest to the hon. member that if he'd like to amend his question in that way, the minister may answer it.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, just on a point of clarification, I agreed with the hon. minister on this matter before.

MR. HORSMAN: On a point of order relative to this particular issue, if I may. There is some concern on the part of the government relative to the nature of the question in view of the fact that it may require a lengthy reply. That being the case, we have looked at the rules regarding the subject of questions. It may very well be that appropriate amendments to the rules may be in order, in order to properly deal with them in the future. The concern the government has relates to Standing Order 34.

If a question is of such a nature that, in the opinion of the minister who is to furnish the reply, such reply should be in the form of a return, and the minister states that there is no objection to laying such return upon the Table of the Assembly, the minister's statement shall, unless otherwise ordered by the Assembly, be deemed an Order of the Assembly to that effect . . .

What has occurred with regard to a number of questions is that they have been phrased in such a way that it is not possible to answer in exactly that way.

From time to time, ministers have expressed concern about that. The difficulty arises, not so much that there's no record in *Hansard* — there is a record in *Hansard* — but in Votes and Proceedings, the questions then appear by way of orders for returns. That's the difficulty we have been encountering. While *Hansard* says one thing, the Votes and Proceedings say another. I just wanted to bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, and that of members of the Assembly, the reasons for suggesting amendments to questions until such time as we're able to clarify this matter and have it perhaps phrased more properly in *Standing Orders* in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: In other words, I take it that there is agreement of the Assembly that regardless of whether or not it may be unusual, we're going to adopt a custom, pending possible revision of *Standing Orders*, whereby a minister may move that a question be amended. On that footing, the hon. minister has made such a motion.

[Motion carried]

152. Mr. R. Speaker asked the government the following question:
A full status report on development and operation of the Electric Energy Marketing Agency, showing:
- (1) progress in establishment of fair and equitable wholesale power rates for Albertans,
 - (2) progress in assuring the most efficient use of power sources throughout Alberta,
 - (3) progress in the reduction of the rate of increase to Alberta consumers in their electric energy costs,
 - (4) progress in development of strategy for purchase of power from outside Alberta,
 - (5) progress in development of strategy to allow the continued operation of utilities companies in the most efficient manner,
 - (6) number of persons employed to administer and operate the Electric Energy Marketing Agency,
 - (7) total cost of development and operation of the Electric Energy Marketing Agency from its inception to February 28, 1983.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the government accepts Question No. 152.

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following motions for returns stand and retain their places on the Order Paper: 132, 133, 137, 138, 141, 142, 145, 148, 162, and 164.

[Motion carried]

135. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
- (1) Copies of all ministerial orders issued pursuant to section 4(a) and section 4(b) of the Hazardous Chemicals Act (R.S.A. 1980, c. H-3) since January 1, 1981;
 - (2) Copies of all "chemical control orders" issued pursuant to section 6(1) of the Hazardous Chemicals Act since January 1, 1981;
 - (3) Copies of all "emission control orders" issued pursuant to section 13 of the Clean Air Act (R.S.A. 1980, c. C-12) since January 1, 1981;

- (4) Copies of all "stop orders" issued pursuant to section 14 of the Clean Air Act since January 1, 1981;
- (5) Copies of all "water quality control orders" issued pursuant to section 14 of the Clean Water Act (R.S.A. 1980, c. C-13) since January 1, 1981;
- (6) Copies of all "stop orders" issued pursuant to section 15 of the Clean Water Act since January 1, 1981;
- (7) Copies of all "certificates of variance" issued pursuant to section 11 of the Clean Air Act since January 1, 1981;
- (8) Copies of all "certificates of variance" issued pursuant to section 11 of the Clean Water Act since January 1, 1981;
- (9) Copies of all "stop orders" issued pursuant to section 17 of the Department of the Environment Act (R.S.A. 1980, c. D-19) since January 1, 1981;
- (10) A list of all hazardous chemical spills reported to the Department of the Environment in 1981 and 1982, reported in the form employed in the return filed in response to Motion for a Return No. 132, Third Session, 19th Legislature (filed as Sessional Paper No. 132/81).

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I propose to amend part (1) by changing section 4(a) to read section 4(4)(a) and by changing section 4(b) to read section 4(4)(b), and also to amend part (10) by deleting everything following "1982".

[Motion as amended carried]

140. Mr. Notley moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
- (1) All reports delivered to Executive Council by the Member of the Legislative Assembly appointed by the government to sit on the board of directors of Syncrude Canada Limited in the fiscal years 1979-80, 1980-81, 1981-82, and 1982-83;
 - (2) A copy of all instructions, documents, reports, and other papers given by Executive Council to the Member of the Legislative Assembly appointed by the government to sit on the Syncrude Canada Limited board of directors for the purpose of delivery to the board in the fiscal years 1979-80, 1980-81, 1981-82, and 1982-83.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to Motion No. 140, I must indicate at the outset some measure of surprise at the motion having been placed on the Order Paper. While I know that the hon. Leader of the Opposition, in whose name it stands, doesn't claim to be an authority on the rules of the Legislature of the magnitude of, say, the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry, nonetheless I think it's clear to all that the specific wording entailed in Motion 140, which calls for documents delivered to Executive Council and for documents provided by Executive Council to a Member of the Legislative Assembly, is clearly the most obvious breach of the well-established traditions of parliamentary procedure.

I'd like to refer members of the Assembly specifically to rule 390 of *Beauchesne*, which deals very clearly with the matter of cabinet documents. In encouraging members to defeat this motion, as it is fully unacceptable, I would simply say that it is in clear violation of parliamentary tradition.

MR. SPEAKER: I realize that I have some responsibility for having accepted the motion for the Order Paper. I

draw to the House's attention that this is not a communication between a member, as a member, and a minister or cabinet. This is a communication by a member who holds a public position which is over and above or in addition to his responsibilities as a member. However the House is certainly at liberty to accept or reject the motion as it wishes.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, if I may. In dealing with this issue, I think it is important that we look at this particular motion, because it has an impact on other motions on the Order Paper, which have been requested to stand over.

I think it is important to indicate that government is certainly prepared to provide information relative to studies, reports, and other documents which may have been provided to the government in one way or another. It is still the intention of the government to rely upon general parliamentary procedure relative to matters which are provided to members of Executive Council, exchanged between Members of the Legislative Assembly, or exchanged between departments of the government, and in some cases as well, where such information is obtained outside of government which might otherwise have been obtained in government had it had the resources or expertise available to provide such information.

I'm speaking in support of the objection — not in support of the motion, but in support of the objections raised by my colleague the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources — to make it clear to members of the Assembly, members of the Official Opposition, and other members of the opposition that the government is quite prepared to file with members of the Assembly, and with the public, information which does not violate the rules which are laid out fairly clearly in *Beauchesne*. While not totally exhaustive in terms of the type of information which might be used by ministers or Members of the Legislative Assembly for making decisions, we think those rules in *Beauchesne* are fairly applicable to the situation in Alberta.

While I am speaking, I might give notice therefore — I think there are eight additional motions on the Order Paper which call for the production of studies, reports, and other documents of one kind or another — that it would be the intention of the government to move an appropriate amendment to each of them, perhaps next Tuesday, when we find the right wording for such an amendment to properly reflect the normal parliamentary procedure which will be followed. So I thought I might take this opportunity, giving notice to the House, that that would be the intention of the government with regard to at least eight of the remaining items on the Order Paper.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of no other member participating in the debate . . .

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, first of all I must say that I think I share with my legislative colleague the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources not quite the same grasp of the rules as our young friend from Glengarry. As I read the citation, I think he must be quoting from a different edition of *Beauchesne* than I have in front of

me.

In any event, I want to make a few observations on the motion for a return that is before the House, and urge members to support it. As I see it, this is not an interdepartmental memo; it is a request for a report, presumably prepared by a member of the Legislature undertaking certain responsibilities. I recall very well in 1975, when this Legislature discussed at some length the whole business of appointing backbenchers to various boards and commissions, how the government bent over backwards in an effort to say that this was a new form of accountability, that information would be made available, and that this particular procedure would not allow members of the government to by-pass the Legislature. As a matter of fact as I recall, in the months subsequent to that debate in 1975 — members who were here at that time will remember that the debate over that issue took some days. It was agreed that hon. members who had official capacities would in fact have to answer questions if they were posed in the Legislature.

On a number of occasions, I recall directing questions to the representative on the Syncrude board. Those oral questions were found in order, because it was agreed that if an individual member of this Assembly was going to undertake these public responsibilities, then questions could be posed. That the government now, in an effort to reduce public information, jumps through all kinds of procedural contortions in order to say: no, we can't possibly accommodate it — let them lay their cards on the table, Mr. Speaker. Let them say to the people of Alberta: we don't want to give you the information — more secretive government, more behind closed doors government. At least the public knows where things sit. But don't attempt to get *Beauchesne* to justify something which is a matter of the closed-door policy of a closed-door government.

Mr. Speaker, as far as I'm concerned, I think the motion is in order. Hon. members who are concerned about public access to public information — if we're going to have backbenchers preparing these reports, they should be answerable in the House, and the government should be accommodating. The hon. deputy House leader should be leaning over backward to show how enthusiastic he is about making this information available to the public.

So, Mr. Speaker, unless there's something embarrassing — I wouldn't think there's anything embarrassing, unless there's no report at all. I certainly can't assume that, certainly not with what we pay the person on the Syncrude board. But the fact of the matter is that it is a reasonable request for information. If this government wants to slam the door closed, then let them take the political flak for so doing.

[Motion lost]

MR. SPEAKER: In this regard I should perhaps mention to the House that where there may be a doubt as to whether a question or motion is in order to be placed on the Order Paper, I have always followed the practice — and intend to continue to follow that practice, unless there's some change in the *Standing Orders* — of resolving the doubt in favor of putting the motion or question on the Order Paper. If on a future occasion, the government disagrees with my view as to whether a question is appropriate for the Order Paper, by reason of reference to *Beauchesne* or otherwise, I think the matter might be raised as a point of order.

146. Mr. Martin moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the O'Connell report concerning the economic feasibility of the Tri-Media Studios development proposed for the Calgary area, and a statement of costs incurred by the government pursuant to the preparation of the report.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to Motion 146, I'm afraid I'm going to have to give the opposition another opportunity to gush and bluster. Our department is a staff department, and because of a wide variety of initiatives that we have to consider, it's essential that we use consultants extensively. In a great many cases, the fact that that information from a consultant is going to be made public not only alters, or can alter, the candor of the advice that's received, it also tends to alter the inputs to the consultant on that advice. I considered this particular report to be confidential advice to the minister, the very same as if I had received it from a senior official, provided I had a senior official who was qualified to give it to me. So, on behalf of the government, I'm forced to oppose the motion.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, it's all very well and dandy that we're protecting certain firms, but surely it's public money that we're talking about.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Did the hon. member close the debate?

MR. SPEAKER: I was just about to put the question as to whether other members might wish to speak before the hon. member closes the debate.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I think the principle here is a lot more serious than in the earlier one. I could buy the fact that if it was interdepartmental or between a MLA and cabinet, possibly there was some question as to whether documents could be produced, even though it's debatable. But I would not agree with this particular motion for a return being refused by the government. We're talking about a copy of a report that is requesting information about a possible industry that can benefit the province of Alberta. We're talking about Tri-Media Studios development proposed for the Calgary area. You don't call that an industry?

MR. PLANCHE: On a point of order, if I might respond to the question. It isn't a report on an industry; it's a report on a specific initiative.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Well, it's use of words, Mr. Speaker. Initiative: it's certainly an initiative. When you start an industry, that's an initiative, whether it's agriculture, tourism, media, or whatever.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, it's not the start of an industry. The industry is well under way here. It's a specific initiative within an industry.

MR. R. SPEAKER: We're playing with words with that kind of definition, Mr. Speaker. But the point of the matter is that public funds are being spent on a report that is either going to produce some jobs, some economic activity of some kind in Alberta, hopefully by that initiative, or it is a report that will say that this economic initiative should not take place because — and give some very good reasons why it shouldn't happen. Hopefully

those are the two choices the report has. But it is being paid for by public funds.

I can see no reason why the government should want to hide that kind of information. If the evidence comes out supporting the position that the initiative should not take place, then the minister can say to the public: because of the report, it should not take place. If the report says that the initiative should take place, then the government has a reason for proceeding and supporting that kind of initiative in this province. It's public information, supposedly factual, objective, non-partisan in any way, and hopefully businesslike.

I can't see any reason why a report such as that cannot be tabled in this Legislature. If we don't table it in this Legislature, it sets a precedent for ministers to hide any kind of report that may be negative to the government's political future or whatever. I don't even see that in this kind of report. I don't see any political ramifications in a report such as this.

I know the minister has already spoken and can't clarify that matter. But if the report had some political ramification, some embarrassment to it, had lack of objectivity, was covering the pros and cons of some special interest group such as, let's say, the group that's interested in stopping the missile in Alberta — even if it had a point of view like that. But I don't see that kind of material in the report: just no distraction from objectivity of any kind in this report that should say that we as taxpayers in Alberta should not have access to the report. Mr. Speaker, I'd certainly like the government to reconsider its position with regard to this matter.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, that's rather an interesting representation just made by the hon. Member for Little Bow. What he is suggesting, unlike everything else he has said since I have been in this Assembly, is that every time information is sought for the advice of a minister, it must be done from within the public service; in other words, hire another member of the public service to provide the information.

MR. R. SPEAKER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. minister is making a completely inaccurate statement. I am not in support of in-house studies at all times and hiring more civil servants. That's what he's implying by that political statement of his. I've been a great supporter of hiring the private sector to do work and of letting that work be openly expressed to the public in general.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to hear that restated, because the hon. Member for Little Bow . . . The implication of what he suggests, however, means that the government is not going to be able to obtain confidential information or advice, particularly relating to matters of an economic feasibility study, if in fact all that information must be made public. Information is not going to be provided by any consultant if such is the case.

Although it is not the policy of this government at this stage, I refer the hon. member to legislation about third party information which has been adopted by the government of Canada in the freedom of information legislation. It is quite clear that ministers of the Crown shall not supply information to the public relative to matters which may relate to the "financial, commercial, scientific or technical information", and so on.

MR. R. SPEAKER: That's different.

MR. HORSMAN: No, it is not different. Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Little Bow interjects. I listened as best I could to what he had to say, and I hope he will now do the same for me.

This is clearly a case where the government, as the hon. minister has said, not having had in-house expertise to make an assessment of a particular economic venture in the province of Alberta, chose to seek out a consultant to make that information available to the minister.

Referring specifically to section 390(4)(a) of *Beauchesne*:

(4) In the case of consultant studies, the following guidelines are to be applied:

- (a) Consultant studies, the nature of which is identifiable and comparable to work that would be done within the Public Service, should be treated as such (the reports and also the terms of reference) when consideration is being given to their release.

Clearly, that is the situation at hand. This consultant study fits exactly into that category and therefore is being treated as such; that is to say, advice given to a minister of the Crown for the purpose of making certain decisions relative to the particular item under consideration. Therefore it is quite in order for the minister to decline to make that report or study a public document. Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, despite the protestations of the hon. Member for Little Bow, it would just be impossible to seek outside consultation or advice to government without retaining the individual or consultant as a member of the public service.

I'm very pleased indeed to hear that the hon. Member for Little Bow supports government utilizing private sector consultants. On most occasions that information will probably be made public. But there will be occasions when, as the rule says, the consultant study is of a nature comparable to work that would be done within the public service, and it should be treated as such when consideration is being given to its release. There will be those cases, and the hon. Minister of Economic Development has identified this as one of those cases. Therefore the motion should be defeated.

MR. NOTLEY: It's a pity the hon. Attorney General isn't in the House, given his views that we don't need a freedom of information Act because we have such devices as motions for returns with which the public can obtain relevant information. We now find this new definition of what suits the government is now going to . . .

MR. HORSMAN: Read *Beauchesne*.

MR. NOTLEY: Yes, I'm going to come to that in a moment, Jim. [interjection] I've certainly been there, and we're going to come to that in a moment.

Mr. Speaker, I think the point the hon. Member for Little Bow has made is an extremely useful one. If we set a precedent by slamming the door shut on the release of this consulting report, then I think we are setting a very dangerous precedent. I look at *Beauchesne*, and I see that under 390 we have (4)(a). I suppose that in a narrower sense one could construe this study as being somewhat analogous to a request for advice from a deputy minister or a senior member of the public service. But, one could also see it fitting in with:

- (b) Consultant studies, the nature of which is

identifiable and comparable to the kind of investigation of public policy . . .

Mr. Speaker, the minister himself talked about an initiative which involves public policy. It may well be that this is the kind of thing that would fit (b), and if there's any confusion between (a) and (b), then (c) comes into effect.

Prior to engaging the services of a consultant, Ministers are to decide in which category the study belongs and, in cases of doubt, are to seek the advice of their colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, if the minister, who told us that we should vote down this motion for a return, had stood in his place and said: Having carefully reviewed *Beauchesne*, I have decided that between (a) and (b), in my judgment, it was (a); I went to my colleagues and we agreed collectively it was (a) — then they at least would have been meeting the provisions of *Beauchesne*, because they would be complying with (c). He would have consulted his colleagues to determine under which category it went. They haven't done that. At least if they've done it, they haven't told us they've done it. And since these people all of a sudden are such experts on *Beauchesne*, one would have assumed that they would be glad to let us know.

I have a sneaking suspicion, Mr. Speaker — I wouldn't want to accuse them of it — that they didn't do that. I have a sneaking suspicion that in an effort to sort of slam the door shut, in the typical Tory closed-door government approach, we suddenly have the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, in a tattered set of arguments, attempting to justify more closed-door government.

AN HON. MEMBER: In cases of doubt.

MR. NOTLEY: In cases of doubt, the Legislature should demand information. And from a government that has the gall to run around the country saying, we don't need freedom of information — Gerald Baldwin, where are you now? We need you back in this province.

Mr. Speaker, Motion for a Return No. 146 should be complied with by this government. The effort on the part of the front bench to turn it down is a scandalous proposal which should be opposed by all members of the House. As far as I am concerned, we have not had one shred of evidence from the members of the front bench as to why *Beauchesne* would apply in this particular instance.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the first observation I would make is that the only place I'm aware of sneaking suspicions is among the Leader of the Opposition who has kept referring to them. On page 139 of the fifth edition of *Beauchesne*, (4)(c) says "in cases of doubt". There has been absolutely no doubt expressed by the minister, therefore no need to consult. That should put an end to both the sneaking suspicions and any question of doubt the hon. leader may have had.

Mr. Speaker, in my view, there is another flaw in this particular motion for a return. The flaw is this: if one examines the motion for a return, it is quite specifically referring to a private development, a private concern, and not an industry, even though the hon. Member for Little Bow, the leader of the Independents, tried to make that case. It is a question of a single private firm and studies related to that particular development.

If one examines *Beauchesne* again, reference to 390(2) (e), one notes that it exempts from production those:

Papers containing information, the release of which could allow or result in direct personal financial gain or loss by a person or a group of persons.

Mr. Speaker, in the case under discussion for this particular return, that may well be a factor. In combination with (2)(e) and (4)(a), which is quite clear, it's a consultant report which could have been produced in house. I submit that this motion should be defeated.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood now close the debate.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. MARTIN: Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make the point that if we follow that type of logic, we'd really be saying that they don't use private consultants at all in the United States where they have a freedom of information Act. Of course they use them all the time, but people have access to that information. It doesn't seem to slow them down in using private consultants.

The key thing here is if there is ever an erring, we should err on the idea that public money should be controlled in the Legislature. Obviously it was a private company, but we are asking specifically about public money. In our understanding, it had to do with whether or not we are going to diversify the economy, which we've spent a lot of time debating in this Legislature. It had to do with government policies in regard to this company. Surely, where government money is being spent, we should have access to that to see if it was well spent or not. Surely that's the role of the Legislature.

If we followed what the government is saying, they could use *Beauchesne* and their narrow interpretation to deny any information at all. They could do that any time they used a private consultant, any time there was public money. Eventually we wouldn't get any information at all. We're almost to that point now. Without belaboring the point, I think this is a very important position. If we're spending public money, surely the people of Alberta, through the Legislature, have the right to know if that public money was spent wisely. That's all we're asking. I'm surprised it's created such a stir because we didn't know we'd create such a stir, we're just interested. Now we'll be more interested. I think the people of Alberta will be more interested in what went in there.

I call on all fair-minded members on this particular issue — it's really a non-partisan issue. It has to do with how we perceive the Assembly and what our role is.

MR. NOTLEY: A free vote.

MR. MARTIN: Let's have a free vote on it at this particular time, and I would say let's support the motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion lost]

MR. SPEAKER: I didn't want to intervene in the debate because of the . . .

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. We wanted to have a standing vote if you had declared one way or the other.

MR. SPEAKER: [Not recorded] With respect to those members who have referred to *Beauchesne*, what is Cita-

tion 390 in *Beauchesne* really? All it is is a set of guidelines adopted by a certain government in 1973. I do not perceive those guidelines as being binding on this Assembly in any way. *Beauchesne* is useful to us in some instances where it is not based on the special nature of *Standing Orders* in the Canadian House of Commons. To the extent that it enunciates commonly accepted and followed parliamentary practice, *Beauchesne* is useful, possibly more specific to our situation than Sir Erskine May's text. But insofar as dealing with freedom of information is concerned, or rules which were followed by a certain government since 1973 in releasing information, I do not perceive those as being binding on either myself or on the Assembly, except perhaps to the extent that they may reflect parliamentary practice that could perhaps be ascertained outside the four corners of Citation 390.

With regard to Motion for a Return No. 146, I should mention further that it isn't for the Chair to make an assessment as to whether or not a report that has been commissioned is confidential. That is a decision that has to be made by government. I have no way of knowing whether certain reports are confidential, so I have no choice but to put the motion on the Order Paper. Then if government says it's confidential, so be it.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Buck | Martin | Speaker, R. |
| Against the motion: | | |
| Adair | Hyland | Paproski |
| Alger | Hyndman | Pengelly |
| Anderson | Isley | Planche |
| Appleby | Johnston | Purdy |
| Batiuk | Jonson | Reid |
| Bogle | King | Shaben |
| Bradley | Koper | Shrake |
| Chambers | Koziak | Stevens |
| Clark | Kroeger | Stiles |
| Crawford | LeMessurier | Szwender |
| Cripps | Lyson | Thompson |
| Drobot | McPherson | Topolnisky |
| Elliott | Miller | Trynchy |
| Embury | Moore, R. | Webber |
| Fjordbotten | Musgrave | Weiss |
| Fyfe | Musgrove | Young |
| Gogo | Nelson | Zaozirny |
| Harle | Osterman | Zip |
| Horsman | Pahl | |
| Totals: | Ayes - 3 | Noes - 56 |

160. Dr. Buck moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
- (1) The dollar amount of bad debt accounts for loans made to farmers by the Agricultural Development Corporation declared in the fiscal year 1981-82.
 - (2) The budget amount for bad debt accounts for loans made to farmers by the ADC for the fiscal year 1982-83.
 - (3) The percentage of total "bad debt" that comes from loans made to beginning farmers for the two time periods mentioned above.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Motion 160 on today's Order Paper be amended as follows: number one, delete "bad debt accounts for loans made to farmers by the Agricultural Development Corporation declared in the fiscal year 1981-82", and add "Agricultural Development Corporation direct farm loans that were not collectable in the fiscal year 1981-82"; number two, delete "The budget amount for bad debt accounts for loans made to farmers by the ADC for the fiscal year 1982-83", and add "The anticipated amount of uncollectable direct farm loan accounts for 1982-83"; number three, delete "total 'bad debt' that comes from loans made to beginning farmers for the two time periods mentioned above", and add "the uncollectable accounts that can be attributed to beginning farmer loans in these two periods".

[Motion as amended carried]

MR. SPEAKER: I should mention that so far, I guess, we haven't gotten into any real difficulty with regard to these amendments. But in getting an amendment with no notice whatsoever, it's next to impossible to form an opinion as to whether it's in order. It may even be difficult to form an opinion as to exactly what it means. If there were no substantial reasons to the contrary, needless to say the Chair would welcome the maximum possible or convenient notice of these amendments.

DR. BUCK: On a point of order. If we have no problem, we don't have a problem. So if the House agrees unanimously, then there is no problem.

MR. SPEAKER: That remains to be seen.

163. Dr. Buck moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
- (1) The cost to the Department of Energy and Natural Resources for designing and printing the energy saving posters entitled "Thingumabob" and "Thingumadoodle".
 - (2) All places that either have received or will receive these posters, and the exact number of posters that have been or will be forwarded to each place.
 - (3) The projected cost of making additional copies of the same posters if this particular energy saving device is continued.
 - (4) Any other energy saving devices presently provided by the Department of Energy and Natural Resources, as well as the cost associated with them.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to Motion for a Return 163, I should mention at the outset that the subject matter raised in that motion falls squarely within the purview of my ministerial responsibilities. I should advise the Assembly that I have agonized over the motion because of the fact that, as mentioned earlier, as a government we do bend over backwards to try and accommodate requests for information from the hon. members of the opposition.

In this particular instance, Mr. Speaker, I think I have found a way. I would propose an amendment to Motion for a Return No. 163 as follows. Firstly, delete the words "The cost" from subparagraph (1) and replace them with the words "The direct cost". Secondly, delete the words "All places" from subparagraph (2) and replace them with the words "The categories of recipients". That renders the question answerable. Item number three, delete the words

"forwarded to each place" from subparagraph (2) and replace them with the word "distributed", again to enable us to provide a specific answer. Finally, delete subparagraph (4).

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that I would be pleased during a discussion of the estimates of the department to endeavor to provide as much information as possible with respect to the subject matter of subparagraph (4).

I move that amendment.

[Motion as amended carried]

MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the next order of business, we're required to proceed to consideration of private members' public Bills at half past four. Does the Assembly wish to proceed directly to call it half past four, or do you wish to start with the other order of business for the few minutes remaining?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move we call it half past four.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is now half past four.

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

**Bill 201
An Act to Amend the
Motor Vehicle Administration Act**

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, since it's half past four, I'd like to introduce Bill 201, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicle Administration Act. The purpose of this Bill is to provide a deterrent to impaired driving. It has been suggested that it's a Draconian proposal, although the person who told me that said that maybe it isn't as Draconian as he first thought.

Before getting into the debate on whether the seizure of a vehicle is a more realistic penalty than imprisonment, let me go into the principles involved. The amendments to the Act would allow a judge to order the seizure of the licence plates and the vehicle being driven at the time of the impaired driving charge being laid. This means that the driver would have to have a previous conviction under sections 234, 234.1, 235, or 236 of the Motor Vehicle Administration Act.* The Bill says that:

... the judge hearing the case may order that the vehicle being driven by that person at the time ... shall be seized and impounded for such time not exceeding 1 year as the judge may order ...

It also says that the judge "may order ... that it shall be seized and sold". This is the area that the public seems to feel is a little Draconian.

I have a number of letters, all — with the exception of two — in support of the Bill. A number of them feel that the vehicle should not be sold. I'd just like to read some of the comments from some of my mail here, Mr. Speaker.

First, one letter in opposition, believing mostly, I believe, that the family would be affected. I'll just take one

paragraph:

There are many reasons why I don't think they should pass this Bill. I don't think you should take away a person's car and sell it, because some people have worked a long time to get their cars. What happens when a person needs a car or truck to run his business then you take it away.

He goes on to say, what happens if it's a truck driver? In answer to that letter, Mr. Speaker, I suggested that a truck driver should have more sense than to drive while impaired.

A number of young people, students from Drayton Valley, wrote to me. They are concerned, and their ideas are excellent. This one says:

I feel that there are too many innocent people being killed each year in impaired driving accidents. I feel there should be a prison sentence for the second offender but I disagree with your idea of selling impounded cars. They should be kept for a specified amount of time then returned to the owner.

One young fellow felt that we should take the car but we shouldn't sell it, and offered an alternative. I'll just read the alternative:

... might not it be more appropriate in setting a price for each day of impoundment than in selling the car.

Another person suggested that at the end of the impoundment, a penalty should be charged covering the cost of impoundment, rather than selling the car.

A lady from Edmonton wrote that maybe we should follow the idea that Finland and Sweden have:

The first offence they receive a 6 month jail term plus their licence is suspended for a year. The second offence they lose their licence for life. In fact it doesn't matter who they are either, doctors, lawyers, [or politicians]. They don't even have a trial if the breathalyzer reads over [a specified amount].

The effect and the gravity of the situation is illustrated in this letter:

[I] recently lost my younger sister ... There is nothing I can do that will bring her back to us. However, each time I express my opinions and add my voice to the growing public protest of the lenient law enforcement, inadequate sentencing and sympathy of society toward the drunk driver, I help to save a life and [maybe] another family [won't suffer the grief] we endure.

And from B.C.:

The only reliable way to prevent crime is to adopt the diversionary system of criminal justice. In the instance of drinking drivers, simply confiscate their vehicles. Without their weapons, they become impotent.

By the way, in that same letter they enclosed an article where two men from B.C. had killed two Dall sheep, and the judge confiscated all their equipment, valued at over \$10,000. He said he was doing this because of the "blatant disregard for the protection of wildlife". Sometimes the sentences meted out for wildlife offences are far more serious than the sentences handed down for criminal negligence and death on our highways. It also says there were 8,000 letters from the public which agreed with the idea of taking the driver's auto in the case of drunken driving.

The last one I'd like to read points out the magnitude of the offences. This letter is from Calgary. It says:

I know a little about this scandalous record of drunken drivers since I have a male relative whose licence has been suspended 4 times and he is still

*See page 424, right column, paragraph 10

driving!

Those are just a few of the letters I have received on this issue, Mr. Speaker.

A number of concerns have been raised, as I said, regarding the seizure of the vehicle, especially if it's not owned by the driver. If the driver does not have a valid driver's licence, he certainly does not have the legal right to drive any vehicle, his own or someone else's. To ensure that there is not undue hardship on an innocent owner because of the Bill, we've put in a notwithstanding clause, item 4, that reads:

Notwithstanding subsection (1), if the convicted person was not the registered owner or 1 of the joint owners of the motor vehicle at the time the offence was committed

(a) the registered owner may apply to the judge for the provision of subsections (1), (2) or (3) to be waived, and

(b) the the judge, if he is of the opinion that the registered owner's application is a proper case for relief and that the motor vehicle was not primarily provided for the private use of the convicted person, may waive . . . subsections (1), (2) or (3).

Mr. Speaker, this section would provide the opportunity for a family member or another registered owner to have the car released in their care. Certainly if the seizure and impounding of the car was going to cause drastic hardship to family members, the spouse could possibly make representation to the judge to release it. Implicit in this release, I expect, would have to be an absolute understanding and honor-bound guarantee that the convicted impaired driver would at no time get behind the wheel of the vehicle as long as his or her licence was suspended.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a new idea. There are presently six Acts where the seizure of a vehicle may be the penalty for a crime. Under the Motor Vehicle Administration Act, section 96, "Seizure of a motor vehicle" says that if section 71 or 95 has been committed, they may seize and detain any motor vehicle. This is in respect to obtaining a registration without insurance.

Under the Liquor Control Act, section 117, a peace officer may, if in his opinion, liquor is

unlawfully kept or kept for unlawful purposes in contravention of this Act or the regulations . . . immediately seize the liquor and the packages in which it is contained and the vehicle, watercraft, [et cetera] . . .

And under (2)(b), it says the vehicle,

watercraft or other conveyance so seized is forfeited to the Crown in the right of Alberta.

Under the Wildlife Act, section 98:

When a game warden or a wildlife officer

(a) finds anywhere . . . any wildlife that he has reason to believe is illegal wildlife, or

(b) finds any vehicle . . . used for or in connection with the contravention of this Act . . .

he may forthwith seize the wildlife, pelts or skins, or any parts thereof and the containers in which they were found or the vehicle . . .

I understand that up toward Grande Cache recently, wildlife officers seized a number of off-highway vehicles, 12 rifles, and numerous other equipment. None of it was returned to the owners.

Under the Highway Traffic Act, section 121 relates to speeding, careless driving, or obstructing a peace officer: "may seize and detain any motor vehicle". Under the Off-highway Vehicle Act, they "may seize and detain any

off-highway vehicle" for contravention of that Act. Under the Motor Transport Act — and I believe this has to do with the illegal transportation of goods — section 55 reads:

A peace officer who has reason to believe that the public vehicle is being or has been operated in contravention of this Act or an order made under this Act may, without warrant, seize or detain the public vehicle and any goods carried in or on it.

Under the Forests Act, section 49:

A forest officer may impound a vehicle or other property and take it to a place designated by the Minister if

(a) the vehicle or other property, in the opinion of a forest officer, interferes with the management or use of a forest recreation area . . .

Mr. Speaker, all those Acts use the seizure of a vehicle as part of the deterrent aspect. In no case, in my estimation, is the act as serious as the deliberate use of a motor vehicle which may cause the loss of life.

Some hon. members seem to think I want the government to go into the business of collecting cars. I don't. I'd like to see this Bill adopted and no cars seized because impaired drivers decided to adhere to the old idiom that if you drink, you don't drive. Originally I had proposed the seizure of licence plates of the vehicle driven at the time of the liquor-related driving offence. In that case, it may be possible to seize the licence plates on a first offence for a period of, say, up to three months.

Mr. Speaker, according to AADAC statistics, there were 21,442 licence suspensions in the first two-thirds of this year. I understand there were 30,000 suspensions in 1980-81 and only 13,000 of those people took the required AADAC courses. Are there 17,000 other drivers out there without a licence?

Mr. Speaker, driving is a privilege, not a right. You only have the right to drive as long as you do not abuse the privilege. The most common abuse of that privilege is getting behind the wheel while impaired. A car in the hands of the impaired driver is the most lethal weapon in Canada today.

Three thousand people die each year in Canada in alcohol-related accidents. In the last six years, 18,000 people were killed in traffic accidents caused by impaired drivers. Compare that to the 17,682 Canadians killed in the Second World War, an equivalent six-year period. Mr. Speaker, that means that by the end of the decade, by 1990, we can expect another 20,000 Canadians to die in accidents caused by impaired drivers.

In Alberta 624 people died in traffic accidents last year, 50 per cent of these alcohol-related. Mr. Speaker, the worst thing about these statistics is that we condone them. We condone them mostly by the kinds of sentences handed out for drunken driving.

Consider the man from Manitoba who was driving on the wrong side of the road and crashed into an oncoming car, killing the woman who was driving it. His blood alcohol was over the legal limit, and he pleaded guilty. He got a \$2,500 fine. A man drove northbound on a southbound freeway, and the inevitable crash killed a 34-year-old father of two children. In sentencing, the judge said he wanted to make an example of the drunk driver, so he gave him four years in jail. But, Mr. Speaker, the accused was out on bail on an impaired driving charge at the time of the accident. A small-town businessman fined for careless driving, convicted of three speeding offences, had his licence suspended. Less than two years later, he sped through a stop sign and killed two people. Citing the

defendant's solid reputation and his remorse, the judge sentenced him to six months in prison. An appeal to a higher court gave him nine months, and he'll probably serve only two-thirds of that.

Mr. Speaker, we simply take death on the road as a hazard of driving and don't stop to think for one minute that over 50 per cent of those deaths could be prevented if public attitude did not condone impaired driving. Driving while impaired is a real crime.

Drunk drivers in other parts of the world are dealt with in a variety of ways. Islamic punishment for the first offence is lashing and imprisonment. Drunk drivers are jailed for the first offence in Sweden, as well as in Norway, where the legal limit is .05. A subsequent violation results in permanent loss of licence. By the way, in Sweden it's socially acceptable and expected of a host to ask the guests, who will be driving and therefore will forego alcohol? Perhaps the most innovative countermeasure can be found in Turkey, where the offender is forced to walk 40 kilometres under escort.

Mr. Speaker, there's one unique one. In Malaysia a first-time drunk driver is jailed, and if he's married, his wife is jailed with him. I'm not sure if that's part of the punishment or not. We haven't determined that. If my husband was jailed with me for drunk driving, it'd be part of the punishment. In El Salvador, there are only first offenders. The penalty is death. They've never had a second offender. The state of Maryland has taken an aggressive stand against drunk drivers. One of the penalties is a 120-day confiscation of the licence plates.

Public attitudes may be changing. Down in California we have MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, and SADD, Students Against Drunk Drivers. In Alberta we have PAID, People Against Impaired Drivers. Judges are even speaking out. I have a recent clipping from the Toronto *Globe and Mail* which says:

People convicted of impaired driving should have their car impounded in addition to facing fines and prison terms, says an Ontario provincial court judge. Judge Jack Climans says an offender's car or licence plates could be confiscated on conviction and impounded for the same period his licence is suspended.

More and more people are speaking out against this apparently legalized illegal maiming, killing, and destruction on our roads.

Few, if any, deterrent programs have long-term effects. There are three components to most deterrent programs: first, a crackdown on alcohol-impaired drivers, involving increased police detective activity and more severe penalties for offenders; second, rehabilitation programs designed to treat rather than punish offenders; and third, public education programs to discourage drinking and driving.

These programs, Mr. Speaker, are all in place in Alberta. The only way they'll be effective is if public opinion is so strong that people simply will not drink and drive and if the penalties are seen to be stiff enough to fit the crime. There's a big difference between a first offender who misjudges his capacity by a drink and gets caught in a roadblock, and the chronic drunk who's had several previous convictions and kills one or two people.

On the question of mandatory jail terms, it must be recognized that courts are reluctant to jail first offenders. It would appear to me that the justice system is also reluctant to jail a family man, a businessman, a young man with no previous record, or a female.

All the available evidence suggests that swift punish-

ment is a more effective deterrent than stiff punishment. Many of us remember a quick trip to the woodshed, where the severity of the punishment was soon forgotten but the swiftness of it was retained and often formed the basis for future judgment decisions. My father's up there, and I'm sure he can ascertain to that fact. A trip to the courthouse two months later, Mr. Speaker, is ineffective. By that time the driver has convinced himself that he wasn't really that drunk, and may even believe it.

This suggests that consideration should be given to some form of administrative, rather than judicial, licence revocation measures. If it were more acceptable for a police officer to suspend a driver's licence for 24 hours and also to confiscate the licence plates of the vehicle being driven until the owner appeared before a judge to either have them returned or have the vehicle impounded for a longer time, the consequences of the action of drinking and driving would be immediate. The car owner could maintain the vehicle at his premises on a bailiffs undertaking if necessary.

It is imperative that a police officer be able to administer a breathalyzer test or request a blood alcohol test if the situation warrants. This could quite easily be done, Mr. Speaker. In order to have the privilege to drive, we first must obtain a valid driver's licence. There are a number of obligations that society dictates we must do to drive safely. We do them automatically without thinking. We drive on the right-hand side of the road, we stop on a red light and go on a green, and we yield to the car on the right. We are obliged to do these things because we hold a valid operator's licence and chaos would result, and does result, when someone disregards this practical set of rules.

Upon obtaining that licence, we're also obliged not to drive when incapable of doing so. Quite often somebody says, I'm too sick to drive home. We don't ever hear anybody say, I'm too impaired to drive home. So to ensure that the police officer is able to do his job and the impaired driver does not have the case thrown out on some technicality — and that happens too often — an applicant for an operator's licence would sign an affidavit on the back, which simply says: in receiving and accepting this operator's licence, I do hereby give permission to be required to take a breathalyzer and/or blood test in the event of an accident, or at the request of a police officer who has reasonable grounds to suspect impairment.

The Saskatchewan highway minister has released a white paper outlining changes, and one of them is taking a mandatory sample at an accident. This immediately eliminates such cases as the one in Calgary where an impaired driver was so drunk he couldn't remember whether he had given permission to have the breathalyzer test, and it was thrown out of court by the judge. It's time that the innocent have their rights and limbs protected.

It's not a simple problem. The judge has before him a repeat offender. He's been up on numerous occasions for speeding and careless driving, all impaired-related. The sanctions have proved fruitless. The fellow is a family man, a good provider, a hard worker, an asset to the community — except that while impaired, he's a potential hazard on the highway when in control of a vehicle. If the judge sentences him to prison, the breadwinner is gone and the family may have to go on welfare. Society pays for his keep and his family's.

In cases where the impaired driver has not been in an accident, is it really better to look at imprisonment rather seizure of the vehicle? A car is a status symbol; it's usually

the first possession a young person aspires to acquire. A man treasures his wife, or vice versa, his home, and his car — and not necessarily in that order. The seizure of the vehicle, being an item of pride, may be the deterrent we need.

I realize that the penalty may seem harsh. However, a jail sentence or a fine might prove equally devastating to the family. A jail term could cause the loss of the principal wage earner or, in a few cases, the loss of a job.

The purpose of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to provide a deterrent which will make the impaired consider carefully the possible consequences of driving while under the influence of alcohol. It is important to note that it's only effective on the second or subsequent offence. In many cases the operator does not even have a valid operator's licence. If the citizen has lost his operator's licence, he's also lost his right to drive. The law states that the operator of a motor vehicle must not do so while impaired. Therefore an impaired person does not have the privilege of choosing whether he drives.

The solution to the problem lies in public attitude toward the impaired driver. The public is becoming increasingly concerned. I believe they are looking for the government to pass legislation and enforce laws in keeping with the seriousness of the offence. I would urge that the Attorney General and Solicitor General look carefully at this alternative, and I hope members will support the intent of the Bill.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise to support the purpose of the Bill. It may well be the way to go specifically; I'm not sure. As hon. members mentioned, in many places around the world they are much harsher than we are in terms of drunken driving. I think of places like Sweden. They have certainly been much more effective in cutting down drunken driving than we have at this particular time. But I think something has to be done in this whole area.

Hopefully the Attorney General will be looking at this, because it came home to me specifically a few months ago, as I know it has with other hon. members in the House. It's always another statistic when it's somebody you don't know. You read about it in the paper, and they mention that alcohol or drugs of some sort could have been involved. You say, isn't that interesting, and go on to the next part of the paper.

A few months ago, when I was working in a high school, a colleague's aunt and another woman were on their way on holidays about eight o'clock Sunday morning and a young man in a car crossed over the median and wiped them out and killed them. As a colleague, of course, I saw what he went through. It brought home to me that we have a very serious problem, especially when you bring it to a personal level rather than the specifics.

The other point I would like to make has to do with costs. Of course the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has brought in user fees and has complained specifically about the high costs of hospital care and medicare in the province. Certainly this is one of the areas where you can begin to cut down costs. The hospital utilization report that was given to the minister clearly indicated that the most significant, highest costs of hospital care are car accidents. We also know — and I think the hon. member brought this out — that the biggest cause of car accidents is drunken driving. So if we were to make the laws stiffer — if it's a matter of impounding the car or some other method that the Attorney General looks at — and we were able to seriously cut down

drunken driving, and people knew that we were serious about it, we would also be saving a lot of money in our medicare system because we'd be cutting down significantly on car accidents.

For this matter, I would generally support the Bill. Although I'm not an expert to know if this would be the best way to go, I would agree with the hon. member that something has to be done, and done quickly, because we are losing a lot of lives and wasting a lot of money on drunken driving. So I would hope that from this — I know private members' Bills are sometimes used by the government as trial balloons — they would see there is support right across the province for something to be done to make it harsher on drunken drivers. I hope the government might be looking at bringing this in, in the fall.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, rising to speak to Bill 201, I'm very encouraged that the Member for Drayton Valley has brought this forward, because I think it reflects attitudes of the public today. I think that in the perception of most Albertans, they see a lax police force, a lax system of administration of justice, or perhaps a lax government. I'd like to make some comments which I believe will dispute that.

First of all, I noticed in today's *Globe and Mail* that a man was jailed on the 10th charge of impaired driving. It's very interesting: it took him 10 times to get into jail, and he had to kill somebody to do it. He has a record of 10 convictions over almost 10 years — 1974. He was sent to jail for seven months and, as is prone to happen with any seven-month sentence of course, in five months he was out again. He was driving. He killed somebody. He has now been sentenced to a year and a half by an Ontario court judge. The comment made is, the only way we can seem to look after you is to lock you up.

Mr. Speaker, I think that would reflect an attitude of many Albertans today that indeed in their frustrations as to what's going on they tend to lash out in anger and make accusations. I think it might be timely to look at some of the facts, if that's not in some way going to confuse people. First of all, we should look at the fact that 92 per cent of all those who took the impaired drivers' program last year were males. That should indicate that females are not really the problem. Secondly, 95 per cent of all those who participated lived in urban centres. So it would appear that our country cousins are not the impaired drivers.

But you can make figures do anything. Because 45 per cent of the participants were single, 30 per cent were married, and the remaining 25 per cent were either separated, divorced, widowed, or lived common law, strong arguments could be made that if you adopted a certain life style obviously you wouldn't be convicted for impaired driving. I think that indicates that you can make almost anything out of statistics. What is important, though, is that fully two-thirds had no previous criminal experiences that resulted in convictions, including impaired driving charges. Finally, only one in every 10 who was convicted of impaired driving had had counselling of any kind with regard to alcohol and driving.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Drayton Valley pointed out, in terms of statistics, that in the '80-81 fiscal year there were almost 31,000 Albertans convicted of impaired driving. If you talk to certain law enforcement officers in Alberta, they'll tell you that generally the track record is one in every five; that is, if five are charged, one would be

convicted of impaired driving. One has to be careful how one interprets that, because invariably people are charged either with impaired driving, refusing to blow, or with a blood alcohol content in excess of .08. The fact remains that some 31,000 people were convicted in the 1980-81 fiscal year.

In '81-82 that had dropped 20 per cent to 24,000. That's a pretty dramatic drop. What would account for that? Were the police not active? I submit that the police were very active. I think what actually happened was that in 1981-82 we saw some very dramatic programs take place in the province, to make citizens aware that they have a responsibility not only for themselves but for others when they're drinking. To date this year we're seeing, on a projected annual basis, that the number of impaired drivers is probably going to reach 27,000. So I submit, Mr. Speaker, that there has been some progress.

The Member for Drayton Valley pointed out quite clearly that there have been more people killed as a result of impaired driving in the past six years than in the six years of World War II. I think it's also interesting to note that each year in America there are more people killed on the highways than during the total period of the Vietnam war — perhaps the greatest war in history; certainly the most expensive war in the history of America.

But what it doesn't tell us, Mr. Speaker, is the cost. The Member for Drayton Valley indicated what the damage was. As a result of accidents, we had some 600 deaths last year, as reported by the Minister of Transportation. Some 50 per cent of those involved alcohol. When we view the fact that there were some 3 million patient-days in hospitals, that would tend to refute the argument made by the Member for Edmonton Norwood that there's an excessive cost element involved in our hospital system. Dealing with approximately 300 wouldn't be a significant factor — not nearly as many as are admitted to hospitals for alcohol problems. That's quite apart from traffic accidents involving drinking and driving.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the cost we're more directly concerned with is within the estimates of the hon. Attorney General. My information is that each conviction costs approximately \$10,000. That would be involved with enforcement; administration of justice; legal aid, if applicable; the appeal side; and mandatory treatment as spelled out by the statute that requires people to be tested through the impaired drivers' program before they drive.

I think I should point out a fact that we are all well aware of but don't seem to spend much time on, and that is that there really wouldn't be much in the way of problems with impaired driving if there wasn't much drinking. It might be interesting to review that, as tough as times are, the sales of alcohol in Alberta seem to be doing pretty well. They clearly exceed 50 million gallons. So when we start determining who does the drinking, we find — and I think this figure has been mentioned before — that every Albertan over 15 years of age drinks some 800 bottles of beer a year. We all know quite conclusively, I think, that that's on average. I don't know who drinks the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray's share, which means that someone else would be drinking 1,600 bottles of beer. But when we look at the number of people in terms of age groups, we find that a very significant number, 70 per cent, are aged 20 to 39. So I think one would readily understand, or it would be a reasonable assumption, that certain age groups tend to drink the most, and that is in direct proportion to the number of motor vehicle accidents which happen between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m., and the number of convictions. When we

look at convictions, the largest number is within that age category.

Mr. Speaker, reference is made in Bill 201 to taking away the automobile. I don't think we should be naive; we should be practical and pragmatic. As we know, the hon. leader of the NDP in Canada represents an area that makes great claims that one in every seven Canadians is directly affected in that he wouldn't have a job if it weren't for the automobile. So I submit that if we interpret Bill 201 in the very narrow sense, two things would occur. One, we would probably have the biggest parking lot in Alberta under government control, because presumably we could have some huge number of automobiles seized and impounded. Secondly, there would be a dramatic decrease in automobile sales, which I guess would prompt a march on the Legislature by certain car dealers. Although that may sound somewhat facetious, Mr. Speaker, I think one has to be pragmatic in looking at the punishment as a mode of resolving the problem.

The Member for Drayton Valley clearly points out that of the total number convicted, in the latest estimates there were some 4,200 who were repeat offenders. The Criminal Code of Canada states very clearly that for second offences for impaired driving there is "imprisonment for not more than one year and not less than fourteen days". Now it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that if there were 4,200 convictions in Alberta, there should have been a significant number of those people doing at least 14 days in jail, if that's the Criminal Code. Yet in reading this — albeit it only covers a three-month period, as submitted by the Attorney General's Department — we had a total of 42 people charged with second offences in October '82, 41 in November, and 24 in December. Multiplying those together we probably get a maximum of some 450 to 500, and yet we know, according to the records, that clearly over 4,000 were repeat offenders.

So there seems to be some difficulty at the administration of justice level, as to whether or not those who are caught in terms of impaired driving are in fact appropriately charged. I submit that if they were, and if the sentences were meted out in accordance with the minimum according to the Criminal Code, then we would have resolved part of this problem long ago. I don't want to be critical of the judges, because a judge can only judge what the Crown counsel puts in front of him. Claims have been made that we don't have enough jail cells in Alberta. If everybody who was guilty of a second offence were sentenced to prison, there wouldn't be room to hold them. I don't know.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that we are doing many things now in the province to deal with this problem. It's interesting to look at a very responsible agency, the Insurance Bureau of Canada. Mr. Lyndon, who is the president, was a deputy minister here in Consumer and Corporate Affairs, a well-known Albertan. They point out in material mailed to all members that all the available evidence suggests that swift punishment is one of the most effective ways of dealing with the problem. I think we have to look at the time lag between the time someone is apprehended, charged, and ultimately convicted, which may run anywhere to several months. Then if they are suspended for a period of six months. I submit the time of the offence is long forgotten by the time they are convicted.

I sometimes think we're dealing with a problem that, frankly, legislators can't deal with. I think it's a question of attitude. It's a question of us as individuals, as community people, as residents within a community to

take a stand and speak up, and not just as legislators. The Member for Drayton Valley has mentioned organizations which I think have become very affective. The People Against Impaired Drivers, alive and well in Alberta, has taken a very strong stand. Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, which was featured on American television several weeks ago, now has a membership of some 200,000 people.

One of the latest ones — and the acronym is somewhat appropriate — is SADD, which is Students Against Drunk Drivers. I'd like to comment briefly on how that works. A U.S. organization, a group of some 8,000 school students, has got together and come up with a very interesting prevention device. It consists of parents and children signing a contract between them. The contract reads like this: I hereby declare and promise that if I'm out having a good time and have too much to drink, I will phone you, Dad or Mom — with the phone number — and you will come and get me; thereby I will not drive while drinking.

I would like to point out — and I know I have already qualified that statistics can be misleading — that, for example, on Long Island, New York, for the past five years there have been at least 20 teen-age deaths during the Christmas holidays. This program started last year; they went through the last whole Christmas period with not one death. Why? The people involved in this organization visited all the schools on Long Island, talked to the students in high schools, and presumably as a result of that they went through a complete festive period with not one fatality. That, Mr. Speaker, is more meaningful than all the laws we can put on the books or attempt to enforce. I clearly think it's a matter of attitude. Although we as a government are subject to a fair amount of criticism in that we are taking in, this year, in excess of a quarter billion dollars in profits from alcohol — clearly the price of alcohol is substantially less than in other jurisdictions — I point out that this government, through a Social Services and Community Health budget of some \$1,050,000,000, recognizes that it's indeed cognizant of social problems and pays out substantial amounts of money. So the criticism this government is taking as a result of alcohol revenue, some \$270 million in projected incomes this year — indeed encouraging the problem — is clearly not accurate. The revenue that comes in is spent fourfold in social services alone.

I would like to close, Mr. Speaker, with regard to what I think is being done in a very worth-while way now in the province of Alberta, and that is through the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission. In the past 10 years, the budget of AADAC has gone up from about \$2 million to \$20 million, clearly an indication that the government of Alberta is committed to doing something about alcohol and drug abuse.

What's being done? I think one of the most exciting programs in North America is being carried out right under this legislative authority. The moderation campaign, which in my view is the answer, is consistent, by the way, with a view expressed by the Insurance Bureau of Canada. They say that punishment, prohibition, appears to fail. "Moderation is a far more saleable concept than abstinence." They endorse it. That's exactly what AADAC's attempting in this province. I think that's great for young people, for those who don't have the benefit through driver training which is offered through organizations in Alberta. I think the treatment programs carried out by the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission in terms of inpatient treatment programs — there's

not a province in Canada that offers the same degree of programs. Certainly no province offers it at the same cost.

The involvement we have in youth throughout this province was epitomized just a week ago Tuesday here in Edmonton at the Chateau Lacombe hotel, when some 200 young people throughout Edmonton — these are high school students, grades 10, 11, and 12 — gathered and participated in workshops which indicated two things: that they believe they are not only responsible for their future and their behavior regarding their future, but they are prepared to take some action and do something about it.

Secondly, I would like to point out that although the number of those convicted of impaired driving does not seem to jibe with those who show up for impaired drivers' programs in Alberta, the indication, as mentioned by the Member for Drayton Valley, is that there are some 9,000 Albertans who are convicted who don't show up to take the course. The assumption is made that they are driving. I think a substantial number of those are driving. That means that [if] we as a government or we as a state declare that whoever operates a motor vehicle must have certain insurances, then we clearly have an obligation to protect those against people who are driving without insurance. Whether it's 6,000, 7,000, 8,000, or 9,000, I don't know. But, indeed it is a significant number.

I personally advocate that a short, snappy handling of an impaired driving charge would be more effective. My preference is for a 48-hour jail term. That, incidentally, happens to coincide, I'm pleased to see, with two things: one is that President Reagan in America has appointed a special presidential commission on alcohol and drunken driving, and Mr. Volpe, who's chairman of that, has recommended 48 hours' incarceration. California, which was mentioned a few minutes ago by the Member for Drayton Valley, has an exciting new program. It has a 48-hour sentence on conviction. I know it's a little too early to comment on what the potential results might be, but indications are that there has been a dramatic decrease.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Member for Drayton Valley for bringing this to the attention of not only our colleagues in the House but all Albertans. Very clearly it's an effort out of — "frustration" is not a good word — determined action by the member to respond to many concerns that Albertans have raised with her. I would have some difficulty, however, supporting the implementation of the Bill whereby we would remove the automobile, primarily because those who are not involved with impaired driving would be forfeiting the use of the automobile.

How times change. Thirty, 40, or 50 years ago, if you lived in Cardston or Raymond you could get to Lethbridge by train or bus. Today you cannot get there except by automobile. We replaced, it seems to me, a spiritual being in this province with an automobile, and I really don't think we can function without it. I think the more laws we put on the books that prohibit people from driving, the less effective they are going to be. So I strongly endorse the principle of the Bill; however, I withhold my support with regard to the implementation of removing the automobile.

Thanks very much.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, it's indeed a pleasure to be able to speak to the initiatives taken by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley today. The issue of drinking drivers

has been around for a long time, and it's going to be around for many years to come. Unfortunately governments in various parts of the world, and of recent times, have found that much legislation they endeavor to pass goes for nought. For an initial period much of the drinking driving, at least the accidents caused by such, does slow down but unfortunately does come back to haunt them.

Mr. Speaker, during the years 1950 to 1970, people over the age of 15 who drink have risen from 67 per cent of the population to 80 per cent. During that period they increased their consumption by over half a gallon per person per year — that is the consumption of absolute alcohol. Surely we must examine why people must become inebriated to the extent that they go out and cause carnage on our highways. Why is it necessary for people to drink and drive? There are many such questions that need to be asked and answered, possibly before we conclude a legislative examination of this issue.

Canadians are [among] the highest users of spirits of 29 countries examined, according to a 1970 statistical examination. Fourteen per cent of our population has been classed as heavy drinkers. That is 17 per cent of the drinkers which are classed as heavy drinkers. Additionally, 15 per cent of the population is classed as above-average drinkers, and 18 per cent of drinkers are again classed as above average. The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is that 30 per cent of the drinkers in this country are above average; in other words, they drink too darned much.

During the period 1969 to 1979, per capita consumption in Canada increased by over 50 per cent. The per capita consumption during the next 10 years, from 1979 to '89, is projected to double. When we're talking about consumption of alcohol, we're talking about the raw ingredient, which is commonly called absolute alcohol.

Mr. Speaker, one of the areas that is extremely frustrating is the policing of this activity. In talking to the police regarding accidents caused by drunk drivers or other means, they suggest that a more far-reaching examination must take place rather than examining just the drunk driver. Many of our accidents, whether they be death or injury accidents, certainly are caused by the drunk driver. However, many other accidents are caused by people doing other things. There is a list of about six items, which they call moving offences, that are causes of major accidents, not always necessarily identified with drunk drivers: running red lights, an extreme major cause of accidents; careless driving, another extreme cause of major accidents; following too close, commonly known as stunting, a major cause of accidents; unsafe lane changing, another cause of major accidents; not stopping at stop signs, another cause of major accidents; and hit-and-run, another major cause. Fines in those areas presently are from \$25 to \$75 per infringement.

The city of Calgary, in supporting a motion from the Calgary police commission some time ago, suggested increased fines, and they went to the Alberta union of municipalities some time ago. I believe they were put forward to the government. But in those six areas alone, it has been suggested that fines be increased from \$75 to \$200 per infringement, recognizing that there's been no change in the fine structure for accidents or driving infringements in this province for something like 10 years, whereas the income levels or the economic circumstances of most people have changed upward to the extent that a \$25 fine for running a red light is certainly out of line. Suggesting a \$100 fine for an infringement of that nature

would be more conducive to the economic circumstances of today's people.

In many jurisdictions there's a do-nothing attitude. I guess we have to ask, why is that attitude prevalent in some government areas? Are governments frightened to legislate because of suggested loss of revenue? What is the concern? If the police sit outside a hotel or drinking establishment and stop people as they leave, it's called entrapment; they cannot do it. They have to stop them in the normal course of their duties in another way if they see that they are doing something wrong.

Then there's the human rights legislation. Now there's nothing wrong with human rights, except that the guy who's dead on the road had some human rights also. I think we have to examine the whole activity here to ensure that the guy does not become a statistic.

Mr. Speaker, the police, in dealing with the issue of drunken drivers and what they determine as dangerous drivers — one and the same — are frustrated in their efforts by both the lawmakers and the courts. I use the terms "dangerous drivers" and "drunken drivers" in a similar tone because there are statistics that show that dangerous drivers under the influence of alcohol become more dangerous and are the cause of many of the accidents, in fact the majority of the accidents, that are injury related or cause death. Many of our young people who are causing some of this carnage do not have the experience of driving a vehicle sober, let alone under the influence of alcohol.

During the last six years, more than 35,000 people have died on Canadian roads through alcohol-related accidents. I might add that the accidents related to both dangerous driving and alcohol-related driving are the major cause of death among people between five to 30 years of age. Consider the cost in terms of medical bills, car repairs, lost productivity, and income, due to alcohol-related accidents of all kinds. This amounts to something like 2 per cent of our gross national product in this country or almost \$2.5 billion, notwithstanding the human suffering of those who have either lost somebody or have caused the loss. During the same period of six years, some 40 per cent of all drivers and 50 per cent of all adult pedestrians killed on Canadian roads were impaired at the time of their death.

Mr. Speaker, considering the hour — and I have a number of comments that I would like to proceed with — I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to correct a statement I made in my earlier comments. I referred to sections 234.1, 235, and 236 in An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicle Administration Act. Those sections are referred to in our Act, but they refer to the Criminal Code of Canada.*

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, by way of advice to the members of the Assembly, it's proposed this evening to sit in Committee of Supply and to conclude the Advanced Education Department, to be followed by Agriculture. For members of the opposition, I advise that tomorrow morning it is proposed to deal with the estimates of the Department of Economic Development, beginning with

*See page 418, left column, paragraph 12

that portion relating to international trade.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore move that the House assemble this evening in Committee of Supply, and that the Assembly adjourn until such time as the Committee of Supply rises and reports.

MR. SPEAKER: Do the members agree that when the members assemble at eight o'clock, they'll be in Committee of Supply?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The House recessed at 5:30 p.m.]

[The Committee of Supply met at 8 p.m.]

head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

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

Department of Advanced Education

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I believe the Minister of Advanced Education was concluding his remarks when we concluded last evening.

DR. BUCK: Be brief and intelligent.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Does the minister want to conclude his remarks now?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, when I left off last night, I had a long list of questions. Unfortunately I've misplaced those. [laughter] Let me just go back on a couple of broad items so I can perhaps give an overview as to some of the questions we have in the Advanced Education budget. I'd simply like to unfurl some of the hidden secrets of financing, if I can at all do that. Of course it is at the heart of several of the questions that have been asked.

First of all, several members asked me what was included in the service element. If I look specifically at 2.6.1, which is the universities operating service element, in that account is an item which will be the growth dollars for 1983-84, which we have not yet allocated to the universities. So to be totally accurate, you'd have to extract from that service element approximately \$5 million and reallocate that money to the universities to get their actual operating money. At the same time, we also have approximately \$9.6 million in new course development under the program support vote. This money, as well, is what we describe as new program money, which is allocated to the colleges and universities, based on the need for new programs in various centres. That money would also have to be added to the operating accounts for universities, to get the total amount they would be getting.

So you see that throughout the estimates, partly because we have not yet been able to determine how to

allocate the growth money and partly because we have not made conclusions with respect to new programs, there are additional dollars which will flow to the university. The reason I mention that, members of the committee, is that several of my colleagues in the Assembly, together with others, have suggested to me that in fact, by a simple calculation on the budget information which is given, some universities are getting somewhat less than the 5.1 per cent which we have agreed to give them. I simply note that the 5.1 per cent is a blend of certain factors including utilities and indices for inflation. But that in fact is not accurate. Until we get full details, until we allocate the money, particularly the two other accounts which I've talked about, you won't have a full realization as to what the specific expansion of assistance to universities, colleges, and other institutions will be.

But I can assure you, in the case of the University of Lethbridge, for example, that although the budget does show something in the order of 3 per cent, it's my quick calculation that the University of Lethbridge will get at least 9 per cent in the next year, substantially above the 5 per cent level.

DR. BUCK: Favoritism.

MR. JOHNSTON: I go on to say that other colleges would get substantially higher. The colleges would be up around 13 and 14 per cent in most cases, others up around 20-some per cent. The University of Alberta and the University of Calgary would be well over 7 per cent in terms of the amount of money which would flow to them. But as you can see, it's based on the percentage calculation, which in itself is determined by the base. Secondly, it's based on the enrolment money, which is now included in the service element because we couldn't properly allocate it at the time this budget was fully recorded. Finally, it involves other items, including new program development.

That rounds out some of the comments I made before about the dangers in applying the arbitrary calculations which are shown in this budget, calculations of percentages in particular. In fact they don't really reflect the true information, the true impact of the decisions which we have made for the funding and resources I'm requesting from the Assembly today.

I also want to deal with the endowment fund. As you will notice in Vote 2, there is an amount of \$8 million for the 1980s endowment fund. This particular program is unique to Canada. It follows the direction taken by the Social Credit government when it formed the three Alberta universities capital fund. We believe that was a good idea, and we included it ourselves. In our budget this year, we have about \$8 million. That fund has been used to match capital donations by others.

Several things are important here. First of all, over the past few years, certainly the past 18 to 24 months in Alberta, the impact of changing technology has become apparent. The use of computers is part of the second language literacy which I think all of us would ascribe to but none of us has yet achieved, at least speaking from my own point of view. But in fact it is imperative in terms of a well-rounded general education for students, at both the basic level and the university level. Certainly the boards of governors and the academics recognized this quickly, and of course they moved very quickly to have that in the course curricula and to have the facilities in place to provide this kind of assistance as an instructional part of the program.

They also found that by using the 1980s endowment fund, they could match the donations given by the computer companies with the money from the province and end up with a very cheap system. It became quite a popular mode of financing computers over the past year. In fact, I had to put a freeze on the expansion of the use of the endowment fund for computer facilities until I had a chance to investigate what would happen with that fund. The information given to me by a group of experts and people in the area — whom I thank for their services — was that if we're not careful, all the money will be used for computers and will not be evenly allocated to the institutions. So at this point I'm looking for a way, first of all, to extend the program, to extend the use of this money, because it is in fact a fixed sum and we'd like to see it last longer into the 1980s. Secondly, we're limiting to some extent the use of the program for computers. None the less, a fair number of computer systems have been put in place. This has been done by matching the private sectors' contributions with our own money from the endowment fund and therefore providing the facilities to the institutions. That's important in terms of its unique way of financing computer systems and, of course, recognizes some of the questions which many members asked with respect to how the government was responding to the need for computers in the educational field. I think to some extent I have dealt with that.

Moreover, it does point to what I think is a new era in terms of funding; that is, that many of the advanced education institutions are recognizing that the government alone cannot carry the costs of these expensive capital buildings, that there has to be some contribution by the private sector or by the public beyond government expenditure, similar to what is happening in parts of the United States. Many institutions have formed foundations which are fund-raising organizations. By raising money in the private sector for special purposes within these institutions, these dollars are then matched by the endowment fund. Again, the money is parlayed very quickly for specific purposes. I think that will be a direction in which we'll have to move more in the future, as the availability of dollars in the public sector, in terms of government, is restricted. That deals to some extent with one of the futures in terms of funding. It may or may not invoke any debate or response, but I think it's one of the realities which we have to face as we consider the options for financing in the future.

Several others have also mentioned the problem of program development. They mentioned it in the context of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and the new Westerra Institute of Technology. Certainly the work of the MLA for Stony Plain with respect to getting that facility there in the first place is commendable. No doubt that will be a major facility in his constituency and in his area, and I know it will be a major contributor to the expansion of advanced education in our province.

It has engendered some problems in terms of the separation of programs. In discussion with both boards, it's my understanding that they have an arrangement, a committee, a set of guidelines, which is working on the details as to how the separation will take place. Of course there are difficulties and disagreements, but at least at this point they are moving with some progress to disentangle the programs. I would expect that when classes at the Westerra Institute start in September 1983, these will have been rationalized. Should there be any problems along the way, Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that it is my view that it would be my responsibility, either by

myself or through my department, to intervene to ensure that there is this rationalization of the program separation between the two colleges. I agree it's not easy, but I think it's one we have to move on.

In the context of rationalization of programs, which to some extent was one of the questions raised by my colleague from Clover Bar — he may not have raised it with that exact expression, but my notes show it as rationalization. I think the comment was, first of all, what are we doing in terms of measuring supply and demand — supply in terms of student numbers and which faculties, and demand in terms of where the job opportunities are once the student graduates?

I already mentioned the rationalization of some of the technical programs between Westerra and NAIT. But on a much broader basis we have had some opportunity to examine a model for dealing with the duplication of programs in the province, in the area of business schools in particular. We brought together the business schools in the province and talked about the duplication, about the need for job requirements from the private sector, about the problems the institutions faced. Over a two-day period in early February, we had an opportunity to discuss the future of advanced education in the case of business schools and undergraduate schools, which are now crowded — at least there is a quota in some of these schools. We attempted to rationalize part of the problem and move towards rationalization of the future development of these schools in the province. The academics and the administrators agreed to meet again and continue to talk in this direction. It was a very fruitful effort of government, the institutions, and the private sector, attempting to deal with the problem of the future of students, in particular what kinds of job needs each of the employers would have.

At the same time, major work was done in September 1982, if my memory is correct, by the Economic Council of Canada, which sets out the expectation of the demand for jobs for the next decade, suggesting where the supply would come from. At that point, I might note that nurses were in very short supply over the decade. I suggest that in the short term it may well be that in the case of Alberta, subject to the views of others, we have come close to balancing the supply and demand for nurses. But when my colleague the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care completes some of the additional hospitals which are on stream, I am sure that any surplus which may appear will be taken up.

While I'm on the question of nursing, let me just say that over the year we have moved into Advanced Education the additional schools of nursing which were hospital based. Secondly, we're now in the process of completing the agreement with the psychiatric nurses. It's my understanding from my department that that agreement is ready for us to sign, and the budgeted dollars for the training of psychiatric nurses in the province are now in Advanced Education.

Nursing research is a priority of this government. Established this year, under Vote 2, we have an amount of \$200,000 in the budget. That \$200,000 will be up for bids from various proposals across the province where certain nurses or people interested in research toward nursing education and nursing in general will make submissions to us. This will be evaluated by a board, which is now in place, along a set of guidelines which they're now working on. We imagine that in the near term there will be several representations to that board to get into the spending of the \$200,000 annually, the \$1 million agree-

gate for nursing research. I think major things will come about as a result of those expenditures, and I certainly encourage anyone who is interested in that area to make a submission to the board.

As I said to the member who raised the question of nursing articulation, it is my view that all nurses are articulate. In particular, the nurse who raised the question is more articulate than others. We do have some problems in this area in smoothing the nursing program from the practical two-year program into the B.Sc. program, or a university based program. My understanding is that we are making some attempts at it. We've lengthened some of the experiential period to comply with more academic learning. It's working somewhat, but we need to improve it. I think that is the general indication I have. I must say that I look forward to any more direction as to how we may move. I suspect that there'll be several suggestions to me.

The implementation committee has also completed its work, as I'm sure the member well knows. I think we have solved some of the objectives which we set out to do, including the stabilization of supply and demand of nursing, developing the nature of the programs, nursing research, developing and attracting qualified faculty to the universities and to the hospital-based programs and, finally, the transfer of the hospital-based programs to Advanced Education, a process which I understand my colleague Jim Foster initiated in 1973 and which some few days later has now been fully accomplished.

With respect to my colleague from Lethbridge West, who raised a question close to my heart — that is, the social work program at the University of Lethbridge — this has been a difficult one for us. First of all, it does tie in with the rationalization of programs. I'll simply open the discussion by saying that right now, the bachelor of social work program is handled by the University of Calgary. At the same time, they have run satellite operations at the University of Alberta in Edmonton and at the University of Lethbridge. The problem was that the University of Lethbridge has now ended because of shortage of funds. We did not have the operating dollars to step in and provide the assistance. So many of the MLAs in southern Alberta had, I think, a substantial number of requests to ensure that that program could be extended.

In discussions with the director of the school at the University of Calgary and with the department in terms of available resources, I can announce this evening, Mr. Chairman, that the government will continue with the program of social work at the University of Lethbridge. We will continue to ensure that that program stays at the University of Lethbridge under the auspices of the University of Calgary. This is a fairly substantial commitment, something in the order of \$337,000 a year. This will be made to ensure that students interested in that program can continue at the University of Lethbridge.

In the context of rationalization, there will not be any new programs in the sense of new program development money at the University of Lethbridge or the University of Alberta. It would be my expectation that they will continue with the existing system, now that we've provided the funding for the University of Lethbridge. I hope that that is good news to those students wanting to go to school at the University of Lethbridge in the bachelor of social work program. I think we have now crossed that bridge and the opportunity exists for them to do so.

Others have talked about the question of deficits. It's always a problem dealing with deficits, because these in-

stitutions are dependent on two major sources of funding: one, the Alberta government and, secondly, tuition fees. I don't think any of us want to put additional pressure on the tuition fee bases. As a result of that concern, we enunciated a tuition fee policy last year which set in place certain guidelines for increases in tuition fees of various advanced educational institutions. At the same time, dollars are scarce here in the province, and I think we have to adjust some of our transfer of money for the operating accounts.

So if there is a situation where an unexpected deficit should occur, that in fact can be covered by either drawing upon additional resources or surpluses which the institution may have, or communicating with the Department of Advanced Education and setting out a plan for them to remove that deficit over the next two- to three-year period. Both of these are acceptable alternatives, and both of these, of course, have been applied. We can't say that you can't operate without a deficit, because that would be an impossible constraint and, in many cases, would be an unrealistic expectation of most of the institutions. But I must say that in all cases, I think the institutions have managed their resources carefully, prudently, and with due regard for the current economic restraint program.

I would also talk about the question of rationalization of programs because somebody asked me — I think it was my colleague from Clover Bar — about the optometric school. I'm sure the member is aware that at the premiers' conference in Swift Current this past couple of months, a manpower study for the western provinces, which was commissioned in Intergovernmental Affairs when I was there, was commissioned and completed. It sets out certain ways in which we can deal with the rationalization of programs within the western region itself, assuming that it's not necessary for us to build a facility for veterinary science in Alberta, B.C., Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. In fact, the experience has been that we will simply bid for seats in various schools, and students will move into those schools as opposed to duplication across the province.

I recommend that study to all. I don't know whether the minister has tabled it, but I'm sure that it's available. It's a very extensive study. In that study, however, it does recommend that the current process should be pursued as an objective to rationalize programs within the western region itself but, secondly, specifically states that in terms of supply and demand of optometrists, there is no need for a school in Alberta at this point. In fact they're suggesting that within the next couple of years there may well be at least a marginal surplus of optometrists. My friends in optometry, including our colleague who was the Minister responsible for Native Affairs and my good friend Walter Mitson in Lethbridge, suggest that those statistics may well not be accurate, and they've made a counterclaim. None the less that's the study, and I think that we would attempt to pursue that. In the meantime, we are attempting, on a co-operative departmental basis, to investigate that study and see if we can implement some of the recommendations in terms of rationalization in western Canada.

DR. BUCK: Any time line?

MR. JOHNSTON: In terms of timing, we would like to see some set of recommendations flowing from that, in terms of public policy from the province of Alberta's point, within the next six months. Finally, we would like

to see those recommendations transferred back to the western premiers, so if there's any direction from them, that could be implemented in terms of a western policy. That of course would be the objective which we follow.

I also wanted to mention with respect to Olds — several of my colleagues have a particular interest in Olds, as do all of us, I think, recognizing that it will be the location of the 1986 world ploughing championship. That in itself will highlight the importance of the agricultural school on an international scale. In the budget this year is an amount of money for the agricultural colleges, including Olds, which will provide for a modest attempt at renovating some of the buildings which are now outstanding, in the sense that they are at such a stage they need to be reconstructed. We have provided in the budget \$2 million for Olds school specifically to allow them to do that.

We recognize fully that the priorities of the Olds College would be with respect to the library and the utilities, and of course a very substantial number of new buildings are required. I don't have the money in the budget this year. I've addressed the concerns with the president and the chairman of the board, and they are presenting a new set of priorities to me, recognizing that we haven't got the amount of money they would like us to spend. At the same time, we recognize that something has to be done. We should note also that any time you build a building, obviously you have to commit yourself to a very substantial amount of operating costs.

Let me also refer to continuing education in Alberta, again operating very successfully in our province. Eighty-three local further education councils in our province — Athabasca, Blairmore, Medicine Hat, High Level, Rocky Mountain House, Provost, among others — 1,070 member agencies, and 1,000 volunteer representatives are involved. As I said, it's working very well. We're attempting to teach non-credit courses to as many people as possible. We provide specific assistance to instructors, managers, and the students, to ensure that they attend the courses.

In the case of English as a Second Language, again this is a very attractive and widely used program in the province. The province, together with the federal government, shares most of the costs on a fifty-fifty basis. We distribute textbooks for them, and we obviously provide instruction, in the hope that as English becomes more available, they move closer to Canadian citizenship. We would like to see that continued. I also have some additional dollars proposed to me by the department in the new program development, and we will be considering ways in which we can increase the efficiency and the deliverability of this program.

The other question I should refer to deals with the continuing problem I face at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology; that is, autonomy for the Alberta College of Art. Over the past few months, there has been quite a series of conflicts between the entity of the Alberta College of Art and the other entity which might be described as the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology: a conflict over instruction, over allocation of resources, over mandate. It reminded me of my days in universities in the 60s when everything seemed to come to a collision with the administrators, and of course it prompted marches on legislatures and various other things.

I did receive a very large delegation from the Alberta College of Art. I met with the key leaders and discussed with them the problems they're facing in terms of communication, organization, a mandate, objectives, and

processes. At the same time, the board of governors advised me that they had directed a committee to investigate the problems between themselves and the Alberta College of Art. In the meantime, they had reappointed a new interim director of the Alberta College of Art, who will act to remove some of the conflict which existed. In fact we're looking now at receiving some report from the college board of governors as to how they expect to determine and to rationalize the problem they are facing. I can't give you any quick answer as to when. But I do recognize the very serious problem, and I empathize with the views the students expressed to me.

I want to deal only with the broad question of capital expansion. One of the items which pervaded all the comments I heard yesterday certainly focused on the need for additional capital expenditure. Everybody had a new building, a new project, a new wing, a new facility. Frankly, if my colleagues can advise me where those dollars are coming from, we'd be glad to oblige, but the difficulty is that we just don't have those resources to allocate in the same fashion we did over the last decade.

As I said earlier in my comments, the era of vast capital expenditures for advanced educational institutions is coming to an end. I think we have to be much more creative than we've been previously in terms of finding ways to provide facilities which students can use. I hope, however, that we can continue with a modest, if not protracted, capital expansion program, based on a very carefully assigned set of priorities across the province itself. That's the unfortunate word which I must bring down today, but it is the reality of the time we are facing. I believe that in most cases the facilities themselves, which are either now built or are under construction, are really without compare across Canada and are very substantial facilities. I would hate to calculate the replacement value of some of these plants. In the case of the large universities, I'm sure it's in the billions of dollars. That in itself is a legacy, in fact part of the heritage, we're leaving to the next generations.

Mr. Chairman, I leave you with those comments. I imagine I've missed some. I would certainly entertain additional questions, but at this point I am at your disposal.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, just one short question to the minister — and I hope the answer will be as short as the question — that is, the representation that I'm sure the minister has received from the Alberta Construction Association as to a degree in construction engineering at the three universities. Has the minister given any consideration to that? I'm sure he just overlooked that.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, in fact I did. I wanted to mention new program development. Currently the department has recommendations for at least 100 new programs in all educational institutions across the province. There have been several which have been recommended to me: the one that the hon. member suggests, and I think another hon. member talked about the expanded engineering faculty. I have been getting a substantial number of letters from various businesses and chambers of commerce across the province for a PhD in business program for the University of Alberta. My colleague from Lethbridge West and I have advocated a master of education program. Unfortunately we just don't have the amount of money to cover all those programs.

Specifically, I can say that in the case of construction technology, the construction engineering specialty, I will

not be able to fund that this year. In the case of the other engineering expansion, I don't believe I have the money to do that, as a matter of fact, in what is described as new course development dollars for 1983-84.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I very much appreciate the comments by the Minister of Advanced Education. They are of particular interest. I am very grateful that the budget for operating the University of Lethbridge, Vote 2.6.5, is indeed an increase of some 9 per cent. That \$1.7 million, I can assure the minister, will be most welcome.

Mr. Chairman, I think I can understand the minister's comments with regard to capital. Inherent in every capital project is obviously ever-increasing operating costs. They must be a significant factor. I didn't quite catch the minister's comments with regard to 2.6.1, the service element. As I understand it, of that some \$7 million increase, perhaps \$2 million is to offset increased costs, such as utilities and so on, within capital facilities. Presumably that would leave some balance.

I'd like to ask a question, though, with regard to new course development. The minister mentioned perhaps 100 new courses. I understand Lethbridge Community College has three new courses proposed. I don't expect the minister to answer the specifics now, except perhaps to confirm what he said last evening, that a very detailed letter would be going, within perhaps a week, to the universities and colleges with regard to their own operating budgets. I think I heard him say that, and I would like him to confirm it.

The final comment, Mr. Chairman: naturally we're extremely pleased that the bachelor of social work program has now been authorized, for some \$300,000, for the U of L. The minister is aware, I am sure, of phase three at Lethbridge. It becomes somewhat difficult where, under the endowment program, the matching program, the U of L has managed to get a commitment from the Max Bell Foundation of \$1 million and, I believe, the city of Lethbridge for some \$400,000, on the condition that it be matched by that fund, which I understand is fine and authorized. However, I wonder if the minister could give some encouraging words — even though he just commented on the capital side that if we could show him where the money would come from, he would gladly encourage it — whether there will be any way that the U of L could somehow proceed with the Students' Union building, something that I think is extremely necessary for the campus at the U of L.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the minister again for a most detailed explanation of his budget.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate an opportunity to explain Vote 2.6.1, for a couple of reasons. First of all, in those service elements, as I indicated, is the growth money, this \$10.4 million. The reason it's in there is that it happened subsequent to the budget being prepared. We did not have a chance, and in fact I have not had a chance even yet, to fully decide on what basis to allocate that. I have indicated that the majority of that money would be allocated on the basis of student population. Secondly, that money would flow as long as the student population continued to expand. Thirdly, that money would not go into the base of the university or the college once the student numbers had dropped off. Those are the guidelines and criteria which my colleagues have imposed upon me, and the ones I have in turn passed on to the institutions.

None the less, in that term-certain funding of \$5 million under the university service element, there is an additional \$1.749 million which is the extended practicum, which allows teachers to go into the school and have an opportunity to become professional and develop their own skills. First of all, this is the first year we've been able to conclude that we would continue with the practicum. Many members will know that there was a study done which suggested a fairly substantial and expensive program. At this time, Mr. Chairman, I can't match the recommendations of that report, but I can expand the program to some limited extent and certainly conclude and confirm that the extent of practicum funding is in the Advanced Education budget this year. We'll be looking at ways in which we can allocate that to universities over the next few days.

Also in that fund, just by way of explanation, is some additional money for vocational training at the University of Alberta, and that in fact wipes that account out. The same thing is true of all the other colleges. I could go through them in detail, talk about insurance coverage, but I don't think that's the intention.

With respect to the capital of the University of Lethbridge: first of all, the University of Lethbridge phase two is just completed. I think it is safe to say it has one of the finest theatrical arts and theatres in Canada. It is a phenomenal institution now. Student numbers are increasing. The academic institution is in place, and it's a very important element of the city of Lethbridge in terms of its social, economic, and cultural contributions. But I imagine I would get some fairly strenuous comments from my friend from Lloydminster and my other colleagues if I suggested phase three was to proceed hot on the heels of phase two. Even if I were not the Minister of Advanced Education, I think I'd have some difficulty recommending that. None the less, the university, by going to the private sector, has managed to mount a fairly substantial campaign of dollars from several foundations, from the city itself, and certainly from the Students' Union, who are also prepared to contribute dollars towards a facility of some sort.

Of course there was a very substantial program in mind, but I have now suggested to the University of Lethbridge that it's impossible for us to continue or to plan for a large facility of that order. It may well be that through the endowment fund with the matching arrangement, we could do something of a modular basis or some smaller opportunity to develop a swimming pool-cum-recreational facility, perhaps even a Students' Union building. But it would not involve a major commitment to a phase three; it would simply deal with funds which were available to the university by contributions which, in any event, would be matched by the endowment process. That is about as far as I can go with respect to the University of Lethbridge.

MRS. CRIPPS: I noted last night, Mr. Minister, the number of advanced educational facilities.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the member kindly use the traditional parliamentary language.

MRS. CRIPPS: Sorry. I noted in last night's discussions on this budget, Mr. Chairman, the number of advanced educational facilities which were being built in various areas throughout the province. I'd just like the minister to note the value of the programs being delivered by the five consortia in the province. These programs are being of-

ferred at minimal construction costs. The concept, I think, is excellent because of the number of resource facilities from which programs can be contracted for delivery in outlying areas of the province.

I want to mention it because I want to encourage the minister to continue the program and look favorably at future developments in this program. I believe it is an excellent opportunity to offer advanced educational courses in the outlying areas with minimal capital costs. It seemed to me that there was a large amount of capital costs being discussed last night.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, [inaudible] with the views expressed, I omitted making reference to the consortia, which I think is one of the more effective arrangements whereby the various advanced educational facilities can reach out into certain communities and provide credit courses at a reasonable price and a reasonable variety. We will continue, at least as long as I am around, to maintain that as a mandate. Frankly, it does solve some of the capital problems, in that we would not guarantee that these would emerge as full-blown second institutions or satellite colleges, but would use existing systems and places and provide funding to run their courses. It's very effective. I've had some comments from the Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest as to enrolment problems, but those are essentially nominal and nothing we can't get around by policy changes.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the hon. minister very much for his comments this evening. He alluded to a number of questions I asked yesterday. I wonder if I could ask the minister a question again, specifically about the further education moneys and the special purpose grants. Could he give us some information on those, please?

MR. NELSON: Mr. Chairman, I don't know that all the questions I raised last night have been answered. However, we'll follow that up a little later.

The minister mentioned that there was \$9 million in new programs, and later on he mentioned that there was going to be something in the area of 100 programs. I'm wondering how we can strike a budget without knowing what the programs are going to be, and how you're going to attribute a cost to them; also, if there's an amount of money in the budget for special warrants that may be offered during the year that we may not be able to see at the present time.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry if I omitted any of the questions. I should have my memory refreshed should I miss them by oversight.

The special purpose grants were in the context of my comment to the Member for Clover Bar. In the special purpose grants are such special contributions to the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, and the University of Waterloo for optometry. They allow us to purchase seats for Albertans so they can complete degrees in subject areas not being provided in the province of Alberta. That also ties into rationalization on a western Canada basis and into the rationalization I talked about in terms of the special study done by Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs for the western premiers' conference. Those are the special purpose grants, and I'm sorry I didn't refer to the hon. member's question specifically.

With respect to new programs, Mr. Chairman, the point I was attempting to make was that because there is

such a series of requests for dollars, 100 in particular, and recognizing that if you initiate a program you must of course continue that program into the future, and that has additional costs in terms of budget implications, it will be impossible to fund 100 programs with the \$9 million I have before me. That was the message I was attempting to get across. As a result, because this budget was made with certain guidelines in terms of broad dollars, and because my colleagues said to me "you will be allocated \$9 million", which I'm requesting from here, you must then turn around and, together with the various advanced educational institutions, establish priorities and allow them to move with these dollars. Some of these new programs have been completed through a decision process, which my colleagues have agreed to, and others are on the open-ended allocation side.

I think this necessary flexibility must be given to Advanced Education to allow us to make these discretionary decisions. Of course the discretion passes once you make the decision to go with the introductory course, and that then requires additional funding for the next year. The risk is that my colleagues will not give me additional funds for the second, third, or fourth year. In case that happens, obviously I have to find those dollars from some other source. The point is that I have narrowed the requests down to approximately a little more than the amount of money I now have. I'm in the process of reviewing those so I can make some decision with respect to new program development.

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| Agreed to: | |
| 1.01 — Minister's Office | \$244,738 |
| 1.02 — Minister's Committees | \$254,246 |
| 1.03 — General Administration | \$6,577,043 |
| 1.04 — Planning and Research | \$218,355 |
| Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services | \$7,294,382 |
| 2.1 — Program Support | \$44,485,312 |
| 2.2 — Provincially Administered Institutions | \$27,519,138 |
| 2.3 — Private Colleges | \$3,244,870 |
| 2.4 — Technical Institutes — Operating | \$114,682,870 |
| 2.5 — Public Colleges — Operating | \$105,167,861 |
| 2.6 — Universities — Operating | \$349,786,643 |
| 2.7 — Technical Institutes — Capital | \$17,107,000 |
| 2.8 — Public Colleges — Capital | \$41,200,000 |
| 2.9 — Universities — Capital | \$80,193,000 |
| Total Vote 2 — Assistance to Higher and Further Educational Institutions | \$783,386,694 |
| Total Vote 3 — Financial Assistance to Students | \$27,860,627 |
| Department Total | \$818,541,703 |

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, without delaying the debate, I simply want to make one brief comment; that is, a special thank you to all the members of the very important Department of Advanced Education for their contributions over the past year. I look forward to the four-year period ahead. Given the information they've presented to me, something in the order of 500,000 Albertans are touched by Advanced Education, a very major responsibility given the times we're facing. On behalf of the government, I certainly want to extend our very best thank you to them.

At the same time, I would obviously be remiss if I

didn't extend a special thanks to my own staff. I very seldom have an opportunity to do that. They have been able to stay with me for the past eight years, in most cases — seven in the case of my colleague Nancy, who went to Mr. Hyndman this last month. Their assistance has been immeasurable. I want to express my thanks publicly to them as well.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Department of Advanced Education, I move that we report the votes of the department for the period April 1, 1983, to March 31, 1984.

[Motion carried]

Department of Agriculture

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Has the Minister of Agriculture any opening comments?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, I have some opening comments I'd like to make before we proceed to my department's estimates. I'd like to say that I was pleased that the Provincial Treasurer gave special recognition to agriculture in his budget when he said:

Alberta's stable and efficient agriculture industry is an anchor of Alberta's economic and social life.

This importance, Mr. Chairman, is reflected in the continuation of programs and new initiatives we have in such areas as lowering of farm production costs and market development.

As many of you know, my personal and department priorities include maintenance and development of the family farm, transportation, marketing, and agricultural processing. Fundamental to all these is research and transfer of that technology to farmers and farm families.

Before welcoming questions, I take this opportunity to highlight some of the variances or increases in Agriculture's estimates. A number of these relate to initiatives and commitments that were made in '82-83. During the past year, the northern drought disaster crop assistance program was implemented with funding of \$26,000,286. This program was brought about because of low rainfall in June and July in the north country. There were also some early frosts, which resulted in very few crops being harvested in most areas of the Peace River district.

To complement the drought disaster crop assistance, it was announced later, on October 22 of 1982, that the province would increase its contribution to the Canada/Alberta all-risk crop insurance program. This enriched program of \$3,500,000, together with increased operating costs of the hail and crop insurance program and the provision of \$185,000 in matching premiums — associated with that was the honey producers' crop insurance program — really necessitated an increase of \$4,265,000. This will directly assist producers in northern Alberta to continue their operation.

In September '82, the 1982-83 Alberta feed freight assistance program was announced to alleviate forage shortages where normal supplies had been significantly reduced because of the drought. The program was retroactive to June 16, 1982, and terminates on May 30, 1983. I'm pleased to announce that as of today, 400 applications have been received, totalling \$1,554,000. As this program does not terminate till May 30, this budget contains \$1,082,000 in direct assistance to producers and represents a carry-over from the '82-83 fiscal year.

Last fall there was also an announced canola crushing industry program, whereby assistance would be given to

Alberta's canola crushing plants that are experiencing severe losses as a result of low and sometimes negative crush margins in the current depressed world vegetable-oil market. This stop-loss program ensured crushing operations during the 1982-83 crop year, and terminates July 31, 1983. Supplemental funding of \$10 million was given to this program, and there's a further \$10 million contained in this budget to cover the April 1 to July 31, 1983, period.

Mr. Chairman, as mentioned in the Budget Address, the beef promotional campaign will receive \$1 million as committed when the beef cattle and sheep support program was announced in 1981. This promotion campaign is the second year of a three-year program. The beef cattle and sheep support program was a tremendous benefit to the producers of the province, and provided approximately \$137 million to an estimated 85,000 participants under the three-part program.

My department budget contains an increase of \$6,845,000 to cover the operating shortfall of the Agricultural Development Corporation, for a total budgetary appropriation of \$65.5 million. This program provides incentive rebates and other subsidies to beginning farmers and borrowers. To finance the activities of the corporation, an estimated \$224 million will be borrowed from the Provincial Treasurer in '83-84.

In addition, today I was able to make an announcement that I was making some adjustments in the Agricultural Development Corporation programs. That's part of the review process we have ongoing at all times to ensure that we're responsive to the challenges presented in agriculture today. Those changes were in two basic areas. The first one was that we have relaxed the restriction on off-farm employment for beginning farmers and Part "A" loans. I think that's relatively significant in times when we have a downturn in the economy and there are some farmers having difficulty. Having that off-farm income is vitally important to seeing that their farm continues viable. I felt it was important to relax that restriction to give that assistance at this time, and also to change when the incentives were paid. It didn't make much sense to me that a beginning farmer would have to go out and borrow money in order to cover himself for up to a year, when now the incentives will be paid on the loan-due date. I think it will be particularly helpful to dairy producers, because that should increase their cash flow. That's the problem we have right now: the assets are there but the cash flow isn't. This should significantly assist in the area of cash flow.

During the 1982-83 fiscal year approximately 90 applications were received under the lime freight assistance program, and there was an estimated cost of \$350,000. The majority of the applications received are from the Peace River, Westlock, Morinville, and Barrhead areas. My department budget provides for a continuation of this program this next fiscal year in the amount of \$350,000.

Inflation, Mr. Chairman, has certainly bothered everyone in the last few years, and some of the programs in my department are no exception. As a result of the increased costs of silver iodide and fuel, the weather modification program has been increased \$414,000 from last year's \$3,450,000. That's to continue the level of operation of last year for the program.

Over the past few months, Mr. Chairman, Alberta Agriculture has made some reorganizational changes. I think it's important that to meet the needs of the people it is supposed to serve, a department has to be flexible and has to learn to roll with the punches. If we're not meeting

the needs of the producers —and that's the only reason Alberta Agriculture is there, to serve the producers — we have to have those reorganizational changes and a change in emphasis so we are really serving the needs of farmers. Alberta Agriculture can't be everything to all farmers or farm families, so we are targeting in on how we can best serve. We are co-ordinating and streamlining our marketing services, our department services, and our extension activities. Also, we have given up a number of positions. I don't think that growth all the time means you have more positions. We have given up a few positions, and we are redeploying some staff to the area of land, soil, and water management.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, Alberta Agriculture's budget, although increased by 15.3 per cent from the comparable 1982-83 estimate to \$191.3 million, represents essentially no growth when adjusted for the expenditures that were committed in 1982-83 and carried over into the '83-84 fiscal year.

I'm pleased to have the opportunity to make a few remarks. The other day I read that agriculture has a profound impact on the economy. Every dollar spent on agricultural food systems generates \$7 for the economy. I think that a pretty important multiplier factor that we have. When you look at the comparison of the construction industry, every dollar creates only \$2.60 in the economy, and the petroleum industry adds \$3 to the economy for the same dollar spent. I think the dollars we put into agriculture are important, and we have to be sure that those dollars are targeted and working in the areas that are important.

I'd be happy to listen to the comments of other hon. members and try to answer questions. Thank you.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make one or two comments. First of all, I would like to compliment the minister on the announcement today on the relaxation of the off-farm employment guidelines. The minister and I were trying to solve a problem that a particular young farmer had, and the minister said that that did somehow trigger him and the department to have a look at some of the people that are working off the farm and trying to make a go of a farming operation. So I would like to say to the minister that I think that is certainly a move in the right direction. I am sure it will help many beginning farmers.

I would like to indicate to the minister that I take the American *Time* magazine.

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame.

DR. BUCK: They don't have a Canadian *Time* magazine any more. Any time you peruse any article on the state of agriculture in the United States of America, it seems to be nothing but doom and gloom. It seems that in Canada, we're never that far behind anything that's happening in the United States of America. I say to the minister that I believe you have a difficult task ahead of you.

I try to stay in close contact with my constituents and the people in the province, and I know many people in the farming sector personally. They are friends, constituents, and patients of mine. There is genuine concern out there. I have a brother-in-law who's been a long-time sheep man. Not only is he a long-time sheep man, he happens to be a long-time Conservative, which distresses me, but you can't have everything. They run a very efficient operation, and he estimated that his net income was going to be down almost 25 per cent this year. That is a

long-standing agricultural unit. It's run as efficiently as I think you can run it. My brother-in-law, being of good Scottish ancestry, doesn't waste too much.

If you use that as a prototype of what is happening in the agricultural community — where you have probably as efficient an operation as you can have, and the net income is down 25 per cent — I hate to think of some of the beginning farmers, some of the farmers who have possibly got themselves into a little too much debt; they've overextended themselves.

I don't know how many of these people are going to be around in three years. I just hope we have an economic turnaround in the rest of the world where people can afford to buy our products. I don't envy the minister in his position. It's going to be a tough four years. I know he's a man who has great energy and enthusiasm for his position, and I am sure that he will give it 110 per cent. But I think it's almost a no-win situation in many instances. So, Mr. Minister, I wish you the best of luck, and I wish the government the best of luck.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Will the member kindly use parliamentary language.

DR. BUCK: I said, Mr. Chairman, to the minister: I wish him, and I hope he has, good luck. It is a tough department. So I would like to say to the minister, but most important to the members of the government caucus, that I know it's always difficult to pry extra dollars out when it's a tight budgeting situation as we have now. But I so well remember, as a member of a government caucus, that a disproportionately large amount of time in caucus was spent on agricultural problems. I know the farmer doesn't believe that. I don't think the situation has changed: I am sure the government caucus spends many, many hours trying to rectify the problems in the agriculture sector. I am glad to see the members are nodding agreement, because it's an area that is still the flagstone and the base of our economy in this province.

I think we have as good farmers in Alberta as you have in North America. They are as progressive farmers as you'll find anyplace in the world, but they are such victims of what happens to the economy. It is the only business that you buy high and sell low. I have said many times to farmers that if it weren't for the tax situation we have in Canada — where the farmer has probably a better tax situation than professional or business groups — I don't think we'd have a farmer left in this country. But you can only go so long on what you defer in taxes, and keep an operation viable. So I am really concerned, Mr. Minister and members of the committee, about our agricultural economy.

I would just like to have the minister jot down a few points that he can bring to the attention of the committee. How is the Prince Rupert terminal is doing? I am sure some of this will be covered by the Minister of Economic Development. What is the situation with Canagrex? I think it's only right that the government tells us what its stand is on the Crow rate. I would also like to ask the minister what the situation is with the Alberta sugar beet producers' board. Is that to become a reality?

Mr. Chairman, those are a few of the remarks I have as general comments. I would just like to say that the minister will have to go slowly and make sure that in our enthusiasm to help diversify the agricultural economy, we don't have too many boners. I think the first Minister of Agriculture in this government, the hon. Dr. Hugh Horn-er, with his burning enthusiasm, got a little too enthusias-

tic many times. There are a few white elephants around. There are a lot of farms and projects that we've taken back, that the sheriff has put the big blue lock on. But that's water under the bridge.

I would like to say to the minister that I wish him well. I know he has a tough job. I say to the government: let's always remember that agriculture is still one of our main industries, and we will be needing food long after the oil wells have gone dry.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Chairman, if I might direct a few points to the minister. Firstly, I would also like to thank the minister for his announcement today regarding beginning farmers. I think that will go a long way.

I would just like to say that we get very, very few complaints about the Department of Agriculture. It is probably one of the smoothest running departments we have in government today. When we do get complaints, it's generally regarding the beginning farmer program, and I see you've rectified some of those through the Agricultural Development Corporation. Of course, any time you are lending people money, there are going to be some complaints when you turn them down or there is something not right there. But with the economy levelling off the way it has, I think that will cure itself a bit.

Mr. Chairman, the one real question I have for the minister: I know that a few years ago we came out with a liming program. I can't find it here in the budget. I would like to ask him how it's making out, how successful it really is, and if it's continuing.

Thank you.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to start out by adding two or three comments to those of my colleagues, in the sense that I too support the fact that it seems we get very few complaints about the Department of Agriculture, except that it's sometimes said that things are done so quietly that the public does not really appreciate the effort the government is making in the whole field of agriculture. Since we are politicians, I think we should look at ways and means of publicizing the accomplishments and programs in Agriculture a bit more effectively.

Mr. Chairman, my reason for speaking is on one specific issue, the Alberta 4-H program in the province. This is a very, very commendable program, involving about 10,000 members and a tremendous amount of volunteer time and leadership being put into that program. I note, Mr. Chairman, that the 4-H Foundation of Alberta is putting forward what looks to me like a very well thought out and well prepared proposal for the expansion of their centre at Battle Lake. I must emphasize that — and I can refer here to the remarks of the Minister of Advanced Education — the proposal they're putting forward indicates that as an organization, they are raising a considerable amount of money. They've already purchased property in that area for their centre. They are going to the private sector for some \$.75 million. They of course would like to see the government respond with a little better than matching money for this facility.

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

My specific question, Mr. Chairman, is whether or not the Minister of Agriculture sees the possibility of funding totally or in part the request that the 4-H Foundation is making and, if not in this particular budget, when we can look for it. What assurance can we give to the 4-H Foundation on this particular matter?

I'd like to conclude my remarks on this particular question by emphasizing that the 4-H associations across the province, the 4-H clubs, accomplish a tremendous amount for young people in agriculture on a very, very cost-efficient basis. There's a tremendous amount of high quality volunteer work put in. The amount of money they expend is very, very productive. In the budget they propose for the construction and operation of this centre, I think some of the things that they feel they can accomplish for the amount of money proposed here are truly amazing.

Mr. Chairman, I finally conclude by urging support for this particular project. It's something that would serve the entire province. It's in a very good location in central Alberta, and I hope that it will be supported.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, it's not very often I get up to compliment a minister, but I would like to take this opportunity to compliment the Minister of Agriculture and bring some of the feelings of my constituency on some of the stands he's taken over the short time he's been in.

One of them is of course on the Crow rate. The people in my area are very supportive of the stand he took on the Crow rate and Canagrex. He is quickly developing into one of the favorite ministers of Agriculture that we've had for the Drumheller constituency. I would also like to compliment him and the former [minister] on establishing the futures market for barley in Calgary. I think it's going to have a very good effect upon the grain market.

I remember standing up here a couple of years ago and spouting off about ADC, saying that it was really slow and not very efficient. I now have to say that the ADC program, at least as far as my area is concerned, seems to be working very successfully. I know that both the former minister and the present minister have had a lot to do with that. There now doesn't seem to be the waiting list there was, and everybody seems to be quite concerned.

Now that the compliments are over, Mr. Minister . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: We knew it was too good to last.

MR. CLARK: I have a concern about the weather modification program. As I look down your budget, I notice that the budget has never increased. I can hear the hon. Member for Drayton Valley already grumbling over on the other side of the room, but I notice that the budget for weather modification has not increased to the extent of what I believe is the importance of the program in central Alberta. I would like the minister to comment, I guess, on taking this program out of the experimental stage and putting it into an active program undertaken by the Agriculture Department because, especially in my district, it's extremely important.

I have another concern, and I have to share that with the hon. Member for Clover Bar. I have a deep-seated worry about the farm debt accumulating in the province, not just in my constituency but all over. It's not just the farm bankruptcies — and there have been a couple of them — but the bankruptcies taking place with the farm implement dealers, where they go into bankruptcy and leave a farmer who has paid for a combine or a four-wheel drive tractor stuck with a court case on his hands, or else paying it a second time. It's something that is going to be more prevalent if the recession, if you want to call it, deepens. I'm just talking about the recession in agriculture, because the price of grain has dropped 50

cents or so a bushel, and the [costs] have gone up. It's caught the farmers in a real bind.

When it costs almost \$80 to seed an acre of land, fertilize it, and get it prepared, it's a big gamble when you seed a lot of land and have to rely on the open market, which I firmly believe in, to sell your product. But at the present time, they are caught in a cost/price squeeze. Maybe the minister in his remarks could make a few comments on the cost/price squeeze that farmers find themselves in and how long he considers it might be before we could see the price of grain on the upswing.

With that, I compliment the minister again on the decisions he's made so far and wish him the very best in the future. Thank you.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, my comments are on Vote 2.4, where I notice there's a 67 per cent decrease in the amount of funding. Supplementary information, element details, shows a decrease of \$27 million in field crops. Could the minister explain that, please?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions or comments? Does the minister wish to respond now?

MR. FJORDBOTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the comments of all the hon. members, because they have expressed the concerns we all share.

The Member for Clover Bar mentioned bringing farmers and the U.S. being all gloom and doom when they talk about agriculture today. Indications are that things are a little tougher across the border than they are here. We are in difficult times.

Many members have brought up the cost/price squeeze, and what's really happening with the grain prices. The problem we're in today is a worldwide surplus. I think one of the facts that makes it even worse is that you have protectionism by the European community and the possibility of a trade war developing between the United States and the European community, which would certainly have a very detrimental effect on agriculture here. We have a sincere hope that that isn't going to develop, and we look at the decrease in the surplus grain that we have. The United States payment-in-kind program will have a favorable impact. They're looking at decreasing the acreage of wheat by 20 to 30 per cent this year. That will translate into a small percentage decrease in the total surplus, around 5 per cent or something, but it's still relatively significant in anything we can do.

I remember from all the years I farmed that I have hauled grain from the combine at 25 and 40 cents a bushel, and then it wasn't that long until it was up again. It isn't that long ago. In 1970-71 prices were down significantly, and it wasn't long before they were up again. It's like a minister coming out with a drought program; before he gets it in place, you need a flood program. If there is a disaster of some sort in the world, that could change the grain prices around. No one has a crystal ball today. In fact many farmers are questioning what they should seed this year because of the worldwide surpluses in many commodities.

Producers are in a more difficult time today, and urban members should be aware of that. It's not easy to say to producers that all you have to do is diversify. It used to be that if we had a surplus of grain, we could feed more hogs or do something in order to get rid of that surplus. But now there are marketing boards in certain commodities, so we are limited to what we can diversify into. So it's not as easy to work your way through a difficult time.

That's why we as a government have to be very responsive. I agree with the Member for Clover Bar. You have to be responsive and try to assist where you can. That's the role for Alberta Agriculture. Alberta Agriculture doesn't tell people what to do; we assist them to do what they're doing, and try to help them over those more difficult times.

The Member for Clover Bar brought up the Prince Rupert terminal. That's under the estimates of the Minister of Economic Development, and those will be up tomorrow. I can say now that the terminal is on target as far as construction dates are concerned. In fact it might be finished sooner than anticipated, and it's coming in under budget. [interjection] That's a question you'll have to ask the Minister of Economic Development. I know he intends to talk about that tomorrow.

The trackage going in there is important. If we don't get a resolution of the Crow rate and get something done so there can be more development of the track going to the coast, to both Vancouver and Prince Rupert, I'm deeply concerned about the higher grain prices that will undoubtedly come and having no capacity to ship that grain. To make Prince Rupert terminal function properly, I think we have to make sure there is the system capacity and trackage going into Prince Rupert itself and the loop coming out, so that we don't have to have a loaded train coming in on the same track the empties are going out on. That will slow down the process considerably. But I know the Minister of Economic Development will talk about that tomorrow.

The other area he raised was Canagrex. I called it a piranha in a fishbowl, and as far as I'm concerned it's still a piranha in a fishbowl. The federal minister said I had it wrong; he's going to have to teach that boy how to fish. He said it's really a porpoise that goes through the water like this and assists people. But I made sure that he heard that piranhas eat porpoises too. So that's pretty important.

I don't think Canagrex will fly or do anything else. We can agree with the basics of Canagrex. We always agree with assisting companies to get out and develop and sell more of our products on the world market. No one argues with that. But it's the whole area of getting in when you can in a joint venture with companies in such a way that you're actually getting into the production of commodities. That's what Canagrex would actually have the power to do. It frightens me when governments get in that position. The latest word I have is that Canagrex will not go through in this session. Hopefully, it will be done with. It has a habit of resurrecting at times, and the market assurance program we saw a few years ago is something that is coming to the forefront again and is being talked about. So maybe we'll have that to look at. I think that's every bit as or even more frightening than Canagrex.

I think our position on the Crow rate issue is very clearly stated. We tried to be very positive to change. We all realize there has to be some change — but what that change would be — and highlighted what we thought were the problem areas we had some concerns with. We're watching carefully now. I hear there's a leaked document out on what the legislation is, but when the leaks start getting leaks I don't know whether to believe it or not. But I look for the actual legislation translating from the Pepin policy, which we responded to. What translates into the legislation that comes is something we'll have to watch for and respond to in due time. We in Alberta Agriculture have been working hard out in the

field, communicating not the Alberta position but what the issue really is, so that it can be laid out and spelled out very clearly so there's no misinformation taken from one side or the other, but to lay it out clearly so that producers have the opportunity to look at it and make up their own minds. That's something we've been aggressively working on, and that will continue.

The other area he mentioned was the sugar beet growers and whether they'll go ahead with the marketing board. That's something they have approached us on, and of course they have to have a vote on whether they want to go in that direction. I haven't had an update in the last week or so, but I understand that that is ongoing. If they have a vote and the decision is a marketing board for sugar beets, we will do everything we can to assist them to see that it's put in place. In fact the chairman of our marketing council has met with them, and they've been in my office and met with me about it. We will certainly do everything we can to accommodate their wishes, if that's the direction they wish to go.

The Member for Vermilion-Viking had some concerns about ADC and said that many of them had been resolved. He would of course be happy to know that we're more efficient now, for a couple of reasons. There's not quite the volume of applications there was a little while ago. That's one thing. We have decreased the turnaround time to one-third of what it was, so we're now down to the point where you can have an answer within about 30 days and don't have to wait forever. Nothing is more frustrating than to make an application, not know where you stand with it, and it seems to take forever. I'm pleased to say that the turnaround time has been decreased.

Also, trying to streamline forms is another area. I never was one to like a lot of forms, and farmers don't like filling out 150 forms. We have simplified and changed them, and that will be ongoing to try to make it more efficient.

In the whole area of the Agricultural Development Corporation, I have asked them to do a total review of all of the programs they have and to look at what they might do to meet the changing, challenging times we have ahead of us. That review is taking place right now in the board. I'm looking forward to the results they come up with.

He also mentioned the liming program. As I stated in my opening remarks, in the '82-83 fiscal year approximately 90 applications were received under the lime freight assistance program at an estimated cost of \$350,000. The majority of the applications were received from Peace River, Westlock, Morinville, and Barrhead areas. The department budget provides for continuation of this program in the amount of another \$350,000.

The Member for Drumheller talked about the futures market. I'm extremely pleased that it is under way. I was happy to — I didn't actually ring the bell; I was able to raise my hand and put it down like that, and somehow by magic the bell rang to kick off trading. Then they put on a good show. The traders were very active on the floor. I was curious to see what the first trade would trade at. The first trade was higher than what we expected. I don't have the latest information with me tonight on the volume traded, but the volume is higher and the price is doing better than we anticipated, as compared to Thunder Bay futures prices.

He mentioned ADC. I've talked about that. I've heard a lot of concern about weather modification, that there isn't enough money put in. There's another \$414,000 added to the \$3.45 million that was in last year's budget.

But we're still in the research area with weather modification. I'm sure the Member for Drayton Valley could say that, fine, you can increase rainfall in a certain area and you can decrease the actual hail, but then you're dumping rain in areas where they don't really want it that bad because they've got a problem with their hay crops.

MRS. CRIPPS: You're right.

MR. FJORBOTTEN: So we have to be careful with it. There's one side that says we should quit all the research and get on with it, because it does work with ground generators and what-not. There's the other side that says no, it's still in the research area and we have to look at it.

We're looking at the formation of cloud and seeding with silver iodide, and that's still in the research area. We have the aircraft not only for seeding hail clouds but also for the research area. I share the Member for Drumheller's concern. When you see the clouds go over and nothing happens, that makes you wonder. Then when you see a big cloud with an anvil shaped top come over, you don't want that thing around. How do you get rid of it? It's an area I think is exciting, that we're undoubtedly going to have to put more money into, and that will quickly progress past the research stage. Right now, it is the best of both worlds. We're doing the job on one side, but we also have the research ongoing on the other.

He talked about farm foreclosures. I'm certainly concerned about that. There were about 18 bankruptcies in 1981. If we look at the bankruptcies in '82, there were 24. You could say that's a 30 per cent increase in bankruptcies. But really, that is only one four-hundredth of 1 per cent of the farms of Alberta, or one seven-thousandth of 1 per cent of the farms in Canada. So when you look at the numbers of bankruptcies, it's not that high. Of course, you can say that that doesn't talk about the foreclosures or the ones who just threw in the towel and quit because they said they couldn't make it.

However, I have a concern about the whole area of farmers being in trouble. The dairy industry is one that particularly worried me. Because of the program announced today through ADC and through the meetings that Deputy Minister Ben McEwen and I have had with the banks, I'm sure we will survive. I get a little tired of everybody running around with gloom and doom all the time. Farmers have always been the type who, when the going gets tough, the tough get going. Every time there's a downturn, there's an opportunity. I always like to say that it's like the two flies that fell into the buttermilk. One quit, the other one swam until he turned it into butter and climbed out. We'll survive this the same way, if we hang in there and work together.

The grain price squeeze is, of course, one area that concerns us. But the area that concerns me more, as I've said before, is to see that we have the ability to move the product. I don't think anything would make me feel sicker than to have piles of grain on the ground and have the price high, the market there, and not have the ability to move it. I haven't got figures later than 1977-78, but then there were lost sales due to system efficiency of \$400 million to \$600 million. Those are numbers that were given to me by the western transportation advisory council. In '78-79 their estimate of lost sales was \$600 million. There were \$20 million in demurrage costs in 1978; ships waiting out there that weren't loaded. Then we have to talk about all the increased storage costs we looked at. I think that getting system efficiency and having the capacity to move that product when the markets are there and

the prices are higher — and as sure as we're sitting here, they're going to be higher. I don't think prices will stay down. There's always some reason why they turn around. We have to make sure our transportation system is capable of handling that opportunity when it arises.

The Member for Ponoka raised some concerns. He said he'd had few complaints but he felt that we were not getting enough publicity. I have to agree with him. Normally, when you talk agriculture — I was going to say it's empty, but I see one face up there that has that concern for agriculture — in the Legislature, there's nobody up there. We try to communicate the best way we can. We have farm magazines, good farm writers, and farm broadcasters in this province. We have Jack Howell and Gerald Vaillencourt working in *Call of the Land*, which is funded by Alberta Agriculture, to try and communicate the programs we have in Alberta to serve agriculture. Nobody pays any attention. We have Ag. Week, when we try to communicate and say how much impact the farming community has on our whole economy. Not very many people pay very much attention.

If you eat, you're involved in agriculture. Whether you actually grow the product or provide the input into agriculture, or whether you transport or market those products, you're involved somewhere in agriculture through that system. Oil and gas might be important, but agriculture is the only essential industry in this province. You're not going very far if you don't eat. So I think that we as individuals have to work on the publicity area, to try to communicate better with all Alberta what we're doing.

The Alberta 4-H program is exciting. Mr. Chairman, the Member for Ponoka has raised the concern they have. I've been happy to meet with them. I've looked at the proposal for the expansion at Battle Lake. I couldn't be too positive towards them, not because it's not a great project but because of budget restraints. There's a limitation to what we can do. They are good lobbyists; I'll have to say that for them. They have a good project, they know it, and they know how to communicate it. I'm committed to trying to work with them to see if there's some way we can assist them. But it is a pretty aggressive project, and it's one they have put a lot of effort into; 4-H clubs across the province have worked hard to raise money to get the project to where it is today. I certainly will try to do the best I can. However, because of budget restraints, I wasn't able to give them much of a blessing of any kind when I discussed it with them. Of course, they are looking at matching money.

It's something that 4-H members are our future leaders. Many of those 4-H members, through the clubs throughout this province, have come to do a few things. I'm a former 4-H member myself. I learned a lot in 4-H, how to pick through grain to make the samples for the Toronto seed fair. I think that team effort we had in 4-H is one I'll never ever forget. It had a great impact. So far as Battle Lake and seeing that development proceed within the budget constraints I have, I'm certainly prepared to look at it.

I think those are all the questions the members raised, Mr. Chairman.

Agreed to:

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1.1.1 — Minister's Office | \$194,699 |
| 1.1.2 — Deputy Minister's Office | \$142,910 |
| 1.1.3 — Surface Rights Board | \$1,208,991 |
| 1.1.4 — Farmers' Advocate | \$275,531 |
| 1.1.5 — Financial Services | \$1,365,454 |
| 1.1.6 — Personnel | \$699,320 |

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| 1.1.7 — Communications | \$3,031,992 |
| 1.1.8 — Director — Departmental Services | \$251,450 |
| 1.1.9 — Computer Services | \$2,106,630 |
| 1.1.10 — Library | \$320,374 |
| Total Vote 1.1 — Central Support Services | \$9,597,351 |
| 1.2.1 — Assistant Deputy Minister — Planning and Economics | \$195,019 |
| 1.2.2 — Planning Secretariat | \$1,098,452 |
| 1.2.3 — Director — Economic Services | \$548,535 |
| 1.2.4 — Market Analysis | \$573,711 |
| 1.2.5 — Statistics | \$364,531 |
| 1.2.6 — Production Economics | \$436,297 |
| 1.2.7 — Farm Business Management | \$871,019 |
| 1.2.8 — Resource Economics | \$304,253 |
| Total Vote 1.2 — Planning and Economic Services | \$4,391,817 |
| Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services | \$13,989,168 |
| 2.1 — Program Support | \$114,373 |
| 2.2 — Animal Products | \$11,507,047 |
| 2.3 — Animal Health | \$7,675,759 |
| 2.4 — Plant Products | \$13,737,938 |
| Total Vote 2 — Production Assistance | \$33,035,117 |
| 3.1 — Program Support | \$172,845 |
| 3.2 — Marketing Services | \$23,619,957 |
| 3.3 — Market Development | \$2,118,571 |
| Total Vote 3 — Marketing Assistance | \$25,911,373 |
| 4.1 — Program Support | \$101,074 |
| 4.2 — Advisory Services | \$11,852,411 |
| 4.3 — Home Economics and 4-H | \$5,830,249 |
| 4.4 — Rural Services | \$11,181,639 |
| Total Vote 4 — Field Services | \$28,965,373 |
| 5.1 — Program Support | \$205,612 |
| 5.2 — Research | \$4,592,264 |
| 5.3 — Agricultural Land and Water Development | \$6,016,607 |
| Total Vote 5 — Research and Resource Development | \$10,814,483 |
| Total Vote 6 — Agricultural Development Lending Assistance | \$65,500,000 |

7 — Hail and Crop Insurance Assistance

MR. R. MOORE: We show here a considerable increase in the operating capital. I would like to get back to the minister on this subject, because it deals with the weather modification area. We looked at that. It is an area that we feel is working in central Alberta, and cutting down on the cost of the hail and crop insurance assistance that's required. We hold it back and increase it here. I'd like to know the rationalization on the part of the minister in this area.

MR. FJORBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, weather modification is one area that we have a lot of concern about. I've been very fortunate in having the people from my department, like Bill Dent, to work with the Weather Modification Board on this very important issue. We

realize this year, because of budget restraint, we couldn't do more in that particular area, even though the demand was certainly there. Before we make large strides, we have to learn to walk before we can run. That was the reason we're looking at combining the research area with the actual application of weather modification.

If I might say something on this particular vote on hail and crop insurance, I've asked the Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation to completely review all areas of hail and crop; for example, like you have a rider for fire, on hail insurance have one for flood. There are areas along the Pembina, also areas in the Member for Little Bow's and my constituencies, that had a hail storm go through, and if the hail didn't get it, the flood did. The flood actually did the damage. I think it would be important all across this province to have a flood rider on the insurance. I've asked them to look at that.

When we're talking about all-risk crop insurance it must be kept in mind that under the federal/provincial agreement, coverage is limited to 70 per cent of the long-time area average yield, or the 10-year running average, and premiums are based on a 25-year loss of risk average. The federal government contributes about 50 per cent of the premiums, and any further subsidies or payments are the responsibility of the province. With the extreme drought conditions that we had in 1982, particularly in the Peace River area, there were very heavy crop losses, and it was evident that many farmers were going to be in a very serious financial position. The province, recognizing this problem, implemented the assistance program to assist farmers who suffered heavy losses. Under this program, approximately 2,600 Peace River area farmers received over \$16.5 million.

One condition of the advance was that the ones who received the benefit had to participate in the all-risk crop insurance. They had to take out policies with crop insurance for the years '83, '84, and '85. Present contract holders were also eligible to apply for the drought assistance advance. The number of contract holders paid under both programs has not been broken down, but it really might be worth noting that in 1982 there were 312 crop insurance contract holders and 1,176 claims paid out, amounting to that \$10.6 million. The province also has a premium subsidy in effect for high-risk areas and paid out \$662,000 on behalf of the Peace River farmers.

It must be recognized that there's a need to improve coverage in many of the Peace River areas. The following changes in the crop insurance program that I'm going to state now have been made to try to assist them to cope and to get involved in crop insurance. There won't be another drought assistance program for them. They're going to have to get involved in crop insurance. We have made some changes for them so they will get involved. To do that, the province now assumes all the farmer's premiums where it exceeds 6 per cent of coverage at the 60 per cent level, and 8 per cent at the 70 per cent level. The end effect is to greatly reduce premiums for farmers in the Peace River area. They can't say it's too costly, because it's now been significantly improved.

The other area of concern in the Peace River was E soil classification, and we eliminated that soil classification in that particular region. All E soil has now been upgraded to a D classification which, in effect, gives the farmers even more coverage. Another change is that the green area or the 1 and 2 subclasses as utilized by the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation have been eliminated. This, along with eliminating the E Class soils, gives the Peace River farmers just three soils classes — B, C,

and D — compared to what there was before. There were 12, and B1, BB2, C1, CC2, D1, DD2, E1, and EE2. We've eliminated those, and now it's back to the three soil classifications.

We also looked at recalculation of the coverage and premium rates, taking the above changes into account. There are also further changes under way to try to make an improvement. The other day, the hon. Leader of the Opposition said that hail and crop insurance in the north was a bust. I can't believe it's a bust with changes like that. And to make sure we're not making decisions in Lacombe or in Edmonton that affect them without knowing exactly what happens, we've had the board of directors of the Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation hold a series of public meetings in Fort Vermilion, Manning, Grimshaw, Fairview, Rycroft, Grande Prairie, Falher, and High Prairie. There were a lot of farmers in attendance, and they were able to hear first-hand what the problems were and what modifications we could make.

The northern drought assistance program: the applications received to date show that while there were severe losses in localized areas, losses aren't enough to warrant assistance under this program. There have been other areas of the province which have said, well, if the northern area got the assistance, why can't we get it, because we had losses too? However, there were localized losses in the rest of the province but not as broad as it was in the Peace River area. Considering the basis for the payment and the fact that losses are mainly the result of hail storms in these pocket areas, the coverage was not expanded to other parts of the province.

There's been another one that's raised some concern in the north, and I'd like to talk a little bit about that right now. It was an area of water pumping program. We've had some concern in areas of the north that because of having no snow in the run-off, they're concerned about the dugouts being empty and they wanted to have pumps to pump them. We didn't feel the pumps should be going out now, because they'd freeze up the first night and then we wouldn't have pumps.

However, we have an ongoing water pumping program operated by the engineering branch and co-ordinated through district agriculturalists and regional engineers. We have 33 trailers now in the province, with one mile of pipe on each one. There are 20 pumps. In 1982 there were 700 dugouts filled, and in 1981 about 750 dugouts were filled. It's another area where we tried to assist the Peace River farmers in their dugout pumping last year. Due to the severe drought conditions in the Peace River area, farmers were rebated \$125 each for every dugout filled. The pump only costs the farmer \$250 to begin with, so in the north last year we rebated half of the cost back to him. I think that's pretty significant.

So when we are talking about the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation, or any other parts of the program, and weather modification, it all ties into water or moisture in some way. We are trying our best to accommodate in every way we can. Just to give you some idea, the water pumping budget program for last year was \$210,000, and that will be continued. If there are further concerns — it's been a standing joke that sometimes we have to use those pumps to take out the excess water. But that's one area that we don't have any control over. We'll continue to try to meet the needs there are today.

Mr. Chairman, I think those are all the comments I have.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, we were talking about hail and crop insurance. The north is not the only area where they have difficulty with hail and crop insurance. The minister knows that the Agriculture Department has for many years advocated less summer fallow and more stubbling in. From watching my son farm, my own place, and my neighbors farm their places around me, I've found that for once they were right. I believe we can grow almost as much on stubble as we can on summer-fallowed ground. It's not too often they're right, but this time I believe they are.

The problem that arises in our area is the great difference between the amount you can receive in hail insurance on a stubble crop and on a summer fallow crop. On one hand, your department is saying you must go to stubble to preserve the land and to keep it from drying out and blowing away. On the other hand, you're saying that if you do that we are not going to insure your crop for so much. As I'm sure the minister knows, it costs just as much or even more in modern farming to stubble in a stubble crop as it does to summer fallow.

My question, Mr. Minister, is: are you going to look at that area in southern Alberta and see if you can come up with a more equitable way of funding the stubble crop, so it's more feasible to do what your own department is asking the farmers there to do?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Government House Leader if he would consider holding the final vote until tomorrow, because I know there are other hon. members who had commitments this evening and they couldn't get into the debate.

MR. CRAWFORD: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The intention is to hold the final vote until the next time Agriculture is called.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did the minister wish to make a response?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The member raised a concern about the stubbled-in crop and the coverage you get in comparison to summer fallow. That's part of the ongoing review taking place right now. The Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation is looking at the whole area. However, you have to realize that there's a separate hail pool and the crop insurance on the other side. The hail insurance through Alberta Hail and Crop is basically the same as you would find from the line companies there. But it's one area we are looking at. Hopefully, as usual, we will blaze new ground and be one step ahead to try to meet the changing times we're in.

One of the areas we have to work on, of course, is erosion and looking at new ways of seeding our crops, rather than sometimes just about working them to death. We can look at zero tillage. When we get into that type of area, we have to be prepared to modify and change our programs to meet the changing farming practices and to meet changing times. That's one area they'll certainly be looking at in their ongoing review.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 7 — Hail and Crop

Insurance Assistance

\$10,210,000

8 — Financing of Alberta Grain Terminals

MR. CLARK: I would like to ask the minister a couple of questions on grain terminals. How much are they being utilized? Are they being utilized to the full extent of their capacity? If not, are there any plans to increase that capacity? I would also like him to comment on whether or not Alberta Terminals has some limits placed on it through federal legislation under the Wheat Board or the transportation powers that limit the use of these terminals to Alberta growers. In other words, are we as farmers ever going to be able to haul directly to the terminals and load out of those like an ordinary elevator system, where we could have a unit train or some such arrangement in the future and upgrade these terminals so they could handle a unit train? Or are there some restrictions at the present time under federal legislation?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, Alberta Terminals is one of the exciting areas we have in the province today. They're running very well. I might respond to the member's question by saying that by delivering directly now to Alberta Terminals' facilities and to the grain company of your choice — for example, in Lethbridge the United Grain Growers has its office in Alberta Terminals; they don't have an elevator in the city of Lethbridge, so they are utilizing Alberta Terminals — the Alberta farmer was able to obtain an average of \$20 per tonne more for his rape seed than he could have obtained by delivering to his local grain elevator. It's pretty significant, I think, that by delivering to Alberta Terminals you could make that type of saving.

In total dollars, this amounts to about \$1 million a year since ATL has been in business. This better price is due to many grain merchants operating under the same roof, and there's keener competition when you're under the same roof ATL's terminal tariffs are really a saving over some of the country elevator tariffs. So that's also a saving.

The upgrading of the terminals was part of the purchase. When they were purchased, an upgrading was to take place in those terminals to upgrade them to code. The requirement in 1980 dollars was \$24,258,000. The breakdown was to be \$8,639,000 in Calgary; Edmonton, \$9,525,000; and Lethbridge, \$6,094,000. The expected completion date to bring them up to code would be 1990. The amounts spent to date are considerably less. For example, in Calgary the total expenditure in 1980 dollars would have been around \$8 million and as of December 31, 1982, we had spent \$846,000. We have held up some of the expenditures for upgrading at Edmonton. We have a problem with truck traffic. The trucks now go through a residential area, and we're looking at how that can be improved.

Once Alberta Terminals gets functioning the way it was really meant to, unit trains will undoubtedly be one of the more important areas that will have a positive impact for producers in this province. We can look at a quicker turnaround time from there. We can clean the grain there, and the screenings can stay here rather than being shipped out. There is a lot of benefit. It never did make much sense to me that when I hauled grain to the elevator, they took the screenings away from me but I had to pay handling on the total amount, including the screenings. I had to pay shipping on the total amount, including the screenings. Then they cleaned it at the other end, and the gross cleaning rate was worked out including the screenings. And then the screenings went back into ter-

minal profits. It would make more sense if they could be cleaned at this end. I know we have a market for screenings at the coast, and we are shipping screenings out there in some of the hopper cars to try to reach some of that market. I think those are some of things we can look at in the future that can be changed.

Alberta Terminals has a very exciting board of directors. They are aggressive people, and they want to serve the producers. They realize that's the only reason those terminals are there. They're not there to be like a picture to look at. They are meant to work for the benefit of the producers of this province. The board is very aggressive in trying to meet the challenges they see before them. I have been pleased to meet with the board on a couple of occasions. As the Alberta government owns the terminals, the shares are in the hands of the Minister of Agriculture. So I am the shareholder and have the opportunity therefore to play some role in seeing the proper utilization of those terminals.

I have agreed with the board, who wanted to do a feasibility study on some market potential in the Fraser Valley. That is being looked at the moment, and we will see what comes back from that particular study. These are some of the ongoing parts taking place right now in Alberta Terminals.

MR. R. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, while we are on grain terminals, the hon. minister said they were doing studies. Is there any thought to establishing grain terminals for the Peace River country and central Alberta, say Red Deer? Calgary, Edmonton, and Lethbridge serve those areas well, and we have unit trains we'd like to move out of there too. We always have a problem in the Peace River country moving grain. In the study area, is there any thought towards expanding these inland grain terminals?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, how we got involved in the grain terminals to begin with was that they came up for sale, and we were fortunate enough to be able to purchase them. The dollars that went into them compared to what they're worth today are insignificant. But to try to build new terminals to serve parts of the province today I personally don't think would be feasible. The cost of constructing large inland terminals is prohibitive.

However, there are a lot of new, innovative approaches we can look at. That will only come about if there's a change in the Crow rate. We can look at off-track elevator systems where there is no trackage. It doesn't make sense to me to maintain a branch line to haul grain where it costs \$100,000 a mile to rehabilitate it. But we can look at off-track facilities of some sort. We might be able to look at containers in off-track locations. We might be able to use those containers in our seed plants. Clean seed can go in those containers, and the farmer can come in and pick up his container when he's ready for it.

There are other areas we can look at that may have possibilities. There's one I hope would have some merit. I think it's exciting. That's condominiumized grain storage. Why should you talk about storage when we're talking about changing the Crow rate so we don't have to store it, so we can ship it? However, it never made any sense to

me to have tin cans, or these tin granaries, sitting there to store our grain on all the farms. If we can live in condominiums in the city — and I notice that in Edmonton Centre, according to a study that was done, about 90 per cent of the people live in rented accommodation, in condominiums or something like that. Why can't we look at condominiums for grain storage, where you could buy yourself 10,000 bushels of storage? In that facility you could have grain drying facilities or whatever you wanted. You could rent out your condominium if you wanted to, or you could rent out a portion of it. You could do whatever you wanted, and you could haul your grain from the combine right to your own condominium.

There are a lot of new things that can be done that I think are exciting and challenging. It's just going to have to take somebody who's going to grab hold of it and do it. There's possibility of off-track facilities, particularly in the north, and I see condominiumized-type storage maybe having potential right across the province, no matter where you are. I think it's one of the exciting new areas that we can look at.

So as far as the terminals are concerned, maybe they'll come. I don't see the cost feasibility of it, but maybe they'll come. I certainly do see merit in the condominiumized concept.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 8 — Financing of
Alberta Grain Terminals

\$2,867,500

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

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

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1984, sums not exceeding the following for the Department of Advanced Education: \$7,294,382 for departmental support services, \$783,386,694 for assistance to higher and further educational institutions, \$27,860,627 for financial assistance to students.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the Assembly will be in Committee of Supply dealing with the Department of Economic Development, beginning with the portion having to do with International Trade. If there's time, we would return to the estimates of the Department of Agriculture.

[At 10:12 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]

