

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Tuesday, May 8, 1984 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. SPEAKER: It would seem appropriate to observe a moment of silence during which our thoughts and prayers might be about those who died or were injured, and their families, in the tragic occurrence at our sister Parliament of Quebec, which ended a short while ago.

[Members of the Assembly observed a few moments of silence]

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 33

**Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund
Amendment Act, 1984**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 33, the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Amendment Act, 1984. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of the Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

This Bill has essentially four amendments, Mr. Speaker. Firstly, as was stated in the Budget Address, there is an amendment which, after August 31, 1984, will transfer the income from the heritage fund to the General Revenue Fund in order to reduce borrowing and to pay for approximately two-twelfths of the operating costs of schools and hospitals and social services and to help avoid the need for tax increases or significant cuts in services. A second amendment makes the definition of nonrenewable resource revenue consistent with the definition in the Mines and Minerals Act. A third amendment ensures the continuation of funding for previously approved capital projects past March 31 of a fiscal year, and allows a special appropriation Act to be introduced after the start of a fiscal year. A fourth amendment enables administrative expenses of the fund to be deducted from the income that is transferred.

[Leave granted; Bill 33 read a first time]

Bill 43

Alberta Income Tax Amendment Act, 1984

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 43, the Alberta Income Tax Amendment Act, 1984.

As in previous years, the main purpose of this Bill is to maintain uniformity between the Alberta and federal personal income tax laws. There are two specific areas dealt with in that regard: one, with respect to the new carryback of losses, which goes back three years; and secondly, provisions with regard to excess refunds. Royalty tax credits are treated here as a refinement of the royalty system, which they are. But I stress that the amendments relating to the royalty tax credit in this Bill

are not intended to have any effect on the ongoing legal actions that involve claims for the royalty tax credit.

[Leave granted; Bill 43 read a first time]

Bill 248

Children's Rights Act

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 248, the Children's Rights Act.

It declares a child's right to the basic necessities of life, education, parental support, and representation at legal proceedings. Under the proposed Act, anyone convicted of depriving a child of his or her rights without lawful authority is liable to a fine or imprisonment.

[Leave granted; Bill 248 read a first time]

Bill 26

Veterinary Profession Act

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 26, the Veterinary Profession Act.

This Bill is the result of extensive consultation with the veterinary profession and the agricultural industry. The Bill replaces a much outdated Act. The legislation reflects government policy on professions and occupations and includes provision for public representation on the professions council and in the professions discipline process.

[Leave granted; Bill 26 read a first time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 26 be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to file five copies each of two sets of documents: Northern Development Goals for Programs, and Ten Years Later. Both sets of documents have been prepared by the Northern Alberta Development Council.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, last Friday a class from Heisler was introduced with their principal, who is our son. This afternoon it's a real pleasure for me to introduce 41 grades 7, 8, and 9 students from Chipman school in the Vegreville constituency. They are accompanied by teachers Mrs. Leliuk and Mr. Guglich; their principal, Mrs. Zacharkiw, my daughter; and bus operator Mrs. Zips. They are seated in the members gallery, and I ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, today it is a pleasure for me to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, a special group. It is a special group because they come from Garden River, a community located some 600 miles north of the city of Edmonton. Many of these students are here for the first time, and the first time to the city of Edmonton. Of course Garden River is located in the constituency of Lac La Biche-

McMurray. There are 20 students from grades 6 to 9, accompanied by teacher Dave Stainton; supervisors Frances and Nora Nanooch, Leonard and Lester Nanooch, and Sister Lorraine, as well as transportation supervisor Cal Wigmore.

As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, it's a first time for many of these students to come to the outside. In particular to the hon. Minister of Education in this Education Week, I think this is an education. They'll be taking part in the education of visiting a farm at Athabasca, a school at Trout Lake, Blue Quills college at St. Paul, the University of Alberta, the museum, and West Edmonton Mall, as well as a visit to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce this group today, and I ask that they rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly. I look forward to visiting them in September, when we'll open a new school in that community. Welcome.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Member for Camrose, I would like to introduce five Girl Guides who are here today to earn their citizenship badge. They are accompanied by their leaders Mrs. Darlene Wiglie and Mrs. Jean Trautman. The driver is Mrs. Gordon Stromberg. They are seated in the public gallery, and I ask that they stand and be recognized by the House.

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure today to introduce to you and to hon. members 31 energetic students from the Piper Creek school in the southern part of the Red Deer constituency. The students are in grade 6 and have just finished studying government. They are accompanied today by their principal, the well-weathered Blair Nestransky, who is my former football coach, along with teacher Jean Tatlo and bus driver Al James. The students are seated in the public gallery, and I ask that they rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce visitors from the constituency of Edmonton Mill Woods today. They are a group of grade 6 students from Malcolm Tweddle elementary school. Accompanied by their teacher Ms Gloria Kelly, they are observing the functioning of their provincial government. They are seated in the public gallery, and I ask them to rise and receive the greetings of the Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Abacus Cities Investigation

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. It deals with the Ghitter-Orr report. Inasmuch as the report indicates that Abacus may have violated section 14 of the Companies Act, and given the two-year statute of limitations contained in section 14(5), could the minister outline to the Assembly what steps, if any, were taken by the government to advise and inform Abacus investors of their rights and obligations under the Companies Act?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is aware that that report was commissioned by a group of outside directors. It was subsequently made available to the commission and, as a matter of course, was available to the people conducting the Abacus investigation.

In terms of the Companies Act and what obligations, if any, the government might have to make available to shareholders and others related to the company the findings of a report private

to those people who were the outside directors at the time, I think it would be wrong to assume that government would play an appropriate role in that matter at all. The Companies Act basically performs a registry function. When you relate to the two sections the hon. member has raised, it certainly provides the ability to seek a civil remedy for people who believe they have suffered or allege to have suffered an injury or loss.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Given the two-year statute of limitations, however — and despite the fact that the minister has indicated it was a document prepared for the outside directors, but nevertheless sent to the Securities Commission — could she tell the House when the government received the Ghitter-Orr report?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member should clarify what he means by "government".

MR. NOTLEY: In this particular case, could I ask the minister whether she is in a position to advise the Assembly today when the Securities Commission received the Ghitter-Orr report and when the minister received it?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have not read the Ghitter-Orr report. It's something like five years old and, since it probably has been addressed in the overall investigation of the Abacus situation, I didn't believe it would be of use to me to look at that report. I understand it has been addressed.

Shortly after the report became available, I believe it was available to the commission. I understand there was a briefing of a number of people who would have been interested in the affairs of Abacus, in both Ontario and British Columbia, at about the same time the Bank of Montreal appointed a receiver for Abacus.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, following the minister's answer. Could the minister indicate what steps, if any, the government took to review the assertions contained in the Ghitter-Orr report that the regulatory agency in question, the Securities Commission, was not able to comply with its statutory obligations and may in fact have contributed to the collapse of Abacus Cities?

MR. SPEAKER: I'm just wondering whether this question, if I understand it correctly, relates to a report of five years ago. If that be so, then I respectfully suggest that the question would be more appropriate for the Order Paper.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, then perhaps I can rephrase the question and simply ask the minister whether or not, to the minister's ability to recollect, the government has given any consideration to an investigation of the adequacy of the Securities Commission as a consequence of not only the Ghitter-Orr report but the ongoing review of the Abacus Cities collapse.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I said to the hon. member, the report was available to those doing the Abacus investigation and, as such, I hope would be addressed in the information that will subsequently be made available to the House, with respect to the findings of the commission.

Mr. Speaker, I think there's one other area I should briefly address. The hon. member has been speaking to a two-year statute of limitations, and I think the hon. member may not want to say to the House that in fact that is precisely what it is: a two-year statute of limitations. I think the hon. member is hopefully saying that it is his opinion that the Act says there

is a two-year statute of limitations. I think for either of us to comment about that particular section would be giving a legal opinion to the House.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, just on a brief point of order. I really don't think it's a legal opinion; I think it's subsection (5). I won't get into that argument here, but rather ask the minister: before appointing a team to review the study of Abacus, did the Securities Commission fulfill its obligations, as set out in section 32 of the Securities Act, to provide the minister and the Attorney General with a copy of its investigation report, interim and otherwise?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that the Securities Commission, in terms of its own work, leaving aside the outside group that was appointed to do the full investigation, had such a report.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the hon. minister then saying that notwithstanding section 32, which sets out very clearly the obligations of the commission to provide ongoing information, there have been no interim reports, no compilation of data obtained by the Securities Commission in this \$3.5 million review?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, that information would have been made available to the commission. I could bring the details of precisely how many filing cabinets, files, and other documents were looked at in the course of that investigation. But that information would have been made available to the commission when they received the report.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. I'm not talking about the information that I know the commission has obtained; I'm talking about section 32 of the Securities Act and the obligation on the Securities Commission to make available reports on an ongoing basis to the responsible ministers. My question is: has there been any compilation of data, initial reports — the kind of thing the hon. Minister of Education reported on yesterday with respect to the Ghitter report on racial intolerance — any initial report at all from this \$3.5 million study?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, on Monday the commission provided me with the preliminary results of the team that was doing the overview on the seven volumes of the report that was prepared.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister told us "Monday", which I take it was yesterday. In view of the clear obligation set out in section 32 of the Act, could the minister advise the Assembly whether any reports were requested by either the minister or the government during the five years of this \$3.5 million Abacus study?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware if the minister previously responsible for the commission requested any interim information, but I did not. I certainly asked from time to time how the investigation was proceeding and when it might be completed. It is my understanding that those responsible for the investigation were quite constantly of the opinion that it was so incredibly complicated, with over a hundred companies involved, that as the investigation proceeded, that complex situation was more and more brought to the fore. That was the reason they could not report to the commission at an earlier time and were not able to provide an interim report. The com-

panies were all related in some fashion, and there wasn't a way of sort of putting together a small package that related to any one portion of the investigation.

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

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

MR. NOTLEY: Could the minister tell the House whether or not the RCMP, in its investigation of the criminal aspects of the Abacus affair, was able to receive from the Securities Commission all documents which the force was desirous of obtaining?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not able to answer that question. But I do know that when the Securities Commission, or alternately the RCMP, is undertaking an investigation, documentation sometimes flows back and forth as a matter of course.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, undoubtedly we'll come back to this question.

Minimum Security Facility — Alsike

MR. NOTLEY: I'd like to direct the second question, if I may, to the hon. Solicitor General. It's a follow-up to questions posed a few days ago by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley, with respect to the correctional centre at Alsike. With respect to the April 11 public meeting, could the minister advise the Assembly whether a consensus has been reached or whether people in the Alsike area are still concerned and opposed to that particular location?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, there are some indications that at least some of the population of the Alsike area are not yet content with the decision to change the category of the Alsike centre from an AADAC rehabilitation unit to a minimum security facility.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. By way of background, I understand there was prior consultation with the community of Alsike when the original AADAC rehabilitation centre was established. Could the minister advise the Assembly why the department chose not to consult prior to the change of this facility from an AADAC facility to a minimum prisoner centre?

MR. SPEAKER: With respect, it would seem to me that a question which appears to relate to the tenure of a former minister should perhaps be put on the Order Paper.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. With great respect, it has nothing to do with that at all. It is a question of why there was no prior consultation on the question of changing the one facility, which was an AADAC facility, to a minimum correctional centre.

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry, I misunderstood the question. I thought it dealt with the original centre.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the centre is now a small minimum security centre, what is referred to as open custody. The function is in actual fact quite similar to that of the preceding AADAC facility. As I said in the House in answer to questions

from the Member for Drayton Valley, the number will be somewhere in the vicinity of 20, with a maximum of 22, and there are several other of these facilities around the province. Apparently in the past it has not been the habit of the department to hold public meetings prior to opening such facilities in other areas of the province. In view of the fact that there was already an AADAC centre there, a decision was made not to hold a public meeting prior to the change in categorization from AADAC to the Solicitor General's department.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Who made that decision? Secondly, in light of the fact that there is a difference between an AADAC facility and a correctional centre, notwithstanding the minister's answer — and it is my understanding that in the case of the AADAC centre, there was community input sought before that centre was established — by what policy consideration did the government conclude that it was not necessary to have input from the people of the area prior to the change being made?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, there were discussions held with the staff of the centre, who were previously under the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission. The staff have stayed on under the Solicitor General's department and are currently being trained as correctional officers, under the department. In the meantime we have moved in other trained correctional officers and, in fact, some senior administrative officers from the Fort Saskatchewan institution. Having dealt with the staff and the transfer of their category from the drug abuse commission to the Solicitor General's department, it was felt that in view of the minimum security category of the offenders transferred to Alsiike and the intention of transferring others, there was not sufficient indication to hold a public meeting to discuss the situation with the residents.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Given the rather experimental nature of this particular correctional program, was the decision to open Alsiike based on the fact that here was a facility that was available, or was it a co-ordinated, deliberative decision on the part of the government? By way of explanation to the minister, I raise that from the perspective of access to both policing in an urban area and the kind of professional assistance and job opportunities which would be available to people in such a correctional program.

DR. REID: As I said, Mr. Speaker, there are a good number of similar facilities — these small work camps — around the province. Some of them are quite close to small communities; others are in more isolated areas, such as at Nordegg. The general use of the offenders for the Department of Recreation and Parks and other departments of government and for municipal work that's available in the area is a good rehabilitation process. It does enable these inmates to function in a minimum security environment prior to returning to open society, whether they are under probation or not. On that basis the Alsiike facility is a very suitable one for that type of function.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question on the matter of security. Is the minister able to advise how many guards are planned for the institution at Alsiike when it's fully housed with a maximum of 22 inmates?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take that under notice. Off the top of my head, I could not give the hon. member the exact number that will be there when the permanent crew is there.

MR. NOTLEY: A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Given the concern expressed by the citizens in the petition, what ongoing consultation is planned for the Alsiike community at this particular project, as far as the department is concerned, in not only dealing with local concerns but perhaps working through an ongoing citizens' policy advisory group?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, certainly the department staff at Alsiike would be happy to meet with any individual or family who has a particular concern in relation to their location close to the Alsiike facility. Whether there is indeed any need for an ongoing advisory group will be determined by the record of the facility and the integration of the facility into the local population and the community. We have large numbers of volunteers who work in other facilities of this type across the province, minimum security facilities and indeed medium security facilities, and we find that interaction with the department and with the offenders quite a rewarding one for both parts of the interaction.

Vehicle Registration Program

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Solicitor General as well. It's with regard to the new licence plate renewals, specifically farmers who want to renew their licences for three, six, or nine months during the spring or fall sessions of their operations. I am wondering if the minister has reviewed the problem that is being created, and whether some changes are contemplated.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, as the member is probably aware, the intention for heavier trucks is that they will renew their licences as of June 30 this year.

It is the intention of the department that in future, truck licences will be renewable on a three-month quarterly basis. The owners of the trucks, whether they are farm trucks or other commercial vehicles, will be able to renew for those quarters for which they need the vehicle. For the farmer, that may well mean that he does not register for the quarter from, say, December to March unless he's going to use the vehicle for hauling grain.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister, for clarification. I understand that at present the person making application for a licence can delay the commencement date but not the cancellation date, which is that respective person's birth date. Is the minister saying that policy is being changed and does not hold from this date forward?

DR. REID: Perhaps the member could clarify whether he's talking about light trucks — the half- or one-ton types of truck — or whether he's talking about the heavier trucks that are used for what could be described as commercial hauling.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I ask the hon. minister to clarify or differentiate between the light truck and the heavy grain truck. I guess the policy enunciated by the minister — is that for heavy trucks only, not light half-ton trucks?

DR. REID: That is correct, Mr. Speaker.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. Minister of the Environment has to do with the government's so-called privatization. Is the minister in a position to indicate if he has had any discussions with the Kinetic Ecological Resource Group and the town of Ryley as to their proposed disposal site in the area of the town of Ryley?

MR. BRADLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, I have not had any discussions with either of those groups.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate if at this time there's any provision in government regulation or policy to allow a private company to go into the business of disposing wastes?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, in January 1982 there was an announcement of the government's policy with regard to special waste management: there would be a Crown corporation in the province which would oversee the implementation of a comprehensive special waste management system for the province; we would advertise a request for proposals to the private sector, for a private-sector proponent to finance and build such a special waste management treatment facility; and the facility would be located on Crown land. Those policies were put forward in January 1982. At that time a moratorium was put in place on approvals for any specific special waste treatment facility.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, just so I very clearly understand the government's policy, is the minister saying that in light of this so-called privatization we hear about from this government, the government of Alberta, the Department of the Environment, will not allow a private developer to proceed with construction of a plant to dispose of hazardous chemicals?

MR. BRADLEY: No, that's not the case, Mr. Speaker. We will have a private-sector proponent. We'll finance it through a contract with the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Why does the government want to invest public funds in such a waste project when there are people in the private sector who will invest the very same money, possibly borrowed from private agencies?

MR. BRADLEY: Perhaps the hon. member is confused. The request for a proposal was for a private-sector proponent to come forward to construct a facility. To own and operate that facility, they would have a contract with the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. There would not be provincial funding with regard to the financing and construction of that plant. It would be done by the private sector.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, is the minister in a position to indicate if he's had a look at the policy? It seems the clause that is the sticker is: on Crown land. Is the minister in a position to indicate that if that policy were changed, a plant to look after hazardous wastes could be built on private land by private capital?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, the policy which was announced back in January 1982 was after a thorough review by the Environment Council of Alberta, which had public hearings throughout the province. The policy announced at that time by the government was that we proceed in the manner I have outlined. There has been no change in that policy to date.

Unemployment Counselling

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Manpower. As the minister is probably aware, federal funding for Alberta's 11 unemployed action centres runs out on June 30. My question is: will the government be contemplating some funding assistance to keep the centres in business, now that the federal government is considering ending its commitment?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge there has been no approach made to the provincial government. If there was, I would respond.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. After that answer, I'm sure there will be some representation. Has the minister had any correspondence with federal officials about provincial assistance to keep the centres open for a further unspecified period, a proposal which I believe is backed by the mayors and city councils of Calgary, Edmonton, and Lethbridge?

MR. ISLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, I have not.

I can add that we looked at the unemployment action centres approximately a year ago. The initial proposal that came forward was an overlap of many of the services currently offered at the provincial and/or federal levels. Hence we were very reluctant to become involved in the funding of them. From my assessment of what has occurred with those centres over the year of their operation, I would say that our original conclusion that they were providing an overlap of service was verified.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister. Rather than the minister's personal opinion, has the government carried out any studies to test the effectiveness of the centres on carrying out their mandate, or are they just opposed on principle?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the mandate of the centres has done some shifting since their first proposal. Until you get a set mandate, it's very hard to evaluate.

MR. MARTIN: So the answer is, we don't know, rather than the minister's opinion.

A supplementary question. According to the creative development association, which was funded by the federal government, about one-third of the high school, college, and university graduates interviewed in the Edmonton area are jobless, and many are angry about their economic situation. My question to the minister is simply this: are there any new provincial programs planned for counselling the unemployed, especially the young, who are feeling despair at their situation?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the hire-a-student offices opened in our major cities a week ago Monday. They are now open in many of our smaller centres. The job orders from the private sector have been very gratifying. The differential between the number of student registrations and the number of jobs available is not as dramatic as I would have expected. Add to that the private sector year-round wage subsidy program and the on-the-job training program, which gives the students an extra tool to use in finding jobs, add to that the very extensive increase in the STEP funding and the STEP positions this summer—an increase of 66 percent, from \$12 million to \$20 million—and add to that the aggressive, positive-thinking attitude of our young people, and I think many of the young people will find some type of employment this summer.

MR. MARTIN: It's nice that the minister has that opinion, but the facts just aren't there. [interjections] I can assure you that a lot of people want to ask this question of this government: will the minister consider any funding support—and I point out that hire-a-student is hardly a new initiative—for reducing what the Canadian Mental Health Association calls...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. [interjection] Order please. Would the hon. member just resume his seat for a moment.

I realize that we've had debate on both sides and, given the nature of the question, that's not surprising. But what the member is doing now for the second or third time is saying to the minister: somebody or other is saying this; why don't you do it? It would seem to me that it would be quite in order to simply come right out and ask the question without at the same time saying: here's some argument in favour of what I'm proposing in my question.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Is the minister considering any funding support for drop-in centres that would help show young people what services are available and how the young should choose the right kind of training — counselling centres as such?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I hope I'm not debating. If you have a program that is working well, you don't replace it; you simply expand on it. Granted the hire-a-student program in this province has been around for some time, but it is expanding as time goes on. It provides the type of counselling service the hon. member is inquiring about, and I think is providing it with the three partners who are critically concerned and involved in this issue; i.e., the federal government, the provincial government, and the private sector. In addition to that, as I've already pointed out, we've put out additional tools in the marketplace for the centres and the individual student to use. So in my mind the response to date has been quite significant.

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the minister, I was waiting to see whether he was going to come around to answering the question — not that he's obliged to — but I must say that I waited in vain.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So did I.

My question to the minister is: because we hear a lot about volunteerism, would the government consider sponsoring and actively promoting citizens' self-help groups such as the south Calgary employment group? Would they consider funding them so that volunteers can do a better job with the unemployed?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with the particular group the hon. member is referring to. And I thought I did answer his previous question, Mr. Speaker, in that we had increased the responses through the existing vehicles.

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

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question on a point of clarification, so we're crystal clear. Other than those measures already announced by the minister, nothing else will be done by the Department of Manpower to aid the unemployed of this province. Is that the official government position now?

MR. ISLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, that is not the official government position. We made some significant new announcements this spring. Many of those programs still have slack that can be taken up. We are very closely assessing how the marketplace responds to them. As has been the case in the past, if there is a need for more responsive actions, this government has always taken them.

MR. MARTIN: That's certainly debate.

Telephone Service — Rural Areas

MR. ALGER: Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications. I would like to ask if the department has examined the matter of providing private phone lines for all farms across the province in order to accommodate the trends toward farm computerization.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the question of individual line service is one that has been addressed by Alberta Government Telephones, as indeed by all the telephone companies in Canada that provide service to rural subscribers. In Alberta there are approximately 120,000 rural subscribers. About 100,000 of those are on what is commonly referred to as multiparty services. That is where there would be up to, but not more than, four subscribers per line. The other 20,000 or 21,000 are individual line services.

Mr. Speaker, the challenge is one of cost: the very high capital cost of providing individual line services as well as the ongoing operating costs. It is fair to say to the hon. member — and it's timely that the question has been raised — that Alberta Government Telephones as well as other telephone companies are exploring ways of using the multiparty services in a way that the various new technological devices can be applicable. But that should not be construed as a long-term solution, which is finding a way to bring affordable individual line services to all rural subscribers.

MR. ALGER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are alternatives being examined that may serve to keep down the expenses that are involved in providing individual phone lines? Obviously they're going to be pretty high under your present system.

MR. BOGLE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. A number of innovative ideas are currently being examined by a variety of telephone companies to do just what the member has suggested; that is, bring the cost of the service down so that it is affordable to the individual subscriber.

MR. ALGER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the department consider providing an individual or separate line to farms that are presently on party lines and would like to use computers? Can that be done at the present time?

MR. BOGLE: To be clear, Mr. Speaker, any Albertan who requires an individual line service ...

DR. BUCK: Has to pay for it.

MR. BOGLE: ... has the right to apply for that service. The service will be provided. As the hon. member has suggested, there is a cost associated with it, an installation cost as well as a monthly operating cost. So it's not a matter of whether or not the service is available: it's the challenge of bringing the cost of providing the service, both in terms of the capital as well as the ongoing operating, to a point that is acceptable to the customer and to the company providing the service.

MR. ALGER: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. Could the minister tell me what his department is doing to help ease the difficulties that farmers who want to computerize are encountering?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I take that question in the context that he wishes me to lobby for single-line service for all farms, and I couldn't agree with that more.

However, I have to say that we have been closely watching the development of computers for farm use and realize that it's going to expand greatly in the future. The only real service the Department of Agriculture provides is information needs for farmers and farm families. We are presently working with an electronic data-processing system. We have done some work in the Westlock area with pesticides, and also are looking to examine and expand that.

We had a survey done lately that shows that about 60 percent of those interviewed said they would like to see some computerization in the district offices and that roughly 5 percent of farm families now have computers. So that will expand greatly. Of course we would like to see anything done that could be, to make sure the information needs of farmers and farm families are encouraged and improved.

MR. HYLAND: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. When the minister is considering the other suggestions, I wonder if he would consider and have his department and Alberta Government Telephones review the possibility of having AGT private lines similar to rural electrification units. Once you pay for a service, it becomes a service to that farmstead. Once you sell the farmstead, the line goes with it. As it is now with AGT, once you disconnect your phone, the next guy has to pay that amount again.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to take the suggestion by the hon. Member for Cypress under advisement and report back to the Assembly in due course.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister of telephones. It's in conjunction with the four-party lines as opposed to the single-party lines. Is the minister in a position at this time to indicate if Alberta Government Telephones is looking at a user-fee principle? The more calls you make, you pay per call, as they do in some jurisdictions.

MR. BOGLE: Not at this time, Mr. Speaker.

Teaching Profession Legislation

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Education. What is the status of negotiations involving the Teaching Profession Act, and might we expect the introduction of a new Act this spring?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, it was my hope that we would introduce a new Teaching Profession Act to the Legislature this spring; however, that has proven to be impossible. We will continue to work with some of the significant related questions during the course of the summer, and we will reconsider the possibility of legislation during the fall and winter.

MR. JONSON: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Was the difficulty, or the reason for this delay, related to any problem with adherence to the government's policy on professions and occupations? Or was that going quite well, and there were some other difficulties?

MR. KING: That is partly a description of the problem, Mr. Speaker. It is true that among the different parties interested in the legislation, the greatest concern was expressed about the application to a new Teaching Profession Act of what is called paragraph four of the policy on professions and occupations. Members will recall that paragraph four is that provision in the policy which provides that professional groups may choose to

be organized in one or in two groups to look after their welfare interests and their professional interests respectively.

The simple fact of the matter is that in our recent experience, all professions have chosen to be organized in two groups, one looking after their professional interests and one looking after their welfare interests. The teachers are the only group that has chosen a single organization, and we need to do some work on developing the model by which that choice could be implemented.

MR. JONSON: One final supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Would it be correct to conclude that the difficulty is not over adherence to government policy as stated but perhaps with respect to the lack of elaboration on existing policy?

MR. KING: Precisely, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. leader of the Independents, and then the hon. Minister of Economic Development wishes to deal further with a previous question period topic.

Temporary Staff Confidentiality

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration is with regard to hiring temporary staff by private agencies. I wonder if the minister could indicate what steps are taken to protect the confidentiality of the workings of those persons.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, just as in the past, when departments have always been free to use the services of placement agencies — and as of June 1 will be provided with a list of certified agencies — the Personnel Administration office has reviewed the practices of each company to ensure how they carry out their hiring practices, how they'll fulfill the client's requirements. Of course part of that involves keeping track of the employees' placements and ensuring with the client that that person is aware of the client's requirements for confidentiality.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Some persons in government take an oath of confidentiality. Will that be required of some of the temporary staff?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, the employees of the temporary staff certified companies are not employees of government. It is government officials who take the oath of confidentiality.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. In terms of that definition, could the minister indicate what recourse the government has in terms of confidentiality being broken in government service when temporary staff are employed?

MR. STEVENS: First of all, Mr. Speaker, each manager would ensure that the confidentiality of material in his or her purview would be maintained. The employee of a company who would be carrying out perhaps specific duties of filing or typing would be advised of the material of that nature, if any. Finally, if there was a breach of confidentiality, I'm sure the department would be in immediate consultation with that company. Depending on the circumstances, I doubt very much that company would be used again.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to clarify a remark I made in the Legislature yesterday. The reference is line 17, page 32, of the Blues for May 7. I said, "we

have a great deal of coal in Alberta". I should have said, "we also have a great deal of low BTU quality coal in Alberta".*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: **WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, in respect of the written questions on today's Order Paper, I move that questions 165, 171, and 172 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

170. Mr. Notley asked the government the following question:
On what day was the hon. Attorney General notified that a recommendation had been made by the commercial crime division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that charges be laid in the matter of the collapse of Abacus Cities Ltd., and by whom was he notified?

MR. CRAWFORD: Agreed.

173. Mr. Martin asked the government the following question:
What is the government's best estimate of when it will be able to table a response to Written Question 129, made an order for a return on March 20, 1984?

AN HON. MEMBER: Agreed.

head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

212. Moved by Dr. Elliott:
Be it resolved that the Assembly urge the government to continue to expand its emphasis on agricultural research and on ensuring rapid transfer of new technologies to Alberta's farmers and agribusiness, in light of the critical role agriculture has in our economy.

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, this afternoon it's my privilege to speak to Motion 212, in support of agricultural research in the province of Alberta. I propose to provide a little history on agricultural research in Canada and how it applies to our province, how our province became involved in agricultural research, some of the good things that have happened, and some of my concerns about where we might be going in the future should the support not continue in a strong and positive manner.

The history of agricultural research is as old as the story of the human race. One can argue that agricultural research was practised when edible plants were first accepted or rejected by man as he walked for food. Indeed the growth, movement, and decline of entire civilizations have been attributed to the availability of food. So it has been down through the ages that society's primary need, namely food, has been the responsibility of the agriculturists in society, agriculturists in general, and agricultural researchers in particular.

DR. BUCK: We all like to eat.

DR. ELLIOTT: I'm sure the hon. Member for Clover Bar, with his interest in agricultural research, will support that.

In Canada the need for public funding of agricultural research was recognized immediately following Confederation, which designated research as a function of the federal government. An Act was passed to establish experimental farms across Canada immediately afterward. The story of Canadian wheat, which began in those early years, will forever remain a tribute to those early scientists. Today the research branch of Agriculture Canada has 35 of these research stations across Canada from coast to coast and employs over 800 scientists.

Agricultural research in Alberta is primarily conducted by four main areas: the federal government through its Agriculture Canada research branch, the universities, the Alberta Department of Agriculture, and the private sector. Agriculture Canada has by far the largest agricultural research presence in this province, accounting for about one-half of the research effort in Alberta. Most of the federal work is undertaken at the three research stations, namely Lethbridge, Lacombe, and Beaverlodge. In addition, they have research substations at Vegreville, Fort Vermilion, and Manyberries. While Agriculture Canada continues to be the most heavily funded institution, its relative position in Alberta has declined in recent years with respect to the rate of input of funding.

Universities essentially have a three-pronged mandate: teaching, research, and extension. Traditionally the Canadian university complex has given first priority to teaching. There, they are training students in the agricultural sciences, and it remains their most important mandate; supplying trained agricultural scientists and agrologists takes precedence over involvement in research. Nevertheless, the basic research and agricultural extension services undertaken by these institutions is a significant benefit to the agricultural industry in this province.

Over 90 percent of Alberta's university-based agricultural research is conducted at the University of Alberta. In addition to the laboratory and greenhouse facilities on campus in Edmonton, the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry operates a number of off-campus research facilities in the Edmonton area. University research funds for agricultural research are obtained mainly from Alberta Agriculture and Agriculture Canada and, to a much lesser extent, provincial and agricultural organizations.

Despite significant increases in research funds to the University of Alberta in recent years, the enrollment of Alberta residents in graduate programs in agriculture has generally declined during the past decade. At present, private industry contributes only a small percentage of the total agricultural research carried out in the province. But this must not be overlooked or belittled, because it does maintain, in a very important way, a high scientific awareness in our community.

The Alberta government had little involvement in agricultural research in the early years. It wasn't until about 1935 that Alberta Agriculture became directly involved when it assumed responsibility for what is now the horticultural research station at Brooks. While many of Alberta Agriculture's current research activities essentially supplement and augment the efforts of other research institutions, the department's overall research program has become much more visible. Alberta Agriculture presently has five major sources of research support. These include: Farming for the Future, divisional and general departmental research funds, the Alberta Agricultural Research Trust, the horned cattle trust, and the Alberta hail project.

The most important is the Farming for the Future program, and I would like to review this area in some detail. The creation of Farming for the Future was announced by the Minister of Agriculture in October 1977, and at that time it defined two specific objectives. The first was to improve the long-term

*See Hansard May 7, 1984, page 721, right column, paragraph 2

viability of agriculture in Alberta, and the second was to help improve the net income of Alberta producers. Farming for the Future's mandate is to support the advancement of agricultural technology by augmenting and complementing research endeavours carried out by the universities, private industry, and agencies of the provincial and federal governments. Mr. Speaker, I feel we must repeat part of that statement, because it has often been misunderstood that the Farming for the Future program should be going further afield into initiating and leading in the research field, whereas it was initially designed to augment and complement present research. It was never the intention that the Farming for the Future program be in a competitive research arena.

Its major emphasis has been and continues to be aimed at research scientists, and this effort is now called the research program. The emphasis on the research scientists in agricultural research in Alberta is there because it is through these people that the projects are initiated in their respective institutions and applications are made through the process, through Farming for the Future, for support for those programs. In 1982-83 the newly formed irrigation program committee approved the first irrigation projects to be supported under the research program. These projects were funded jointly by Farming for the Future and the Alberta Irrigation Council.

In 1982-83 two new funding programs were instituted under Farming for the Future. In order to assist the dissemination of agricultural technology to producers, the very important and very successful on-farm demonstration program was created. As well, the very important and very successful graduate student research support program at our universities was initiated to provide financial support for graduate student research projects that relate directly to Alberta's agricultural industry.

Farming for the Future is administered by the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta. This research council was created in April 1978. The council is designed to reflect the broad interests of Alberta's agriculture industry. It is presently composed of 15 members. The Minister of Agriculture is our chairman, and the Deputy Minister of Agriculture is the vice-chairman. There are seven producers, an extremely important part in the way this council is formed — the seven producers represent not only different areas of production but different segments of the province — and one representative from each of Alberta Agriculture, the University of Alberta, the Alberta Research Council, Agriculture Canada, the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, and the Alberta Irrigation Council.

Here I inject a personal note, because it was my privilege, at the time of the formation of the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta, to be the representative for Agriculture Canada. I'll never forget how it came about. I was in my home in Beaverlodge at 10 o'clock on a Friday evening when I received a phone call from the hon. Member for Smoky River, who was the Minister of Agriculture at that time, inviting me to be the representative for Agriculture Canada. When I said I would be very interested in taking on this assignment but would have to clear it with my officials, the Member for Smoky River, in his usual manner, said: you don't have to bother, I've already done it for you; we have Eugene Whelan's permission and that of your director.

Over the years, the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta has established nine program committees. These program committees review and evaluate research proposals. As explained above, these proposals are submitted for support under the Farming for the Future research program, and each program committee is responsible for a specific component of Alberta's agriculture industry. Although the nature of many of these proposals is such that a number of committees may be required

to review them, that does not cause a problem to the council, because the proposals are transferred throughout and the recommendations are accepted from each of the committees. For the record, I'd like to identify these committees. It also reveals the nature of the scope of Farming for the Future research support and the nature of agriculture in this province. The committees are: [apiculture] and entomology, cereals and oil seeds, forages, irrigation, land use and engineering, nonruminants, food processing, transportation, marketing and socioeconomics, ruminants, and the last one, special crops — a portion of this province which is growing in significance, both in local production and for the export market. Each of these committees is chaired by a member of the council and is composed of producers, scientists, and public-sector managers. This is a whole new group of people that are brought into the process of Farming for the Future by working on these committees, as opposed to working on the council which I referred to earlier.

Under the research program, project proposals are submitted each fall and are directed to the appropriate program committees. There they are evaluated, comments compiled, and returned to the research council for evaluation. Each proposal is appraised in terms of Farming for the Future's objectives. It is also appraised for the merit of the proposed research and the current information needs of Alberta's agriculture sector. Committee evaluations and recommendations are then forwarded to the council for final decision. This particular process adds one more dimension of very great importance to the whole mandate of Farming for the Future, namely that of being able to be selective in the research which it wishes to support. As pointed out, if the research is not of a nature that would add to the basic information pool on those problems which are directly related to agriculture in this province, it would probably be given a low priority.

Farming for the Future is financially supported by the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. In 1979, which was the start of its first five-year mandate, it was funded with \$10 million. In November 1980, an additional \$15 million was allocated to the program from the heritage fund. This additional funding at that early stage was a response to the wide scope of interest throughout Alberta, throughout the research community, that was displayed for this program. Thus, during its first five-year mandate, which ended with the 1982-83 fiscal year, a total of \$25 million had been provided in support of agricultural research in Alberta. And I point out, "in support of". During 1982-83 there were 150 projects, covering all agricultural commodities, conducted in provincial, university, federal, and industry research facilities.

During the fall 1983 sittings, approval was given in this Legislature for a new mandate for Farming for the Future. The mandate is effective for three years. However, funding was approved for only one year at \$5 million, and this represented a 28 percent reduction from what had been experienced in previous years. In addition, Farming for the Future will have to assume more of its own administrative costs, and this will further affect its budget.

Fourteen research agencies received funding from the Farming for the Future program during 1982-83. The two most heavily funded agencies were the University of Alberta, with \$2.06 million in that year; Agriculture Canada was the second most heavily funded agency in Alberta in 1982-83, at which time \$1.75 million was directed to support research programs being conducted in Agriculture Canada research stations. Other agencies were Alberta Agriculture, the Alberta Research Council, Fairview College, private industry, Veterinary Infectious Disease Organization, Western College of Veterinary Medi-

cine, and the universities of Calgary, Guelph, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Toronto. The interesting thing about that statement is that it shows that the Farming for the Future program was designed in such a way that funds could be assigned to research projects outside the province, provided those projects were directed at finding solutions which would assist with the mandate and objectives of the Farming for the Future proposal.

I have some personal observations at this time, Mr. Speaker. The research branch of Agriculture Canada is one of the finest agricultural research organizations in the world. Administratively, it is the leader of all the departments in Ottawa and is frequently the innovator and test area for new administrative plans. Scientists who work in Agriculture Canada's research branch are dedicated and held in high regard wherever one travels in the world. It is no accident that Agriculture Canada scientists are frequently invited to participate in technological missions by other countries.

It was my privilege to be a member of such a mission, requested by the People's Republic of China to visit their country and explain to them some of our major recent developments in plant breeding, plant seed physiology, legislation relative to pedigree seed production, and the administration of the Seeds Act in Canada. This type of participation in international agriculture is not new to scientists working on the federal scene. During that tour to China — of particular interest to us at this time — much of the 30 days was spent in our sister province of Heilongjiang, where cropping conditions are so very similar to much of the northern portions of our province. Consequently we were able to compare notes on items relative to grass and legume seed production, barley, rapeseed, and wheat.

Mr. Speaker, research is expensive. Individual scientists are always frustrated by inadequate funding; I say "inadequate" relative to the capacity of the research scientists to provide new ideas, new plans, and the necessary supervision for additional support staff to conduct that research. The frustration of inadequate funding is particularly in the areas of supplies, travel, and additional hands, frequently referred to as seasonal labour. The scientists with Agriculture Canada are no exception. Thus, with the creation of Farming for the Future in 1979 and continued support during the past five years, funding was made available for selected and qualified projects to augment and supplement existing research. To those of us involved in the research branch of Agriculture Canada, this was truly a breath of fresh air, because this would positively impact our research in many ways.

The two most common ways were that we were immediately able to collect more data in a shorter time frame, a vital objective to any research program if one is going to cut down the time required to get the finished product from the program. This meant that new varieties and new technology could be made available to producers in the area much sooner. In some cases it was cut in half. For example, it is suggested that the plant breeding time for a new barley variety could run from 10 to 20 years. This time was cut in half. New barley varieties were released in this province in less than five, because we were able to collect additional data from more places and get a faster reading on the progress of the research program as it developed.

The second major area was that new technology could be transferred more rapidly to producers through demonstrations on the research stations and through more field trials throughout the region. This was a very valuable portion of this Farming for the Future project, because in so many instances we have research on the shelf that has not yet gone out to where it can be used by those who need it. Being able to speed up the

dissemination of this technology and get it into the hands of the people who needed it meant that the economic impact of that research was felt much, much sooner.

To demonstrate some of the points I've been making, I have a short example. Of course I would like to relate this example to the area where I was working in agricultural research, namely the research station at Beaverlodge in northern Alberta. I suggest that if one reviews the agricultural history of the northern part of this province, one would soon note that there were two industries that developed simultaneously. One was a forage seed production industry, made up of both grasses and legumes, and the other was a honey production industry. The former, made up of grass and legume seed production, was a natural for an area with a short growing season and a sensitive soil very prone to wind and soil erosion and seedbed crusting, and deficient in organic content and associated fertility.

Grasses and legumes generally are cross-pollinated. This means that if you're going to get seed production, you have to have more than one plant, because the pollen from one plant must be spread to the flowers of the other plant in order to complete pollination. Grasses have it made, because they have a very light pollen. It is wind borne and disseminated throughout the fields on the wind. Cross-pollination is very seldom a problem with grasses. However, legumes have a heavy, sticky pollen. This pollen must be carried from one plant to another and can't be carried on the wind. Therefore this job is done by insects such as the honeybee, as it goes about its job from plant to plant collecting nectar. The important thing here is that the honeybee needs the legume plant and the legume plant needs the honeybee. Thus we had developing in northern Alberta a seed production program, much of which was legume crops, and a honey industry which dates back just prior to 1910. Continuing with the honey aspect of this, we have in Alberta today a honey industry which is worth \$18.5 million annually, a major portion of that coming out of northern Alberta.

Beekeepers traditionally imported bees from California each spring and killed them each fall, and a whole new trucking enterprise grew around transporting bees into Canada each spring. In recent years this transportation and transfer of bees brought with it certain problems such as bee diseases and parasitic mites. And along with the increased cost of transportation there was the increased cost of production of honey. These problems threatened the industry, and research scientists at Beaverlodge were challenged to find solutions. New research plans were developed, but the constraints of funding precluded a rapid solution. The interesting thing is that it was about this time that Farming for the Future came into effect.

The honey producers in this province approached the provincial Department of Agriculture and the Farming for the Future program. With the co-operation of the federal department and their scientific expertise and facilities, the provincial department with its funding through Farming for the Future, and the beekeepers in this province, a very important new program called the Alberta bee breeding program was established. The objective of this program — and here's how complicated scientific objectives might be — was to breed for Alberta climatic conditions a bee that displayed superior docility, overwintering ability, honey production, and disease resistance. During the period 1979 to 1984, this was one of the most heavily funded projects under Farming for the Future and one of the most successful. A brief look at the results will show us.

The breeding parts of a honeybee — this is an extremely complicated research assignment. Number one, we have a haploid biological unit in the adult bee. This does not appear very often in the biological world. This is a complication which one

must face to even start breeding a new breed of honeybee. One of the other difficult things about it is that the queen bee mates only in flight, and control of the male segment of mating is not easily done in flight. The other difficult thing is that the queen bee mates more than once in flight. All these factors had to be taken into consideration by the scientist when he proceeded to develop his new queen bee.

Nonetheless, our scientists at Beaverlodge, along with the support of other scientists throughout the province, were successful in establishing a new honeybee. For the first time ever in Canada, Alberta developed an Alberta bee — not only one strain but two. A second one, called the prairie bee, came through in the same program for the southern part of the province.

AN HON. MEMBER: You've got lots of busy bees.

DR. ELLIOTT: Lots of busy bees.

Mr. Speaker, there was much spin-off from that project, and we could spend many, many happy hours relating some of the additional research findings that came.

I would point out that overall, Farming for the Future is proving to be one of the most complete agricultural research support programs in the world, sponsoring activities that range from laboratory research to testing and demonstration of that research on the farm. The ultimate goal is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our food system so that consumer prices can be kept at reasonable levels while still providing the agricultural industry with an equitable profit.

I'll close there for now, Mr. Speaker, and encourage other members of the Assembly to speak to this motion and support government participation.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, it's a real pleasure to participate and support Motion 212. It's a very important and interesting motion. However, I do want to speak on it with some mixed feelings. Sometimes one wonders just how much research is needed, will be needed, or can be expected. Our government has been providing good initiatives and incentives for expansion of farm operations. Research always exemplifies ways to expand agricultural production. When one looks at the commitment of our government to preserve the family farm, anything is done to expand the size of the farm, it thereby seems to defeat the purpose.

I can see research needed to develop new varieties of grain that can withstand various weather or other conditions. One knows how many different weather and growing conditions we have in this province. Research for new pesticides and herbicides and information on the types that are most effective are very essential. At present, farmers have to rely many times on the claims of the various chemical companies or on a trial-and-error basis. Chemicals are costly, and research would help farmers have effective control.

I believe farmers should make use of the Alberta Environmental Centre in Vegreville. Last year a test project had plots set out in rape fields to test for flea beetles. Findings could predict an infestation for the next year and would help farmers prepare and take precautions. The research station in Beaverlodge provides much of this. Two years ago I had the opportunity to visit. I was really glad to see that experts from the Alberta Environmental Centre were there, providing seminars which I'm sure everybody found very valuable; I did anyway.

I think research in irrigation is a needed step. For 75 or more years, southern Alberta has had an irrigation system. I served on an irrigation committee and had a good view of the system in southern Alberta. Even though the system worked

— it impressed me — I don't think it has changed too much in those 75 years. I was impressed with it when I saw that on one plot of land, probably about 20 acres, there were some 35 head of cattle pasturing and the grass alongside was almost tall enough to mow. Just across the road was another parcel of land which was not irrigated, and the carrying capacity of that was about one head on 40 acres. If one only thinks that the poor cow has to tramp around 40 acres to feed itself, one can see how she wears out much more than she can gain from that.

I noticed that in southern Alberta there is only sprinkler and flood irrigation. This looked all right to me, but I had the chance to view irrigation in Israel and Italy almost four years ago and was surprised how much research and technology is doing in that part of the world. You see very few sprinkler systems there, very much underground irrigation, and some flood irrigation done.

In northern Italy, in the Milan area particularly, I was really surprised to see a field of grapes covered with plastic. I thought maybe that was to prevent the direct sun, but I was told they do it for the purpose that in northern Italy there is occasionally a bit of moisture. They get a little bit of rain, so they have those grapes covered so the moisture does not come on the plants. I was really surprised; here they're irrigating and still covering their fruit so no moisture comes. It was research that taught them. I was even surprised to learn that if any bit of moisture comes on certain plants, particularly fruits and vegetables, the plants lose their resistance to plant diseases. That was the reason they had those grapes covered. One can see that research has played a very important role there. Maybe we did not have to go as far here because we have more water. But water is all rationed there, and they just cannot waste an ounce of water more than is needed. So I think one area we could really look at is research into the irrigation system in this province.

Maybe research is needed to keep farmers abreast of new machinery. Machinery is a very costly item for farmers, and maybe farmers could be informed as to new techniques and so forth — something like PAMI, the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, whose reports are published in Saskatchewan and evaluate machinery as to strengths and weaknesses. Then in buying, a farmer has an idea of what line is best suited for him. I also believe there is a need to acquaint farmers with computer use, a wave of the future.

I mentioned fertilizers and irrigation. Fertilizers play a very important role in agriculture. Fertilizer companies are doing research on their products on a continuous basis and have said they are ready to provide fertilizer that will help to reach the estimated goal of 30 million tonnes in the next few years.

I well remember when I started farming. Without using fertilizers and with an abundance of rain and so forth, if I was ever able to get 20 to 25 bushels of wheat per acre on summer fallow, it was considered a bumper crop. It was like that and much less. I very well recall the first time I applied fertilizer and the yield almost doubled. I know it is because of such farming practices that, for the last 12 years or so, we farm continuously with no summer fallow whatsoever. We've had some drier years, but it seems that with the fertilizer applications you can almost raise a crop with just a couple of inches of rain a year. When one realizes how much it costs to summer fallow now — every time you work that acre of land it costs a lot — it seems that people are looking more and more to seeding most of their land. Even though unfavourable weather does sometimes persist, it seems that with the fertilizers today, raising a crop is not quite as difficult. The expectations of life today have increased to the extent that regardless of where you are, the farmer must produce much more on what he has, to be able to provide himself with a type of life which is demanded.

We need more research on ways of marketing our products. I think that is very important too, and we have some research being done. I can refer to the Minister of International Trade. He is doing research work on a continuous basis and finding markets at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks, I must say I wholeheartedly support this motion. It's a motion that is needed. I'm looking forward to listening to what other members have to say and would encourage support of this motion. Thank you.

MR. STILES: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to rise and participate in this debate. If I may, I would like to direct my comments not so much to the matter of research, which I believe the hon. Member for Grande Prairie has certainly covered adequately, but to the need for us to look at and develop the means of transferring the technology we are so capable of developing to not only the people who will use it in the future but the people who should be using it today. We have a tremendous base of research available to us, both pure and applied research. I think it's vital to our industry and to the economy of our province that we find and develop the means for transferring that technology to the people who can put it to work.

As a preface to my remarks, I think I should once again — and I feel this is important — emphasize the importance of agriculture. In fact I'd like to call it agribusiness, because it isn't just agriculture. I'd like to focus on the importance of agriculture in our provincial economy. We've heard this before, and I don't want to overdo the topic. But I think it's important.

In terms of agribusiness consumption, the producers of our province consume somewhere between \$1.5 billion and \$2 billion worth of products. They pay out that kind of money each year. They own and operate somewhere in the order of over \$4 billion worth of machinery and equipment. That machinery and equipment is purchased. Certainly the elements of that vast amount of sales are not all produced here in Alberta. A lot is produced in other parts of Canada, and that's the contribution Alberta farmers make to the other parts of Canada's economy. Two and a half billion dollars worth of products are sold. Those are the dollar figures; they're not the critical figures as far as I'm concerned. The critical figures in Alberta are the jobs that are created in this province by the activity of agricultural producers and the other people in the agribusiness infrastructure.

A hundred jobs are created for each \$1 million worth of purchases by the farm community. If you calculate those purchases for 1983 at \$2.8 billion, that means over 280,000 jobs were created in this province. In terms of the handling and processing of agricultural production, nine jobs are created for each farmer. For each individual producing on the farm, nine jobs are created in handling and processing that production.

Agribusiness is a renewable resource. Agribusiness will be here when the oil and gas wells have run dry. When the mines have been worked out, we will still have agribusiness thriving in this province. I believe agribusiness has as much potential to diversify our economy in Alberta as has the petrochemical industry. The potential is there. Agribusiness is now, and will always be, Alberta's key industry.

The transfer of knowledge, skills, and technology to the primary resource, the people, is the critical factor in maintaining healthy growth in the agribusiness economy and, in fact, in maintaining the economy of the province. But when we say it's a renewable resource, it's not an endless resource. Renewable resources must receive reinvestment. Every farmer knows that we only get out what we put in. Farmers today are well aware of the need for soil conservation. They're well aware of

the need for fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. Those are the inputs. A great deal will depend on the kind of care and management to determine what the output will be.

Agribusiness technology is extremely complex and as fast changing as the technology in any other industry. It is so complex that I believe few people grasp how complex our agribusiness is. It involves farming and horticulture, supplies and services to the industry, processing the production, the mechanics involved in building, repairing, and maintaining the equipment, information processing, commodity markets, marketing the products, transportation, finance, communications. It is not a simple business. It's an extremely complex business, and accordingly the technologies attached are also complex.

We are involved in a period in which there's a worldwide demand for reduction of food costs and improving our productivity. We're involved in a period when soil fertility has been declining; we must address that. We're involved in a period when small holdings are increasing. Increasingly, people who do not have any experience in agriculture and agribusiness are moving out to small holdings, and there's a need for training that kind of people. The challenge for us today is to ensure that that primary resource, the people factor, utilizes the second most important resource, the land, in a way that the best managers produce the maximum results.

If we don't keep up technically, if we don't keep our primary institutions for transferring that technology current, we will not accomplish that task; that challenge will not be met. If we do not support the practising agriculturists, we won't survive the demand to feed the world or to export our technology. I think we need to ask the question: where have we been in terms of technology transfer in agribusiness, and where are we going?

The history of Alberta, in terms of agricultural education — in the early 1900s we had five agricultural schools at Vermilion, Fairview, Youngstown, Raymond, and Claresholm. Two of those five schools remain, Fairview and Vermilion. In each of those two colleges, there is a blend of the agricultural mandate with a regional trades and technology training mandate. Their agricultural enrollment has been limited, partly because of their location near provincial boundaries or on the edge of agricultural areas. At Lethbridge we have the community college, in which there are some agricultural programs.

MR. JOHNSTON: First-rate.

MR. STILES: First-rate agricultural programs, even though they may be few.

In the province of Alberta, we have one school — and I don't know why it has to be me who says this all the time — whose primary focus is agricultural education. I'll just mention it briefly; it's Olds College. Centrally located between major trade and technology centres, Olds College has been chosen as the remaining agricultural college in a province of 2.5 million people, the only college whose primary mission is to provide education, training, and service for agriculture and other non-urban, land-based renewable resource activities. [interjection] And it's getting close to receivership.

In 1972 the administration of the agricultural colleges, which had been under the Department of Agriculture, was transferred to the Department of Advanced Education. I'm happy to see the Minister of Advanced Education in the House today. I'm sure he's paying careful attention to these remarks, since it's a subject that affects his department in so challenging a way. Some key officials from Agriculture moved over to Advanced Education, individuals with expertise in agriculture and agricultural education. Unfortunately time goes on; people age and retire. At the present time, most if not all those key officials

have retired, leaving the Department of Advanced Education with a dearth of individuals with that kind of expertise.

Also historically, during the 1970s Alberta recognized the need for upgrading our trades and technology training. That was accomplished with a concentrated attack on upgrading the facilities of the institutions, investing capital. That training void was filled. Today in Alberta we have a fine base of secondary education, in terms of world-class universities. Our technical institutes have international reputations. We have a comprehensive system of two-year community colleges. All these postsecondary systems are well supported and modern, and that is a credit to the previous and present ministers of Advanced Education.

Unfortunately I cannot say that the state of Alberta's agricultural colleges has been so well maintained. I don't want to belabour the point of the lack of capital funding for agricultural education. I think that topic has been covered before, and I believe that members probably remember the details all too well. But I would point out that from 1968 to 1984, knowledge has increased four times. We have had a quadrupling of knowledge in that time period, and I believe we have met the challenge in most areas of postsecondary education. But unfortunately, in terms of agricultural education, we have simply not come up to the mark.

I recently had the opportunity to look at a paper prepared by an Albertan who recently completed a six-year term as the chairman of the board of governors of Olds College, Don Robertson. Don, as a Nuffield scholarship recipient, is currently carrying out a research project. He's done part of the work in Australia and New Zealand, and he will be going to Europe to complete it. The project is to review and do a survey of agricultural education in other parts of the world as it relates to Canada. It's just a preliminary paper and not the finished product of his research, but certainly very interesting.

He points out that in Canada, and certainly this is true in Alberta, at the secondary education level in our junior high schools and high schools, there are very few, if any, elementary agricultural courses taught — virtually none. At the postsecondary level, we have certificate and diploma courses at colleges, and in some other parts of Canada, not Alberta, schools attached to universities. We have science degrees at universities, extension short courses, short courses at colleges, trainees working in agriculture, green certificate programs, and that type of training program. Teaching of agricultural subjects is generally indoors, in winter, and in theory.

Mr. Robertson was in Australia and New Zealand last year. He had the opportunity to go through both countries and take a very critical look at what those countries are doing in terms of agricultural education — transferring technology. Agriculture is taught throughout the high school system in every state in Australia in both public and private schools, including some of the urban high schools. It is especially extensive in western Australia, where three high schools have agricultural wings where they teach agriculture as a vocational course, and where they have three residential agricultural high schools teaching toward postsecondary education. That's at the high school level.

They have a kind of training institute that to my knowledge is not available in Canada at all; that's the pastoral college. These have a strong practical agricultural leaning, and they are for students who do not have much interest in book learning. Their basic aim is to train and develop a good station hand, a farm worker. They are not there to teach management in particular. Students are accepted as soon as they are 16 years of age or over. We're talking about students who are ready to leave school, who do not particularly want to continue on to

postsecondary education, and who are not really interested in staying in high school past the age of 16. Students are accepted, they spend about 25 percent of their time in class — that's all — and the rest is spent in demonstration or in actual practice. They build the college's new buildings, repair and modify the machinery, and repair the fences. In some cases there are no nonteaching staff, and staff and students run rather extensive operations as part of the education process. The state of Queensland has developed four of these schools and each of them is specialized, one in beef and irrigation, another in sheep, another in broad acre cropping, and another in tropical crops.

The next element of agricultural education in Australia and New Zealand is the technical and further education colleges. These institutions are engaged in trades training, and one of the trades they teach is farming. The students come in on either a day-release or a block-release basis from full-time jobs in the industry; so these are apprenticeship-type schools. It is a situation where the students are employed in the industry and come back to these schools for further training, either on a day basis or on a block basis. The employer is very much involved, and his approval of the competence of the trainee is essential for progress by the trainee. The training is partially at the school and largely based on the farm, the institution providing the theoretical and technological background. These courses in these institutions lead to a certificate in farming.

One of the interesting points Mr. Robertson makes in this paper is how there is a substantial difference between Australia and New Zealand in the way these technical and further education colleges operate. The influence of trade unions is very clear, very high in the Australian colleges. He says:

bureaucratic rules abound and a very clear distinction between the worker in the trade and the management who supervise him is made, so that management training is very much frowned on and a good deal of deviousness must be practised by the instructors to insert [management] inasmuch as they clearly recognize that apprenticeship is a step to farm ownership wherein management spells success or failure.

In New Zealand apparently the development of these colleges came out of the Federated Farmers Organization, the umbrella farm group of New Zealand. As a result, the unions have not had nearly the influence they have in the trade schools in Australia.

A further element of agricultural education in Australia is the colleges of advanced education. These are largely funded by the federal government in Australia, and they prepare students with two- and three-year courses. Another level of the advanced education colleges has a three and a half year applied degree course, which is a diploma-type course. The teaching emphasizes hands-on training, and communication and analytical management skills, much the same way that our courses are taught at Olds College in Alberta. There is a college of this type in every state except one, and these are exclusively agricultural colleges.

I don't want to go on at any much greater length on this subject of the way the system functions in Australia, Mr. Speaker, except to say that there is a degree of co-ordination and attention to planning being paid in Australia and New Zealand that is not apparent here. As it is here in Canada, it is the primary responsibility of the states to provide education. The responsibility for agriculture in Australia is a matter of state responsibility. New Zealand, not being a federal system, has more of a unitary government; accordingly, it's a different system there. But in Australia, where they have a system very similar to our federal system, the primary responsibility for agriculture and education is in the state governments, as the

primary responsibility for education is with the provinces here in Canada.

Through their state governments, the Australians have moved to control the system so it's not allowed to just grow without any control. They are carrying out studies with respect to the transfer of technology in agriculture. These studies have the effect of stabilizing the systems, since once accepted they become the pattern everyone can depend on for a few years to come. In western Australia, as an example, they carry out these kinds of studies and develop these plans for rationalizing their system about once every 10 years.

I think there's a lesson to be learned there, and it wouldn't hurt us a bit to have a look at what they're doing elsewhere in the world in that regard. Mr. Speaker, it's essential that we rationalize and co-ordinate the delivery of our educational systems for agricultural education, for transferring the technology that's there. We have a need to update and improve the capital facilities at our agricultural educational institutions in Alberta. We need to develop co-operative programs with the Department of Agriculture, with other colleges, with the universities, with the municipalities, and with community groups.

We live in exciting times, Mr. Speaker, times of new developments in electronic data processing and computers, in electronic media — television and broadcasting media — for the transfer of ideas, for communicating new ideas and new thoughts. We have the people who have the ideas; those people are available. The applied research projects in production and in soil conservation and reclamation are out there. New energy sources: we're coming up with ways of replacing conventional hydrocarbons as an energy source.

The Harvestore installation at Olds College last summer is an example, the waste management system they've put in which will be producing methane gas, clean water, and bedding materials, all from the manure and wastes from their corrals. It's an exciting project, and it's the kind of technology that's there. We've developed it, it's in the process of being developed, and we have to be capable of transferring that technology to the people who are using it or will use it.

We need to concentrate our resources. We need to make an investment in the transfer systems. I believe the critical challenge for us in this whole field of agricultural research, agricultural technology, is transferring that technology not only to the students, the farmers of the future and the people who will be involved in agribusiness in the future, but also to the people who are out there farming today, working in the industry. Those people have a constant need for upgrading, and it's we who have the challenge of finding a way to provide them with that technological improvement. We have the opportunity; we have the people; we have the resources. The rest of it is up to us.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a few words today. Unfortunately I can't address the part of this motion regarding the implementation of technology, but I would like to emphasize the role of the Research Council.

I would point out that it will be difficult for us to involve new technology without a particular facility in place, financing, some kind of structure whereby we can take these discoveries out of the laboratory and into the marketplace. In an attempt in this direction, there has been a recent paper on science and technology put out by the Hon. Hugh Planche and myself, which made that as a suggestion. There'll be more heard on that later.

I would like to say, though, that I appreciate what the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury said, that our most important resource is people. I think none of us should lose sight of that fact. On the other hand, we should also look at some basic

statistics. The annual gross production of agriculture in our province now exceeds \$4 billion a year. We have some 30 million acres of land under cultivation and another 20 million designated as potential agricultural land, which makes up approximately one-third of the provincial area.

I don't need to tell our rural friends that economics makes farming a highly capital-intensive operation, and the demand on farmers to be more efficient and more productive is the greatest challenge facing the industry. But there are basic problems appearing, and these must be solved. Soil degradation is one; salinity build-up is another; nutrient loss is another problem; soil erosion, particularly by water; acidification — all have to be investigated. Climatic conditions and changes are among other concerns. New techniques offer the possibility of modifying weather patterns and the manipulation of plants themselves to be cold-, heat-, or drought-resistant.

Increasing food production has become a scientific and technological problem. The key to this agricultural progress is in research. I would like to point out to the hon. Member for Vegreville that we can't have enough of it. We have to look to scientists and researchers to provide the answers, and these answers are quite often slow in coming. To give you an example, it took Charles Saunders, the developer of Marquis wheat, more than 20 years to come out with an early-ripening, drought- and disease-resistant strain of wheat. After 25 years of research at the Alberta Research Council, scientists are just now finding conclusive results in hail suppression experiments. As I mentioned earlier last week, biotechnology research is only on the threshold in the promising area of genetic manipulation.

Through research programs in such diverse areas as biotechnology, weather modification, and soil investigations, we at the Alberta Research Council are playing a vital role in the area of agricultural research and the support of a basic provincial resource. In 1983 Alberta farmers harvested a near record crop, yet according to payouts by the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation, weather-related losses reached an all-time high. While the payouts reflect more coverage carried by more farmers in an increasingly expensive business, the \$86.5 million insurance payout included \$37 million for hail damage alone. This is a huge loss to the agriculture industry.

Right now the largest single project at the Alberta Research Council in the broad spectrum of weather modification research is being carried out by the atmospheric science department in our hail project. During the 1983 summer season, the successful utilization of our new research aircraft marked a milestone in the 25 years of weather research in our province. The aircraft, developed jointly with Intera environmental consultants of Calgary, has the latest airborne measuring and data recording equipment. This allows cloud physicists to gather more precise information on ice particle formation and the effects of cloud seeding to reduce hailfall and increase rainfall. It carries the equipment for seeding operations and, based on their seeding experiments on cumulous clouds, scientists are now confident that precipitation growth can be modified.

Scientists are also turning their attention to the manipulation of rain and snow formation. Their goal is to induce precipitation where it is most needed, in the traditionally dry areas of the province. This would be a tremendous achievement if we could do it this way instead of having to transfer water from the north to the south, as has been suggested by some hon. members.

Just monitoring the weather can be potentially useful. Scientists are demonstrating that radar can be utilized to forecast and track the path of severe storms, and radar can also measure rainfall, giving agriculturists more reliable information.

I would now like to deal with a technological innovation which has been around for thousands of years; I am speaking

now of the windmill. It is making a comeback on farms. Governments and other agencies are now exploring avenues of achieving more efficient ways of using this equipment. While modern technology is transferring the appearance and capabilities of today's wind machines, the motivation remains the same: to exploit the wind as a renewable source of energy. A small wind energy-conversion system, water pumping project was initiated in 1982 by Alberta Agriculture in co-operation with a solar and wind energy research program of the Research Council. Last summer six wind turbines installed at a test site north of Lethbridge began operating and, through a computerized data acquisition system, are being monitored for wind-conversion performance. The data collected by the Alberta Research Council will be the basis of economic analysis by Alberta Agriculture. At the same time, we are also logging maintenance requirements of this equipment.

According to the SWERP manager, Dr. Luft, time is money for the farmer. I might add that time is money for everyone. If it can be shown that a wind turbine works effectively with minimal attention and at less cost than an electric, gas, or diesel pump, then there is a benefit to the farmer, since a wind turbine runs as long as the wind is blowing and the wind-pumping system remains operational.

Another program that we are involved in and which involves Farming for the Future, the Alberta/Canada energy resources research fund, the drainage and irrigation council of Alberta, and TransAlta Utility Corporation, is a program where we have installed computer data acquisition equipment and monitoring and design of computer graphics display, all involved with the wind energy program.

I would now like to move to alfalfa. This is the day when urban members are becoming instant farmers, and I notice the smiles on some of the rural members. According to Dr. Don Gerson, the head of our new biological department at the Research Council, a field of alfalfa looks like pretty straightforward stuff. But according to a scientist, it's a complicated plant, and its genetics are a mess. Alfalfa is a legume whose root system normally supplies enough nitrogen through the formation of nitrogen-fixing nodules but often lacks adequate amounts of this essential nutrient. To combat this problem of decreasing natural supplies of nitrogen, farmers have turned to a combination of chemical fertilizers and imported inoculants to stimulate the nitrogen-fixing process. It is estimated that Canadian farmers now spend between \$7 million and \$12 million annually to import inoculants from the United States, and many farmers are complaining that they don't work. Dr. Gerson says that the bacteria are dead or they won't adapt to our particular soil and climate conditions.

In the Alberta Research Council's biotechnology research laboratory, the search is on for a bacteria strain which will be adaptable to the particular soil and climate of Alberta. The object is to develop a commercially viable rhizobium inoculant which will allow alfalfa to absorb nitrogen from the atmosphere, thus promoting healthy growth.

Alfalfa is an important forage crop in Alberta. If the Research Council is to be successful in its objective, it could mean reducing farmers' dependence on the expensive chemical nitrogen fertilizers produced from natural gas, and the effects of unwanted leaching of such chemicals into provincial waterways. Then you could quit accusing the city of Calgary of fouling up the South Saskatchewan River system.

In a related project, research scientists Dr. Walter Leps and Dr. Cole are looking for a better method of making the rhizobium inoculants. In co-operation with Dr. Clark of the University of Manitoba, who has considerable experience in this area, Dr. Leps and Dr. Cole are hoping to find a bacterial

strain which is more resistant to drying effects. Success in these projects would mean not only considerable cost benefits to farmers but the possibility of opening a new industry in inoculant production in Canada.

Unfortunately the Alberta Research Council's are fairly long term, possibly five years, by the time field trials are completed. But according to Dr. Leps, the end results will have far-reaching application. The United States is interested in better strains, and if we can come up with a good inoculant, not only will Alberta farmers benefit, but there is no reason why Canadian manufacturers shouldn't sell it to the United States market.

The words "soil erosion" conjure up visions of the Dirty Thirties, when thousands of acres of topsoil literally blew away. Fifty years later, loss of productivity through erosion is still a major concern. Soil scientists know what it is — the interaction between landscape factors. What is missing, though, is the real knowledge of the nature of these interactions: the geological characteristics, the climate, and the land use practices. Dr. Moran, the acting head of the Research Council's land sub-program, says that soil erosion is one of the six major areas requiring research. The other five areas are soil land inventory and related research, land reclamation, soil salinity, soil chemistry, and land drainage.

In land soil inventory, the Alberta Research Council has an established expertise which goes back some 50 years. The information obtained by research in soil characteristics, which continues to be updated, provides a starting point for land use decisions and management recommendations. The development of soil capability maps is just one example of this work.

Interest in land reclamation, especially as it relates to surface mining, has increased in recent years. The objective of the Research Council scientists has been to build a predictive framework for reclamation and the impact of mining on water resources on a long-term basis.

Soil salinity is considered by many to be the number one soil problem in the Great Plains region. It has been stated that more than a half a million acres are affected by the accumulation of salts at the soil surface. The problem is growing at a rate of about 10 percent annually, and the estimated cost to our province is about \$250 million a year.

Soil acidity is another area of concern in some parts of the province. Alberta Agriculture has long expressed concern over the effects of fertilizer practices on soil acidity, as well as the extent of naturally occurring acid in soils, particularly in east-central Alberta. Additional concern has been expressed about the impact of gaseous industrial emissions on soil acidity. The drainage of marginal lands for productive use, either as agricultural or forestry land, is another area of concern, and it raises numerous questions about the effects on soil properties and productivity. Little is known about which lands will respond favourably or what deleterious side effects might result on either groundwater or surface water regimes. We at the Research Council are trying to address all of these concerns and to assist in the ongoing program.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention that, as all hon. members know, we have a new president of the Alberta Research Council. To those of you who are its clients or who know people that are, I'd like to point out that he said recently that the Research Council must be seen as a competent, purposeful organization that knows what it's doing and must give people a sense of responsiveness and responsibility. Staff should remember that we are almost entirely funded by the province and the future of the Research Council depends on the population's and the politician's feeling we are making good use of those funds. The nature of an impression of any person having contact with the council is important to us. The way in

which staff behave is going to affect people's opinion of the competence and responsibility of the council.

MR. DROBOT: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak on Motion 212, I am in agreement with the motion that we must continue to expand our agricultural research and rapidly transfer some of our new technology to our farmers and agribusiness. Certainly our Alberta government has responded to that need in the past, but our modern technology is such that we must keep advancing our research, improving our method of operating farms, reducing costs and, at the same time, improving productivity. The answer to most of those needs in agriculture is research on a continuing basis and getting the information out to the producers on the farm with farm demonstrations, farm testing, and utilization of that knowledge.

In our society there is a strong emphasis on nutrition in our country and in the world. Farmers today are trying to get their hands on anything that can increase their ability. Currently many farmers include microcomputers as part of their farm operation. A few quick examples of technology on the farm: spraying monitors, which regulate the volume of water flow according to soil requirement; temperature gauges for grain storage bins; building alarm systems, regulating such factors as heating, power, and other livestock feeding systems, dairy systems, and so on.

In regard to cropping, great advances have been made in agriculture. Researchers have exceeded over 250 bushels of corn and over 65 bushels of soybean in Ontario. In the prairies, spring wheat yields have exceeded 60 bushels per acre, with the new 3M varieties exceeding 100 bushels per acre. We require more research into fertilization, crop hybrids, variety selections, timing of field operations, and plant populations. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, a maximum yield strategy should be the researchers' goal.

New and continuing technology will be the strength of the agricultural industry in the future. Only a few years ago, many scientists were seriously worried about moral and biological consequences of tinkering with genetic makeup of living cells. Today that is forgotten. Mankind is beginning to enjoy the benefits of the new science that will bring great progress in the field of agriculture. Certainly in the future, plant breeding projects that took years with conventional procedures may be accomplished in months or even weeks, and that's just the beginning. A likely possibility is crops that can grow in extremes of hot or cold, that may convert nitrogen directly from the air to the plant in a form that's usable to the plant, plants that can produce their own insecticides and fungicides, plants that can grow in saline soil or under irrigation using brackish water, and so on. We've hardly scratched the surface in regard to what plant scientists can discover, given the funding to carry out research. In the livestock sector, possibilities for disease control, feed efficiency, growth promotion, plain old-fashioned beef breed improvement, embryo transfer, and biogenetic engineering will have a much bigger role to play.

Alberta could be a leader in exploiting the new field of agricultural technology by supporting more research. Wouldn't it be something if, for example, we were to have access to nitrogen-fixing strains of wheat ahead of our competitors? New technology in agriculture, food processing techniques, and new products will have a great impact on food processing in Alberta in the future. We are taking a commanding lead in many of these areas and must continue to do so. Agriculture, insects, microbe agents have both positive and negative effects on agriculture. Beekeeping is an important industry in Alberta and a continuing research program that is carried out must be further utilized to bring research data to producers in a rapid transfer.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not mention the Farming for the Future program and the great work the Alberta Research Council is doing. Research is an ongoing thing. The results are completed at an ever-increasing rate. The researchers' list is long and impressive, but we cannot rest on our laurels. We must continue to expand our expectations of what research technology can achieve and dispense that information as soon as it is available. The future of agriculture depends on the quality and direction of research that is applied to it.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to say a few words about agricultural research and how it affects the constituency of Vermilion-Viking. As many of you are aware, our area is diverse. We have some very light land, we have some reasonably light land with a good clay soil base, and we have some very, very heavy land that's quite alkaline. Driving in this spring in particular, I can't help but notice that a number of the fields are turning white. It's not that they're getting that old; they're just going gray from the salt and the alkali. It would appear that this is the worst year we've seen. I suppose it has something to do with the drought we've been experiencing and the unusual kinds of weather we've had. So I believe that our government has to assist in alkali research in some measured way.

As the Member for Olds-Didsbury pointed out, research money is required for his college at Olds. I would suggest that Lakeland College at Vermilion should be considered as a vital link in this program, if in the next short time the minister could see fit to devote some money to land purchase, particularly of some of the heavy land and, as has been mentioned, light land and so on. But we do have some real problems facing us with our very, very heavy land. It's not just the heavy land that's being affected by the alkali; some of the lighter land is too. It's very prominent. I suppose it's a little too late now, but I'm sure it would have been meaningful for the Minister of Agriculture to have flown over our area at low altitude just to see the magnitude of the problem this spring when the snow left. It was very, very serious.

I really don't want to take up a great deal of time, but I would like to suggest that we are doing so many, many good things with research in agriculture, and it's paying off, although I believe we're coming to a point when it's hardly economical to be a farmer under today's prices. Farmers have increased their production so very much. As a young man on the farm, I remember that we would expect a certain yield at best; now that "at best" would be considered a light crop. Research in various stages — first by the farmers themselves, by industry, by the provincial government and, of course, the federal government, and by other farmers, industries, and governments around the world — has helped us a great deal. Although there's still a lot of land that can be brought into cultivation, we're now getting to a point where most of the land in our area is cultivated. But if we start to lose that land to alkali, we really haven't gained a great deal.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ALGER: Mr. Speaker, before speaking on the obvious merits of Motion 212, I would like to congratulate the Member for Grande Prairie for introducing it to this Assembly. I'm sure all members, both rural and urban, can appreciate the importance of agricultural research in Alberta.

Agricultural land is one of Alberta's great resources. Fifty million acres in Alberta are used for agricultural production, and the agricultural sector generates about 40 percent of all economic activity in Canada. Further, one out of three jobs in Alberta is related to agriculture. With only about 8 percent of

Canada's population, Alberta produces about 20 percent of Canada's agricultural products.

Mr. Speaker, you won't believe this, but on one acre an Alberta farmer can raise enough potatoes in one year for a family to have french fries every day for 27 years. That's a little trivia statistic I want you to keep in your head and quietly forget. The dickens of that statistic is that potatoes don't last very well, so we've got to have a better arrangement than that. Another kind of trivia thing is that on one acre an Alberta farmer can grow enough wheat in a year to supply a family with bread for nearly 10 years. It's a magnificent thing.

The future of our agricultural production is closely related to the quality, direction, and amount of research applied to it. In order to ensure that Alberta farmers remain successful, we must continue to take the necessary steps to ensure research and technology transfer to the agricultural sector.

Agriculture is easy to forget, especially here in Alberta where our natural resources are the centre of attention. But agriculture is a vital link in Alberta's economic chain, and the evidence shows that agricultural research is a profitable long-term investment, not only for the farmers but for all of society in general.

In looking back at the technological changes that have taken place over the last century, one can see the positive effects they have had on agriculture. The substitution of machine power for animal power greatly expanded capacity. Hydraulic and electrical engineering advances further allowed for the reduction in farm labour and draft power. Advances in building construction and other farm-related structures have contributed significantly to increasing agricultural production. Developments in biological technology have allowed for the introduction of new strains of wheat and canola, while the refining of artificial insemination techniques has been particularly important. Better and more effective fertilizers have increased crop yields. Improved understanding of soil, climate, and topography has allowed for a more appropriate mix of land use.

All of us in this Assembly are aware of the success of the Farming for the Future research program. As a heritage fund project, the program is representative of this government's support for agricultural research. Besides the new knowledge and new technology the Farming for the Future program has given to Alberta farmers, I am especially pleased to see it is becoming more and more cost effective. If research programs such as this ultimately become cost effective, I see no reason why they should not continue indefinitely.

There are two more points that I'd like to bring up today, Mr. Speaker. The first concerns agricultural exchange programs. Each year hundreds of Albertans visit foreign countries on agricultural exchanges. These programs provide an exchange of people involved in agriculture and thereby improve the sharing of technical information while broadening the views of the farming sector. They also result in increased trade and a stronger economy. The possibility of scientific research exchanges may also prove beneficial in the immediate future.

The last point I'd like to make, Mr. Speaker, is a little closer to home. In fact we dwelt on it a bit in question period today. Computers are becoming more and more important in the everyday functioning of the average farm in Alberta. Computerized heating, watering, and feeding have freed up a significant portion of the farmer's time, thus allowing him to concentrate on other important matters. I know that in the constituency of Highwood, many farmers, both big and small, have adopted computerization and thus have become more efficient. However, this has not occurred without problems. While the expense involved in giving each farm in Alberta its own private phone line is prohibitive, I think ways must be examined

to gradually make this possible. Technological change is great, especially when all areas of the farm can advance at a similar pace.

By supporting this motion, Mr. Speaker, we are banking on our future. Research efforts have the potential to improve net farm income, increase value-added processing, and enhance the long-term viability of agriculture in Alberta. Once again I thank the Member for Grande Prairie for bringing this motion forward and urge everyone in this Assembly to support it.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, I also would like to congratulate the Member for Grande Prairie for bringing such an important motion to our attention and would like to speak in support of the motion.

Anytime we get some research, we generally get an economic benefit to agriculture. I would have to say, though, that there is generally an economic benefit to the consumer also. During my lifetime, Mr. Speaker, the benefits from agricultural technology have gone as much to the consumer as to the producer. For instance, in the 1940s more than one-third of the people in Alberta worked for basic agriculture. Today one person working in basic agriculture feeds 97 other people. In 1950 approximately 50 percent of the dollar of the average wage earner went to purchase food. In 1982 only 16 to 18 cents of the wage earner's dollar was used to purchase food. So you can see how research and improvement in our food production has benefitted the consumer.

Technology has also helped us lower our cost of production and keep our product on the world market. However, there are places where marketing research could improve this situation. As was suggested by one of the former speakers, we haven't reached our potential in our ability to produce food in Alberta, providing that it is economically viable. What we have to do is get some research done on our marketing so we can market these products at something that the farmer can afford.

Some things have happened in the machine industry, for instance, in the last few decades. When I first started farming, hydraulics were generally used for front-end loaders and to raise and lower machinery. Today hydraulics is a very important part of our machinery. Orbit motors are now replacing a lot of belts and chains on machinery that needed a lot of maintenance. The orbit motor runs on oil and requires very little maintenance.

We have monitors in combines that allow the operator to sit in the combine cab, look at the monitor, and tell how much grain is going over at any given time. It also tells him what to do to correct that. He can close or open his cylinder, turn on a little more wind, close up his sieves, or whatever. During my time, in the few years that I did operate a combine myself, you generally had to get somebody out in the field with a scoop shovel to catch some chaff out of the sieves to see how much grain was going over.

Nowadays they have closed circuit TVs in tractors where you can watch the TV and see what the machine you're pulling behind is doing and do a better job of operating your equipment, particularly where it's quite dusty and you're not able to see what's happening out the tractor window.

Another thing that has happened in agriculture is sawfly-resistant wheat, for instance. At one time sawflies were a big concern to farm people, and nowadays you hear very little about sawfly problems in wheat. And 60-day barley — if for some reason or another you are not able to seed your crop until late in the season, you can seed 60-day barley and harvest it as product the same as your other crops.

One thing about technology is that it must be practical and economical to the farmer. There have been times when things that came up were tried and were found not all that practical.

I would have to say that one of them is artificial insemination in beef cattle. During the early 1970s, there was a rage for everybody to go to artificial insemination in beef cattle. But it was found so labour-intensive and the success rate was not all that good. You find a lot of those people that went to artificial insemination have now changed back to normal breeding methods.

A few days ago the Member for Edmonton Glengarry suggested the possibility of beef cattle growing wool through technology. Although this would give an added income, as a beef producer myself, I think I would bow out of that program. First off, the sale of wool has problems in the sheep industry. Also I wouldn't care to have the problem of shearing all my cows every spring.

As far as computer programs are concerned, I believe they're of great benefit to farm people in certain ways, particularly in weed spraying. Weed spraying at best is a guessing game, as everybody here who's sprayed weeds knows. You have your pressure, your ground speed, the amount of water you're putting on, the weather, how high your crop is, the kind of weeds you have — taking all those things into consideration, you're generally guessing whether you're doing right or not. With a computer, you can plug all this information into the computer and it will tell you exactly each one of those components you should use. For instance, if you use a heavier chemical, then you would use less water, and your ground speed could be reduced if you had on more pressure. Those types of things can be easily brought about by computer without hours of working with the monitor.

Research in the meat packing industry is very important today. I understand that the federal government has built a new meat packing research centre in central Alberta, and I believe it's supposed to open next week. In talking to people from the meat packing industry, they're quite excited about this. They say there's some technology that needs research, but they feel the packing industry is in for some improvements as far as cooling carcasses is concerned. The new technology will allow them to reduce the cooling time on a given carcass to about 50 percent of the present time, and they will also have a better product when finished.

The hon. Member for Grande Prairie was talking about the honeybees [pollinating] legumes. In the area in southern Alberta they generally don't depend on honeybees or wild insects to [pollinate] alfalfa. They have what they call a leafcutter bee. It's probably been brought in, in the last decade. These bees travel only 300 feet from the hive and they get a guaranteed pollination of their alfalfa seed, whereas if they depend on other kinds of insects, including honeybees, there's a chance the weather, wind problems, or whatever might offset the insects being able to [pollinate]. So to get a guaranteed pollination of their alfalfa seed, they use leafcutter bees which stay in this certain area.

Irrigation technology was mentioned, and one of the real needs we have in southern Alberta is research on seepage from irrigation canals. Seepage from our main irrigation canals has ruined a lot of land within the vicinity of the canals. The lining of irrigation canals to prevent seepage has been tried several ways — one with polyethylene, which is subject to damage and quite expensive. There have been several irrigation canals in southern Alberta that have been lined with cement to prevent seepage, but that again is not economical if you consider the costs per acre to the irrigation farmer. Of course pipe has been suggested. If we were able to economically manufacture a pipe that would prevent seepage and also allow some sort of pressure, it would certainly revolutionize the irrigation industry and save a lot of land.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would again like to say I feel that agricultural research and technology is very important to the people in Alberta and, although Farming for the Future is doing a great job of it, I would certainly recommend any further research that can be done. I would suggest that the rest of the people support this motion.

Thank you.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to join in for a minute. Actually I'm on standby, but the Member for Highwood triggered my mathematical instincts. I did a little calculation on his bread for 10 years. If a farmer raises enough wheat on one acre at today's prices, he's raising approximately 80 bushels. Mickey tells me it's \$3.40 a bushel. So the farmer receives \$252 from that acre of land but, over the 10 years, the family pays \$1,560 for their bread. So you can see that the farmer isn't really getting very much out of the food basket dollar. As the Member for [Bow Valley] said, they're only spending 17 cents out of a dollar on food in the first place, so in that instance the farmer is getting much less than 1 percent of that 17 cents.

I want to say a couple of words on agricultural research. I want to support the member's motion, but agricultural research must be geared to be practical. I believe that's much of what the Member for Olds-Didsbury was talking about — the ability to apply the research. I was recently informed about a program where a quarter section had been fenced into two-acre parcels, and every day the man was moving the cattle from one of these two-acre parcels to another two-acre parcel. If the research had been to measure the amount of forage the cattle were eating, I could see some sense in it. But that wasn't the research. The research was to see how many more head they could pasture in this manner on the quarter section than they would if they just had the quarter section open. That's ridiculous, Mr. Speaker, because nobody is going to run around every day and move cattle from one little two-acre pasture to the next. It just isn't practical. So research must be practical.

Research must also take into account negative effects as well as positive effects. I'd just like to mention the hail seeding project, which is an excellent example of a lot of research done on the positive aspects of the research but very little account taken of the negative aspects.

I want to briefly mention the Lacombe research centre, because I noticed that Mr. Frieden has just retired. I'm very familiar with the work he did on meat products. He's retiring for one reason. He said there was a time when the experimental farm system was dedicated to resolving the problems that faced agriculture, and those who came into the field of research spent time with those in the agriculture industry to identify the problems and work on them. That isn't happening today. Today they're hiring strictly PhDs, and there's very little contact with the agricultural community. They use a public relations department to transfer that knowledge to the agricultural sector. I think that's a grave mistake. There has to be balance between the research that's done and making sure that research is, number one, practical, number two, applicable and, number three, available to the agricultural community.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I support the motion.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of those who spoke in favour of the motion this afternoon. With that, Mr. Speaker, I close debate.

[Motion carried]

MR. HYNDMAN: On behalf of the hon. Government House Leader, Mr. Speaker, before calling it 5:30, this evening we'll be doing second reading of Bills on the Order Paper, beginning on page 2 with Bill No. 35, the Child Welfare Act, and then proceeding to Bill No. 8, the Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 1984, and Bills 16, 18, and so on down from the top of page 2 on today's Order Paper.

[The House recessed at 5:25 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Assembly agree to revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is again my privilege tonight to introduce, as I did last year, a group of young people from all over Alberta who are with the Forum for Young Albertans. There are 47 of these young Albertans here, and I know that my colleagues who will be addressing them in a number of activities over the next couple of days will be challenged by their questions and other matters that will be raised.

The group is led by Linda Ciurysek, president, who has been with the organization since the beginning. If the organization is six years old and Linda was 17 when it started, we almost know how old she is. She's done an excellent job. I know the difficulties we can have when we have a lot of young people who are very anxious to look and see in every corner and may not always be together at the time you'd like them to be. A young fellow from my constituency, Greg McNally, is their vice-president. Greg started out with the forum several years ago and has been assisting with it since. They have three counsellors with them: Karen Hebson, Cameron McNamee, and Angela-Lyn Perry.

The group will be together for one week. They have four days of provincial affairs, one of municipal, and then they have a model parliament. Hopefully, the members who were visiting with the young people from various constituencies will have given them some tips on our system and how it operates, and maybe in some way assist in their model parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like all the young people and those who are with the group by way of being counsellors and in the executive to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to members of the Assembly a guest visiting Edmonton. He's a man well known for his thinking, which seems to be always to the right. He's a man well known to certain members of this Assembly. Mr. Robert Giesbrecht from Lethbridge is seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask him to rise and be recognized by the House.

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

Bill 35
Child Welfare Act

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 35, the Child Welfare Act, this evening.

Before getting into the main features of the Bill, I'd like to briefly describe the background. Those hon. members who were here will recall the March 1980 time period, when the Cavanagh Board of Review was established to do a complete review of the child welfare system in Alberta. That particular board of review was chaired by Justice J. C. Cavanagh, and had as its members Mrs. Flora J. Allison and Dr. Ernest E. McCoy.

That particular board reported in October 1983. Shortly after that, on November 16, 1983, we introduced Bill 105 into this Legislature. That Bill died on the Order Paper because we wanted to have public reaction, public response, not only to Bill 105 but to the Cavanagh Board of Review. Some 2,000 copies of the Bill as well as copies of the Cavanagh Board of Review were sent to various parts of the province. We did get excellent public input in terms of over 150 briefs from the general public plus approximately 50 written briefs from within the department, primarily from those people in the child welfare area either in a direct working way or in a management way.

Since that time, as well, we — "we" being a number of the departmental staff and myself — did a tour of the province, visiting with the child welfare and departmental people to get their reactions to Bill 105. On April 18 of this session, we introduced into the Legislature Bill 35, the Child Welfare Act, which reflected many of the recommendations that were made to us in the time period between last fall and this spring.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill itself is just part of a very large work load in terms of addressing the whole area of child welfare. Once we are able to have the Bill pass through the Legislature, there will be the regulation-making process. In that particular process we intend to involve the interest groups and the public that are interested in having input with respect to those regulations and also policy development, so that we will be able to proclaim the Bill, as our target date, July 1, 1985.

Mr. Speaker, as you and members know, a Bill of this magnitude does not result without a heck of a lot of work, not only from members within this Assembly and the various committees, whether it be the health and social services committee of caucus, the social planning committee of cabinet, the full caucus, or the assistance from many people in the department. If I could, I'd like to introduce some members of the department who played a very large role in the process.

We have tonight Anne Russell — if Anne would stand. Anne Russell has been the legislative planner and the main author of this particular Bill in terms of legislative drafting. In terms of the team that worked with her — some of them aren't here tonight of course, but we have a few here. I'd like to name them and have them stand and be recognized by the Assembly: in addition to Anne, Jeanette Fedorak, Diane McAmmond, and Dick DeJong. I believe that's it.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to compliment my predecessor in terms of the major changes in policy that were made during his time as minister: such things as increasing the number of child welfare workers in the department after the 1980 time period, also in terms of upgrading the qualifications of the child welfare workers in the system, because a significant improvement occurred in that particular area over the period from 1980 to 1984.

Mr. Speaker, getting into the principles of the Bill, I'd like to indicate that at the beginning, we have what we call "matters to be considered", by the courts, child welfare workers: all those who have any authority or any decision-making relevant to this particular Act. Those principles have a focus on the family and, in addition, recognize the interests of children and the protection of the interests of the children. In fact section 2 of the Bill has 13 of these principles. I think they are very important to this particular Bill, because they outline to us a basic philosophy which those who are involved with the Bill have to consider in making their decisions.

In terms of addressing the first one in particular, it says, "the family is the basic unit of society and its well-being should be supported and preserved". The second one: "the interests of a child should be recognized and protected". Mr. Speaker, it has been a difficult process to try to balance in this particular Act the pre-eminence of the family and family responsibilities against the recognition and protection of the interests of the child. We think we have a fair balance in that respect. Also, I think we do stress the very, very important aspect that even though it's called a Child Welfare Act, it does recognize the family as a basic unit of society.

There are those who might say, why don't we have a separate Bill of rights for children, or why haven't we built rights into the Act for children. The Cavanagh Board of Review addressed that particular issue, and it did not recommend that we have a separate Bill of rights. They indicated that we do have our Alberta Bill of Rights and Individual's Rights Protection Act. Children being people and also having parents in most instances, and parents having responsibility for children, their rights should be adequately protected. This particular aspect of the Bill, building in these matters to be considered, is rather unique in the history of our province in that there is only the Alberta Bill of Rights that has the principle section or principles built into that particular Bill.

Mr. Speaker, a second important feature of the Bill is the definition section, where we define a child in need of protective services. This is a very precise and detailed definition, probably the most detailed and precise in Canada. The definition of a child in need of protective services is based upon the definitions of three concepts, being physical injury, sexual abuse, and emotional injury. It also spells out the circumstances under which the child welfare workers may be involved in families and thereby restricts that particular involvement.

Mr. Speaker, one of the difficulties with the current Child Welfare Act is that the definition of a child in need of protective services is not precise, and therefore the child welfare workers and the courts do not have detailed definitions to go by. We feel this is a very important aspect of the Bill, to have this definition of a child in need of protective services. I might point out that even though there's no reference to the term corporal punishment, corporal punishment is allowed in this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, another important aspect of the Bill relates to the provision for the separation of the role of the children's guardian from that of the service provider, and establishment of those offices in legislation. What this means is that we are naming a "children's guardian" in the Bill. The children's guardian would be playing an advocacy role with respect to looking after children in care, with respect to medical consents. They would receive court notices and would be involved in decisions that are made with respect to children being moved from one foster home to another.

We are trying to separate the advocacy role from the administrative role in the department. In the Bill there is the term "director" or "directors". These particular individuals would

be appointed and would be primarily responsible for the administrative aspects of the Bill. A child welfare worker would report to a director, in terms of spelling out the exact administrative structure that would occur in the department with respect to the separation, these details and the mandates of the different positions have to be worked out over the course of the next year.

Another important feature, Mr. Speaker, revolves around the issue of reporting child abuse or reporting a child in need of protective services. Under the current legislation, it is compulsory for a child welfare worker to investigate or follow up every call. It's required by law. For the purpose of preventing unnecessary intervention, this particular Bill provides discretion on the part of child welfare workers to assess reports of abuse and neglect, to determine whether an investigation is warranted. Section 5 in this Bill does allow the possibility, in the case where a child welfare worker thinks a call may be malicious or unfounded, that they would not have to follow up in terms of investigating that particular call.

Also in the current system, whether the child welfare worker who investigates that particular case finds a situation where a child is in need of protection or it's a completely unfounded case of alleged child abuse, the name of the alleged perpetrator of child abuse goes onto a registry called a child abuse registry. In this Bill, Bill 35, there is no reference to the registry, and that's because we are abolishing that particular registry. In the future, the child welfare workers would investigate a report and come back and make their report. Their report would spell out the details of the investigation rather than having on a registry the name of an alleged child abuser with no reference as to whether the allegation is valid or not.

Mr. Speaker, section 17 of the Bill is particularly important in that in terms of restricting the authority to apprehend a child from his family without a warrant, there are two emergency situations. In other words, if a child is in need of protective services, the director or child welfare worker would have to have a court order in order to apprehend the child except in those circumstances where the child may be involved in a life or death situation or where a child is abandoned or lost. This is spelled out in more detail in section 17. The child welfare workers — I keep saying "child welfare worker" because everybody knows what I'm talking about; in the Bill it refers to "director", but I'll keep on using "child welfare worker" — may get their orders from the court, from either a judge or a peace officer. The Bill also allows the possibility for these orders to be obtained via the telephone so that in certain circumstances, in remote areas, a child welfare worker would be able to make a telephone call and get a warrant for an apprehension. There is a built-in follow-up in the Bill as to what the workers would have to do once they get a warrant.

Once the child is apprehended and if the child is not returned within two days, the director or child welfare worker has to go to court for either a supervision order, a temporary or permanent guardianship order, or an order returning the child to the custody of his guardian. That has to occur within a 10-day time period; it has to be heard within a 10-day time period. That's if the child is not returned to the family within two days. However, the guardian of the child, once they've been informed, may serve notice within five days to the director of the department. In that event, the case shall be heard within one day following that. What we're trying to do here is really tighten the time lines in which the case can be heard before the courts once an apprehension has occurred. The current situation is a time period of approximately 20 days before they can get into the courts.

The court may order the child returned or otherwise. Another important feature in this particular area is that if the child is

returned to its home within two days, there is no requirement for the department or the director to go to the court to justify that particular apprehension. However, there is the opportunity for the guardian of the child to take action if they so wish. This particular feature of the Bill will be important in certain instances where a child may be found alone; the parents may be off somewhere. The child could be picked up, in order to have it in safe protection, and brought back within two days.

Another important feature of the Bill in cases where a child may be found alone in a particular situation: without removing the child from the home, there's the opportunity in the Bill for emergency care to be provided to the child or the children that may be found there.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill also has a focus on the use of voluntary measures to provide protective services through agreements which provide greater continued parental involvement with the child and avoid unnecessary appearances. There are different kinds of agreements, support agreements either with the guardian or with the child itself if the child is 16 years of age or over. The idea here is to try to avoid unnecessary court appearances, to work with the family to try to keep the family together and at the same time look after the interests of the child.

Another important feature is that we are requiring that both agreements and court orders include a written plan for the care of the child. This is different from Bill 105 in that this was not a requirement in Bill 105. One of the important pieces of input we had was that we should have a written plan for children when we go to courts or even with the agreements.

Another feature, Mr. Speaker, relates to permitting proceedings to be held in open court while protecting the identity of persons involved by banning publication of names. Again this is a change from Bill 105. It is an open court, but there may be the exclusion of certain people from the court. As I mentioned, there is a ban on the publication of names except with the consent of the court.

We also have the ability for the courts to authorize orders restraining a person who is likely to abuse a child from residing with or contacting the child. In those situations where there may be a history of child abuse, sexual abuse, incest, rather than removing the child from that particular environment there is the ability for a restraining order to remove from the home the perpetrator of the crime or the abuse.

One of the concerns with current legislation that has been expressed by a number of people is the lengthy time periods it takes to have a child's case dealt with in the courts as to whether or not there should be permanent guardianship or the child should be placed back with the family. We are building into this particular Bill a total cumulative time period of two years of temporary guardianship. In the past there was no limit on this, but if you go way back into the past, there was a time limit. With this current time limit, where you can only have a temporary guardianship order of one year at a time, up to a maximum of two years, we think there is an escape mechanism so that if the court is satisfied there's good reason to provide for one extra year, then it can be done — again the idea of trying to prevent a child being shuffled from foster home to foster home over a period of years, but requiring the department to bring forth to the courts either an order for permanent guardianship or trying to get the child back with the family.

A concept that is unique in this particular Bill is the concept of joint guardianship, whereby a person may become a joint guardian of a child who is under the permanent guardianship of the department and thereby allow a private citizen to act as an advocate for the child. When a child becomes a permanent guardian of the children's guardian, the children's guardian has all guardianship rights for that child. But we're building in the

possibility so that if there is a private citizen who wants to act as an advocate for that child, they can have that possibility to become a joint guardian.

There are a fair number of safeguards built into the Act with respect to the secure treatment, which was previously known as compulsory care. We think we have built in additional legal safeguards for children who are in those situations.

Another important concept, and I think a unique one, is the concept of private guardianship, whereby any adult who has had continuous care of a child for more than six months may apply to the courts to be the private guardian of that child. This would be particularly beneficial to foster parents who have had a child for more than six months and may want to assume guardianship without having to adopt that child. I think this has been well received by the Foster Parents Association and others. This is just one area of the Act where foster parents have a greater role to play in terms of the children they have in their care. It's built into other sections of the Bill as well.

Mr. Speaker, the whole section of the Bill dealing with adoption is very important. We've made a number of changes from the current situation. We've also made some changes from Bill 105 last fall, as a result of the public input. First of all, there's a provision for the parent of a newborn child to reconsider a decision to give that child up for adoption. In other words, if the parent of a newborn child in the hospital makes a decision to give the child up for adoption, they can go home and there's a 10-day time period built in whereby if they change their mind, they can go to the court to get the child back. The reason for the 10 days is that in most instances the child that is up for adoption is placed in an adoptive home in 15 to 20 days. So we would have a 10-day time period in which the mother could change her mind. We also have provision for the father, or an individual who claims to be the father, to assume guardianship of that child if the mother wants to put up for adoption as well. He also would have to make application to the court within that first 10-day time period.

An important feature relates to the ability of adoptive parents to make their own applications through the courts as opposed to those applications coming through the department. Parents can make their applications to the court, the department would be notified of such an application, and there could be a check to see whether or not there was any concern or any history of child abuse associated with those prospective adoptive parents. But the department would not be involved unless they had a concern with respect to a situation like that.

There's also the elimination of the six-month probationary period before an adoption application may proceed. This was one particular aspect of the Bill where we had various opinions. There were those who thought it was important to eliminate that six-month period. However, there were others who thought it should be in. We have built in the elimination of that time period.

One anomaly that existed previously was that, supposing parents divorce and one of the natural parents keeps the child and the new spouse wants to adopt the child, in the current situation the natural parent and the new spouse both have to go through the adoption process. With this particular Bill, we eliminate the requirement for the natural parent to adopt the child.

One aspect of the section dealing with adoptions that probably received the most attention was the concept of a passive postadoptive registry. I think we received more letters on that particular section or concept than any other area. This allows either one of the natural parents, the adult adoptee, or siblings to register with the department. If, say, a natural mother registers and a sibling registers, then they would be reunited. There

are also provisions for the disclosure of nonidentifying information to the parties of the adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I know I'm running close to the maximum time allowed. I just want to indicate that in terms of Indian children, because of the large number of Indian and Metis children in our care, we have built an important aspect into this Bill whereby we would consult with the chiefs of certain councils or with other members of the councils before making decisions with respect to children that are on the reserve. In cases of children off the reserve, with the permission of the guardian we would be in consultation with the band. In this regard we have in the past year taken steps, such as the Lesser Slave Lake agreement, whereby over a period of time we would try to have Indian children placed in the care of native families, and also more responsibilities on the part of the bands themselves with respect to the welfare of their children.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that the regulation-making section of the Bill will be the section we'll be working on next. It will govern the standards of services that will be provided in the future. I believe the important part of any kind of program is its preventative nature, to try to prevent families finding themselves in situations where the children are in need of care. We will be taking a close look at this particular aspect over the next year, to see how the family and community support services program, the FCSS program, can apply to help us in that particular area.

I'm very pleased with the reaction of the departmental people to the particular Bill, even in terms of their day-to-day operations since we've been working on this legislation. In the last year we have decreased the number of children in care from 18,500 to 16,000. The emphasis on working with families at the same time as looking after the interests of children — we think we have the right balance with this particular piece of legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in addressing comments to Bill 35 this evening, I would like to say first of all that it will be the intention of my colleague and me to support Bill 35 on second reading. Before hon. members get too enthusiastic with that comment, I will take a few moments to deal with deficiencies in both the process and the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, might I just say that after the Cavanagh Board of Review report was tabled in the House, and then last fall the government introduced Bill 105, my colleague and I, along with two other members of the New Democratic Party, undertook a series of public meetings in the province. A number of submissions was made to us on health and social service issues, but probably the largest number of submissions was in the area of the Child Welfare Act. So the comments that both of us will be making during the course of second reading and during the process of the consideration of the Bill at committee stage will in part be flowing from some of the submissions made to us by professionals in the field, by concerned parents, by interested Albertans who had had an opportunity to look at the Cavanagh Board of Review and to examine Bill 105.

I think it's also fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that Bill 35 represents something of an improvement over Bill 105. I am particularly pleased to note, with respect to treaty Indian children, that we are going to inform chiefs and councils. I think that's a step in the right direction, and I applaud the government's decision to move in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, it is now almost five years since we had the first of a number of headline-grabbing scandals related to the Department of Social Services and Community Health. It was in July 1979 that the Westfield story broke. It was seven or

eight months later that we had the problems at the northern residential treatment residence and the fact that here was a situation that I think most Albertans, regardless of their political slant, found completely intolerable, that children were forced to eat dog food.

Mr. Speaker, the government appointed the Cavanagh Board of Review, and the minister has noted that board of review in his introductory remarks to this piece of legislation tonight. But I think it's important for us as members of the Assembly, when we consider second reading of Bill 35, to ask ourselves whether major legislative reforms could have proceeded more quickly. As I read the Cavanagh Board of Review, quite frankly I am concerned as I look, for example, at page 6 and find that there were fears, perhaps groundless, among people who were working in the department that there might be reprisals if they made submissions to the Cavanagh Board of Review. It says on page 5 that the measures the Deputy Minister had taken

did not entirely remove the fears. We did have employees come to us privately to give us information.

Then we have the rather remarkable situation where information which might have allowed the commission to move more quickly was kept from the board of review. I think page 9 of that board of review is worth noting this evening. This is a submission from senior people in the department:

The second submission was prepared in January, 1981.

It was not submitted to us. We learned of its existence from sources in the department. We asked for it and finally the new Minister released it to us in January, 1983. The former Minister took responsibility for withholding the same, saying that he felt it would have been presumptuous to try to indicate to us where there might be problem areas. We appreciate the concern for our feelings, but we think that was a misguided attitude. In fact, it was perhaps discourteous to think that if we were given indications of problem areas, we would be gullible enough to be misled into thinking they were the only problems. That second submission would have saved us a lot of time, had it been given us when it was ready.

Mr. Speaker, I again quote page 9 of the Cavanagh Board of Review:

That second submission would have saved us a lot of time, had it been given us when it was ready.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the principle of Bill 35 tonight, I think we have to ask ourselves: could it have come sooner? Could this debate taking place tonight that will put in place, hopefully starting in July 1985, a better legislative framework, have come earlier? As one reviews carefully the words contained in the Cavanagh Board of Review, I think the answer has to be yes, it could have. The question is, why didn't it? The why it didn't was because of a misguided attitude on the part of the former minister and thereby on the part of the government.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I recognize, as do all Albertans, that it's difficult to juxtapose two principles, the rights of the family and the rights of the child. I guess what disturbs me when I read the legislation is that I see the rights of the family — which I agree with, because I think all of us in this House, quite apart from our political differences, recognize that a family basis is by far the best protection for the rearing of children. But noting that, I also note that when it comes to children, we talk about the "interests" of children, not the "rights" of children. My colleague today introduced a children's Bill of rights. Notwithstanding the comments that the minister made about the Bill of Rights in this province and the Individual's Rights Protection Act and perhaps even the Charter of Rights passed by the government of Canada, the fact of the

matter is that I think the rights of children would have been better protected had they been clearly delineated in this legislation. That may be a philosophical difference of opinion. But when an important investigative undertaking took place in our neighbouring province to the west, that particular commission came up with recommendations for the rights of children to be included in a statutory form. Perhaps we can debate that as we get into the clause-by-clause study of Bill 35, but I do want to underline it at this point in time.

Mr. Speaker, as I look at the Cavanagh Board of Review, there is no doubt that their recommendations are based in large measure on preventive services. Without spending all evening quoting from that board of review, I think it's important to at least reflect upon some of their observations as we consider the principles of legislation that will guide this department and the Child Welfare Act in the years ahead. Page 246 of the Cavanagh Board of Review:

There are recommendations which are aimed at substantially reducing the case loads of social workers, at improving the foster care system and there are recommendations stressing the importance of early and intensive work with families and the children with a view to preventing the children from coming into care, recognizing that the taking of children into care is in itself some evidence of the failure of the system. The recommendations throughout are based on the premise that fundamental to the improved operation of the child welfare system is the concept of preventive services . . .

Mr. Speaker, as we look at this legislation, I would have to say that there is a proper recognition in the legislation of the need for preventive care. But what I suppose many Albertans will be asking in the months ahead, as debate on this matter occurs throughout the province, is: will the government in the 1985-86 budget year be providing the funding necessary to provide that kind of preventive service, the sensitive support system that has to be in place if the family is going to be kept together?

In submission after submission when my colleague and I travelled the province in December, Mr. Speaker, we had people come to us and say quite bluntly: fine; we like the idea of underscoring and underpinning the importance of the family unit and we like the idea of keeping children in the home, but the concern is that unless we have the support services available — and those support services include a properly functioning department, the churches, community organizations, and the complete infrastructure of society — unless we can provide that kind of underpinning of support to the family, what we may be doing is lessening the number of children in care but jeopardizing and risking the future of children in family situations where there isn't that kind of backup.

So I say to the minister that we are not going to dispute the words contained in the legislation, but we are going to be insistent that when the minister and his colleagues present their budget in the 1985-86 year, they ensure there is sufficient funding so we are not put in a situation where social workers are overworked, where child care workers have caseloads that are ridiculously high, where we have a service in place which is so grossly underfunded that we have a preventive system in theory but a crisis-management system in fact. Mr. Speaker, that will be a test not only of the minister but of the entire government caucus.

I want to make one other observation about the Cavanagh Board of Review, because it's important for us to keep this warning in mind, too, as we consider Bill 35. Page 248:

We have noted a tendency in the former Minister and some others to compare Alberta's child welfare program

with other provinces. That may be a good political argument, but we think the Government of Alberta can rise above that attitude. The province should be able to say, if it is so, that its child welfare program truly protects the rights of children in its care, not that it is doing better than other provinces and, therefore, because of that it need do no more.

Mr. Speaker, the test is not what's happening in New Brunswick, British Columbia, Manitoba, or wherever the case may be; it's what needs to be done.

I say to the members of the House tonight that I'm sure that when we get to second reading, we will have one of those occasions where there will be unanimous support for the principle. But if that principle contained in Bill 35 is to become a reality which will usher in a better environment for the children of this province, then — to the members of the government — next year's budget presentation will say much more about this government's commitment to the principles contained in this Bill than the wording in the Act itself. We've gone through a long period of legislative gestation, one might say, on this issue. As I mentioned, the Westfield incident occurred five years ago. But I suppose there is no better way in which to judge the quality of any civilization — I say "quality" deliberately — than by the manner in which the young and the elderly are treated. We have a lot of good programs in this province, and I would be less than honest if I didn't say that. I think there is great potential for good in Bill 35. But what is now necessary is for us not to pass legislation and forget about the subject but to ensure that there is sufficient funding.

I suppose some may consider it rather inappropriate that I would go back into the past on second reading. I make no apology for doing so, because the Cavanagh Board of Review and its findings must be basic to our considerations tonight. I think it is particularly regrettable that there was a delay in that report, because had we been able to deal with legislation in 1982 as opposed to the report coming in 1983, had we been able to push it ahead two years sooner, I suspect that the plea I am making for next year for proper funding to get this process started would have fallen on ears that were more prepared to listen. In 1981 and 1982, when we were talking about the money that was coming into this province and we had the great energy agreement signed in the fall of 1981 and we were talking about that \$60 billion, I suspect that had we had the Cavanagh Board of Review at that point in time or in the six or eight months after it, we would have been able to put into place the kind of system that would allow us to get a preventive program fully off the ground and to realize the objectives set out so eloquently in the Cavanagh Board of Review. We didn't get that review on time, and now we are dealing with a recession attitude.

Mr. Speaker, I close by saying to my colleagues on both sides of the House that notwithstanding the changed economic circumstances that face the province, the appeal for basic justice, for a better and more humanistic approach, that I think came through so clearly in the Cavanagh Board of Review and is reflected in this Act, is one that we should listen to and should act upon, notwithstanding the economic situation that faces us in the 1985-86 budget.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to make a few brief comments on second reading of debate of Bill 35, the Child Welfare Act. At the conclusion of his remarks this evening, the hon. Leader of the Opposition indicated that some of us may feel it's inappropriate that the Leader of the Opposition dwell on the past rather than on the provisions of the

Bill before us. Mr. Speaker, this is one of those rare occasions when I find myself in agreement with the leader. I for one do feel that such rearview mirror preoccupation is indeed inappropriate.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to suggest that the legislation before us this evening is legislation all members can be proud of. Many of the Bill's provisions represent excellent legislative judgment that results from assimilating timely and relevant comments that have come from all over the province, during the Cavanagh inquiry and during the drafting process. Tonight I'd like merely to refer, without much elucidation, to four of the Bill's provisions that I feel are particularly laudable.

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, I commend the minister for his attempt to maintain the principles of family autonomy and responsibility. May all the members of the House always be found in support of that principle. Secondly, the new position of the children's guardian; an official to act as parent and protector of the interests of all children in provincial care is in my view an imaginative and valuable provision of Bill 35. Thirdly, the new definitions of the circumstances under which a social worker should apprehend a child; I'm supportive of these new definitions and feel they will go a long way to resolving some of the kinds of child apprehension problems we've had in the past. Finally, Mr. Speaker, I applaud the minister for his courage and tenacity in arriving at what I feel is an entirely workable clarification of that fine line between disciplinary spanking and child abuse. As the father of seven, I feel I'm somewhat expert in that matter.

Before concluding my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make mention of the William Roper Hull Home in the Fish Creek constituency. As the minister and many of the members are undoubtedly aware, the William Roper Hull Home is a treatment centre for emotionally disturbed children. It's been my unforgettable experience on several occasions to spend time with the staff and students at the Hull Home. I never cease to wonder at what devoted teachers and staff are accomplishing with some of our younger Albertans whose emotional needs constantly challenge the best in our professional staff there.

After the original Bill's introduction, Mr. Speaker, I met with the executive director of the William Roper Hull Home and provided him with a copy of the Bill. He subsequently reviewed it in great detail. I have passed along the results of his review to the minister, but for the *Hansard* record I'd like to quote two recommendations of that review: under the subject of parents' and children's rights, the recommendation that the distinction between care and treatment be carefully reviewed; and that remedial components of the child welfare system be identified and governed by a set of clearly defined standards; and under the subject of compulsory care, the recommendation that the proposed compulsory care procedures be restricted to short-term holding for the purposes of assessment or protection and that children identified as being in need of longer term treatment be subject to a different set of standards and procedures.

Mr. Speaker, with these few remarks I would like to express my very strong support for this excellent and timely legislation.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to participate in Bill 35, the Child Welfare Act. As my colleague has already indicated, I would say that generally it's a good Act. I have some concerns I would like to lay out to the minister. Perhaps some of them are unfounded concerns, but I think now is the time to look at them. Before I do that, Mr. Speaker, being the positive person I am — some hon. members over there are laughing, but it's generally true — I would like to point out some of the good points of the Bill.

Both people who have spoken on the Bill so far alluded to the general feeling of the pre-eminence of the family with regard to child raising. I think all Albertans can certainly agree with the pre-eminence of the family as being the most important unit in our society, but I would like to come back to that and express my concerns. I believe the general thrust of the Bill is correct.

I think a generally good aspect of the Bill is the fact of a provincial children's guardian. In other words, as I understand it, somebody would be acting as a parent for the child and taking some responsibility, although I would like to raise some questions about that if I could. I think delivery of child welfare services, such as counselling and residential programs, will be delegated to directors. I want to get a little more information. I have some specific questions about how that would work.

I also commend the hon. minister, as did my colleague, for involving the chiefs or the band councils, the fact that they will be consulted before Indian children are taken into care. I think this is a very positive and progressive move. The minister alluded to the adoption reforms, Mr. Speaker. I think they are good reforms and include giving siblings the right to seek reunions through a new postadoptive registry and provisions to give adoptive parents the surname of their child. I think that's positive. I commend the minister, because I think that's also a step in the right direction.

Perhaps there is still some work left on one other thing, because as the minister is aware, there is an attempt to define that often very difficult line between disciplinary spanking by parents and child abuse. I think that's something we will have to look at, but at least there's an attempt to do that.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, I think the principles of the Bill itself are generally sound. But I would like to move, as I did for a reason — and I know the minister feels at this point that because the Cavanagh commission didn't bring it up specifically or say it wasn't necessary. I do believe it is necessary to have a children's rights Act, especially when the push in the Bill is towards the pre-eminence of the family, as it should be. When we're making that the main thrust of the Bill, I think there has to be a balance somewhere. As my colleague said, where section 2(c) states "the family has the right" whereas section 2(b) only talks of the "interests of a child", that frightens me somewhat. I think the advantage of putting in a children's rights Act would simply be that it would balance it and make sure that we are balancing the right of the family, but it's also very important to balance the children's rights.

As I said earlier, my Bill today — it won't go through — was an attempt to do this. If we brought them both in, I think we'd have the best of both worlds. All we are trying to do with the Children's Rights Act is to declare the child's right to the basic necessities of life: education, parental support, and representation at legal proceedings. It's hardly a radical document, but we think it's a necessity to balance off Bill 35. Of course under any Act, there have to be penalties. It's not only us. I recognize that the minister is saying that the Cavanagh commission did not feel that it was necessary. But to put it into perspective, other commissions have.

For example, my colleague talked about the 1979 commission on family and children's law in British Columbia which recommended that. If we look at other organizations, I notice a quote from Dr. Chris Bagley from the faculty of social welfare that I think says it very well:

Children have basic rights which should be acknowledged and met by any social service system. These rights are not, in principle, different from the rights of all human beings ...

We have made them somewhat different in terms of our wording when we talk about the "interests" of a child and the "rights" of the family in this Act. The Canadian Mental Health Association says that:

Development of a legal mechanism to allow children and their representatives to appeal departmental decisions and enforce children's rights should be enacted by legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I know at this point that the minister has rejected it. But I would say to the minister that of course everything is not brought in overnight, but that he take a serious look at what I believe would balance off Bill 35 and not reject it; it doesn't have to be brought in right away, but take a look at some of the other children's rights Acts that are on, and especially watch to see if we need it.

The other questions I have in terms of the children's guardian, to clear up some — I'm not sure exactly how much power the guardian will have. That will probably come out in the regulations leading into the next year. I hope it's not a powerless position and that the role of the guardian will not be limited — in other words, that they would have the final say — because I think that to do this job a person would have to have the clout to enforce his or her decisions with regard to children. In terms of concluding debate, perhaps the minister can tell us exactly how much power — I know he can't lay out the regulations, but what the power of that children's guardian would be.

The other area I'm a little concerned with in terms of principle are the directors who are responsible for delivery of child welfare services. I understand that, but I would like talk about the appeal decision. I understand that appeals to any decision made by a director are to an appeal panel and that this appeal panel would be appointed by the minister. I hesitate to say this, but I hope that rather than just the minister doing it, there would be some procedure, some board, because they could — and it's happened with this government — become political appointments. I'm not saying this minister would that, but the potential is there. If there's any area that should not be political appointments but be on expertise, surely it should be this area. I wonder why the minister wanted the sole right himself for that panel.

The other concern I have in terms of the principle has to do with handicapped children. As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, handicapped children are placed in a separate section. What I'm wondering is why these children are separated from the main section of the Act. I believe this distinction emphasizes the difference of handicapped children. It seems to me that one of the lessons taught by people who deal with handicapped children is to promote their integration into and their realization of a normal life-style as much as possible. I wonder if we're not designating them as somehow different, which I think would go against that idea of promoting their integration into a normal life-style.

The last part I want to talk about, though, is something my colleague talked about. Basically, other than some minor comments I've made and some philosophical difference perhaps with regard to the Children's Rights Act, the proof is in the pudding, as my colleague said. Overall, as I've already said, it is a good Act. But any Act is worth no more than the paper it's printed on if we do not have the money in social services to do the proper job. When we talk about the pre-eminence of the family — and I've said that this is where it should be — the point is that we know there are families that need help. With some support services, with some counselling, perhaps they might well be able to take a child and do the proper job with him. But if pre-eminence of the family means just sticking him back in the family without support services, without the counselling that's necessary, then we're into a recipe for disaster.

That's one of the reasons why I thought it was important to have a children's rights Act.

I know that basically we will not have to look at this in terms of estimates in this budget year, because the bulk of this comes due on July 1, 1985, but I am a little concerned about the trend. When I see that for 1984-85, 14 staff positions have been cut in child welfare and as of September 30, 1983, the average caseload for child welfare workers was 48, and then I notice in the estimates, which we haven't debated yet, that there is actually a decrease of .4 percent in funding of support services — basically the status quo, but a cut of .4 percent for family services — a 6.5 percent reduction in program development and support for children's services, and a 1.2 percent reduction for contracted homes, then I begin to worry that we're starting a trend to cut back. If we're cutting back in that area then, as I said, the Bill is only as good as the paper it's printed on.

I think the Bill is basically well written, well done, but I believe that it asks for an adequate service. It's going to need adequate support services. If they're not there, the Bill is not going to do what it's meant to do. So I have those concerns. I know we will have time in future estimates to take a look at this.

In terms of the cost — and I know the minister has not always agreed with this — I think we know that with high unemployment as we have in Alberta right now, and certainly higher in Edmonton and in the cities, where a lot of these problems occur, there's going to be increased pressure on the social services, on the minister's department. I think that's very clear. I again quote Mr. Bagley:

Social work action in Alberta has hitherto been marked by very high case loads carried by workers under great pressure.

If in Bill 35 we are demanding more for support services, as I believe we are, then I suggest that higher unemployment is going to put more pressure on. I believe it's going to make it very difficult to follow the principles of Bill 35.

If the minister says I'm just thinking that unemployment causes these things — I know the minister has alluded to when he was told that when times were good that created problems, and when they're bad they weren't — I just refer him again to the latest book by Canadian Mental Health, *Unemployment: its impact on body and soul*. It ties in precisely with what we're talking about right now in terms of family breakdown. It mentions that a police study in Toronto in 1980 showed that of 100 wife beaters, 80 percent were unemployed. The other area that applies directly is Windsor. When unemployment soared to 20 percent in 1980 — we're now officially at 15.1 percent in the city — there was an increase in the caseload of local service agencies of from 25 percent to 377 percent. That's going to put pressure on in terms of what we're doing for this Bill. We can go on and on. They say the best single indicator of child abuse is having an unemployed father in the home.

Mr. Speaker, the point is that this will all tie into Bill 35 in the next year. I just alert the minister and say that I believe we're going to have these pressures. I know that the minister is going to watch, but my point is that I hope that the principles of Bill 35, which are good, have adequate backup service and the money we'll need to do the job. In terms of the preventive social services part of it, I believe that if we spend some money here now, we'll end up spending less later down the road in terms of jails and that.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by saying again that I will support the Act. There are some concerns. We will watch the estimates, where I think the main action will be in terms of whether this is going to work or not.

As I said before, it is a good Act and well worth support in this House at this time.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak to Bill 35, first of all, whenever I hear the Member for Edmonton Norwood agree with the government, I begin to get nervous just on a matter of principle, and we're talking principles in this Bill.

It might be wise to take a moment to realize and recognize why the government is moving with Bill 35 at this time. Reference has been made by the Leader of the Opposition that it's five years since certain incidents happened in this province. Here, five years later, the government is finalizing a Bill to protect our young people or our children. Mr. Speaker, I've never ever thought there was a bad time for a good idea. I've never ever felt that you improved anything by recriminations. I would think that members of this House — and I'm now quoting the Member for Edmonton Norwood — would all support this Bill in the interests of those who are unable to help themselves. But I would like to take a moment and perhaps raise points that I believe are very important to us as members of this Assembly who are addressing this legislation.

First of all, why do we have it? Very clearly I think the reason government is bringing this in is because parents of this province and others haven't met their responsibilities. Let's not kid ourselves, Mr. Speaker. Our society has changed to the point where we can no longer rely on the so-called family unit as we knew it 50 or 75 years ago. No longer can we put out to the parents of Alberta a sense of responsibility, because I submit that if people were doing what they had probably traditionally done, perhaps we wouldn't need the Bill in quite so much detail as we have it today. Surely the role of government is to help those who cannot help themselves, and that's why we're dealing with Bill 35 tonight. But one can't be naive and ignore the facts of life, which I believe are, very clearly, marriage breakdown in three out of five marriages in the first five years — the average marriage in Alberta is now lasting 10 years — and the child abuse that's going on, for a variety of reasons, much of it related to substance abuse, as members well know.

I know the views of the Member for Edmonton Norwood, and I agree with him. When you get economic conditions such as we have, you cannot have an unemployed husband and father sitting home all day without certain things occurring. The first thing he loses is his dignity. When he loses his dignity, he begins to lose the respect of his children and his family. We recognize that. But does that mean we turn the province upside down with government make-work projects? I don't think so. I think we have to respond in a way — and we've heard the budget of the Provincial Treasurer: \$3 billion. Surely that's been put to bed.

Reference was made by the Member for Edmonton Norwood about dollars. We'll be coming to the minister's estimates shortly, and we will see there's some \$139 million allocated to child welfare alone, before this Bill takes effect. Then there is almost \$200 million dealing with single-parent families. With respect, Mr. Speaker, I think the financial commitment of the government is there.

I do feel, however, that we should be a little bit careful. There's a fine line sometimes. I've never been the recipient of an anonymous call about abusing my children; I don't know how people feel who do receive those calls and innuendoes. They don't know whether it's their neighbour, their sister, or their mother. It must give people a terrible feeling. I urge a word of caution about the big brother syndrome, Mr. Speaker; it is 1984. There is that feeling around that — I think we've seen it beginning to surface in the Public Health Act. There are sections that undoubtedly are essential for our well-being;

at least that's what the purpose of the debate is going to be. But I sense an area we'd better be careful in. There's a fine line between parental responsibility and big brother taking over. Where do you draw the line?

The Member for Calgary Fish Creek, as a father of seven, mentioned that he felt certain responsibilities and carried them out. If he has 20-year-old children, I suggest that when they were three or four some of the things he did would have prompted the AGT lines to burn up today. As a father of five, I feel the same way. There are ways I undertook as a parent in disciplining my children, rightly or wrongly — I felt it was right — that probably wouldn't really wash today in our province. It would prompt 10 or 12 phone calls.

I urge members to be a little careful. When we consider that there are many parents in this province who are presently carrying out their responsibilities in a God-fearing way, thinking they're doing what is right, let's have a little empathy for them when they're on the receiving line of a phone call, as somebody — you know, they put their youngster out for two hours to play, and he cries at the door. A well-intending neighbour makes a phone call, and then all hell breaks loose because as a result of this Act being introduced there's no question the focus of this government is going to be on protection of the child. Let's remember that.

Mr. Speaker, I recall many cases. As an M.L.A., I get phone calls, from people who come out of a divorce court. A judge in all his wisdom has made a judgment for child support on this hand but visiting rights on that hand. Woe betide the husband who doesn't come up with the support. But when the father arrives on a Saturday to take advantage of the rights that were given to him by the court and the mother is gone with the kids, nobody says a word. What about the children's rights in that case? What about the rights of the children who want to see their parents?

I suggest that in our enthusiasm — I support the Bill; I think it's an excellent Bill. It's long overdue. But I think we also have to be careful and cautious. When we finally proclaim this Bill and put it into action, we're going to have expectations out there with many people, particularly staff. In the area I represent, I know we have a very dedicated staff in child welfare. There's a Molly Mitchell, who has been with the department I don't know how long. Hours mean nothing; she's dedicated to the job. If there's an abused child in the community, she's on the spot. I think that's dedication. The minister made reference earlier to those he would commend in terms of putting this Bill together. I think there are thousands of dedicated departmental people who've worked long and hard to see that kids in this province were protected, and I hope and suspect that this Bill will improve that.

Mr. Speaker, the final comment is that with the passage of this Bill, perhaps even with the debate of the Bill, I hope Albertans everywhere recognize that after 65 years under the old Act, a new Act is being drafted for modern times. Modern times tend to make one nervous because we're in the instant society, where we anticipate and expect instant gratification, instant satisfaction, instant jobs, instant this, and instant that. Again, I urge a word of caution. Let's not expect instant, overnight changes to our society, because in the final analysis we're talking about Alberta as a series of communities where people within those communities set the norms. I don't think we should expect Cardston, Alberta, to be duplicated too quickly in High Prairie, Alberta. I don't think that's going to happen overnight.

Mr. Speaker, there is section 7 dealing with handicapped and Indian children, a point made by the Member for Edmonton Norwood. I too am pleased to see that a director shall consult

with either a chief of the council or the band council or a designate before placing an Indian child. In dealing with the definition of "family", I think we must recognize that there are cultural benefits, religious benefits, and heritage benefits that one must consider when considering young people.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge all members — and I'm sure it's going to happen — to support this Bill so that future Albertans will be well protected, well guided and, more important, grow into leading Albertans. Thank you.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I too am very pleased to participate in the second reading debate of Bill No. 35, the Child Welfare Act. Bill 35 involves and encompasses — perhaps it's a cliché — our most important resource, our children, the future of our great province and the future of society in Alberta. I commend Dr. Neil Webber, the Minister of Social Services and Community Health, for his initiative, his drive, his desire to help children, to care for them, and to provide such great impetus in seeing that this Bill is in the Legislature today.

Mr. Speaker, what a task it is. I think it's important — the minister as well as the Leader of the Opposition have alluded to this — to talk about the process a little bit more. I know that Edmonton Kingsway residents and, I think, all Albertans would like to know a little further how this legislation got in the House today. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to have been involved with the health and social services caucus committee, under the capable chairmanship of the Member for Calgary Foothills. We worked extensively on this particular Act. We met scores and scores of times to discuss, to debate, to review, to read, to meet with people, et cetera. But this is just one area; that was just the caucus committee. We discussed the philosophy of child care in Alberta. We discussed the needs, desires, and wants of parents in this province. We discussed the interests and the rights of children in our province. These determinations involved many, many lengthy meetings but, again I stress, only one specific aspect, and that was the committee.

Mr. Speaker, there were many others. The minister and his staff, including legal advisers, senior child care managers, social workers, and many, many other staff members in his department and outside his department reviewed, drafted, and discussed at length what was needed in this particular new Act. But that was not all that was involved. Extensive communication from scores of individuals, be they parents or helping professionals or groups interested in the area, be they professionals or lay people, communicated extensively their concerns, their views, their ideas that should be put forward in this Act to help children. We were also very fortunate, and members have alluded to the Cavanagh Board of Review report. Many of the ideas have been incorporated in this particular Act, and we praise those who worked on that committee. This extensive approach to the development of this Act has resulted in a Bill that is thorough in many ways. It shows caring, thought and, as far as I'm concerned, positive direction.

Mr. Speaker, as a citizen of Alberta who has worked with children for over 15 years, I am excited and pleased with the philosophy and goals expressed in this particular Act. Its 52 pages cover the spectrum of children's issues from the serious, horrendous issues of child abuse to extensive definitions of what that term means. This government and the minister should be praised for including for the first time the term "emotional abuse", something that had not been added and something that is overdue.

It deals with the adoption of children. It shows compassion for women wishing to place their children for adoption, by permitting them more time after birth to make the serious deci-

sion of placing their child for adoption — something very unique and something very, very much needed. It also deals with establishing the postadoptive registry, that was covered by one of the members, but it's important to understand how this would work. After 18 years of age, a child who has been adopted could register his or her name in a postadoptive registry. If his or her biological mother or father or sibling also register in this postadoptive registry, they indeed could be matched. I believe this is a most positive step forward.

Mr. Speaker, the family is established as the basic unit of society, and it stresses that its well-being should be supported and preserved. But that is not the most important aspect of this legislation. The protection of children is of paramount importance in this particular Act. As an example of a major change, legislation is being put forward to limit temporary wardship of children to a specified period of time. Why is this a major change? I'd like to give you an example. When I was a social worker in the late 1960s and was involved in apprehending young children because of neglect or abuse, a child could be taken to family court and be made a temporary ward. The resulting things would happen. For example, the parents might have required some psychiatric or psychological assistance; perhaps they were incarcerated; perhaps they were placed in an institution for help. What would happen — and this is the problem — is that this temporary wardship would be extended again and again, with the result, for example, that a child could be made a temporary ward shortly after birth or at one or two years old, and be 10, 11 or 12 years old and still a temporary ward.

This legislative change will require that a decision be made within a two-year period with perhaps, as the minister indicated, a slight further extension. Hopefully that two-year period will force parents, courts, and indeed department staff, to make some decisions for children so that if they are not to be returned to their parents, for whatever reasons, these children can have some further stability, can have a home atmosphere, and hopefully could be adopted or placed in a permanent residence.

I'd like to allude, if I could, to two additional sections in the Act. First of all, members have talked about section 73(2), dealing with the Indian child. I know members have referred to it, but I think it's important. If I could just quote 73(2):

If a director has reason to believe that a child is an Indian, a member of a band and a resident of a reserve, the director shall consult with a chief of the council or the council of the band or the designate of either of them before entering into a permanent guardianship agreement or applying for a supervision order or a temporary or permanent guardianship order in respect of the child.

Mr. Speaker, this is simply an example of how this Act has attempted to deal with unique situations involving children, all children throughout this province.

Another area of interest, and the Member for Edmonton Norwood alluded to it briefly, is the appeal by children, by guardians, or by foster parents who have had children for over six months, to an appeal panel which will be established. This process permits re-examination and indeed changes in decisions if determined by that particular appeal panel.

Mr. Speaker, the Act is a forerunner in North America for the protection of Alberta's children. Its definitions, on pages 3, 4, and 5 in the Act, are all-encompassing and all-inclusive. Of course this is an Act that cannot and will not have all the answers. If changes are required in the future, those changes will be made. Its mandate pertaining to preliminary intervention, agreements, court orders, secure treatment, adoption, issues regarding the handicapped child, appeals, the Indian child, giving evidence, and maintenance orders, are clear,

they're candid, they're required, and they need the support of every member in this Legislature. The children of Alberta need your support. Support Bill 35.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WOO: Mr. Speaker, in rising in support of Bill 35, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate not only the present minister but the past minister for their initiatives. I think both ministers recognized a need and a time for change. I think both ministers recognized the fact that in order to effect those changes there had to be certain challenges to certain institutions. If those institutions happen to be of a long-established nature, then certainly the dislocations and disruptions will be of a greater nature.

I think both ministers approached the challenge with confidence in the fact that there had to be certain changes effected. In that respect too, because of the number of dislocations and disruptions that were occasioned, I would also like to take this opportunity to commend the work of the officials who toil not only at the departmental level but at the regional level within that particular department. I commend these people because I really believe them to be dedicated and sincere professionals.

Mr. Speaker, cases concerning family issues have always been, and will remain, complex and emotional issues. In such matters I don't think I can fault the need for people to err on the side of being overly cautious as opposed to perhaps a more cavalier attitude of not caring enough. I think it is within such a framework that because the flexibility was not there, a lot of the adverse criticism that was directed toward people working in the field was not deserved. That is not to say that sometimes things did not go wrong. By the very complex nature of child welfare cases, I am more surprised that more cases of adverse public reaction have not occurred rather than at those that have. I believe we learn from our mistakes, and that's the other side of the coin.

I would like to direct my attention to section 73 of the Act and make a number of observations and comments concerning Bill 35 in its relationship to the aboriginal peoples of Alberta, specifically the treaty Indian sector. Indian parents are no different from other parents in this province when it comes to the welfare and well-being of their children. Historically the debate surrounding Indian child welfare issues has always been conducted on a unilateral basis, excluding the Indian sector, notwithstanding the fundamental universal right of parents to control and direct factors affecting their children. I believe that Canadian society as a whole cherishes that universal right, yet legislation in the past has chosen to deprive our first citizens of that right.

I think it is interesting to look at some statistics relative to Indian children when we proceed with Bill 35. I think it is necessary to assure ourselves that the section dealing with Indian children is appropriate, adequate and, most important, has been arrived at in a bilateral fashion and will not in effect be construed as provincial legislation that attempts to take away Indian status originally acquired under the federal Indian Act. A recently completed national survey indicates that one out of 20 Indian children between the ages of birth and 19 is in the care of a provincial Department of Social Services and Community Health. It is also interesting to note that such children are less likely to be reunited with their families and communities than children of other ethnic groups. In the last two decades, over 6,500 Indian children were adopted. Of that number, a little over 4,800 were adopted by non-Indians. What that tells me, Mr. Speaker, is that only 1,700 Indian children were afforded the right of adoption by their own race, culture, and community. In Alberta, during the same time span, 562 Indian

children were adopted. Over one-half of these children were adopted by non-Indians.

During the course of the 1982 National Indian Brotherhood survey and conference on national Indian child welfare, a number of important issues were identified. Ones that I think are important to this debate may or may not appear to be important to others, Mr. Speaker. But I might remind my hon. colleagues in this Assembly that any legislation we might pass will certainly have greater implications and that some very fundamental issues relative to the constitutional conference on aboriginal rights issues are yet to be resolved. I refer to the areas of self-government and self-determination and the right to create legislation exclusive to the reserves.

The issues that the 1982 National Indian Brotherhood conference raised, and the ones which I think are relevant to section 73, relate to the areas of jurisdictional concern with respect to provincial incursions: the inordinate number of native children in institutions, the large number of native children in non-native homes, the loss of the cultural integrity of Indian children placed in non-native homes, and the number of Indian children being placed outside provincial home boundaries and outside the country of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I raise these concerns not to oppose the spirit and intent of section 73 of this Act, for I do support the principles embodied in the total Bill. But I raise them during second reading simply to mirror the concerns of the treaty Indians of this province and to again ensure ourselves that we are doing the right thing the right way.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the minister and his officials for this all-important Bill, and I commend this Bill to the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. minister wish to conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear the hon. members make their comments on Bill 35, the Child Welfare Act. There were some very good comments made, comments that need to be considered in the future in terms of drafting regulations and departmental policies.

Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I was disappointed with the comments from the Leader of the Opposition in that he did basically keep his remarks to the history of the process, in terms of the Cavanagh Board of Review and what led up to that. Even though he indicated he was supportive of the Bill, he really didn't get into the principles of the Bill.

Both members of the Official Opposition did raise the question of budget and money. We will be going through the budgetary process before too long. I would just comment that during that process, I would be happy to answer any questions they may have with respect to the funding of child welfare matters. I just point out at this time that there is an overall increase of 5.4 percent in the child welfare services vote of the budget, as opposed to basically a zero percent increase overall for the entire budget for the department.

However, I would just like to comment that when we were receiving input from the public and from within the department, the point was raised: how much money or what kind of support services are going to be required in the future in order meet the needs of this particular piece of legislation? Mr. Speaker, my response was basically that we go through a budgetary process in this Legislature and we will deal with that process responsibly when it comes to matters of dealing with children. We will be looking at the expanded role that the Family and

Community Support Services might play in that regard. No matter what kind of budget we would come up with, I am sure there are those who would say that it's not enough. I don't expect that will ever cease, in terms of those who would complain about that. I think we have to deal with the budgetary aspects of it in a responsible way, through the budgetary process.

With respect to the rights of children, I have pointed out in my comments that in our view we have a balance in Bill 35 between, if you like, rights of children and the importance of the family. I didn't catch all the comments the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood made with respect to rights of children in his Bill of rights that he presented in the House today. The one I did catch was with respect to the right to an education. Without debating that particular piece of legislation, it seems to me that it would be inappropriate to build such a right into this particular Act, the Child Welfare Act. We do have our legislation with respect to education, and it might more appropriately be placed there if there is a need for it.

All through this particular Bill, if you like, we have rights for children. There is the right to legal representation. There is the right to consultation. If the child is over 12 years of age, he can receive notices that relate to court orders. In the area of compulsory care or secure treatment, the court has to give reasons to the child for the orders and the child can appeal these court orders. So throughout the Act, there are rights of children built into it, if you want to refer to them as "rights".

Mr. Speaker, I did point out that in this particular Bill we are trying to separate the advocacy role for children from the administrative and the service delivery role. I just want to indicate that we recognize the importance of trying to separate those roles, whereby the children's guardian can deal in the best interests of the child without worrying about the budgets and the administration of these services. I really do not want to get into any details with respect to the mandates of the children's guardians or of the directors in this particular Bill. That will be dealt with through the regulations and departmental policies.

There was reference to the appeal panels, which I failed to mention, and the current Child Welfare Commission, whose members consist of departmental employees. I think it's more appropriate that we have an independent view, that we have representation from the general public on these appeal panels, where decisions can be appealed no matter what the decision may relate to in terms of how it might affect a child.

The hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood indicated that we had a section in here dealing with the handicapped child. I agree that it may appear to be inappropriately placed in a Child Welfare Act, where we are dealing with children in need of protection. This particular aspect was in the old legislation, and there was the desire on the part of many in the public that we make sure we don't delete the section dealing with handicapped children. It may be possible in the future to more appropriately place it elsewhere, and we will consider that.

Mr. Speaker, I believe those are reactions to some of the comments that were made by hon. members. I am happy with the public reaction and also the reaction of my colleagues. I recommend that all members support it.

[Motion carried; Bill 35 read a second time]

**Bill 8
Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 1984**

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 8.

The history of this proposed legislation is that under the Legislative Assembly Act recently passed in 1983, a provision of the preceding one was carried forward, which was there as a result of a recommendation of the committee chaired in 1979 by then Mr. Justice Miller of the Court of Queen's Bench. The

result of that recommendation and its inclusion in the Legislative Assembly Act was that members would receive an increase in allowances and salaries if the inflation factor in the preceding calendar year in general terms met the test of 5 percent when averaged between the two major metropolitan centres in Alberta for which statistics are kept.

In the time frame that would apply to this year, the increase in the cost-of-living average was a mere .2 percent over the limit, and strictly speaking an increase in salaries and allowances for all members should then follow. It was felt by the government, however, that in the light of the present economic situation in the province and in particular the need in the private sector for people to accept either no increase or potential roll-backs or layoffs in numbers of businesses, it would not be appropriate for members of the Assembly to accept the 5 percent increase this year. For that reason, although this Bill would not affect the same situation in any subsequent year, it would have the effect of setting aside the increase that would otherwise have been paid this year. I urge all hon. members to support that, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 8 read a second time]

**Bill 16
Stray Animals Amendment Act, 1984**

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 16, the Stray Animals Amendment Act.

There are several changes needed to improve the previous Act. One is that the existing statute requires that moneys collected from the sale of livestock be forwarded to the Provincial Treasurer. The proposed amendment would have this deleted. There is also reference made to claiming of expenses, which amends the statute specifically that proof of expenses must be supplied. After the sale of stray animals the proceeds, minus expenses, shall be placed in the Stray Animals Act fund. It permits the Provincial Treasurer to pay moneys from this fund to individuals who have incurred damages. It also permits the Minister of Agriculture to authorize payment of the balance of the proceeds of a sale to an individual who has proven ownership of livestock. This is, of course, within a one-year limit. If after one year the claim is not made, the moneys go into the general revenue of the province. It also establishes and authorizes the Provincial Treasurer to make payments from the fund. It establishes procedures for disposal of proceeds from the sale of a nursing calf found on a community grazing lease when the ownership of the calf cannot be determined. It states that permission must be received prior to allowing cattle to graze on an Indian reserve or a community grazing association. It also makes provision that an individual who finds livestock on his property must notify either the owner or an inspector within seven days.

[Motion carried; Bill 16 read a second time]

**Bill 18
Department of Energy and
Natural Resources Amendment Act, 1984**

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased tonight to move second reading of Bill No. 18, the Department of Energy and Natural Resources Amendment Act, 1984.

As many of us know, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Energy and Natural Resources Act establishes the department and sets out the powers and responsibilities of the ministers. The main purpose of this Bill, therefore, is to make certain

amendments to assist in the operation of the department and to clarify the position of the associate minister. I would like to briefly outline these important amendments and the reasons they are required.

First of all, the Bill will establish a revolving fund for the department. This revolving fund will facilitate the provision of supplies and services such as maps, photo services; surveying services; et cetera, to the public and to other government departments. It will also cover the provision of supplies and services such as pharmaceuticals and minerals related to the operation of the provincial grazing reserves. This has become necessary in order to deliver a more effective and better service to the citizens utilizing these grazing reserves and to the citizens who are purchasing mapping services.

A secondary purpose of the Bill is to formally establish the position of the associate minister and to enable him to fully preside over those portions of the department previously assigned to him. There has been an Associate Minister of Public Lands and Wildlife for several years, and this Bill will make the position consistent with other legislation and orders in council proclaiming the position and the duties thereof.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Bill proposes some consequential amendments to the Public Service Act to deal with the situation where a department has more than one minister and a deputy minister.

[Motion carried; Bill 18 read a second time]

Bill 23

Hospitals and Medical Care Statutes Amendment Act, 1984

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 23, the Hospitals and Medical Care Statutes Amendment Act, 1984.

This is a very straightforward amending Bill, Mr. Speaker, and follows upon legislation that the Legislature passed last fall. Two Acts are amended very simply by this Bill, first of all the Hospitals Act, and secondly the Provincial General Hospitals Act. The purpose in both those amendments is to make absolutely certain that the legislation we passed setting up, organizing, and applying to the establishment of hospital char-

itable foundations applies to all hospitals throughout the province in a uniform manner. It also responds to concern raised by some hospital boards that some words we had included in the original amendment last year could perhaps be awkward to their purposes. That phrase is being removed.

So it's a very straightforward amending Bill, Mr. Speaker. The only thing I would say in conclusion is that just since last fall, I'm really encouraged by the apparent tremendous response and interest there's been on the part of the public toward these charitable hospital foundations. Just by way of interest, I mention that when I was present with the hon. Member for Highwood at the opening of the Oilfields hospital in Black Diamond during the Easter recess, on that opening day there were already three substantial cash donations made to the hospital board, with a pledge of another large one to come. In these days of challenging budgeting times for hospital boards, I think this is a great opportunity for the Legislature to seize. Today anyway, it seems to be one which will be well supported by the public.

[Motion carried; Bill 23 read a second time]

Bill 36

Mines and Minerals Amendment Act, 1984

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 36, the Mines and Minerals Amendment Act, 1984.

Mr. Speaker, as was outlined at the time of first reading, the purpose of the Bill is to ensure that incentives paid or given to explore for minerals are recognized as costs that are incurred to collect royalty, and as such are an integral part of the royalty system.

[Motion carried; Bill 36 read a second time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, in a minute I propose to move that the Assembly adjourn until tomorrow. I want to indicate first, though, that tomorrow afternoon we will be in Committee of Supply with the estimates of the Department of Housing. If there's time after that, we would call the estimates of the Department of Labour. The present intention is to sit Thursday evening as well.

[At 9:59 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]