

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Monday, April 22, 1985 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Legislature Library copies of an interprovincial comparison of volunteerism prepared by the Canadian Council on Social Development. This document will be valuable as a resource for the national conference on volunteerism being held this week in Ottawa.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly some two and a half dozen alert grade 6 students from the fine Parkview elementary school in the Edmonton Glenora riding. They're in the public gallery, accompanied by Donna Meier. I'd ask that they rise at this time and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

Department of Education

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I believe that a teacher is one of the two most important people involved in education, and the performance of the teacher in the classroom is critical to the quality of education offered to each and every child.

Today I want to advise this Assembly further about another important step towards improving the quality of education in our classrooms. The initiation to teaching project, as previously announced in the Budget Address of March 25, will provide us with an excellent opportunity to combine a temporary employment program with the concept of teacher internship. This concept may be a way of improving the teaching skills of first-year teachers. The initiation to teaching project will allow for the continued professional training of prospective and beginning teachers in a structured classroom environment and will facilitate their transition from student to professional teacher.

Employment in the program will commence September 1, and information packages are being sent immediately to all graduating students and school boards. Funding for this project will be provided by Alberta Education and the Alberta youth employment and training program announced in October 1984 by the Hon. Ernie Isley, Minister of Manpower. The program will run for two years at a total annual cost of \$14 million and will provide employment for Albertans recently graduated from faculties of education who might otherwise be unemployed or underemployed. Of the \$14

million, \$4.9 million will come from Alberta Education, \$7 million will be provided under the youth employment and training program, and the remaining \$2.1 million will come from school boards who hire these beginning teachers.

School boards wanting to participate in the project are eligible to receive a grant of up to \$7,800 per participant per year from the youth employment and training program. Alberta Education will provide a grant of 70 percent of the Alberta Manpower grant to a maximum of \$5,460. The contribution of contributing school jurisdictions will be 30 percent of the Alberta Manpower grant, to a maximum of \$2,340 per participant per year.

The initiation to teaching project will enable recent graduates of teacher preparation programs to be employed by the boards of school jurisdictions, category 1 or 2 private schools, or private early childhood services operators. Participants will not be employed as teachers; rather, they will work under the guidance and supervision of teachers with outstanding professional qualifications. The experience gained by these recent graduates will enable them to refine their teaching skills and improve their competencies. It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that up to 900 interns can be employed each year for the two-year project.

I want to point out as well that this project has been discussed and approved by all the major stakeholders in education: the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the faculties of education, the Conference of School Superintendents, and the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges. As well, constructive discussions have been held with students in education. I am pleased that the response has been so positive and the interest so high.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that the initiation to teaching project is not an internship program in the full sense, but it does provide an opportunity to assess whether or not the teacher internship concept can result in significant improvements in the preparation of prospective teachers. The initiation to teaching project will be carefully evaluated over the two-year period, and this evaluation will provide a basis upon which to determine the usefulness of internship in enhancing the training of beginning teachers. This is critically important, Mr. Speaker, because our children must be assured of the excellence of their teaching and their education.

Thank you.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, in rising to reply to the ministerial announcement, I have no major problems as it stands, although I do have questions that I'm sure we can raise in estimates. One could argue that perhaps the funding would have been better used in education generally rather than specifically in this program. But I would put the minister on alert, because there are a couple of questions I think are important in reading this. I'm glad to read that

Participants will not be employed as teachers; rather, they will work under the guidance and supervision of teachers with outstanding professional qualifications.

Of course, this is one of the concerns we had when the minister first talked about it; it could be a method of getting a cheap teacher. But I wonder what controls are there? Surely it's not the intention of the minister to have bigger classes necessarily and have the interns there. I hope he would not see that they would be cutting back on teachers, to have a master teacher with some interns working for less money. I wonder what controls there are on that.

The other area, Mr. Speaker, has to do with the whole idea of permanent certificates. It used to be that when you came out as a young teacher it would be two years to a permanent certificate, if you proved satisfactory. I take it now that this would be two years when that wouldn't happen and that it would be another two years before they would become a permanent teacher, if they got jobs after this program.

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I'll leave it for estimates to follow up.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the ministerial statement and not to repeat the remarks of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, in theory I'm certain the program has some merits. The concern I've had from a number of potential graduates of our universities is that they have spent four years preparing themselves to teach in the province of Alberta, the opportunity is not available to them, and now they're going to be asked to apprentice for two years. During that period of time, they have to carry their student loans as a responsibility with, as I look at a quick calculation, very minimum wages. I would say that the hon. minister should evaluate that and the impact on those persons, whether they're single or have a family to support during the upcoming two years.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Hazardous Waste Disposal

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. We'd like to give him a rest, but things seem to keep coming up in the province. Another large shipment of PCBs arrived at the Kinetic facility Friday night. As I understand it, it was not met at the border by the minister's department. My question to the minister is simply this: can the minister advise on what date he was first informed that this shipment from Ontario was on its way to Alberta?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, the department was advised by the federal Department of Transport of their itinerary for the movement of hazardous materials. It was received by the department on April 10.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, then, to the minister. Given the legitimate concern over the transportation record of Kinetic and the minister's assurances in this Assembly on Friday, can the minister advise why he did not instruct his officials to meet the latest shipment at the Alberta border, inspect it, and then escort it to Nisku?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, the direction to the department in terms of ongoing shipments received by this company had been discussed, and a decision was made on Friday that all new shipments coming into the province would be met at the Alberta border and inspected by the department. The department then made many attempts to contact Kinetic Ecological Resources with regard to this new directive. Late Friday afternoon or early Friday evening they finally made contact with Kinetic. Kinetic advised them at that point that the shipment which the hon. member is referring to was in transit and within the province at that point in time. The department decided they would then meet the shipment when

it arrived at the Kinetic facility, which it did later than evening.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister. As I understand the minister's answer, it wasn't till Friday that the department decided they should be doing this. As a result, they had no knowledge of the shipment coming in until Friday afternoon and were not able to inspect it until they hit into Nisku. Is that correct?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think I advised the House as to the procedures which were put in place Friday, the same day the federal Department of Transport put in new regulations with regard to the shipment of this type of material. The specific shipment was in transit at that time.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Last week the minister assured this Assembly a number of times that the Crown was protected by bonding on all material brought into the province since March 20, yet in discussions with the assistant deputy minister of environmental protection services our office was told something a little different today. My question is this: can the minister confirm that the Kinetic bonds they talked about are not formally in place and that the government is awaiting Kinetic's ability to secure a line of credit before we are actually protected?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think I explained to the House that with regard to new shipments coming in, the company would be required to put bonding in place. The department has contacted the company with regard to that new requirement. The company has responded to the department that they would meet that requirement. They are now negotiating the specific time when the bonding will come into place. At this point we do not have a formal bond in place. We have a commitment that a bond or equivalent will be in place, and the department has given the company until April 30 to ensure that that bond is in place.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. On April 16 the minister said:

on March 20 the department contacted Kinetic Ecological Resources with regard to the bonding requirements, in terms of any new material which would be stored at their site, and arranged for new material to be bonded.

Given the minister's answer now, it seems to us that that is not precisely the truth that the minister was saying. The question I have then: is the minister getting wrong information from his department? It is clear that he said all material coming in after the 20th was bonded, and now we find out it wasn't.

MR. BRADLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, I think it was clear that the department advised that all new material coming in would have to be bonded and that arrangements were being made to have that bonding in place.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I guess *Hansard* isn't quite correct then. We'll have to analyze what's inside the minister's head rather than what he's saying. Just so we're clear today, Mr. Speaker, is the minister telling the Assembly that the material which arrived Friday is not formally bonded, that there was no bonding in place for the material that spilled in Kenora, and no future shipments are yet bonded?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think I answered that question with regard to procedures the department has implemented. As I said, they advised the company that bonding would be required. The company has agreed to put that bonding in place, and a deadline has been set in terms of when that will be finalized.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, that means we're taking all this in and it's not bonded. That is a very different impression than the minister gave in the House. My question to the minister now: can he advise what protection system is in place, then, to prevent the Crown from being stuck for the liability for not only the material stored in Nisku before March 20 but all the new material shipped there up to the 30th?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I anticipate that the commitment from the company will be upheld by them and the bonding or equivalent will be in place on April 30.

MR. MARTIN: Is the minister saying that he has no assurances? He is hoping that it will be covered then. Is that what the minister is saying?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, the company advised us that they would meet those requirements. I believe the deadline when that bonding has to be in place is April 27. They said they would meet the requirements in terms of bonding any new material, and we set a deadline.

MR. MARTIN: My supplementary question to the minister is simply this: if they are not able to meet that bonding requirement on the 27th, is the minister saying that Treasury will have to pick up the costs of these most recent shipments into the province?

MR. BRADLEY: No, Mr. Speaker. We will pursue other avenues in terms of enforcing the commitment which was made.

MR. MARTIN: Could the minister indicate to the House those methods of getting that from the company then? If they're not able to bond, what other assurances do we have? Could he be more explicit?

MR. BRADLEY: We will use whatever legal remedies are available to us in terms of the authorizations that are in place and other legal remedies we have in terms of enforcing that provision.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the hon. leader's final supplementary on this topic. Perhaps we can come back to it.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. In view of the fact that we seem to have the responsibility for D & D, what makes this situation different? If they're bankrupt, how are you going to get anything out of them, Mr. Speaker? That's my question to the minister.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, that's new information. The hon. leader is now saying that the company is bankrupt. That's new information to me.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate whether it is possible that the

125 drums of contaminated pavement, which is in Ontario at the present time, will be brought to Alberta or not?

MR. BRADLEY: No, Mr. Speaker. In terms of requests made to us by the province of Ontario and Kinetic, the Special Waste Management Corporation has responded that we would not consider the material contaminated as a result of the spill as part of the authorization which had been given earlier.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. In light of the fact that we have to store these materials until the plant is completed in Swan Hills, why is the province of Alberta having the contaminants come to this province? I asked the minister that before. Has there been a deal made between the province of Alberta and the other provinces to accept their hazardous wastes?

MR. BRADLEY: No, Mr. Speaker. I think I responded to that question earlier in terms of the legislation which is in place in the province. The amendments to legislation last fall outlined the responsibilities on which the department could operate with regard to this. That legislation was proclaimed on March 13. From that point forward new rules are in place. I think I've elaborated on those in the Assembly as to what action we can take. Under those new rules the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation authorized Kinetic to complete any contracts they had in place as of April 4 and that there would be no new shipments coming in after May 15.

In terms of our discussions with other provinces, we have not encouraged other provinces to move PCBs to this province. In fact, the opposite is true. We've advised them over a period of time that it was not our policy to look in a favourable manner upon the importation of wastes into the province.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate what monitoring the department does to see what drainage that comes from the site at Nisku goes into a watercourse which leads into Blackmud, which leads into Whitemud? What monitoring is being done of those watercourses?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, there has been ongoing monitoring by the department over a period of time with regard to that. Most recently, this weekend the department again took samples of Blackmud Creek, Whitemud Creek, and discharge into the North Saskatchewan River. There were extremely low levels of PCBs in the watercourse: .05 parts per billion. It is of no concern. The department has been monitoring this on an ongoing basis in the past few years.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is the source of the PCBs in those watercourses the site at Nisku?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, the monitoring took place both downstream and upstream from the Nisku site. The levels upstream were the same as the levels downstream, so it does not indicate at all that the source was the Nisku site.

Canadian Commercial Bank Support

MR. MARTIN: I'd like to direct the second question to the hon. Treasurer. It's about one of his favourite subjects, the Canadian Commercial Bank, so we can hear him talk about confidence and the things he likes to talk about. Mr.

Speaker, last week the Bank of Canada undertook another rescue package for the Canadian Commercial Bank by lending it close to \$600 million to stave off a liquidity crisis. Given that these cash advance loans are subject to repayment with interest, has the hon. Treasurer assessed what effect these interest charges on the cash advances will have on the ability of the CCB to weather this crisis and its ability to pay the \$73 million back to the provincial government?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's our assessment that there would be no change in the original assessment I made that they would be able to repay the amounts and carry forward as a viable financial institution.

MR. MARTIN: That's very nice, but what leads him to believe this? We seem to go from one crisis to another. We're told that \$600 million in deposits has been taken out. Will the Treasurer assure this Assembly that no more money in any form will be committed to the CCB by the province of Alberta?

MR. HYNDMAN: Of course, Mr. Speaker, the initiative taken by the Bank of Canada was its initiative, pursuant to federal legislation. As I've indicated in the past, I think the approach taken by the government of Alberta and those others involved in the reorganization package was the right one, because it was with respect to an unique western Canadian institution based in the province of Alberta. As well, it encouraged and underscored the growing confidence in the province. So I don't believe there will be any further need for the Alberta government to participate beyond what has been committed.

MR. MARTIN: That's very nice, but I wanted an assurance that it wouldn't. I take it by the Treasurer's evading the question that we're not going to get that assurance, that we could be putting some more taxpayers' money into this favourite bank of the Treasurer. My question then: would the Treasurer indicate if this government has set a ceiling on the amount of money it will provide for any further bailout packages for CCB, and what might that ceiling be?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's a rather odd suggestion. As I've indicated in the past and as has been indicated in the white paper, the government of Alberta believes it is an important element of public policy for this government to support the continuing viability and expansion of financial institutions in western Canada. To that extent we have moved and made arrangements and initiatives with respect to a number of those institutions. That is the objective and that is the goal. I believe it is supported by Albertans, particularly those businessmen and individuals who want to see growing confidence and growth in the province of Alberta in the future.

MR. MARTIN: I was wondering when he was going to say the word; he couldn't resist. Mr. Speaker, it's nice that we like government involvement in the economy and socialism for the banks. I thought the Treasurer was a free enterpriser. My question is to the Treasurer. The Bank of Canada's governor is on record as saying that the Bank of Canada will provide the Canadian Commercial Bank with whatever liquidity support it may require. Is such a blank-cheque policy shared by this government?

MR. HYNDMAN: No, I've made no such statement, Mr. Speaker. I think the hon. member should perhaps talk to the governor of the bank with respect to any elaboration on that commitment.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. We're just trying to find out what our commitment ...

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary on this topic. There may be an opportunity to get back to it.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we're told that it's confident, but every time something happens — \$6 million in deposits taken out — and by the answers from the Treasurer, we're not sure we're not going to bail it out some more. The first bailout is rather interesting. We can see how shrewd a business deal it was.

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder, are we going to have a question, or is it going to be a speech? Do I have to watch the time limit?

MR. MARTIN: You can watch the time if you like, but I'll ask the question anyhow. My question now: has the Treasurer determined yet where our share of the initial \$225 million bailout package will come from? At one time it was from the heritage trust fund; the next day it wasn't sure. Do we know now, some weeks after?

MR. HYNDMAN: From the General Revenue Fund, Mr. Speaker.

Sugar Beet Industry

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. It's with regard to the sugar beet commitment that was made not only by the federal government but by the provincial government. Is it the intention of the provincial government to supplement the federal contribution of some \$8 million with a \$6 million contribution, or will there be some trade-off in terms of the commitment of the Alberta government?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we're not looking at supplementing at all. We made our commitment earlier than the federal government. That commitment of \$10 per field ton of beets up to a maximum of \$6 million was put on the table. That commitment will remain for 1985.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the minister indicating that there will be, between the federal government and the provincial government, some \$20 per ton in terms of assistance payments?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: No, Mr. Speaker, that's not quite accurate. Our commitment was based on \$10 per field ton. The federal commitment is based on sugar content. So I don't believe it will come out to \$20 per field ton. However, as I stated in my previous answer, our \$10 per ton commitment will remain.

Fertilizer Price Protection Plan

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the minister received any reports that the prices of fertilizer have been raised to reduce the benefits of the price protection plan?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: I'd be shocked, Mr. Speaker, if they're raising the price of fertilizer after our commitment recognizing the concern about farm input costs. I should say that there is a normal increase in the spring over the fall discounts; however, any increase above that would certainly be shocking.

MRS. CRIPPS: Shocked or not, has the minister any intention of meeting with any of the fertilizer companies to ensure that, in fact, this doesn't happen?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, it's my intention to meet with the Alberta Wheat Pool tomorrow. At that time I will be discussing with them their intentions and what activities they've had with respect to fertilizer pricing.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. If the farmers in Alberta have run into an increase in the price of fertilizer from the week before the announcement to the week after and they write to the minister, will that be investigated and something said to the companies?

MR. SPEAKER: That sounds like a hypothetical question. If the hon. member is able to look for facts instead of possibilities, perhaps we could deal with it.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, when the price of fertilizer goes up \$12 a ton two days after the announcement, it's not really hypothetical. When people write to the minister and indicate the price of fertilizer has gone up and where it is increased, will the minister contact those responsible?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member can be assured that we'll contact them. In addition to that, we have established nine marketing areas in the province with 45 marketing centres, and we'll be monitoring the prices of fertilizer in all of those centres from January 1984 until July 1986. They'll be monitored on a weekly basis, and if we see anything that raises concern, we'll certainly be contacting those companies and having discussions with them, recognizing the concern we have for input costs at the present time.

MRS. CRIPPS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the postage-stamp rate established across western Canada by Western Co-op Fertilizers provide a fairly high ceiling for competitors and would that increase the price of Alberta fertilizers?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member is speculating about something and asking for an expression of opinion or an assessment of what is going on, and at the moment I'm not able to relate the question to the official duties of the minister.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I don't think I am speculating. It is, in fact, a postage-stamp price.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member is speculating about the effect of it.

MRS. CRIPPS: Maybe I could ask another supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. Because fertilizer needs moisture to be effective and I know the minister took the blame for the drought last year and I presume he took the credit for the

moisture this year, next time could he be a little more explicit in outlining the moisture delivery guidelines?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the member that even though I was criticized for the drought, I took no credit for that or for the moisture content, because they call me "honourable" not "Your Holiness".

MR. R. SPEAKER: He only walks on snow.

Health Unit Nurses' Strike

DR. BUCK: Hugh Horner was the only guy who walked on water.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Can the minister indicate what monitoring he is doing to see what effect the nurses' strike is having on the health units?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, until a week ago I was having daily reports from each of the eight health units where the nurses were out on strike, and now I'm receiving weekly reports. The last report I had came in April 15. Also, MLAs have indicated they would bring to my attention any concerns they have.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Can the minister indicate what studies have been done by his department as to the long-term effects of the nurses who are presently at health units moving back into the active nursing field and leaving a shortage of nurses in the health units? What long-term effects is the minister looking at, or does he know?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, since the strike is only a few weeks old, I haven't initiated any long-term studies related to the impact of nurses leaving the health units over to the hospitals. I am hearing that in at least two health units all the home care nurses have returned to work, and as of April 15, the impact on the home care caseload has been that 35 home care patients have been hospitalized because of the strike. That's an average of about six per health unit in the six health units where hospitalization occurred. At this stage I think it's too early to indicate if there will be any impact.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate what effect the immunization program is having? Are the medical people taking up the slack, or what is happening to the immunization program the health units formerly did?

DR. WEBBER: Early in the strike, Mr. Speaker, I had indications that medical doctors were in many instances picking up on the immunization process. I haven't had any recent reports on that.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, is the minister in a position to indicate if he will consider direct intervention in the strike, or is he just going to let it run its natural course?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, a process is in place, and it is my intention to let that process proceed. There's no intention on my part to be involved.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, is the minister in a position to indicate if the department, the minister, or the government

has given any consideration to increasing the funds to the health units so they can pick up an increase in wages to the nurses?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the funding for health units in the province is outlined in the budget for this year, and I'll be happy to discuss that at that time. A 2 percent increase has already been established for the health units. How they use those funds is up to the health units to decide.

Pork Industry

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture, and it follows from my question Friday regarding the petition by Gainers about the Pork Producers' Marketing Board. What consideration has the minister given to launching a provincewide information campaign to counter the Gainers information that's been made public and to ensure Albertans are getting a true picture of the situation with regards to pork producers in the province?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I've given no thought whatsoever to having an advertising campaign, of any sort across the province. However, I have been meeting with all the people particularly involved in the hog industry in the province to see if we can come to some solution of a problem that has spread across the province.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister asked Gainers whether or not government failure to give in to the demands outlined in the petition I referred to would result in Gainers closing its Edmonton plant?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister has been pushing for a national tripartite red meat program and for a national conference, yet meanwhile there seems to be concern about immediate problems. My question is: what temporary support measure would the minister be able to announce today to the House and to the producers in this province that would restore the traditional market share that Alberta pork producers have had and deal on a short-term, temporary basis with the desperate straits that he's indicated pork producers are in?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt about the difficult circumstances our hog producers find themselves in. I'm sure the hon. member also recognizes that this week we have in Alberta a group from the United States looking at subsidy programs in Canada to look at whether the countervail should remain, or it may even be increased from what it is at the moment.

So I've had very intense discussion over the last couple of weeks with the Chairman of the Hog Producers' Marketing Board as well as the Cattle Commission and others to look at what help we may be able to provide to the industry through the short term.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Out of these discussions, then, could the minister tell us whether or not he has completely rejected implementing any sort of temporary stop-loss or support

program for hog producers, such as the Pork Producers' Marketing Board called for recently?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we have rejected nothing at this point, but we're certainly prepared to work with them. I might add that I've sent a message to the federal Minister of Agriculture asking for an agriculture ministers' conference immediately on this issue to try to work out between the provinces and the federal government a way that we could get out of the balkanization and the proliferation of programs across this country that are causing us all so much of a problem. So we're very active, and we'll continue to be so, working with our hog producers.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In view of the absence of any temporary support program, can the minister confirm that in recent weeks the price for Alberta hogs has dropped about \$30 or more per hundred-weight below the cost of production, and if so, can he advise, beyond calling for meetings, what he is going to do about that situation?

MR. SPEAKER: It seems to me we're asking about public knowledge.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I can't get into any debate with respect to what the costs of production are; however, I can say that we have the lowest priced hogs in North America, which is just not acceptable. Also, the work that we have been doing on a national tripartite red meat stabilization program — which, I might add, the pork producers in this province support — is one step in the right direction. But recognizing there are some short-term problems, those can best be worked out in consultation with the industry, and that's exactly what I'm doing.

Energy Market Prorationing

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask whether the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources can assure the House and directly the small, independent, Canadian-owned oil companies that the provincial government will keep in place its prorationing marketing system to ensure that these companies will continue to have access to market? Is it the intention of the government to do that?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, the western accord specifically provides that the prorationing system which is currently in place can be maintained. At the present time, there is certainly no intention on the part of this government to make any change in that arrangement.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

(continued)

MR. MARTIN: To come back on the statement by the minister, Mr. Speaker. I'm confused. He said it was a correct statement. He said on March 20, and I quote again:

The department contacted Kinetic ... with regard to the bonding requirements, in terms of any new material which would be stored at their site, and arranged for new material to be bonded.

That seems to be a straightforward statement by the minister. My question very simply is: why did he make the statement of the 16th, given the news today that this wasn't, in fact, the truth?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think I've explained exactly what my statements meant. The department was arranging for bonding to take place. They advised Kinetic on March 20 that bonding would be required for new shipments coming into the province. That is exactly what is taking place.

MR. MARTIN: I think it's a serious matter when we're given information in the House . . . That's not what the minister said. He didn't go through the bonding procedure. He said any new material which would be stored at the site. He didn't make those qualifications. I think the minister would agree that makes a very different interpretation on whether we have bonding or not. My question to the minister is simply this: would the minister admit that this statement he made was, in fact, misleading at the time?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to check the *Hansard* record prior to responding further on this matter.

MR. MARTIN: Fair enough.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon we continue our study of the 1985-86 estimates.

Department of Education

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, it's a real pleasure to have the opportunity that is presented by committee consideration of the estimates for the Department of Education.

I have reason to believe that education is very much on the minds of members in the Assembly and, therefore, I don't intend to make lengthy introductory remarks. I'm sure that in the course of debate all the issues of interest to any or all of the members of the Assembly will be raised. So I would like to make just a couple of points very quickly.

The first of them is to draw to the attention of hon. members the fact that the estimates being proposed for the 1985-86 fiscal year represent an increase of 6.6 percent over the comparable estimates for the fiscal year just finished. I think when some people talk about cutbacks in education or freezes or 2 percent increases in transfers to school boards, it is good to bear in mind that the estimates for this fiscal year are up 6.6 percent from the comparable estimates for the last fiscal year.

Indeed, if we then look at the three votes for the Department of Education, the fact of the matter is that vote 2, financial assistance to schools, the vote that represents the actual transfers to local school boards, is increased by 6.9 percent. The vote that represents departmental support services is down by .5 percent. The vote that represents education program development and delivery is down by .8 percent. I'm sure we'll get into the background. I'm sure that during the course of the afternoon we'll get into a clearer understanding of what is represented by those figures, so I won't say any more about them at this time, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to make only one other comment — again, very quickly. Obviously, there are a lot of things happening in the field of education in Alberta at the present time. These things have been six years in the making. Not one of them has sprung unexpectedly on the professional, the educational community in the province. While there are a number of initiatives that will come to fruition in 1985, there are three that particularly have my attention. With respect to governance, we want to see a new School Act presented to the people of the province for their consideration and review. I expect we will do that this fall so that people can think about it over the winter. I am hopeful that we will be able to introduce a new School Act in 1986.

With respect to delivery, we will make decisions about teaching, the teaching profession, and the professional status of teachers in the province. That concern is represented by the establishment of the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards and, of course, the initiation to teaching project that I announced in the ministerial statement this afternoon. There will be other initiatives that will support our concern for improving the status of teachers as the best possible way of improving the delivery of the educational product in the province.

With respect to the content of education in this province, our focus is, of course, on the review of the secondary program of studies, in which I am being very substantially helped by the work of the committee chaired by my colleague the hon. Member for Ponoka.

With respect to governance, content, and delivery, we are going to see major accomplishments delivered in 1985, and I look forward to the year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HYLAND: I was caught a little by surprise. I haven't known the Minister of Education to be so brief in his opening statements for some time. I hope it's a good indication.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to bring forward a few points. First are the ones dealing with the review of the School Act that the minister has related to, the work that was done in the review of that Act, and the opportunity the public had to partake and make comments about what they thought should be in a school Act. I had met with a number of teachers and others about the Act and had forwarded their thoughts to the minister so that he could have a look at them and decide which he thought should be in the Act and what was useful to use.

I should also congratulate the committee, chaired by the Member for Ponoka, that did the secondary review and looked at changes. The only comment I had against the secondary review and the School Act was that if these groups expect to hear from the rank and file of the teachers when they go around the province, please consider holding these meetings after 4 o'clock. The other problem in my area was the amount of notice in the papers, especially for the secondary review committee. After talking to the chairman, my secretary and I made some frantic phone calls to let people know they were coming, but I don't think the turnout was all it could have been. It wasn't bad, but it might have been better if the notice had been longer.

Second, Mr. Chairman, is that I had a meeting with a local group of teachers last night, in fact, and we had quite a discussion. I'm sure the minister must know what it was about: COATS or whatever nickname they gave for the committee the minister announced in the Assembly. Several suggestions came forward, and for what they're worth, I'd

like to put them out. I think the one thing that really came forward is that there have been comments made that the ATA doesn't speak for the rank and file of the teachers and that people wonder why the minister made the announcement of that group. Two of the three teachers there — and they've talked to their friends — told me that they feel nobody has really asked them what they think: not the ATA, the government, the Department of Education, even the public. They think they haven't had a chance to express their views as the rank and file of the association, as those in the classroom who work with the children.

The suggestion I made that was tossed around and they kind of agreed with was what they would think of forming a committee similar to the secondary review committee that would go out and talk to the public — parents, teachers, ASTA, ATA, et cetera — and look at this situation for professionalism in a new Act, see what should be in that Act, get the actual feeling from the grass roots, what people feel should be in the Act, bring that forward in a proposal, and debate it at that stage of the game. Then they would truly know that the grass roots had been heard from, and maybe the announcement that was made would be the way to go. But at that stage they would feel the feeling had been made known from the grass roots, that that was the desired way.

If this were done, I think some conditions would have to be put to it. One would be that the influence of the overall association, of the head office of the association or Barnett House, would have to keep out of it; they would make their proposals before such a committee at the time given to them, and they would not put any undue influence on the teachers. Those who wished to could appear before such a committee so they could make their views known. As I said just a few moments ago, such a study group, or whatever you want to call it, should consider holding all their hearings after 4 o'clock so the classroom teacher, not just the administrator, would be able to get time off to come to them.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

The other suggestions that were made were that if this committee is to be and it's going to be there forever, there were some thoughts of the problem the executive of the association possibly has with the way the people are nominated to the committee. Some thoughts were: would it work if these people were elected by the local regions or elected inside the local education department regions, or something like this, or would there be another way of doing it so the control would be with the grass roots rather than with the association and the department.

I think those are the only remarks I have, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to begin by congratulating the minister for doing another superb job in his portfolio. I believe he's into his sixth year as the Minister of Education, and he continues to exceed, I believe, all expectations of the people of Alberta with regard to education and the importance education plays in today's very rapidly changing society. I think the minister is tackling those changes very adequately. I know that my constituents have given me feedback that the minister certainly has their confidence.

We look at the estimates, and we see that the Education estimates are now the second largest budget, I believe, of any department in the government. I think we as Albertans

have to be concerned that these costs are not accelerating at a rate that is faster than we deem acceptable. Certainly, with the high priority that we place on education in this province, we have to be very, very certain that we are getting adequate return for our dollars. I'm confident that many of the initiatives taking place right now in the field of education are certainly going to respond to that concern: are we getting the best deal for the taxpayers' dollars?

I'd like to begin my comments by referring to the internship program which the minister announced in the Ministerial Statement today, which of course had been previously announced in the budget. I believe it's an excellent initiative. I've been pursuing this with the minister for some time, and I believe it was long overdue in one form or another. Certainly, it's a two-year program, and we'll have a chance to revise the program if it falls short and adjust any shortcomings that may occur after we've seen it at work.

A few years ago when I first entered the teaching profession, there was an internship program of sorts, but that was of a short duration. University exams usually ended at the end of April, which left May and June for the internship program. The way it operated at that time was that graduates who had the potential of employment were taken by school boards which anticipated hiring them in September. So during the two months of May and June teachers were normally brought into the school where they were anticipated to be needed in September. Those two months allowed them to become more familiar with the operation of the school, staff, and students. Thus, when they began their teaching position in September, they were much better prepared. I believe that program worked fairly well, but again it was of a short duration and may have been a bit of an artificial situation, because there were really no clearly outlined duties. The person was assigned more to the school than to a department or to any particular segment of the staff.

I think the internship program will alleviate much of the inadequacy of the teacher practicum that now exists at the university level for student teachers, assuming that the largest number of graduates will participate in this internship program. I think this will come about as the credibility of the program spreads. Indeed, the graduates who participate in the internship program will have that much better an opportunity to be employed, because they will be better prepared to face the challenges of the classroom.

The question raised in question period by the Member for Clover Bar was: well, there are no jobs; how is this internship program going to help? I don't really believe that's the issue. I think the issue is to better prepare our education graduates to take their place in the classroom simply from the perspective that — and I'm now looking at how the internship program ideally should work — school boards would be taking on interns who they would hope to hire eventually. I don't believe the program will work if they simply use those interns as something like teacher aides. If that is what is going to happen — and through a review of the program the minister will be able to determine it — it would be self-defeating. For example, if three or four interns are hired by a board which anticipates hiring two the following September, they may take the best two of the four. In many ways that will solve the problem of teachers who just don't work out and are very difficult to replace once they've got permanent certification. In this way I think boards will be much more confident in their hiring abilities, because there will be an adequate way of

assessing the quality of the education graduate and, thus, making sure that they fit more suitably into the community standards and certainly into the teaching abilities that will be shown.

Another question I'd like to pose to the minister regarding the internship program is the definition of the words "recently graduated". Would there be a parameter as to the definition of "recently"? Is someone who graduated from the Faculty of Education five years ago considered recently graduated according to the definition, especially if that person has taken employment in some other field either through choice or simply because they were not able to land a teaching position? Maybe the minister could elaborate on the definition of that.

In terms of the success of the individual intern, I'm interested in the minister's comments on evaluation of the internship participants. Will they be graded, much as student teachers are in the practicum? Who will conduct the evaluation? Would it be the co-operating teachers? I know the minister has said that interns would not be assigned to one particular teacher; it would have to be to a department or a group of teachers. How would that evaluation take place, by whom, and in what form in terms of how that evaluation will be used later by school boards in assessing the potential of the intern for permanent placement?

A final comment on the internship is the question of duties. As I mentioned a few moments ago, I would not want to see interns being used as teacher aides, where they would do little more than the busy work the regular classroom teacher would be engaged in, such as marking exams or something like that. I think we have to guarantee that the interns will have a true and meaningful teaching experience, which doesn't really happen in student teaching because it is an artificial situation. With the 10 months that an intern will spend in this program, at the completion of that one year there should be no reason why that person could not claim to have almost the equivalent of a full year of teaching. Those were my comments specifically with regard to the internship program, which I again applaud the minister for bringing forward. I know it will be a success, given that any problems that may arise could be corrected.

The second point I'd like to address, Mr. Chairman, regards the School Act review committee of which I have been a member. As a committee we spent a great amount of time together doing the preparatory work for the new draft of the School Act. Again, I'd like to compliment the chairman of that committee, the Member for St. Albert, who has so ably led her troops — quite often we weren't sure into what kind of situation. The old adage is that the Christians were thrown to the lions, and quite often we reversed that claim.

It has been a great challenge over the last year to meet with various interest groups throughout the province. I have had experience as a classroom teacher for approximately 10 or 11 years. I thought I knew education, but until I travelled the province and participated in the public hearings we held throughout the province, I didn't really realize how narrow my perspective on education was. Certainly, in my classroom, my school, and my school jurisdiction I may have been fairly knowledgeable. But this is a very large province. It carries a great amount of diversity from one end to the other, and as a member of this committee I was certainly re-educated. So it served a dual role for me as a member of the School Act review and the work we did there. Personally, I benefitted enormously.

One quick question on the School Act review. I know we've got some time lines. I want to know if the minister

wants to reaffirm them in terms of the release of the School Act. The minister made some initial comments, that we're looking at a September date, putting off the School Act review over the winter for public input and discussion, and then making it legislation to be introduced in the spring of '86. I believe that's what the minister said. I just want to clear that, because a lot of Albertans who are talking to me or to members of our committee are wondering if we're still holding true to that time line.

The third point I'd like to address, Mr. Chairman, is with respect to the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards, which the minister recently announced through a ministerial statement. Once again, I applaud the minister for taking that extremely important initiative on behalf of every Albertan who's interested in education in this province. Certainly, the minister has responded on a number of occasions to the concerns that members of this Assembly have had with regard to the COATS. I don't like to use acronyms; I know they can always lead to mistakes. Maybe I'll just say "the council", and that way we'll have an understanding of each other in that respect.

The response I have received as an MLA has been excellent up to this point. I've had one what I would call half-hostile telephone call, but the other callers have, in essence, asked either how they could become a member of this council or how they could nominate other interested parties to become members. I just hope that when the minister ends up with 400 or 500 nominations, he will be able to arrive at a conclusion, because I'm sure he will find many excellent Albertans who are members of the teaching profession who will want to give the minister the best advice possible on improving not only the professionalism of teachers in this province but certainly the calibre and the degree of excellence in education that our province currently enjoys and will benefit from even further.

Just a question on the council. I believe the advertisements for nominations were to end May 10; the minister could correct me if that's not right. When would the minister expect to make the final appointments, not only the six members of the teaching profession but also the five from the other interest groups and public at large? Basically, when would the minister anticipate the council having its first organizational meeting? Also, has the minister — I'm not clear on this — made a decision as to how a chairman would be selected by the council once the 11 members have been identified? Maybe the minister could comment on that; I don't believe I have that information.

Of course, tied in very closely with this Council on Teaching Standards is the Teaching Profession Act. That's certainly a piece of legislation which I know the minister would like to revise and upgrade to current standards for 1985. I know there have been difficulties over the last five years, at least while he has been the minister, and I just hope the minister is pursuing the completion of this document so that, indeed, teachers who are interested in achieving independent status as professionals will have the legislative muscle to do it. I would like to get some comments from the minister with regard to the Teaching Profession Act. How does the minister see it going? Does he still maintain the position that it is virtually impossible or that he will not pursue revisions to the TPA unless he has the support of the ATA and the ASTA? Or does the minister believe that the advisory Council on Teaching Standards will have to become a permanent body, in essence, if the necessary changes are not made to the Teaching Profession Act?

The final point I'd like to address, Mr. Chairman, regards the strike situation that occurred in 1985 in the

various school jurisdictions in the province of Alberta. As a member of the teaching profession, I for one am not very pleased by some of the actions that took place in various parts of the province. I know many of my colleagues are not very pleased, although they may certainly speak for themselves when addressing that problem. Many Albertans, whether constituents of mine or Albertans we met as a committee travelling throughout the province, are really questioning the legitimacy of strikes by the teachers in the educational system. I know it reached serious proportions in the Elk Island dispute, although there were three other strikes of a shorter term.

We still have to address the whole question: is the educational system too important to allow teachers to determine the outcome of those various talks and negotiations? It is not just the teachers that are affected. We certainly realize that all Albertans, particularly students and parents and taxpayers, are also burdened by these types of strikes. We've used the legitimacy of essential services to remove the right to strike in other sectors. I'm not advocating removing the right to strike from teachers, but I think we have to look at some type of measure by the amount of damage done to those jurisdictions that are adversely affected by strikes. I think we as a government have to assess how much further we're going to allow these types of disruptions in education to take place.

One of the recommendations made — and I proposed this to a group of teachers I met with — was that a school year in any particular area would not begin until a contract had been negotiated. Better to have a strike at the beginning of the year than to have a disruption at some point during the school year. That is one option that was suggested by the participants in that discussion.

One question I want clarified by the minister regards grants to school boards that have had strikes take place. Are those grants then removed on a per day basis or in some other formula? Or are school boards allowed to keep all or some of the money that would not be paid out in terms of salaries to teachers? I know this question has been raised in the past, but I'm still not clear as to the answer. I would like an explanation from the minister if possible.

Mr. Chairman, with those questions I'll relinquish the floor to other members. Thank you.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Chairman, I too have a number of questions for the minister and look forward to his comments a little later on in response to some of them. Let me start with perhaps the single greatest concern I have, coming from a small rural jurisdiction. It relates basically to the whole issue of the funding provided to school jurisdictions in this province. From talking to school board members in a lot of small rural jurisdictions, my understanding is that they see very little doubt about the fact that it's significantly more expensive to operate small rural schools than schools in larger centres and that the current funding that provides some equalization for that kind of situation doesn't begin to approach being adequate for the situation as it exists.

The problems are such that in a small school of perhaps 40 or 50 or 75 students, operating six or nine grades, it's still necessary to have most of the pieces of equipment you might have in a school of several hundred children, yet there's a much smaller population to support that fairly expensive equipment. Libraries, I think, are a particular concern in a lot of small rural schools and school jurisdictions. I'm aware of very few schools where you wouldn't find encyclopedia sets that are anywhere from 10 to 25

years old being used as almost an exclusive basis of information for work that children do.

Another area is busing for small rural school jurisdictions. Especially in areas of the province such as mine, the bus runs tend to be on much poorer roads than in parts of the province where most of the roads are paved and where people live closer together so the busing can be more efficient.

Just one more example is the area of educational travel. People who live in areas far away from the urban centres lose a lot of valuable educational opportunities with their classes. I'm so pleased every day, Mr. Chairman, to see the classes of students that are able to come here and get a really firsthand idea of what happens in government in this province. Of course, that's a relatively simple and inexpensive thing to do if you're teaching in or operating a school in the city.

So those are just some of the areas where it's a lot more expensive to operate schools in the remote areas of the province and the rural jurisdictions, particularly where the school populations are very small. I'm interested in what actions are being contemplated or might be under way that would go further towards making equal educational opportunity available to children living in the rural parts of this province.

When I look at the financial assistance to school jurisdictions, I'm interested in the fact that it seems like there are a lot of situations where funding is specific to some particular program. I'm aware that under the new management finance program a school board now at least has the chance to get hold of the money initially under a specialized or conditional type of program and later justify the amount of money they asked for. But I still have a concern about the overall situation in the sense that it's similar to what I talked about with municipal government a few days ago. The situation seems to be that there's a lack of confidence in the ability to make good decisions at the local level. Instead of money being provided in a general way and confidence then being put in a school board and the administrators, teachers, and parents that are advising the school board as to how the money could be used, there are still a lot of places where the Department of Education has to be satisfied that the money will be used for something they've decided, from a central perspective, needs to be done and which may or may not be a priority in the particular jurisdiction or particular school in the province.

I won't take time to go into a lot of anecdotal examples of that, but anybody who works in a school in this province is aware of situations where programs or pieces of equipment supplied to the school or jurisdiction were really unnecessary and never saw any use. Meanwhile, needed things were not happening, and there was no funding available for needed things in the jurisdiction. I make a plea with the Minister of Education, as I did with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, for an extension of the idea of local autonomy. The voters who select a school board can be trusted to make good decisions in the same way as the voters who choose MLAs in the province. We can then let them decide the necessary use of funding in their area.

I'd also like to comment to the minister about the funding specifically to regional offices that's shown under vote 3. It's nice that the Grande Prairie regional office has a 2 percent increase, but that's the largest funding change. Basically, regional offices don't see very much change: anywhere from a percent or 2 increase to a percent or 4 decrease. Mr. Chairman, I'm concerned here because my

experience in a classroom and in administration up to very recent weeks tells me that personnel in the regional offices in this province are having increasing responsibilities given to them. They were doing a very important job in years past, primarily in a consultative way. It was very useful and helpful to many, many teachers and schools. I'm concerned that while those consultative responsibilities remain for the regional offices, a lot of other supervisory responsibilities have been added in the last year or two. Yet the funding doesn't reflect the fact that regional offices are being called on for a wider and wider variety of things.

We just need to look at the job description when a new or vacant regional office position is being advertised to see the expectations for someone to fill that position compared to the expectations when one of these positions was advertised two or four years ago. We see how much more is expected. Yet we don't see an increase either in positions in the regional offices or in funding to allow the salaries for people working in regional offices to be competitive. In other words, people are going to start looking at regional office positions and saying: "I might as well continue working in the classroom. The rewards in a financial sense for going into this much more difficult and challenging task are so great that I don't know if I want to."

I'm concerned, too, that regional offices seem to see vacant positions filled slowly. I wonder whether that's a policy to save a few dollars here and there by letting vacant positions in regional offices stay vacant for four and six months and longer rather than being promptly filled when the vacancies come up. I guess my biggest single concern is whether or not the added job responsibilities for personnel in the regional offices are going to be such that we'll see a point reached in the future where consultation — being available to teachers and to administrators to consult, in some cases very specifically — is going to completely disappear from the time regional office personnel have available. If something like that were to happen, I think that would be too bad.

I would like to ask the minister one question related to the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards. In the Speech from the Throne the Lieutenant Governor indicated the commission on Alberta teaching standards would

establish and maintain standards for and conditions of teacher certification and discipline.

Then I understood that the minister said there was a typographical error in the word "discipline" being included in that speech. Yet when I listen to some of the information about the purpose of the council and what it's going to be doing, it seems to me that, in fact, it will be involved in disciplinary matters. So I wonder if the minister could explain whether or not the word "discipline" should be there and what the real situation is about that.

I'd also like the minister to respond to something I raised earlier. That's the issue of whether or not there is any possibility at this point that the representation of different interest groups on the council, the teachers and also the other groups — that the final decisions as to who would fill those positions be based on decisions by the Lieutenant Governor in Council as opposed to internal decisions at the Department of Education by the minister.

I'd be interested in the minister's comments on some issues related to native education in the province as well. I have a particular interest in that today, because today marks the first day of a special week at my old school in Rycroft. It's called Native Peoples Week. Most of the regular program is suspended for the week, and a number

of people are coming in to work with the students there. The purpose of the week is basically that by Friday afternoon children will have had a lot of experience and opportunity to talk with leaders from native people's groups in the province, and a lot of opportunity to write on and explore some of the issues for native peoples. So I'm especially sensitive to native education during this week.

I wonder, for example, what actions are being undertaken toward making funding available for the establishment of a Metis learning centre, toward making money available for the establishment of a data base in Metis studies for Metis students, and toward sitting down with school administrators and teachers to establish a set of priorities for the improvement of native education in this province. I wonder if we can look forward to a point near in time when the minister would be prepared to look at the recommendations of the Ghitter report on native education, the report by the Committee on Tolerance and Understanding, and respond recommendation by recommendation, indicating how Alberta Education will deal with the fact that that committee at least suggested that the education of native students is just not meeting minimum acceptable standards in this province.

I'm also interested, Mr. Chairman, in what actions the minister is undertaking to improve the situation according to the report of the Committee on Tolerance and Understanding — which says that in comparison with the other provinces in western Canada, Alberta has the least to show in the areas of native education regarding policy, curriculum resources, and teacher preparation — so that those teaching in situations where there are not a lot of native students teach those non-native students to appreciate the particular situation of native peoples and that those teaching in situations where there are primarily or exclusively native students are properly prepared to make the accommodations and teach in those different ways that are necessary to deal well with that.

With regard to the overall budget of the department, I'm interested in the minister's comment about the fact that in 1982-83 Alberta spent 17.6 percent of the provincial budget on education and that this was ranked seventh in Canada in terms of percentage expenditure according to Statistics Canada. I'm aware of the things the minister indicated earlier about the absolute dollars being spent, but I'm concerned about the status it has as a priority within the government when we're seventh as far as the percentage of the provincial budget spent.

I'm interested in the minister's responding to the Minister's Task Force on School Finance, which we've talked about before, and its recommendation:

The provincial share of total schooling costs should be targeted towards providing an average of approximately 85% of the total expenditures of all school boards in the province, leaving an average of approximately 15% to be raised by local supplementary requisitions.

I wonder what the provincial share is now in comparison with that recommendation and whether or not the minister totally rejects the 85 percent figure. Is there an intention to move up or down from the percentage we find ourselves with this year, from whatever it is, 85 percent or otherwise?

One other thing I'll just comment on briefly is the issue of school user fees and where we stand on that now. Recently Mr. Gordon Bell won, I think, the fourth consecutive court battle against Yellowhead school division with regard to payment for instructional services fees. The judge in that case said that the division's levy on instructional material did not constitute a proper rental agreement, and

thus Mr. Bell was not compelled to pay the money he was being sued for. The judge also ruled that the school division did not have the authority under the School Act to decide what was necessary for a child's education and to then bill parents for it. In light of this ruling, I wonder what the minister is doing to reassess the situation and to make whatever changes are necessary so that the whole issue of school fees and this extra billing that's imposed on parents — and in some cases it's very significant — will be addressed and that equal access to education in the province will be restored to people regardless of their ability to pay.

DR. BUCK: Regardless.

MR. GURNETT: Regardless. Sorry about that. Thank you.

One final area just before I sit down. School closures are also a concern, and I am interested in the minister's comments about what's happening with school closures. It seems that there's an increasing need to close schools or reduce parts of programs in schools around the province. There are a lot of creative kinds of things that could be done to assure the people who need the educational services in the province that facilities of good quality will continue to be available and that the responsibility to do that won't create a severe drain on local school jurisdictions so that neither the school jurisdiction nor the people that need the education end up suffering.

I'm particularly concerned because school closures or school program reductions in rural Alberta are one of the key pieces in the whole story of small towns and villages gradually beginning to die. Once you don't have a school operating in a community, it becomes one important reason why people who live in the rural area don't bother visiting that community anymore. So what might seem small, the reduction of a few grades in a school or the closure of a school and more efficient busing to a community a few kilometres away, may in fact have a much wider effect on people in the whole area. So I'd be interested in whether special things are being anticipated or special action is being developed that would guarantee that we won't see school closures, even when it may be economically a little more expensive to continue to operate schools in some of these small communities.

I look forward to the minister's comments on those matters. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Chairman, I have a few questions to pose to the minister on his estimates. I noted in his first statement that the transfer to school boards had increased some 6.6 percent. I wonder if the minister could elaborate on where the areas of initiative are. I note that one of them is in the area of school busing services, and I think the two or three other areas that may exist should be highlighted. They provide some additional help to rural school boards, and that recognizes a need out there in terms of smaller school jurisdictions.

I'd like to comment a bit about the whole field of native education. Mr. Chairman, right now we have three or four different committee activities ongoing within the government, one being the policy formation initiated by the minister's department. In addition, we have a study going on in the Department of Social Services and Community Health. The minister of Native Affairs is doing a study. In the native community I'm in contact with, I think they recognize these initiatives as a good idea. But they feel that the matter of committee work and studies has been going on for some

time, and they would like to see a co-ordinated effort in terms of quickly setting down policy and seeing some action implementation in these areas, particularly the area of native education.

I'd also like to ask a specific question concerning the project money that is available in the field of native education. I wonder what the guidelines are for utilization of that money and whether any specific projects are being considered. I know that on the Ermineskin Reserve of the four bands of Hobbema, they've done a great deal of work in putting into place a proposal for a native education project. In my view, it has considerable merit, and I would like to know just what the status of that application is at the present time. As far as I understand it, the necessary band resolution is in place, and we in the constituency would certainly like to see that followed up.

During the last session and the spring session, Mr. Chairman, questions were raised about the adequacy of the new special education funding. I ask the minister to review the experience of the department with respect to the special education programs of the province and to comment on whether that funding program has been adequate or whether changes have been made or are being contemplated.

I noted in a recent press release that the Department of Advanced Education is undertaking a pilot project with respect to the establishment of networking. I would like to know if this has any relationship to the basic education program of the province, whether there will be pilot schools recognized, and whether they'll be able to tap into that particular project. This is an area which certainly has a great deal of promise for the schools of the province in terms of providing up-to-date information to libraries and to the overall school operation. It also has great promise with respect to assisting in instruction in certain areas.

I'd like to make a comment with respect to the secondary review previously mentioned by the Member for Cypress. I realize that there were some difficulties with respect to communication, but I think it should be pointed out that in addition to the round of public forums or public hearings that were held, the committee members made themselves available to speak to teachers' groups all across the province. I know they were kept very busy in that particular activity during February and March. As an example, there was a session at the Lethbridge convention which all teachers had the opportunity to attend. I'm sure there were meetings of that nature throughout the southern part of the province. I know committee members were involved in several of them.

My last two questions, Mr. Chairman. The first has to do with the library policy from Alberta Education. I commend the minister on that particular policy, but I am still somewhat unclear as to the relationship of that policy to the actual responsibility of school boards to implement it. I wonder if the minister could clarify in his remarks just what the obligations are in terms of implementing that policy.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I noted some time ago that there was a proposal from the Alberta Teachers' Association for a pilot project in a medium-size school jurisdiction to implement recommendations of the Kratzmann report of a few years ago. I certainly do not feel that is the only promising possibility in terms of a more effective delivery of education. Certainly, the use of support personnel in the form of clerical help and aides shows promise. The utilization of technology shows promise. I wonder if any initiatives of that type are being contemplated in the plans of the Department of Education for this year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a few comments related to education and direct a few questions to the minister. First, I would like to express my words of compliment to the minister for his energy and the accomplishments he has made during his years in office and also to those people he relies on to a great extent, his departmental staff. Those that have worked with our School Act committee have given untold energy to the committee and have not complained about long hours and at times rather arduous working conditions. I would like to recognize three of the departmental people, although I hesitate to do it because there are many more that have provided support and untold hours to make the School Act review committee as effective as possible. I would like to pay compliments to Brian Fennell, Sandra Smith, and Joyce Bourgeois, who have contributed an enormous amount to date. Although the process is not finished, I think it's important that we recognize that this effort does not take place because of the political representatives but because of those appointed people that are dedicated to education.

Across the province our School Act review committee has met with some exceptional educators and seen some extremely effective educational programs. One I would like to single out is the community school program. Mr. Minister, I think this program, beyond all others, has demonstrated an effective model for bringing parents into the school and having a liaison and harmony exist between home and school. I implore the minister to press in future budget years for additional funding for the community school program. I believe it accomplishes one of the objectives of education, and particularly one of the underlying objectives of the Partners in Education paper; that is, a greater responsibility on the part of parents for the education of their children. Too often parents abdicate the responsibility when children get into school. They assume that the educators are the professionals and that the school knows best, or they're intimidated by the educational process or whatever. Education cannot be effective without the support and meshing of the home values with those of the educational system. I believe the community school model has demonstrated that this is one extremely effective way to bring parents in to make them feel comfortable and to get their support for what happens within the classroom.

Another area I would like to make some brief comments on relates to special education and the concern that some school jurisdictions have for the placement of children with special needs in rural settings. I believe there is some thought in the Department of Social Services and Community Health that children with special needs are often accommodated to a better degree in a rural setting. This places an onus on boards that are outside the major urban boards. Not having an economy of scale, these school jurisdictions are faced with additional costs they would not normally have from their populations. I think this is an extremely important area that we must recognize. In order that the children are best accommodated and that their special needs are met, we must recognize that the funding formula has to be flexible enough to accommodate those specific circumstances. I have asked the boards I have met with that have expressed this concern to communicate the specifics to the minister. I know he is concerned about providing the best for all children and would recognize that this may be a special area for extra financial consideration.

One of the areas related to special education and special needs that I would like to make a few comments on relates

to children with learning disabilities. This is a field that is rapidly changing. There are now new methods to identify children that have learning disabilities, and there are identified ways to facilitate learning for these children. I can honestly say I have had some of my saddest meetings with constituents who are parents of children with learning disabilities, who have struggled to find the problem their child is facing and, secondly, have struggled to find a proper and appropriate placement. The policies have allowed funding to kick in when a child reaches a certain number of months or years behind what a child of that age should achieve, and only at that time has the system been able to accommodate those with the most severe disabilities. However, I think it's an area where preventive dollars spent now with children with learning disabilities can save many dollars in years to come.

I think some of the frustration experienced by parents could be alleviated with a recognition that this is an area where we have a vast new knowledge available to us. That knowledge has to also be communicated and transferred to our teachers. It's an area that does not receive a great emphasis in teacher training. I believe it's extremely important that we recognize that teachers that are trained and are able to identify children with milder learning disabilities can be very effective within a classroom without necessitating extremely expensive programs for all children that have learning disabilities. I think it's an area we can improve upon. Our society as a whole will be the beneficiary of having children that have been upgraded to bring their skills up to a child that would fall within an average range and thereby been assimilated back into the mainstream classrooms.

I wonder if the minister would comment on the management and finance plan. It's a relatively recent policy change in finance in the Department of Education. I wonder if the minister could advise the committee as to the effectiveness of the management and finance plan from the perspective of communication and feedback he has received from the boards. The theory behind the management and finance plan, which provides a greater decentralization of fiscal autonomy, is commendable, but I am most interested in learning the reaction he is receiving from the local jurisdictions.

The Member for Ponoka mentioned library development, and I believe this is an area that is also extremely important and that we could perhaps give greater emphasis. A policy paper related to library development has been produced by the Department of Education. In an age when many youngsters often tend to watch the electronic media as the easiest way to pass the time, it's extremely important that libraries take a more important emphasis within the school system so that children can learn how to use their time other than just turning on the tube. It's also an area in which some of the smaller jurisdictions require a greater emphasis and encouragement to provide library facilities that would be adequate — whatever the word "adequate" means — and of an acceptable standard throughout the entire province.

The last area I would like to comment on relates to French language instruction, specifically the immersion program. The immersion program has become so popular in many parts of Alberta that there is a concern by some of our teachers within the province that there will not be adequate job opportunities for those who do not have a French language background or capability to instruct in French. Mr. Minister, I believe this is an area in which we're going to need to look at assisting Alberta teachers

who are currently in the field to be trained in French language instruction. I think it's a crisis that may hit us in a very few years to come. It's positive from the point of view that many Albertans recognize that learning one language is far less acceptable than having a second language. This is good, but on the other hand we have to recognize that there is a need to have first-grade teachers that can instruct in a second language so that we do not have to rely on bringing teachers from other provinces, thereby displacing those we have trained that have resided and worked within this province.

Mr. Chairman, those are just a few areas that I wanted to comment on. I just want to conclude with an appreciation to the members of the School Act committee that I have worked with over the last year. I appreciate their dedication to education and the long hours they have contributed to this process that we're part of. We have a number of months ahead of us in seeking public reaction, and then we have to get down to the nitty-gritty of making some final recommendations that will form the basis of a new School Act. It's an extremely interesting process to be part of, Mr. Minister, and I appreciate having had the opportunity to learn a great deal myself about education within this province. As we know, education is a lifelong learning process, and this has really been an extremely interesting one which I sincerely appreciate.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of areas I would like to discuss with the minister, but for the time being, until I hear the answers, I'll limit myself to a few areas. Some have been raised before. The minister and I have had many circumstances when we stood across the House and debated figures; he chooses his set of figures and I choose mine. I expect there is some reality in both of them, but I think that's probably irrelevant. I'm sure he now knows where I got the other figures from; I made a special point of bringing it back. It was the minister's own task force. I know he didn't agree with 85 percent, but I hope he agrees with their figures because I think we spent a fair number of dollars getting that report.

I say to the minister, and my colleague has talked about it, that there were perhaps times in the '70s when people would suggest that a lot of money was going into public education. It's still a lot of money; there's no doubt about that. I know it's comparatively less. My colleague talked about what it was in the budget at one time; I think it was 17.6 percent. The point is that in reality many boards are now faced with making some very undesirable choices, Mr. Chairman.

That choice has come down to three or four areas. Either raise property taxes — and more and more that burden has fallen on the property tax payer. That's one of the things alluded to in the minister's report, and frankly I think that's the most unacceptable way to finance our educational system. The other area that has become more popular, as the minister is well aware, is user fees. I know he doesn't like the term. I coined it last year; I couldn't think of a better term. As my colleague pointed out, there's some difficulty there. A lot of money is being raised that way, more than in most other provinces when we looked across Canada, as I recollect.

The third area is a cutback in services. Frankly, we could have almost predicted the teachers' strikes. I hate to say "I told you so," Mr. Chairman, but we predicted a while ago that this was inevitable. Rather than talking about the most per pupil grants and all the rest of it, which takes

in all those aspects, I think it's more relevant to look and see if the minister still believes we are fat and then come back to specifically where. But if we keep bleeding and bleeding at the local level, I suggest that it's not really as rosy out there as the minister might lead us to believe.

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

The other area is one of the things that tie into school finance. My colleague talked about it in terms of rural areas. The minister knows I've had a concern — I expect he has too, because I know it affected his riding — about school closures, especially in the inner cities in both Edmonton and Calgary. I think it was more drastic last year than it has been this year, certainly in the city of Calgary. But if we continue the same path, I expect this is going to be an ongoing problem. As I said to the minister last year — I'll say it again, and I suppose it ties into rural areas — one of the quickest ways to kill the inner city, which both he and I represent, is to close down a community school. Younger people that might be able to afford the housing in that area will avoid it if there's not a school close by.

I know there are problems in terms of financing. It's one of the decisions that boards make. I know it wasn't the minister's decision, but it has to do with overall funding. I'm sure the minister would agree with that. I think it's a very regressive step when we start closing down schools before we've looked at all the alternatives. In one area in my riding, H.A. Gray has been closed down for a year. I went around there, and frankly you can see a deterioration in that community because of that. There are fewer young people; there are more houses up for sale. I don't know if the minister has checked; I believe schools in his area were shut down last year too. Fortunately, I didn't this year, but in the types of ridings we represent, we're always going to have to watch for that. I think it's a very regressive step to start doing this. Frankly, we should have learned from those experiences in the United States and what happened to their inner cities. That's one of the things they did at the time.

In saying that, we recognize there's a problem. I've already talked generally about educational funding. Last year we provided some alternatives, some of which the Department of Education knew, to school closure — that the department take the lead with some new, innovative ideas. I'll just repeat them; I'd like to see if there has been any follow-up. I suggested them and I lay them out again for the minister to take a look at and have the lead come from the Department of Education. Maybe the minister can allude if they've looked into these, a year later, and fill me in. At that time I suggested an alteration in the way the utilization factor component of capital funding for which a board is eligible is determined, so that boards are no longer necessarily penalized in new construction grants for operating schools at less than 85 percent capacity. If that were changed somewhat, it would certainly have an impact in terms of whether the boards might look at keeping certain schools open. There's no doubt about that.

I suggested before, and I'll repeat it, the establishment of an information clearinghouse program to aid boards in understanding and profiting from the experience of other jurisdictions and a research fund to help boards pay for technical consulting assistance. As I mentioned last year, there are many, many different experiences in both Canada and the United States of innovative ways they've tried to deal with this whole problem, whether it's having a school

in half the building and offices or boutiques or whatever in the other half. They've tried this. I've suggested that the department could do this best for the boards.

Another of the three things I suggested, Mr. Chairman, is the extension of the building quality restoration program to include the cost of modifications necessary to accommodate nonprofit, community-based users of excess school space who are unable to raise the capital necessary to cover the costs of such modifications. Surely, if it's a nonprofit group and there's some room in the school that the citizens could use for office space or to run groups or whatever, we could bring them together. I know it's not all under the minister's jurisdiction, but again I'm asking for leadership from the department in this area, at least that school boards could take advantage of it.

The other thing is undertaking a review of the problems and costs of reconversion prior to 1985 to determine whether or not there is a need for development of a special program to assist with the reconversion of school facilities. It can cost money. Experience in some of the cities we've read about in the United States is that there is a movement back toward the inner city. It will happen here. It makes good sense. They later found the need for some of the schools that were closed. There is quite a cost to reconvert them, to bring them back to par, to have school there. So school boards should be aware when they make those types of decisions that it could end up costing them money in the long run.

I think the last thing is the most important one and would definitely require the leadership of the Department of Education: the establishment of a special task force of school board officials, municipal planners, and relevant provincial departments to develop a provincewide action plan to deal on an emergency basis with the very serious problem of vacant school space. It's certainly happened less in the city of Edmonton this year than it did in Calgary, but when I look at the figures and how many pupils are coming in and how many rooms we have in the province, I think this is going to be an ongoing problem. Because it's an ongoing problem, I would really like to see this looked at seriously. I say as honestly as I can that the most regressive thing we can do to a community in the inner city — my colleague will talk about the rural areas — is close the school. The school is the hub of that inner city, and the younger people you want to keep that community viable will avoid it. They will avoid bringing their kids. As I said, that's happened to some degree.

I'll talk generally about the other area. We've gone through the whole idea of the minister's Council on Alberta Teaching Standards. I say to the minister quite honestly that I hope there is some give and take on this issue. Nobody is going to be well served if you have the Minister of Education and the Alberta Teachers' Association at total loggerheads over this issue. I said to the minister after the ministerial announcement that there is probably a compromise on this issue. What officials say at one time, when they're not getting something precisely the way they want it, and what they're willing to negotiate is another matter. Mr. Ghitter doesn't agree, after travelling around, and he says he wasn't misquoted. The Teachers' Association doesn't agree. Surely we can come back with something acceptable. Maybe each person does not get everything he wants, but that's negotiation. If the minister persists, it's going to create a climate of bad will in this province for many, many years. The end recipients, the people who will suffer the most, are the students. There's absolutely no doubt about

that. I say to the minister that if he could go back through Mr. Ghitter, perhaps some compromises can be worked out. If we want to take a position that nothing can change and it's full steam ahead, all the people will pay the price. It won't be just the teachers, I can assure you. The minister is well aware that the teachers are the ones that have to deal with the students.

The other area I would like to come back to is today's ministerial statement, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't able to be here, but I want some clarification on some of the questions. I see in the ministerial statement that "Participants will not be employed as teachers." I wonder what controls there are. Let me throw out a scenario. If I'm a school board strapped for dollars and I feel that through this program I can still get a new, young teacher to be an intern, who theoretically should be as qualified as what was coming out of university before, and I have some good teachers, is there not the tendency to make a decision that we can have 35 instead of 30 in the classroom? After all, this teacher now has an intern for a while, and hopefully the program will go on and we'll get another intern. I hope that's not the purpose of this program, but I wonder what controls we would have on that? Obviously, this program would be not for that purpose, but I can see that happening with school boards that are hard pressed for money.

As I said, there is probably some merit in the program. I don't want to be totally critical. Is it not possible that we'll have two types of beginning teachers, both with the same training? Is it not possible that some of them will get jobs right off and some will have to go out as interns? Of course, there are many different problem areas with that: money, to begin with, but also pensions over the long haul and all the rest of it. I'm wondering how the minister would react to that possibility.

I'm not sure about another area. I take it that a permanent certificate would have to come after that time. As it stands now, if you are a successful teacher as evaluated by the board in your first year of teaching, you could get your permanent certificate. It used to be two years; I think it's still two years, is it not? Would that mean that after they have interned for a year, that would not count as one of the years? Would it be two years after that? I wonder about the minister's assessment of that.

Mr. Chairman, I want to conclude on the whole area of private schools. I'm getting different signals. I notice the Member for St. Albert alluded to Partners in Education. One of the statements here is that all approved schools would be eligible to receive a per pupil grant. Only publicly elected boards would have the authority to raise taxes locally for support of their schools and programs. The Ghitter commission recommended something different. They said that we'd continue receiving 75 percent of the school foundation program grants. I know neither of these documents are final or written in stone, but it seems to me that I recall — maybe the minister will correct me — that he thought this idea of all approved schools being eligible to receive the full per pupil grant made sense. I question if that's the case. If the minister believes that, does he not see potential problems there? For example, is it not possible that that would lead to a two-tiered school system, where different groups could set up their approved school, an independent school, and follow the other criteria? Of course, I'm not talking about the unapproved ones that we all agree should not be there. If they happen to live in an area and they can afford it, they can charge whatever tuition they want. Then that money doesn't come into the public school

board either, so what's left — and to some degree this is what has happened in the United States. The public system suffers, and they offer a second-rate education. I'm saying: if we follow that, is that potential not there? I'd like the minister's reaction.

The other area I'd like to follow is that I wonder what the minister perceives happening with the whole concept of private schools if we go in this direction. Does he see this as a trend that many different groups or churches or whatever would follow? Again, is that not going to lead to a checkered type of education in the province? Depending on who your parents are or which church you're in, this is the type of education you get. I have those concerns and I give them to the minister.

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that a preferable alternative, recognizing that people learn differently, that they have different modes of learning — some of us learn better from individual study, others learn better in the more traditional ways, some learn better in more authoritarian ways, and others learn better in more permissive ways. Is the experiment in Calgary, at least with the alternate school, not a preferable way to go if we want to get different types of learning experiences for our people? I recognize that's a little more difficult for a rural area, but is that not a possibility we should be encouraging in ongoing discussions? I know it's only encouragement; I don't expect the minister to come back and say he can force school boards to do this. Would it not be preferable to have alternate schools — I think Mr. Ghitter talked about that — within the separate and public school systems themselves? I leave that as a caution and wonder what the minister's most recent thinking on that is, if he can give us those answers.

[Mr. Hyland in the Chair]

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, there are many other areas we could look at, but I think we've covered a few. I certainly have other things I'd like to follow up on, but rather than go on — the minister might forget some of these important things I'm raising — I'll leave it there, allow him to answer those questions, and come back a little later with some others. Thank you.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I want to make one or two comments to the minister. First of all, I'd like to ask about the bilingual programs. It's been brought to my attention that people are always quite worried if they're going to have sufficient funding to carry on with the bilingual Ukrainian and German programs. I'm sure that also applies to the bilingual French programs.

I'd like to bring one matter to the minister's attention on the French bilingual program. I'm not sure if it has changed, Mr. Minister, but a few years ago, when my youngsters were in junior high, they started the bilingual program in grade 8. I don't know who the brilliant academic was who came up with that, but if he knew anything about human nature and the developing adolescent, Mr. Chairman, you cannot pick a worse time than grade 8 to start anything new. At that age they hate themselves, they hate their mothers, they hate their dads, and they hate their brothers and sisters. They don't know what they are. Then you bring in French instruction. I hope that has been rectified. I'm not sure if it has. I know that they are starting the German and Ukrainian bilingual programs at a very, very early age.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to say to the minister that I grew up in the sticks, of Ukrainian parentage, and I moved into town when I was in grade 1 at six years of age. I've never forgotten the language. All I really had were those five and a half years of my parents' native language. But when you start in grade 8 and take it for a few years and then drop it, you never learn anything. The same with our high school French; we never really learned too much about the French language. I'd like to say to the minister that if we're going to have French immersion programs, let's make sure we have them an early age.

When we talk about self-governing, Mr. Minister, why do we not just grab the bull by the horns and give them complete autonomy. If we really believe the teaching profession is a profession, let's make them completely self-governing. Or is it the minister's intention to make this committee the forerunner of what they're going to do to the other professions? Is that the government's intention? Are they going to do the same thing to medicine, dentistry, and law? They are completely autonomous, self-governing professions, and I think that's what should be done. We as a party, Mr. Chairman, advocate that. Make teaching a completely self-governing profession.

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to find out from the minister what the department proposes for special funding for community schools. I know that when the program was initiated, many schools applied. I guess there's a waiting list a mile long for the special funds for community schools. I'd like to know from the minister when these grants are going to be handed out.

I'd also like to say, Mr. Chairman, that if there ever was a time when we could lower the pupil/teacher ratio, that time should be now. We have the manpower. I think that our future is really going to depend upon the next generation, and if we have to use the heritage fund, so be it. Education should be our number one priority. When we talk about it in the government's paper on economic development, we seem to put a high priority on education, but it doesn't seem that we're following that through with dollars or action. When we talk about lowering the pupil/teacher ratio, I suppose the Kratzmann report is gathering dust. The reason it's gathering dust is that we didn't really like what it recommended. So I guess it's just going to keep on gathering dust.

I'm also concerned about the cutback in programs. There are no funds available now for busing youngsters to extra-curricular activities, intermural programs, and interschool programs. I think that possibly is retrogressive. It's pretty unfortunate that we have to have bingos, donations, and tag days, that kids have to pay for a bus to go from one school to another. I think that's all part of education. Also, some of the special programs, such as the band programs and so on, are getting to the point where the schools can hardly carry on with these.

I'd also like to ask the question the Member for Spirit River-Fairview asked. What is the long-term objective of this government as to how much educational financing should be carried by the provincial government? I know this government rode to power saying they were going to carry a higher share of it than the former government did, but they have gone in the opposite direction. Mr. Chairman, we as a party would pledge to the people of this province

that 75 percent of education would come from provincial coffers.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that I think the minister has touched off a tempest in the teaching profession with his advisory committee. I cannot believe that a government would be so unresponsive. I cannot believe that government backbenchers would be so unresponsive to what the minister has done: antagonize and take on the teaching profession head on. I cannot understand the politics of it. Either the minister has been left out on a limb by the government and the Premier to self-destruct as did the minister of health the hon. Mr. Miniely when he had to announce the hospital freeze, or it's been the minister's own initiative to take the route he's taken, to confront the teaching profession. I've never seen teachers as a whole more upset. Maybe the minister knows something I don't. He's gone over the heads of the ATA, the executive duly elected by the members of the teaching profession, and appealed directly to the teachers en masse. I think that's poor politics. It belittles the profession. I certainly say to the minister: I think you've made an error in going the way you've gone, and I hope your caucus realizes that not granting the profession full self-governing powers has been an error in political judgment.

With those few words, Mr. Chairman, I would like to allow other members of the committee to make their suggestions.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a few comments regarding the educational area, especially as it relates to Calgary McCall. I have the good fortune to represent a constituency that probably has as many, and more likely more, kids going to school than any other constituency in the province. At the last election there were something in the order of 35,000 children of school age or younger in my constituency. It's a subject of some concern and much discussion within the bounds of that constituency.

Firstly, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to relate to an issue that's near and dear to my heart, and every time I get the opportunity to talk about it, I try. It's regarding a high school in the north end of Calgary. It's interesting to note that on the east side of the city of Calgary, with some many hundreds of thousands of people, there's only one public high school. I know the minister has probably read the report or the recent discussion with the chairman of the public school board, Mr. Havelock, who has been making some noise and giving a very sincere effort in seeing to the needs of the school-age people in northeast Calgary. There was a suggestion of a high school that might even be a joint effort between the public and the separate boards, and I'm hopeful that can be worked on in some fashion so that we can get some people off their behinds to develop a product so we can get our young people to participate in a school in their own communities.

Let's be quite frank. A community of some 80,000 people, or a little less now that the recession has taken its toll on our community — however, let's use 80,000; it's not too far out. It is considerably larger than the cities of Lethbridge or Red Deer or any other community within the province. Would we develop a community that large without a high school or a school period? Obviously, the answer is no.

There are some reasons for that. There are vacant school rooms within the community at large, and of course it's easy to bus. I understand that just out of part of the

constituency the figure today is 1,000 high school students, notwithstanding the many hundreds and possibly thousands of junior high and even elementary school students. I also understand that the minister has to await a request from the boards of education within the municipality requesting funding, at which time a decision would be made whether or not that funding would come forward. It's quite possible that we as the government may have to stop some of this nonsense of busing students so the school board can get funding which maybe they use in other areas rather than strictly for busing and go and build a high school. It's important.

I would like to add that a few Saturdays ago I had a meeting with leaders of all my communities, either presidents or people involved with the education committees of those communities, and the chairman of the school board to discuss school issues in northeast Calgary. Of course, the primary goal at that time was to discuss a high school, but there are other issues. One of them is an elementary school in the communities of Falconridge/Castleridge, where I understand some 450 to 500 elementary school/ECS kids are bused out of the area. Some other difficulties are in the area of English being a second language to many people. Many students are having difficulty in the school that's there now, the Falconridge elementary school. I think some of these things need to be examined. If not properly done by the local board, we need to put some people in there from this huge administration that we have to examine some of these local issues, if not with the Board of Education with the local school itself. Maybe we'll have to step on a few toes to do it, but if that's the case, so be it. The primary goal is our kids' education, and that has to be of primary concern. As I said, if we've got to step on a few toes to do it, then I say let's step on them and take whatever comes.

The other thing is, of course, the library area. I know that the school board sometimes short changes funding in the area of library services in some of the new schools that are opened. Where you have schools with a high number of students who are still using English as a second language, I think it's important that we make sure we have every facility available for that student to learn and read the English language, so they can become proficient in it at the youngest age possible. We all talk about the French language being so greatly important in our society, and that's certainly given predominance in all the discussions because of the pressure groups that are out there. I think it might also be incumbent upon those of us who speak English to put a little pressure on to ensure that those people who want to fit into society using English as their second language are given the same opportunity to develop in the manner in which we have tried to develop ourselves.

Another concern that was recently directed at me is with regard to funding for ECS children in schools other than those operated by the local school boards. There seems to be two sets of rules, or there have been in the past, and I still haven't got an answer as to whether those rules have changed or not. I've got some information here, but I don't understand it. We talk about immature students. There's another group that's not determined immature but may be a little slower. The term "immature" upsets some parents, because they don't think their kids are totally immature but they want to hold them back for a year to make sure they're capable of taking on the grade 1 school year. The private schooling is run by a community group, even though they are using school board property. I think there are 38 of

them in the city of Calgary. They have paid staff and volunteers and what have you. They have some concerns that if they use the ECS program available from the school board — and there aren't enough spaces for that — and if a person is immature or somebody they wish to repeat at ECS level, they may not be funded for that, whereas through the school board they are. I don't think that's fair considering the fact that the program is basically the same as those available through the school board. We need to ensure that moneys are available for that.

Getting back to the funding area, I see areas in the various estimates that show administrative services increasing: school business administration service increasing 6 percent; assistant deputy minister of planning going up. I can go through this whole estimate and see some areas of increases that I reached some concerns about: general services, administrative support. There are some programs that should be out in the school rooms, and maybe they should be funded rather than some of the administrative increases, even though I recognize from the estimates that the minister has decreased his overall manpower authorization in the department by some 16 full-time positions and the man-year authorizations are down by some 12. I think that's a good sign in that respect. However, maybe the minister could outline some of these programs I have some concern with. We spent 2 million bucks in the Calgary regional office, and I don't know what that's for. I would like to have some general idea of what that might be for.

I guess what I'm trying to get here, when I see expenditures like this — when I was an alderman, I used to be concerned about administrative costs in the city of Calgary. In fact, I think my colleague from Calgary Buffalo and I used to initiate some budget cuts; sometimes he was a little bolder at it than I was. It's amazing how our political aldermen and wings of governments don't like to ruffle the feathers of the administration or the bureaucrats by knocking a bit of money off them. I believe we should be putting moneys into services in the community, be it education or anything else. I'd rather spend the money on school books or school libraries or something like that than on a whole raft of bureaucrats and what have you.

Notwithstanding that, I stood up basically for two reasons; firstly, to again discuss the area of the high school in northeast Calgary. I think there should be an examination of the capital costs of the high school and ultimately the operating costs as against the present and future costs of busing students at a great, great cost, possibly in excess of a quarter of a million to half a million dollars a year, not only high school but others. The concern about elementary schools in the area: I know there are a lot, but at the same time there are young people with very, very young families that are concerned about the education of their children.

I'll just close with the high school again, Mr. Minister. It's interesting that when people coming from the same area of a city or a community are transferred or shipped into different schools — three or four of them, in fact — they lose some of that pride, some of that concern with your own community. If students are able to correlate within their own communities instead of this shipping back and forth to other communities — your neighbour or colleague or friend may be going to a different school than you are, and some of that pride and concern for your own community is gone. I think that's very important. We ought to examine that and maybe get some pressure on the public school board in Calgary and, through them, possibly pressure back

to the MLAs and the government to make sure a little city within the city is given the same educational opportunity within their own community as other communities may have, including those of city status such as Lethbridge, Red Deer, and so on.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Chairman, I won't take too much time, but there are several areas I would like to speak on this afternoon. First of all, I must say that I appreciate the stand the minister has taken on various issues, some of them no doubt controversial. I think he took a stand in the right direction.

As far as the internship program, I highly commend the minister for looking at this. Our government has provided employment to many others through Manpower agencies and so forth, and I think this is only right. Should students graduating from four years of university be walking the streets for three or four years before they can find a job? Should they have to go back to school? Would they be in a position to go? I think this is also an encouragement for some of them to go into this internship program. For some it will probably be an experience to find out whether they really want to stay in education or maybe change their field or occupation or profession. At the same time, I think it would give school boards an opportunity, when there are vacancies, to tell which of these young people they would like and would be most capable. Maybe the minister will be able to respond to the concern I have that some school boards in extreme areas of the province where they have more financial problems than others because of their small contributions may not be able to participate in this program financially. It would leave only those school boards that are in better financial standing to employ these interns. However, I think there's a chance to change it in time.

One real area of concern was the recent Elk Island teachers' strike. It was a real concern to me because back in the late '60s while president of zone 3 of the Alberta School Trustees' Association, we formed the Elk Island Regional School Authority Association. I was the first chairman. It was a difficult job, but it was successful. How well I remember 1971, when the present Minister of Labour, who was also on economics with the Alberta School Trustees' Association — we sat two days and one night and signed a memorandum, a two-year agreement. However, this spring I was quite disappointed that it had to go to this area, because who really won in this strike? There was an annual meeting of the county of Lamont in Chipman this Saturday, and I was there. This was brought up and questioned: who really gained? Sitting there as an observer, I was of the opinion that everybody lost, the students most of all. When you see that some of these teachers probably lost \$2,000, \$3,000, or more to gain \$260 a year, many of them will never recover that loss. I feel that whoever was giving advice to Elk Island for this strike did very poorly in advising the teachers.

The Member for Edmonton Belmont was wondering about the financing of schools during the strike. I must say that I am glad a stand has been taken to withhold 75 percent from school boards during the strike. I can well remember — it seems just a few years ago — when one of the school boards in the eastern part of the province stayed on strike for 30-some days, and then they boasted how much money they saved. It actually became a surplus. I think it was because of this that Education had to curtail grants during the strike.

One big area I think is at fault — and I don't want to blame only the teachers. I recall attending the school trustees' convention last fall, and financing was one of the issues. At that time they all pleaded that they were going to work together and stay pat on what they were going to pay for instruction. Two weeks later the Medicine Hat school division went beyond that and offered 5 percent or whatever it was. That was a sign. I don't want to blacken the Medicine Hat school division, but if they had worked together, the teachers and school boards throughout the province wouldn't have had this problem. It went on from one school jurisdiction to another. As a farmer I would feel very bad and I'd yell just as loud if I got 50 cents per bushel less than the fellow in Camrose or Daysland. That's exactly what has happened to the jurisdictions.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition isn't here, but he mentioned just a few minutes ago that he predicted those strikes; he knew they would go because of not enough financing. I wonder how much financing can be expected from the government. When we formed the government in 1971, the budget for the entire province was \$1 billion. Today the budget for Education alone is \$1.3 billion. How much higher can they go? There is nothing to say that more money is going to provide better education.

I would like to mention that many times we hear that cry of dollars and cents. As I mentioned, at the annual meeting of the county of Lamont on Saturday their financial statement showed — and it was questioned — that the school committee and the county council received \$93,000 in interest. So maybe things aren't quite as tough as some like to put it. It's nice to have a surplus like that, but I don't think the taxpayers should be drained for more money when there is that much standing.

I would like to commend the minister on some of the strong decisions he made. I know that the Department of Education has worked well and so forth, but he worked by the book. Sometimes changes have to be made. I really appreciate the stand the minister took about a year ago with the Lavoy school. It's a small school, a hundred and some people in the community, maybe a hundred and some children in the school. That school did exceptionally well. They needed renovations. They were in a critical position. As I said, the Department of Education book says that you can have this and this. I recall very well when I brought this to the minister. It's not very often that I go to any minister to cry for dollars, but in this particular case I felt there was a reason. The minister provided even more than they asked for. When the minister responds, I wonder if he can tell us anything. They applied for a community school. I think it's very important, because that's what they did: they put in their new gym; the community was involved in everything. They are looking for approval for a community school. I know there was a freeze, but I'm wondering whether the minister will be able to give me anything on that.

Another area, as I mentioned, is even more important. It is the high school in Two Hills. I know very well that the schools in Two Hills county are the oldest in the province, but maintenance has been good. Those schools are close to 40 years old and look quite good, but the time has come for replacement. The books in the Department of Education say that the low occupancy of the schools in other areas, not in Two Hills, creates a problem. Here again the minister had to make a very strong stand. On behalf of the community, thank you, Mr. Minister.

As far as the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards, I think the minister is doing this with all sincerity. I have

talked to many teachers. Some expressed their views in different ways, but many of them strongly believe that professionalism more than unionism has to be applied. If it were left in the hands of the Alberta Teachers' Association, if they appointed six teachers from central office, it makes me wonder exactly what impact it would have. It would have exactly the same impact as if the Minister of Education said that five of those teachers were going to be appointed from the Highlands constituency. If there were an appointment of teachers from across the province, I think this would work. I can't see the ATA crying that something is being taken away that they already haven't got. In his decision I think the minister was willing to give six teachers a chance to have input in what he would normally have had to do himself. I think this will work out.

Maybe some other areas would be more acceptable. I have thought about it at length. Maybe the regions should offer nominations, 10 from each of the regions in the province and so forth. Maybe a cross section of those selections would be good. But I still think there are many, many dedicated teachers who would serve well on this committee, and I think the minister's intentions are that.

I see that the time is going. At any rate, I appreciate the minister's stand in the past, and I think education has seen good advancement in the last few years.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I want to raise a couple of points with regard to the Department of Education that are particularly important to the constituency of Lethbridge West. Perhaps the minister can respond when he responds to other members. Obviously, education is something everybody knows something about, and most of us think we know everything about it. It happens each year. All the experts, I guess, are to be found under the dome of the Legislature. I often wonder if anybody knows what the kids think. They're the ones who use the system. Perhaps it wouldn't be a bad idea sometime to ask the users of the system. We seem to do this in all other programs in Alberta. That justifies our supporting the hog producers or other people. We say: "We've talked to them and they said ...; therefore, we will." It raises the question, maybe even begs the question: what do the users of the system think, some 425,000 children of this province? By far the largest number of Albertans use the school system, and I've yet to hear from members what the users in their constituency think of the system. That may not be a bad thing for the minister to consider.

Mr. Chairman, we are all looking forward, I know, to the new School Act that is proposed as a result of the hearings by the Member for St. Albert and the Member for Ponoka. We obviously won't deal with that in the estimates of the minister, but there are several other areas. The first one I'd like to comment on — this past weekend I had the opportunity of attending a conference on the health and physical education portion of the Alberta Teachers' Association, which was sponsored in Lethbridge. The Member for Ponoka spoke at that conference. I want to say that I was very impressed with the calibre of the people who attended. They were all teachers of health and physical education. It was very encouraging to hear their attitudes about how important health and physical education are to the well-being of young people in this province. I think the ATA can be very proud of them.

They can be very proud of another matter. I was there for a number of hours, and not one teacher at that conference raised the question of teacher standards, which tells me

something about the professional area the teachers attracted to physical education have. I was very impressed with that.

Mr. Chairman, reference was made a few minutes' earlier to community schools. Lethbridge has the Nicholas Sheran community school, which the minister had the opportunity of visiting on December 4. It is truly remarkable, in my opinion, that 7,000 citizens of Lethbridge used that school in the month of November. It is truly a community school. The Leader of the Opposition made reference to better use of school space, and I can't think of a better way of using it than having more community schools in the province. With that in mind, it was very welcome to hear last week that Gilbert Paterson school in Lethbridge has now been accepted as a community school.

The Leader of the Opposition continues to talk about alternate use of schools. He didn't touch on one area that I thought was so important. He mentioned nonprofit societies, and I agree they should have access to unused school space if the school jurisdiction deems it so. Frankly, I have difficulty in understanding how the government can dictate that. We as a government spend some \$54 million on day care in this province, and what better place to have day care centres than in a system where the law says the kids must go anyway at age six. That would be in the school system. The building is there. The facilities are there. There are many senior citizen groups crying for space. What better use of school buildings, of perhaps a third or a half of those schools that are going to close, than to have senior citizen groups, service clubs, other nonprofit societies but particularly volunteer groups — I think they should have access to school space. I urge the minister to see what he can do to the School Trustees Association and individual boards to encourage them to do that. I really don't understand why the cost has to be involved to any great degree. I think it's perhaps a matter of moral suasion.

Mr. Chairman, as decreed by the United Nations, this is International Youth Year. We in Alberta should be proud; we have allocated a million dollars to the international year of youth. On February 20 at the Westin Hotel, it was very encouraging when Premier Lougheed declared the international year of youth officially open in this province. There were some 300 people in attendance representing all the young people of Alberta. The theme is "Young and Alive in 85". That theme was adopted by a school at Smith, Alberta. A variety competed, and they came up with the winning logo. We've had buttons minted. What better theme to have for our young people in this province. I hope the chairman of that committee, the Minister of Recreation and Parks, sees fit that every member of the House gets that pin. It was Ron and Cathy Pearn, very dedicated teachers from that school, who motivated the youngsters to come up with that theme. I'm very, very optimistic that Alberta will lead the country in terms of youth activities this year in celebration of youth year.

Mr. Chairman, I have a concern about funding. Reference has continually been made to not enough funding. It's now \$2.2 billion between the two departments of education. When you get 22 cents of every dollar going to education, how much is enough? Do we want to reduce health and hospital care? Is that what we want to reduce? Do we want to take some from the jail system? I don't know where the money is going to come from. Everybody wants more; I don't see them offering it. I see them wanting to spend someone else's money. Quite frankly, I'm the last one to say teachers earn enough or too much. I don't know. But you can't have it both ways. You can't have elected school

boards making that decision and at the same time stand up in this House and say that they're not doing a good job and should do something else. If more of us did what we were supposed to do and let other people do what they were supposed to do, we might just have a better functioning province. However, I don't particularly want to take issue with that.

I want to draw one particular problem to the attention of the minister, Mr. Chairman, and that's the funding of private schools. I know it is an awkward and a difficult situation, but we've had a development recently. I recall that four years ago it was a real precedent when we got agreements whereby school districts, on behalf of students in their area who went to private schools, could get dollars from the department and flow them through to those private schools. In those days we had an arrangement whereby school districts and private schools had to sign an agreement with the management finance plan that went into effect January 1 this year. I understand that is no longer required, and as a result there's a very popular school in my area, the Immanuel Christian school, that finds itself without the sum of about \$100,000 from the county of Lethbridge primarily. That means about \$193 for every student or \$400 per family. Quite frankly, they're not going to survive. I'm sure the minister will address his mind to that problem, but perhaps during these estimates he will come up with some solution whereby if the policy was wrong when it was implemented, perhaps it could be addressed or resolved or reviewed. I simply draw that to his attention.

I want to close with a comment that the deputy minister, Mr. Bosetti, has been extremely helpful to me as the MLA for Lethbridge West, as have Marvin Bruce, the director in the regional office in Lethbridge, and many people. As the Member for St. Albert said, it's always delicate to mention names, but Joyce Bourgeois has been extremely helpful to me as a member.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I certainly commend the estimates to the House.

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

MR. KING: In six minutes? Mr. Chairman, I think a number of very worthwhile contributions have been made to the discussion here this afternoon, and I would certainly like to reply to the questions that have been asked, the comments that have been raised, and the constructive criticisms that have been offered. I can't do that in the time that remains, but I would like to begin and then perhaps carry on on a subsequent occasion.

I tried to take the comments offered by my colleagues and group them into related areas, and before we adjourn this afternoon, I would like to speak briefly about what I will call community involvement in the process of education and the local control of the process of education. There's no question that in recent years the community has developed an interest in participating in the decision-making process of government. That's the case not only provincially but locally and federally. It is the case not only in Alberta but in other provinces. It appears to be a phenomenon that is developing around the world, and as far as I'm concerned, it is a very worthwhile phenomenon and one that we want to support.

We can place recent activities of the Department of Education in a context that is established by the tabloid that was distributed to 900,000 households last spring and

the public opinion survey that was done on our behalf by the Gallup organization. I might add that we can place these recent activities in the context of the survey that was done of student opinion as represented by students in high schools last June. Having those in mind, we then come to the review of the School Act, which has essentially been undertaken by the committee chaired by the hon. Member for St. Albert, and the review of the secondary program, which has essentially been undertaken by the committee chaired by the hon. Member for Ponoka. Following the release of the government's white paper on industrial and science strategy last July 20, a committee travelled throughout the province and conducted fora on the white paper. In the same way, the School Act review committee and the secondary review committee have travelled extensively throughout the province this spring looking for public input, answering the public's questions, and responding to the public's concerns. In all of these things — the tabloid, the surveys, the travel throughout the province, and, I might add, the recent letter to 33,000 teachers in the province — we see evidence of the government's desire to find new and better ways for entering into direct dialogue with the people of the province. We want to involve our citizens more and more in the government's decision-making process because we believe the decisions made by the government will be better when they are based on that kind of public input, discussion, and dialogue.

Mr. Chairman, obviously there are many more things I want to say, but in view of the hour I think I should sit down and let us proceed.

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

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

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, in the event that Government Motion 10, which is to be debated at 8 o'clock, doesn't take the entire evening, we would propose to return to Committee of Supply and would call the Department of Transportation and following that the Department of Education.

[The House recessed at 5:30 p.m. and resumed at 8:00 p.m.]

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

10. Moved by Mr. Hyndman:
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly, pursuant to section 6(4.1) of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Act, authorize, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1986, the making of investments under section 6(1)(c) of that Act in:

- (1) the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation in an amount not to exceed \$171 million in aggregate,
- (2) the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation in an amount not to exceed \$185 million in aggregate,
- (3) the Alberta Opportunity Company in an amount not to exceed \$47.4 million in aggregate.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move Government Motion 10, standing in my name on the Order Paper.

This motion is now presented annually and is another example of accountability of the heritage fund to the Legislature insofar as the moneys noted here cannot be invested or spent without the Legislature's debate and approval. In this case the three ministers whose Crown corporations are up for debate tonight under subparagraphs (1), (2), and (3) are here. I draw the attention of hon. members to the details with respect to this motion which can be found in the Budget Address, firstly on page 49, where there is an outline of the proposed maximum investments in provincial Crown corporations of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. As well, in Appendix C there is a detailed breakdown of the expenditures and the accounting with respect to the Agricultural Development Corporation, the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the Alberta Opportunity Company. An outline of the proposed expenditures for the upcoming year is contained on pages 56, 57, and 58.

I think I will conclude the debate at this stage, Mr. Speaker, by urging the Assembly to support these worthwhile continued enterprises of these three Crown corporations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. MARTIN: Let's not be in too much of a hurry. Mr. Speaker, I have some concerns on Motion 10, not so much from the ministers' departments but this has been raised before. As I understand it, this motion is proposing to tie up roughly \$403.4 million of the trust fund money into more of our Crown corporations, three specifically, the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation, the Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the Alberta Opportunity Company.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that there should be a more imaginative way to use our trust fund. I remind the Treasurer that this does seem to fly in the face of recommendations from the heritage trust fund committee. I think of recommendation 24 in the 1980-81 report, recommendation 14 of the '82-83 report, and recommendation 12 of the '83-84 report. I guess the first thing one has to ask — we spend a lot of time in the heritage trust fund committee debating recommendations, but they don't seem to mean much. I think the recommendations that basically came out of the trust fund make some sense at this particular time. We do have a good credit rating in the province, and we could be using this money in much more imaginative ways. We can go to the open market and get a good deal for these corporations if we need the money. Of course, we have a surplus, but they can borrow on the open market at very good rates because of our credit rating. It seems to us that this has not ever been a very imaginative way to deal with the trust fund, especially in a time of recession when we talk a fair amount about job creation and helping out people who are unemployed, small business, or farm income.

It seems to us that there would be a better way to do this than what we're doing here. I say to the Treasurer that if these recommendations don't mean anything — I've seen it three years in a row, suggesting that if money is needed for any of our Crown corporations, including ACT or other ones, they can borrow on the open market. Why do we spend that amount of money and time debating it at the trust fund?

According to the last quarterly report of the fund the Treasurer put out, we now have over \$7.4 billion really unavailable for what we might call productive investment, tied up in our own Crown corporations. I say in all honesty to the Treasurer that this doesn't seem to me to be a very wise way. In the Foster report and other documents that have been given to this government, I think it flies precisely against what they're suggesting: that we're going to have to be much more innovative with the trust fund. As I said, it's not that I'm suggesting that there aren't some good things happening in those three departments, because I know there are. I'm suggesting that there is a different way to go about it.

The other point I would like to make, and I think we should have some debate — we have this in a motion and there's a lot of money here: \$171 million to the Agricultural Development Corporation, \$185 million to the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and over \$47 million to the AOC. I'd perhaps like to hear a bit from the ministers about what's happening here, because this is a big estimate. We're in the process of debating estimates in other areas, but this is a blanket amount of money, a lot of money. I think we should spend just a little time finding out where this money is going so we can come back with some reasonable assessment.

Just as a matter to the Treasurer, in terms of how we brought this in, it would perhaps have made some more sense if we had had some of the agricultural estimates up. I notice that we haven't had the Minister of Small Business and Tourism. This would have been better after we had dealt with the estimates so we have some idea about what's going on in the department, just as a matter of bringing it up.

Frankly, I think it's nice that we're spending this amount of money, but as I said, I really have some reservations about getting our money out of the heritage trust fund in this way, especially when we're in a recession, especially when we can borrow on the open market, and especially after the heritage trust fund committee, in at least three separate years, has suggested this. It seems to me that we've just ignored that recommendation from the trust fund committee again, Mr. Speaker, and I for one would like to know why, because it wasn't just from the opposition. As the Treasurer is well aware, the government has a majority on the heritage trust fund committee. I would like to follow from those directions so we could get some ideas in.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I believe this is the third occasion that this motion has been brought to the Assembly. Prior to that, capital borrowings of the Alberta Housing Corporation or the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation were approved by Executive Council or the heritage fund committee of cabinet. As a result of a recommendation of the select standing committee of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, the capital requirements are now brought to the Assembly, and I think that provides a useful opportunity

for members of the Assembly to discuss those borrowing requirements.

Without getting into the detail of the estimates of the Department of Housing or the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation, I'd briefly like to advise members of the Assembly the purpose for which the funds contained in Motion [10] are required. As the hon. Provincial Treasurer indicated, page 59 provides the information in terms of the capital requirements of the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This is the first budget year in which the two corporations have been combined, so the capital requirements are combined on this occasion for the first time into a single part of the resolution.

The \$185 million that is contained in the motion is basically made up in the following way. New capital that will be required by the corporation for the housing and land programs is principally made up of 600 Alberta family home purchase program housing units, 300 of which will be new units, that is newly constructed units, and 300 of which will be housing units that are preowned. It should be noted that there will be no new housing units financed through the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation in the major centres because of the surplus housing that is available. In addition, there is financing for 200 rural and native housing units which are for families with low to moderate income in communities of fewer than 2,500 people throughout the province. Also, we propose to construct 250 senior citizens' self-contained units and 85 lodge units. There is also a limited number of community housing and transitional housing units. So the expenditures in this upcoming year will be significantly reduced from previous years.

The capital requirements for new construction total about \$117 million. That really isn't all new construction, because 300 housing units will be preowned units that will be financed. The balance of the funds is required to refinance existing short-term borrowings of the corporation. The corporation has traditionally and historically borrowed from the heritage fund, but the borrowings have generally been 20-year debentures with a five-year rate. As a result of the rapid changes in interest rates, the corporation has allowed borrowers who wish to renew the mortgages on their homes the opportunity to renew for either one year, two years, three years, or five years. As a result, the corporation has some short-term borrowings in the neighbourhood of about \$80 million. So a portion of the \$185 million that isn't used for new capital borrowings will be used to repay the short-term borrowings.

Mr. Speaker, that pretty well describes the purpose for which the funds are required by the corporation. I should note that in previous years, the capital requirements of the two corporations have been in the range of \$1 billion in a single year. This dramatic reduction in requirement of funds is simply a reflection of what is happening in the housing market in terms of vacancies that exist throughout the province.

One comment that the Leader of the Opposition made was with respect to seeking funds from other than the government. As long as funds are available, I believe and support the Provincial Treasurer that it is useful to use our own funds. I don't have the precise numbers in front of me — I can check and confirm it later — but I believe that since the two corporations, which are now combined into one, have obtained their funds from the heritage fund, they have repaid to the heritage fund more than \$1 billion in interest and principal, which to a great extent is so very helpful to the government in meeting our General Revenue

Fund needs by that transfer of the earnings of the fund to the GRF for government expense. So it has been very helpful to the taxpayers in being able to generate that revenue in Alberta as opposed to in New York, and passing those earnings on to the taxpayers of Alberta.

Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I might just make a comment or two relative to the funds that are provided to the Alberta Opportunity Company and where they will be used this year, keeping in mind two things. As we have pointed out, the Opportunity Company is a lender of last resort that in essence follows its guidance with those who apply having been turned down in the private sector to some degree by one or possibly two lenders that are out there. It might be of note if I provide a little bit of information as to the number of loans that have been approved, the actual average size of the loan, and the like. I'd like to do that if I may, Mr. Speaker.

The number of loans since its inception to March 31, 1985, is 3,290. The amount of dollars that have been loaned since that time to March 31, 1985, is \$354,295,000. The number of loans in the last year to March 31, 1985, versus 1984 — so there's a trend there that shows: in 1984, 254 loans were approved; in 1985, 292. The number of dollars that were committed for lending to the period March 31 is \$29,180,000 versus \$28,745,000 in the 1984 period. The average loan since its inception is \$108,400, and the average loan last year was \$100,000. An interesting and possibly one of the more encouraging statistics is the percentage of loans in arrears: 1984, 15.68 percent; last year, 14.3 percent. So there is a brightening of the area of loans in arrears that's improved, not necessarily substantially, but certainly there's been a good increase in that. The number of loans outstanding at March 31, 1985, is 1,615. Basically what happens in the process, as is pointed out in the motion, the \$47.4 million is there on top of the loan repayments as part of the operating fund of the company, and that along with the other sources of funding, the grants from the General Revenue Fund, provide the \$76 million necessary to operate the company for any given year.

It might not hurt for me to outline the procedure again for the approvals by the various people in the Alberta Opportunity Company. Loans up to \$50,000 can be approved by the branch manager, up to \$60,000 by the credit superintendent, up to \$75,000 by the deputy managing directors, up to \$100,000 by the managing director, up to and including \$250,000 by the loans committee. That's a committee made up of the managing director, the deputy managing director, the senior management, and the branch managers. Over \$250,000 the management will make a recommendation to the board of directors. That occurs generally twice a month when they have their meetings and will make the recommendation to the board of directors. Loans over \$1 million go through the same process I just outlined a moment ago. In addition to that, they also go to cabinet for approval at that level. So any loans over \$1 million follow the normal process from the managing director and the management loans committee, to the board of directors, and to the cabinet.

That has worked, in essence, reasonably well. The longest period of approval time is for the larger loans that actually go through the process of going through the applicant to the company, from the company, if it's over the \$1 million mark, to the loans committee, from there to the board of directors, and from there to cabinet and final approval.

Basically, the smaller loans right down the line can be approved almost immediately in the sense that the branch manager deals with it alone, and you go up through those to the managing director. I think we have improved that particular time frame for approval process quite significantly over time, although unfortunately, the larger ones still take some time. But they are notified of that length of time and the process that must take place.

One of the more significant programs this year, Mr. Speaker, that has seen some acceleration, if that's the right word, is the student loan program. I have put together some statistics that I think you'll find quite interesting. The student loan program has been in place for some time. Comparing 1984 to 1985, in 1984 we received five applications for student loans. That was for a sum of up to \$2,000, which a student would apply for and receive approval if all other factors were in place for that sum of money. The repayment schedule for that would begin in September of that same year. In 1985 we had 24 applications, up from the five of the year before. All five, I should point out, that were in place in 1984 were approved, and all of them were repaid. This year we've had 24 applications to date; 17 have been approved, two have been declined, one has been cancelled, and four are presently under review by the Opportunity Company. This year we increased the amount that could be borrowed to \$3,000 from the old \$2,000. We also involved what I might call a bit of an advertising campaign by letting the various institutions know. For example, letters were written to all postsecondary schools in the province, advertising in the school newspapers as well, and we had some of the people in the Alberta Opportunity Company available to speak to student groups about the possibility of the loan program itself. That has greatly assisted in the number of applications that have come in from the five of last year to the 24 to this point in time for this year.

I might just add that generally the experience has been good. I think there is only one loan in the entire length of time the program has been in place in the Opportunity Company that the payment hasn't been repaid in full. Those who are eligible are any students of the province of Alberta 18 years of age or older and enrolled as a full-time student. As I said before, repayment of the loans is scheduled for September of the year in which they are granted. On occasion that has seen an extension provided, if requested by the student who had the loan. An exciting program and certainly an acceleration of where we were previously with that one. With the Alberta Opportunity Company looking at the increase to \$3,000 and, of course, the publicity they did in fact generate by sending information to the postsecondary institutions as well as the speaking engagements, that provided some additional opportunity for students to get involved in some kind of business activity over the summer of 1985.

Basically, Mr. Speaker, I guess that covers the kind of information that is related to the borrowings for the Alberta Opportunity Company and gives you a little bit of an information background as to the number of loans approved, the kinds of applications we have had, and where we are at this point in time.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

[Motion carried]

head: **COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**
(continued)

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

Department of Transportation

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, on the last occasion that we discussed the Department of Transportation estimates, a number of members had some comments or questions. The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview was not in attendance that night. The Leader of the Opposition asked that we hold the finalization of the vote until he had an opportunity to make some remarks.

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View, Mr. Zip, asked me a question with regard to the twinning of Highway 2 south of Calgary. I want to indicate that while I neglected to answer that, indeed we do have some long-range plans for the twinning of that highway farther south. For the immediate term we're doing a substantial amount of overlay in 1985, which will incorporate passing lanes and improve the flow of traffic on that particular highway.

There were a number of other questions from members that I think I answered for the most part. I want to say again, as I did the other evening when we were studying these estimates, that if members have concerns throughout the year from time to time about road construction programs or maintenance or any other area of the Department of Transportation, they are, as always, free and welcome in my office to discuss those concerns, either by telephone, in person, or in writing. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that the concern of members and the expertise they bring to my office with respect to the concerns of their constituency does, indeed, help us serve Albertans better than we might otherwise do, so I appreciate that dialogue.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Chairman, I want to express my appreciation to the Minister of Transportation for agreeing to delay the approval of the estimates. I appreciate the chance to ask about a few specific items there are particular concerns in in my area and to hear some response on those items. Certainly, it's good to see the hundreds of millions of dollars that are being invested in transportation. There is no question that in my area the roads are vastly improved over what they were when Louis and Mabel Bernard arrived in 1917. It's good to see that money is available so that kind of thing will continue. The point of mentioning the Bernards, though, is that while it's good to see the money being spent, I sometimes question our getting too excited about how wonderful the expenditure is, because, obviously, as more people live in areas and as the life-style changes, the need for quality transportation is there. Simply meeting a need is something we can be glad we're doing but not necessarily something to be too excited about.

Let me ask about a few specific items. In my constituency and our part of the province some of these things are particularly important because of the very spread-out population. Even for most of rural Alberta our area is unusual, so transportation systems are particularly important there. One of the most famous ones, that I'm sure the minister has heard about many, many times, is Highway 64, which is a corridor that basically connects the Fort St. John area through to Fairview and the Alberta Peace River country. When that road was originally built, just the fact it was built meant that a large amount of traffic began travelling back and forth through an area that previously didn't have a great deal of traffic. People had to go around. They found other ways, and it created difficulties. But the fact that that highway was constructed originally meant that immediately a great deal of traffic, primarily agricultural and oil and gas industry related, started using that, because it was a more efficient road.

My concern is whether or not a date has been set to complete the paving on Highway 64, because once you start getting a lot of traffic on this road, the problems multiply at least as fast as the conveniences of having the road. People in that area are certainly pleased with the amount of paving that's happened. I can remember how much more difficult it was only three years ago when you didn't have any pavement beyond Hines Creek. Now there's at least pavement to the Worsley turnoff and that's certainly improved things. It's one of those kinds of situations where we need to know about an early date for the entire stretch of highway to be completed. As every little bit of paving is done, the amount of traffic increases on the road, and therefore, the unpaved part becomes increasingly inconvenient and dangerous. I know that people there talk about the very serious rock problem and the accident dangers that are related to the heavy dust that's on that road in the summertime. So for safety kinds of reasons, this is a road that's particularly important. I'd be interested in the minister's dates in connection with Highway 64 so that people there can anticipate more specifically when they will be able to travel all the way to the British Columbia border on pavement.

Another major highway in the northwest part of the province that, again, provides a great deal of connection on an east-west basis between the British Columbia area and the Alberta Peace is Highway 49, coming a little closer to the minister's home country as well. Again, this is a case where having a little chance to see some improvement has whetted people's appetite for seeing even more improvement. A small eight-kilometre stretch of Highway 49 between Rycroft and Spirit River was widened and proper shoulders were constructed on it a year and a half ago. As far as safety goes, that's been a real improvement along that little stretch of the highway. However, there's a serious concern among people that live all along Highway 49 from Rycroft going east with the fact that the road is currently two narrow lanes with basically no shoulders. Given a lot of the farm equipment that travels that stretch of the road — that's very prosperous agricultural country between Rycroft and the Smokey River. Given the large amount of major agricultural equipment on that road, people worry a great deal about the kinds of situations that arise when you get a large combine or a tractor with a lot of cultivators on it that's travelling and taking up two-thirds or so of the available paved width there. There are lots of people saying: "When can we hear from the Minister of Transportation that the dates have been set for widening and rebuilding more of Highway 49 so that I don't have to drive it, worried about getting a flat tire and having no place to pull off or worried about meeting a combine and a truck coming from the other direction and a very unsafe situation arising there?"

So those are two major highways, Mr. Chairman, that people on the north and the south sides of the river respectively are very, very concerned about, and we'd like to hear more about plans to continue the good things that will improve each of those roads.

I'm interested also in whether or not the minister is having any study done or giving any consideration to the possibility of a bridge across the Peace River directly west of Fairview where the Peace River loops north that would provide a convenient way for the people living in the Silver Valley area to have access to the commercial and government centres in Fairview. I raise that question with the minister particularly because of the recent announcement that the British Columbia government intends to construct a bridge

at Clayhurst. Presently at Clayhurst there's a ferry operating across the river part of the year. In the Bear Canyon area a great deal of the business and the traffic already goes to Dawson Creek because of the Clayhurst ferry. Certainly, with the construction of a Clayhurst bridge, the entire Bear Canyon area in the northwest corner is going to move to Dawson Creek as a centre to use. That's going to have a real economic impact on the town of Fairview. I'm interested in what research is being done about a bridge that would allow us to let people start moving in from the Silver Valley area and have easy, convenient access to Fairview, so that perhaps Fairview will recover, by capturing some of the Silver Valley business, what it's going to lose in the way of business from Bear Canyon area going to Dawson Creek. I'm aware that bridges are very expensive investments. On the other hand, they are of very long-term benefit in creating patterns of where people travel and shop. I certainly feel badly thinking that large amounts of business are going to support businesspeople in British Columbia when we could see that going to towns here in Alberta.

I'm also interested in whether the minister would be willing to consider looking very carefully at upgrading to secondary highway status the stretch of road that's currently called the 12-mile stretch between Silver Valley post office and Highway 49 coming in from the west. It's a stretch of gravel road that's heavily used, and people living in the Silver Valley area are concerned that the secondary road going north to Bonanza is apparently going to be paved. This stretch of road also has a great deal of traffic but, obviously, until it's at least upgraded to secondary highway status, the chance of it being paved is very remote. So I'd be interested in whether or not a date has been set to upgrade the status of that piece of road to secondary highway status and then, beyond that, to seriously look at paving that stretch of road.

I have an overall concern, too, as I look at the estimates for Transportation about the figures I see in connection with improvement district roads. I'd like the minister's comments on that. As far as reconstruction, I see there's no change in money that will be available for improvement districts in the year ahead. As far as maintenance, there's a small decrease in the amount of money that will be available for improvement district roads. Improvement districts tend to be the parts of the province where the most new development is happening, new settlement, and new farms being developed. In my experience, improvement districts are in great need of old trails being upgraded to properly built gravelled roads and new roads being built to serve people who are developing areas they haven't live in before. I'm certainly concerned to see how little change — in fact, what little change there is is a negative change — in money that's being committed to roads in the improvement districts.

I'd also be interested in the large increase in money that's going to be spent on rural resource roads. I see \$7 million more suddenly going for rural resource roads. I'd be interested in what exactly this money is going to be used for, where these roads are that the money is going to be spent on, and why there is such a big jump in money to be spent on rural resource roads.

Finally, the other area I'd appreciate some comments on from the minister relates to the business of a rail link between Hines Creek and the British Columbia Peace, and the minister's feelings, especially since he represents an area of the Peace country, about pushing for an early development of a rail link, whether that's a priority with the minister and something we could look for his personal involvement in with regard to in the near future.

Having posed those few questions, I'll look forward to the minister's responses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MARTIN: There is just one area I'd like to converse with the minister on. It has to do with questions I raised with the economic minister, because it falls in both areas. It has to do with the light, fast train system possibility between Edmonton and Calgary. When we discussed this in the estimates, I certainly got the impression from the minister that it seemed to have some merit to it. They'd been studying it in the economic department, and with some work on it, it looked like it could be viable.

My question is simply this: does the Minister of Transportation share the Minister of Economic Development's enthusiasm? Ultimately, Mr. Chairman, that would come under the Minister of Transportation's perusal. I would just like some comments on that area, if I may.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the minister like to conclude?

MR. M. MOORE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I appreciate the comments of the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, and I'd like to respond to a number of questions he has raised.

First of all, with regard to Highway 64 from Fairview over to the B.C. border, we've been involved in upgrading that highway since I've been privileged to be a member of this Assembly in 1971. We started with literally nothing, and a decision was made about that time that we would build quality rather than quantity roads. I suppose we could have gone in there and covered up the existing grade with some asphalt and had what British Columbia would call a paved road. If one has driven down the Hart Highway recently, you'll know what I mean. If you don't put anything underneath the pavement, it isn't going to last very long. We instead chose — and we've done that elsewhere, and I think wisely so — to begin by reconstructing the grade so the sub-base is adequate to hold base course and asphalt so it will last for 25 years. I should say, Mr. Chairman, that the philosophy of the hon. Member for Drumheller, the hon. Gordon Taylor, who was Minister of Transportation during the '60s, was the same: to build a quality road as opposed to seeing how much pavement you could spread each year.

We've spent very large sums of money on Highway 64 and have completely rebuilt it right from Fairview to the B.C. border. The most recent project was in 1983 when we completed a stretch of about 20 kilometres immediately west of the Worsley turnoff to a good gravel standard. During the course of the recent by-election campaign, when I was in that area, I said that while people are concerned about the progress, in dollars and cents we've actually paid for about three-quarters of the cost of the entire reconstruction of Highway 64 from the B.C. border to Fairview. We've completely reconstructed the grade throughout, we've base-coursed the entire amount from Fairview to the Worsley turnoff, and then there's about 15 kilometres of final paving left to put on top of the soil cement base course that was completed last year. That project is in fact already tendered for 1985 and involves an expenditure of something like \$1.3 million for the final paving up to the Worsley corner. That's a project for '85.

Over the course of the years it's my full intention to carry on from Worsley Corner to the B.C. border with completing the base course and paving until that road is

finished. And it will be vastly superior. If anybody has driven the B.C. portion from Fort St. John to the B.C. border, while it's paved, the grade is very substandard. That's why most of them prefer to go south over the Clayhurst Ferry, if they're going to go that way to Dawson Creek. Hauling grain over that route is very difficult to truck over because of the grades and so on, and it's very narrow pavement. So while it takes a little longer, we eventually will have a first-class road there. There's no question about that.

We got a really difficult situation on Highway 49, and it comes from the 1950s style of covering up the black dirt with some pavement. Much of that is located in my own constituency. From about Girouxville west as far as Rycroft we have a grade that's adequate in terms of its width and everything else for the traffic that's on it, really, in terms of what exists in the rest of the province. It would be nice to have it wider, and we could go in there for probably about \$100,000 a mile and widen it on each side or one side, put a cap on it, and it would look pretty good. The problem is that the base is incapable of sustaining traffic, particularly during winter months because of the very soft conditions that exist. If the hon. member has driven over it during the winter, you'll notice lots of frost heaves. It doesn't make much sense to spend \$150,000 to \$200,000 a mile to widen that grade, and still have all those frost heaves. The major complaint of truckers in particular but other motorists as well is not the width of the highway but the roughness of it during the wintertime.

I've been evaluating what we should do about it, and quite frankly I'm reluctant to go in and do a widening job when I know that the base isn't proper. What that entails is simply taking the asphalt off the top, recycling it, piling it up, digging the entire subgrade out, putting in a new subgrade, and then widening it. That's about \$400,000 a mile to do that kind of job. It's akin to building a brand-new highway where you don't have one.

We have to start doing that, at some point in time. I'm not sure when. But in the next year or two, we're going to have to start with the worst sections and do 10 miles at a time and get the job done. It certainly points out the fact that the criteria of sort of laying pavement over whatever is there is not the best route to go.

I share that with the hon. member and with other members of the Assembly who are sometimes anxious to get a paved road. The other day I had to suggest to the hon. Member for Vegreville that we went out and drilled a secondary highway that we'd committed to pave this year in his constituency and found all kinds of black dirt in it. We know that it won't hold up, and so we've taken the decision to defer the paving, rebuild the grade, and do it properly.

As far as a bridge across the Peace River directly west of Fairview is concerned, I would have to say to the hon. member that, at least in the foreseeable future, it's out of the question. We're talking about \$20 million-plus to build a bridge, plus the grades up and down the hill and connecting the roads with the existing ones. Really all that it would do in the Silver Valley area is transfer some business from the Spirit River area to Fairview, because there isn't much difference. You'll interfere with established trading patterns. It may be a little closer to Fairview, but I really doubt the wisdom in a community of that size of moving people into another area. The costs are simply enormous in getting across the Peace River. It's one of the largest rivers that we've crossed with bridges in Alberta, and the cost does not come cheaply. It's very expensive.

Insofar as the roads in the Silver Valley-Bonanza area, as the hon. members knows, I made a commitment to pave the base course Highway 719 from Highway 49 into Bonanza and four miles north, and we will also be doing five or six miles of reconstruction of the grade from that point north and east towards Silver Valley, which is the worst part of the whole road that connects Silver Valley with Bonanza. In the area of the road east of Silver Valley and over through Blueberry Mountain, while some portions of that road may not be up to paving standards, they probably don't warrant rebuilding until we're ready to pave. There's a pretty good bunch of life left in most of that road yet, and it can be improved by maintenance in a timely fashion. I hope that my department staff will be undertaking to ensure that it is well maintained.

Improvement district budgets are the same as 1984 in terms of capital construction. It is my hope that we can do as much work, and I'm certain there will be an opportunity to improve roads in every improvement district in the province. One must bear in mind as well, Mr. Chairman, that we no longer have ID 1 in the Cypress area around Medicine Hat, and ID 10 in the Rocky Mountain area also went to municipal district status. I added some funds to the grants to municipal districts to take care of those two improvement districts. So while the fund remains the same, at \$30 million, for ID construction, there are two less IDs involved and they were major improvement districts in terms of the total capital costs. So we do have funds that will more than adequately make up for any increase in cost of construction and provide a few dollars in addition to that.

The resource roads budget is something that was brought in a number of years ago. The Member for Drayton Valley and others in this Assembly requested that we give special consideration to rural roads that were heavily impacted by resource traffic, and they exist all over this entire province, in the hon. member's own constituency and many other places. We simply use that fund to both construct new grades and pave and base-course on primary highways, secondary highways, and resource roads throughout the province. It doesn't even cover what we would call the resource roads of this province. Highway 67, for example, in the Redearth area south to Slave Lake, where we'll be spending about \$9 million this year, isn't even covered by the resource road fund. We're doing that out of the primary highways vote, and it's totally a resource road in terms of the activity that is going on.

I can't begin to describe the number of projects that are involved in that resource road. There are 220 projects tentatively scheduled in the entire department budget with primary highway construction program, secondary road construction program, the resource road program, and the twinning programs on Highways 1 and 16 in addition to literally hundreds of improvement district jobs and other special projects throughout the province. But it is a very important vote for us to utilize to catch up on some of the difficulties that occur when rural local roads in particular, funded by municipalities, are heavily impacted by the resource industry.

If I could move to reply briefly to the hon. Leader of the Opposition's comments about the fast train between here and the city of Calgary. We have, as hon. members know, a very good highway between Calgary and Edmonton. It's impacted on the north end from Airdrie in particular to Red Deer by a construction technique that's a very narrow media and no shoulder on the left-hand lane, and that has resulted in a large increase in accidents over a traditional

four-lane that we're building now on Highway 16 or elsewhere in Alberta. It's my ambition to try to do something to correct that. In fact, it's my intention to begin later this year in the Airdrie-Three Hills area with the construction of an additional width while we're doing an overlay on the outside right-hand shoulder of that highway, in order to shift the travelling lanes over and provide for a left-hand shoulder of about eight feet so that cars won't be going off the shoulder and impacting cars in the other lane.

I mention this, Mr. Chairman, simply for this reason: the major mode of transportation between Edmonton and Calgary — not only between Edmonton and Calgary but within the corridor from Red Deer south and north 50 miles and from Leduc and Wetaskiwin to Edmonton, from Airdrie and Red Deer to Calgary, and so on — is now, and will be for several decades to come, the automobile. Indeed the movement of freight between our two major metropolitan areas and to serve centres in between is by truck — far in excess of what is moved by rail. In addition to that, I think it's safe to say that while the air service which presently exists between Edmonton and Calgary might alter in terms of its form, in terms of seeing twin-engine turbo prop planes that are quieter or something — it may alter from jet service to something else — I don't have any doubt at all that air service will be here for many, many years to come, serving the two major metropolitan areas.

So I think there are indeed a lot of funds, if one has to place a priority on capital funding, that can go into improvements on the highway system, and that may preclude the development of a high-speed train track, over the short term certainly. Members who have looked at movement of people by high-speed train in Europe and elsewhere will appreciate the very significant realities and possibilities that exist there but will recognize as well that we're dealing with populations that are far greater than exist in Alberta and, in most cases, centres that are far closer together. In Tokyo, for example, more than 4 million people a day move in and out of that major metropolitan area by train. Of course, we don't have 4 million people in Alberta, let alone that many to move daily to and from work by way of rapid transit. While the possibility is interesting and does exist, and perhaps we ought to look to the future in terms of protecting some right-of-way at least so that some time down the road we can build a high-speed train track, I would anticipate that it's a few years away before we would seriously entertain the actual construction of such a track. Obviously, the capital construction at least would have to be totally subsidized by some level of government. I'm sure you wouldn't get the private sector to be involved.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that answers the questions that have been posed by the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions, will the minister make the necessary motion to report the vote?

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

[Motion carried]

Department of Recreation and Parks

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a couple of brief comments because I spoke about the Olympic facilities, particularly Mount Allan, under the estimates of the hon. minister of public works. At that time I mentioned

one of the events I attended on Easter Sunday. It was a dinner in honour of athletes participating in the national cross-country ski events that were held in Canmore. It was a very successful evening, and it was a pleasure for me to meet so many enthusiastic and very competent young athletes. I would particularly like to commend the Sport Council, which of course is a budget item under the Minister of Recreation and Parks, for their outstanding work in co-operating with the various organizations. They're very, very helpful to these groups in so many ways. I certainly hope the Sport Council will take note of the hard work that is done by the cross-country organization and be able to find sufficient funds for many of their endeavours which, of course, are leading up to the 1988 Olympics.

The only other point I would like to mention, and again it's through the assistance of the Sport Council, was a whole day's activity held in Silver Springs, sponsored by the Silver Springs community association. We were very honoured in February to have the Minister of Recreation and Parks attend the opening of this event. Without a doubt it is unique, because it was probably the first time in the province of Alberta that a community association totally organized a mini-Olympic event for all the children of that community. As Mr. Frank King, the chairman of the Olympic committee, put it, the Olympics are based on three major sports: skiing, skating, and sleighing. All of the children were very enthusiastic, because most of them could pretty well say that they had participated at some time in all of those events. The day was extremely successful. They even went so far as to build a luge run in the association area and also a small ski jump.

I'd like to take this opportunity to commend the hard-working parents and members of the Silver Springs community association for probably setting a precedent in Alberta. They were able to do this, of course, through the funding of the Sport Council. I hope the minister will pass along my comments to the Sport Council for their help to so many Albertans.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Since I have no other members on the list, would the minister like to conclude?

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At the start of my estimates there were a number of questions raised. I would like to go over those for the members. The Leader of the Official Opposition raised a number of concerns. One was that he felt that the estimates for parks dropped from \$37 million to \$34 million. He's correct there. We're shifting most of our funding to the recreation portion of our department and not into parks, as we're now doing a granting system through recreation. Even though the decrease is slight, the total increase in dollars going out for jobs has increased.

The second question asked was: is there a major park in the works for northern Alberta? I suppose he was referring to Kananaskis 2. I've said before and I guess I can say again that I'd like to see us develop a Kananaskis 2 and a Kananaskis 3. When we get the necessary climate, we'll move toward that goal.

The next question was that there is no fund for planning for Mount Allan. That's correct. Mount Allan is already planned. It's developed. There are no funds for planning. But he did comment about the hurricane winds. I want to put this in *Hansard*. We have a monitoring system every month at Mount Allan. I want to point out that for the month of February, at the top of the men's downhill the

wind was 16 kilometres per hour. At the top of the gold chair on B run, it was 11 kilometres per hour. At the base area it was 11 kilometres per hour, and at the Nordic Centre the mean wind speeds averaged 7 kilometres per hour. If that's a hurricane, I guess it's a light one.

The next question was: why are we developing athletes' village funding under 4.4? Why is there \$2 million? I want to suggest to the hon. member that that's the start of our commitment of \$16 million for the athletes' village, which will be used by the athletes and has been requested and is necessary for the students at the University of Calgary. Whether the athletes were in it or not, the village would be built for the students at the University of Calgary. That's the start of our commitment this year, with construction to start in 1986 and to be completed in 1987. The athletes will use it for the Olympics. As soon as the Olympics are finished, the students going to the U of C will move in.

The next question was: is there any revenue derived from the golf course at Kananaskis Country? Under our agreement, developed some years ago, the first year of operation was this year, and I would like to advise the House that there is a considerable number of dollars now coming to the people of Alberta through the profits of the Kananaskis golf course.

The final question was in regard to a baseball team coming to Edmonton from a number of places across the province. The hon. member was contacted by a colleague of his, Mr. Wally Footz. I might say to the hon. member that I played ball with Mr. Footz back in 1952-53 when I was in Vermilion. He is a pretty good friend of mine, and I did talk to him on the phone. I'm giving him all the assistance I can. I also want to point out that some two months previous to that, the Member for Barrhead raised the concern with me in regard to these young players coming to Edmonton and suggested that I try to do what I can for them, and indeed we will be through any way we can. I've notified my department that if there are some temporary jobs available, we'd like to steer them in that direction and also, if they could, try to get some temporary jobs with the city of Edmonton through their parks and recreation board.

I went on to the member for Fort McMurray, and he raised the same concern in regard to urban parks. He'd like to see them expanded to other areas. I might say to the member that I would too, and we'll work towards that goal. He wanted to know if we would have provincial signage on our new capital projects in the CRC program. Definitely yes; all buildings and project developed under that program will be signed. In regard to Kananaskis 2 and 3, with the support of my colleague we'll work towards that.

The Member for Calgary Egmont raised the concern in regard to debt retirement because of the MCR projects in the past. He pointed out that we should consider a priority on retirement of old debts. I want to put it this way, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the commitment of any local government to the major cultural/recreation facilities in the past was that they all signed a dissolution agreement suggesting that if the club or association or society failed, they would pick up the tab and make sure it was continued. I would hate to suggest we would insist that debt retirement be the number one priority, because there are a lot of people in our communities who want to develop new projects. If we were to insist that debt retirement was number one, we would be in difficulty with those that wanted to expand or develop new programs and also the ones that have done

a good job in regard to having their finances in place and having no difficulty in regard to operating. So even though our program, the new CRC, community recreation/cultural grant program, provides for debt retirement based on fifty-fifty matching dollars, we will not make it a priority of this government. We will insist that they do what they think is best for their community and answer to the community for their actions.

I'm pleased he mentions the involvement of the Sport Council and anybody else in regards to junior hockey in Alberta. I have to agree with him in total that we must have some of our communities get more involved, because the hockey players of today are Olympic athletes of tomorrow.

The Member for Red Deer also expressed the concern that the urban park should be expanded to other areas, and I want to compliment him for that because I'm glad to see that he, being an MLA that's received considerable funding for an urban park, likes to share the wealth.

The Member for Calgary North West wanted me to convey her thanks to the Sport Council, and I think I will on behalf of everybody. The Sport Council has done just a tremendous job and, I'm sure, will continue to do a good job until 1988 and the Olympics are done, and then continue on thereafter.

Mr. Chairman, I believe those are the questions that were asked of me. With that I'd like to conclude.

MR. MARTIN: Just to follow up on a couple of questions, if we can try to be a little more specific in a couple of areas. I appreciate the response about the baseball team. We, too, have been helping, and I was aware that you had played baseball. Mr. Footz told me about those days. I think he said he used to win most of the games, but I'm not sure that that was true.

MR. TRYNCHY: He did or I did?

MR. MARTIN: He said he did.

In terms of the park in the north, I appreciate that the minister doesn't want to be narrowed to say specifically it's coming and there will be this amount of money. But it's been rumoured for a couple of years now; it's been raised. I want to know if it's in serious consideration at this particular time, or is it something that perhaps is in abeyance for many years in advance? I want to know how serious it is in terms of the planning, if it's in a couple of years, three years, or something that's just talked about in the future.

The second thing is that about the golf course you mentioned that the amount was a considerable amount. While we're in estimates, if the minister wouldn't mind being a little more specific than "a considerable amount", I think it might give us a better idea about what's going on. If I could follow up with those two questions from the minister's remarks.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Chairman, I thought I asked the question earlier, and I didn't hear a specific answer, in reference to the recreational areas that the minister said will not only double but triple the amount, but half the grants would be spread over two years. Could the minister be specific? Exactly how did you spread that over and will there still be that annual maintenance over 20 years? Will that be half or what?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the minister like to respond?

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the municipal rec areas, we will be bringing 30 of them on stream this year. What we'll be doing, with the support of the Provincial Treasurer, is funding them over two years. So what we received in one year last year, say, \$100,000 per municipal rec area, we will now receive the \$100,000 over two years. At the completion of construction and after we open it, they will then receive their operating funds of up to \$20,000 for 20 years. The thing that I mentioned in my opening comments was that we also will be asking whoever it is to change the type of funding so a community that wants to take \$50,000 or an MLA who wants to spread it over two areas will be allowed to do that. What we'll do is provide \$50,000 to one area and \$50,000 to another and split up to \$20,000 into \$10,000 for each area so they can continue to fund the operating end of it for the next 20 years. That's what we intend to do.

Certainly, I'm serious with regard to the park in the north. But being serious can't put me down to a timetable of when it'll be.

The reason I can't give a precise figure with regard to the golf course return is because the statement is not audited yet. According to the figures I get, it should be in excess of \$100,000. The statement will be coming to be me shortly after it's been audited. The year-end is just finished, and then we'll know.

Those are the two questions the hon. Leader of the Opposition asked. Am I serious? Yes, I am, but no timetable. And the return is in excess of \$100,000.

MR. MARTIN: If I may, I recognize that the minister is serious or he wouldn't have raised it in the Legislature. Rather than narrowing it down to a year or something, is it in active planning now? Is this a relatively high priority in the department? Are they looking at it coming in, say, in the next five years, or is it something that's basically thought about but not a high priority? I'm just trying to get a feeling for what the planning is within the department, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TRYNCHY: I can't be more definite than I have been, Mr. Chairman. Anything I do within the department is serious. Hopefully, if I get real serious, it will come on stream sooner, and if I don't, it will come on stream a little later. But we're serious.

Agreed to:

1.01 — Minister's Office	\$204,146
1.02 — Deputy Minister's Office	\$257,206
1.03 — Administrative Support	\$429,877
1.04 — Financial Administration	\$1,161,109
1.05 — Personnel Services	\$423,202
1.06 — Systems Development	\$754,788
1.07 — Public Communications	\$79,116
1.08 — Planning Secretariat	\$279,799
Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$3,589,243

2.1 — Program Support	\$1,017,661
2.2 — Financial Assistance	\$61,360,497
2.3 — Community Recreation Development	\$996,611
2.4 — Recreation Program Development	\$2,588,872
2.5 — Regional Recreation Consultation	\$2,059,594

Total Vote 2 — Recreation Development	\$68,023,235
3.1 — Operations and Maintenance	\$22,362,230
3.2 — Design and Implementation	\$5,034,701
3.3 — Parks — Reconstruction	\$6,509,000
3.4 — Parks — Construction and Redevelopment	\$200,000
Total Vote 3 — Provincial Parks	\$34,105,931
4.1 — Capital Development Coordination	\$738,149
4.2 — Alpine Venue	—
4.3 — Nordic Venue	\$10,000
4.4 — University of Calgary Venues	\$2,000,000
4.5 — Operations	\$65,265
Total Vote 4 — Support to the XV Olympic Winter Games — 1988	\$2,813,414
5.1 — Program Support	\$1,231,796
5.2 — Recreational Services	\$3,879,402
5.3 — Facility Development and Maintenance	\$4,966,529
Total Vote 5 — Kananaskis Country Management	\$10,077,727
Departmental Total	\$118,609,550

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I move that the votes be reported.

[Motion carried]

Department of Education (continued)

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, before the adjournment at 5:30 p.m. I had just started to make some remarks in response to the questions and comments that had been raised during first consideration of the estimates of the Department of Education. The overall point I was trying to make is that this is a government which is constantly looking for new and better ways to communicate with our constituents and to receive input from our constituents about the policies, the programs, and the operations of the provincial government. I had described the fact that last year, because we were concerned about education in the province and wanted the input of citizens about important educational questions, we had distributed 900,000 tabloids to every household in the province. We had followed that by commissioning a survey of public opinion about these educational questions. Then, in fact, we surveyed high school students to find out what they thought about the educational system in the province.

In line with the practice that was followed with respect to the white paper, the committee chaired by the hon. Member for Ponoka and the committee chaired by the hon. Member for St. Albert have been travelling the province holding public hearings, inviting citizens to talk to us about the review of the secondary program of studies or the review of the School Act, and have been trying to enter into a dialogue with interested Albertans.

Recently, with respect to the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards, we took the initiative of corresponding directly with every teacher in the province, approximately 33,000. It is our intention this year, I hope in the very near future, that we will establish an electronic bulletin board that will be operated by the Department of Education, so that interested Albertans, no matter where they live in the province,

if they have access to a microcomputer or a terminal will be able to correspond directly and electronically with the Minister of Education or the department and can receive response directly by the same media.

I only point to these initiatives, which have been undertaken by the government in the last 12 to 18 months, as a preface to the statement that we want to do more. As a government, in each of our departments and in each of our constituencies we are constantly looking for new and better ways of communicating with our constituents and learning from them about what is important to them, why it is important, and how they want to see certain objectives pursued. In all of this, which is meant to increase communication between the citizen and the provincial government, we do not want to forget that it is very important to encourage local decision-making. We do not want the focus to be on the citizen's relationship with the provincial government if the best decisions can and should be made locally. By and large, that's my view with respect to education.

Mr. Chairman, I get mixed signals from the members of this Assembly who happen to be members of the New Democratic Party. I'd be very interested in pursuing this with either or both of them in greater detail during the course of the estimates. I heard a cogent argument that we should provide what I would call designated or targeted funding support for small schools and small jurisdictions. I thought I was hearing that from the same member who later argued that there should be less tied funding provided to local school boards, that school boards should have more freedom, in the context, I think, of global funding or block funding, to make their own decision about whether or not they wanted to operate small schools or bus to larger schools or provide education entirely by way of the conventional school system or go into distance education, or whatever else. My problem is that I can't reconcile the plea for more global funding with the argument that in order to support small schools we should continue to provide targeted funding.

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

In the same vein, I heard an hon. member express skepticism about whether or not school board trustees would respond to the initiation to teaching proposal with intelligence and good faith. In my view, school boards will respond to the initiation to teaching proposal with both intelligence and good faith. They have been told that it is a condition of the program that they will not use the interns to replace certificated teachers. In my mind, that means that they will not use the presence of interns in their system to justify larger classes.

Mr. Chairman, the philosophy on this side of the House — this side and that side; both sides of the House — is that controls by the provincial government should be a last resort, not a first resort. Intervention should be a last resort, not a first resort. In my view, Mr. Chairman, we do not need to start off this bold new initiative by talking about what kinds of controls are necessarily placed on local school boards in order to ensure that they will do what common sense would, in any case, dictate. I'd really like to ask the hon. members whether or not they got their argument in favour of greater control by the provincial government of local school boards from Anne Hemmingway, who is a trustee in northwestern Albertan, or Betty MacArthur, who is the chairman of a school board in northwestern Alberta,

both of whom I know are prominent members of the New Democratic Party.

It is true that balance is necessary, but my own prospective is clear. As much as possible I believe that decisions should be made locally. As much as possible I believe that decisions should be made by the people who will live with the consequences of those decisions. Having said that, they are entitled to the credit when things succeed and they are entitled to live with the consequences when their decisions are not wisely made. I want to repeat that from the point of view of this government we are going to assume intelligence and good faith on the part of local trustees unless experience demonstrates to the contrary. Controls will be a last resort, not a first resort.

The question was asked about the budget for the regional offices, Mr. Chairman, why it isn't bigger. The answer is very simply that when we have limited resources, we focus them on school boards rather than on our own system. We could have provided a bigger budget for the regional offices. We would have done it at the expense of money that is being transferred to local school boards. In our judgment, Mr. Chairman, it was wiser to transfer the money to the local school boards so that they could make decisions rather than keep the money in the budget of the department for the operation of our regional offices.

A number of questions were asked about school closures. Particularly, the hon. Leader of the Opposition substantially repeated remarks he made in this Assembly last year during the estimates of the Department of Education. Perhaps he was not in the House when I responded to those same remarks, because the fact of the matter is that a number of the things he is recommending to us are in place now, were in place last year, and had been in place for a couple of years prior to that. While I don't have all my notes in front of me, I point particularly to his recommendation that the building quality restoration program should be modified so it could provide financial support to the renovation of schools for noneducational community use. I might point out to him that that was done at least two years ago; I think three years ago. I'll point to one example of which I am specifically aware, which is the renovation of St. Clare elementary junior high school in my own constituency so that one wing of the school could be used by a community day care program.

One of the hon. members said that small towns and villages are gradually beginning to die. That, Mr. Chairman, is not the case in Alberta. Nothing could be further from the truth. This government will not undertake any program or support any program which would directly or indirectly undermine the vitality of the small towns and villages in this province. Since 1972 I think it's fair to say that the population of more than 85 percent of the small towns and villages in the province has grown over the last 15 years — not declined, but grown.

Comments were made about educational finance, and I'd like to make yet another attempt to explain the reality of educational finance in this province to my hon. colleague the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Chairman, let me again say that on the basis of the most recent information that is available to the government, this province provides more financial support for education on a per capita and per pupil basis than does any other province in Canada. The most recent complete information that is available is for the calendar year 1983, and in 1983 Alberta ranked number one on both a per capita and per pupil basis in terms of support for basis education.

Because the hon. member knows that that is the case, he chooses to argue on a different ground. He makes his argument on the basis of effort, noting quite rightly that in terms of effort we rank number seven or eight among the provinces of Canada. The reason that our effort is relatively less for education is precisely that it is relatively greater for many other significant social service programs. There is no province in Canada whose health care program can match Alberta's. We put effort into providing health care that is unequaled in Canada, and we provide it for our citizens. There is no other province in Canada that has a widows' pension as is found in Alberta, and that represents effort by the provincial government on behalf of the citizens of the province. There is no other province in Canada that has a program that begins to match the major cultural/recreation facility program in terms of the extent of its positive impact on communities throughout the province from one end to the other. That program represents effort by the government of Alberta on behalf of the people of the province. There is no other province in Canada that has agricultural assistance programs such as are found in this province. That represents effort by the government of Alberta on behalf of the people of the province. Mr. Chairman, the list could go on and on and on.

The fact of the matter is that when you look at that total and when you appreciate the variety and the extent of the people programs that are offered in this province and not in any other province in Canada, it is true that compared to the range of those programs, our effort for education is less than in other provinces. But is the hon. member arguing that we should give more for education and eliminate the widows' pension? Is he arguing that we should give more for education and eliminate the major cultural/recreation facility program? Is he arguing that we should give more for education and eliminate the senior citizens' housing programs or the nursing home programs or the auxiliary hospital programs or the other extended care programs? I think not.

The government has made a decision that its support for education is significant and that in the context of all the people service programs we want to offer to the citizens of Alberta, our support is balanced and appropriate. I am sure we are all prepared to defend that record on the hustings in any constituency in the province.

MR. MARTIN: You'll get your chance, Dave.

MR. KING: To everything there is a season.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, that if the hon. member argued that we should increase our support for education by 5 percent or 25 percent or 50 percent, he could not give this House any assurance and he could not give the general population any assurance whatsoever that the quality of education offered to any student in grade 1, grade 6, or grade 8 would be 5 percent better or 25 percent better or 50 percent better than at the present time. We have reached the point in educational finance where we should, first of all, try to ensure that we are making the best use of the resources currently available to us before we argue for more resources.

Mr. Chairman, to be able to demonstrate to the people of this province that we are making the best possible use of the resources currently available to us, we have to take a new approach to evaluating education. That's what we began last year with the new management and finance plan. In another two, three, or four years we will be able to

show the people of Alberta what is happening in education, and we'll be able to show them on the basis of the outcome of our educational effort. We will not be limited to arguing that because we've got X number of teachers or Y number of square metres of space, we have a good educational system.

The suggestion was made this afternoon that one way or another more money is the only solution to the challenges facing education. It was suggested that to get more money, we could raise the property taxes or we could expand the use of user fees or we could cut back on services or we could put in more provincial government funds. I find it a very telling point that a fifth option was not listed. Yet surely it is possible to argue that one way of improving the system is by making more efficient use of existing resources. Maybe we should make more efficient use of existing resources before we demand more from the people of the province.

Let me give only two illustrations of what I mean. There is a fairly small school board in the province which, a few years ago, looked ahead and saw that its incumbent superintendent was shortly going to be retiring. The man ran the system with the help of a secretary-treasurer and office staff of the administration building; basically, though, a two-man head office. The board, recognizing that they would shortly have to appoint a successor to this man when he retired, decided that they would anticipate the problem and deal with it on a carefully planned basis. So they established three new executive positions, three assistant superintendencies. They hired three assistant superintendents and said to each one of them, "We're going to watch your performance for the next two or three years, and the one of you that performs best is going to succeed the incumbent when he retired." The cost of these three new executive positions was about \$150,000 for that school board. And do you know, the year after they made that decision, they had a deficit of \$150,000. They dealt with the deficit by laying off all the teacher aides in their system, the para-professionals who help the teacher in the classroom. When parents complained about that, the board suggested: "Talk to your M.L.A. Talk to the Minister of Education, because the Minister of Education is not providing enough money for our educational system."

Let me give you one other example, of a school board that gave a sabbatical to a senior administrator, who was probably earning something in excess of \$50,000 a year. While the senior administrator was on sabbatical, his assistant looked after all his responsibilities without any overtime. He apparently handled the job very, very capably. This board, for the year that one of their executive staff was on sabbatical, basically didn't know he was gone. But when he came back there was work for him to do. His position was there vacant, and he came slotted right back into that position.

Mr. Chairman, there are other anecdotes I could offer, and I don't think I need to. The point I am making is that education is generously funded in this province, school boards are responsible for the decisions they make, and I believe it is possible for school boards to operate a first-class educational system in this province on the basis of the financial support they currently receive from their local property tax payers and from the General Revenue Fund of the province. I do not accept the argument that there needs to be more for education at the present time.

Questions were asked about the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards, the Teaching Profession Act, and pro-

fessionalism generally. I think it is important, Mr. Chairman, to make a brief introductory remark about the nature of professional legislation. Professional legislation is not a gift that the Legislative Assembly or the people of Alberta give to any professional group in the province. It is not a gift that we give to teachers. It is not a gift that we give to doctors, lawyers, architects, or engineers. It is in the nature of a bargain. It is in the nature of a social contract between the community and the members of the profession. The community says to the profession: you are doing something that is important to us, something that is important to our community of interest. You are in a good position to police the practice of your profession, and it is vitally important to us that the practice of the profession should be adequately policed. It is vitally important to the community that good standards should be established and maintained. So we will enter into a mutual understanding. We will give you responsibility for the practice of your profession, and that responsibility cuts both ways. It gives some rights, and it conveys a certain onus which you must discharge on behalf of the community.

It is not my job to go to the Alberta Teachers' Association and say: "Well, what would you like in legislation? You tell us what you want, and we will be delighted to give it to you on a silver platter." It is my responsibility to go to the Alberta Teachers' Association and say to them: "What vital interests do you consider are involved in a Teaching Profession Act? Let me tell you what vital interests I believe are involved in a Teaching Profession Act, on behalf of 450,000 students and 2.3 million citizens of the province." It is the responsibility of the ATA and the Minister of Education to sit down and hammer out a bargain that effectively represents and protects the interests of not only the teachers but all the citizens of the province as well. Until we can strike a bargain that is mutually beneficial, mutually protective, and mutually advantageous, there will not be an agreement. That must be clearly understood.

The question is asked in this regard: why does the Alberta School Trustees' Association have any say about this Teaching Profession Act? The answer is simple. They have a say because they are the trustees of the interests of the children and the community. No one has ever suggested that the Alberta School Trustees' Association has a blanket veto over a new Teaching Profession Act. That is not the case; it has never been suggested. But it is equally true that this government simply would not be wise to introduce a new Teaching Profession Act in which the Alberta School Trustees' Association felt that the vital interests of the local community were not adequately protected. We didn't introduce a Nursing Profession Act in this Assembly without having discussions with the Alberta Hospital Association. We didn't introduce a Dental Profession Act without having discussions with the College of Physicians and Surgeons. The development of new professional legislation is not a bilateral process of negotiation that excludes everybody else except the professional group and the government. The development of new professional legislation for any professional group is a multilateral negotiating process.

With that as background, let me say one more time that I have always preferred to resolve a number of significant issues that affect teachers in the context of a new Teaching Profession Act. I have always preferred that course; it is the course I prefer today. I'm always looking for progress in the negotiation of a new Teaching Profession Act. But I have reached the point of saying that in the absence of progress along that avenue, I am not prepared to let certain significant issues sit on the back burner any longer.

I get letters from parents who are concerned about the way a child is treated in a classroom. I get letters of inquiry about the competence of a very, very small number of teachers in this province. Is there anyone who suggests that after six years of effort we should simply carry on setting those things aside and saying, "It's too bad we can't deal with this particular case, but perhaps in six months or a year or in three years we will have the means in place, the new Teaching Profession Act, that will allow us to deal with the successor to this case or the successor 10 times removed"?

The Council on Alberta Teaching Standards will operate, and there is nothing in its operation that will prevent discussion about a new Teaching Profession Act. There is nothing in its operation that will preclude us from coming to an agreement about a new Teaching Profession Act if the basis for an equitable agreement is available. There is nothing in the operation of the council that will detract one iota from the current operations or responsibilities of the Alberta Teachers' Association, and I cannot repeat that often enough or strongly enough.

A number of questions were asked about the initiation to teaching project. Let me reiterate a point I made earlier, that in this project we do not want the interns to be used as teacher aides and we do not want them to be used as substitute teachers. In the background documentation that has been provided to all interested students, and to the school boards in the province as well, I believe we have made that point abundantly clear. The phrase "recently graduated" means that they have graduated in the last 18 months; that is, basically they graduated in the fall convocation of 1983 or later. Evaluation is going to be a joint responsibility involving the teachers and the Alberta Teachers' Association, the school boards, and the Department of Education.

The activities of interns will be conducted under the supervision of a team of teachers. The interns will not relate to an individual teacher in the school. They will relate to a small team, partly because we want them to learn from more than one good role model. We don't want them relating exclusively to one teacher, because while that one teacher undoubtedly has some strengths, there are undoubtedly weaknesses as well. So the interns will not relate to one teacher; they will relate to a small team in the school, and the activities will be conducted under the oversight of that team. It's hard to be specific about what those activities will be except to say that, first of all, the model will be developed by the principal and the school jurisdiction. The detail of it will be worked out between the intern and the team, and will vary according to the needs and the circumstances.

Questions were asked about the review of the School Act. It is our expectation that a draft of the School Act will be available for the public this fall. It will sit over the winter so the public can consider it carefully and respond to the government. I am hopeful that the School Act will be introduced again to the Legislature in the spring of 1986 and, depending upon the circumstances in 1986, adopted in the Assembly, but I would expect proclamation to follow about a year behind the adoption of the Act. After it is adopted in the Assembly, it may take a year for the necessary organizational and operational changes to be made so that we can successfully implement it.

I should have said that a question was also asked about the appointment of people to the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards. The deadline for receiving nominations is May

10. Of course, I should take this opportunity to invite my interested colleagues and indeed any of the citizens of the province to nominate people to serve on the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards. I hope to receive those nominations by May 10. We'll then take three or four weeks to evaluate all the nominations we receive. I will want to talk to prospective appointees to the council, and I hope that I'll make the appointments the last week in May or the first week in June. I'd like the council to have two or three organizational meetings in June and July, perhaps in August as well. I would really like to see the council up and running on September 1, so that it can begin to discharge its responsibilities at that time.

Let me go back to the initiation to teaching project for just a moment and acknowledge, in response to someone who asked this question, that it is indeed a prototype of an internship. It is not a true internship. It's not universally available to new graduates of faculties of education, and it is not a requirement of certification that anyone go through the internship proposal. So in those two respects it is not a true internship. Nevertheless, we believe we will get a good experience from the two years of operation, upon which experience we hope to be able to make a decision about whether or not the continued operation and the universal application of an internship would be the best way to invest X number of dollars for the greatest improvement to the educational system.

My colleague the hon. Leader of the Opposition suggested that it was problematic whether or not this was a good way to invest money or should we have invested it in some other aspect of the educational system. That may be. It's precisely in order to answer that question that we have made the decision to operate the project for two years. If at the end of two years evaluation suggests that the money would be better invested in another aspect of the educational system, then of course that is the decision we will make. But clearly, the research suggests that the greatest, single thing that can be done to improve education in any system is to improve the quality of the preparation teachers receive before they actually go into the classroom.

Questions were asked about native education, and I'd like to advise the members of the committee that the so-called Sabey committee, which is currently meeting with interested groups across the province, will be reporting to me in June with some recommendations that would constitute the basis for a policy decision that would be made by the government thereafter. So I suggest to members this evening that the government will probably be making decisions about a policy for native education in the period June, July, and August. Clearly, we will follow our policy decisions with certain decisions about the development of programs, the development of materials, and the development of methods of teacher preparation.

The community school program was raised, and I'd like to advise members that the community schools which will receive designation as a result of this budget include the Beiseker school in the Rocky View school division, the Bon Accord school in the Sturgeon school division, the Dr. Elliott school in Three Hills, the Gilbert Paterson school in Lethbridge, the Grassland school in the county of Athabasca, the Millarville school in Foothills, and the Win Ferguson school in the county of Strathcona. All of those schools have been advised that they are to be designated and to receive financial support as a result of this budget.

The reaction to the management finance plan, Mr. Chairman, has been generally very positive. We have cer-

tainly had some specific criticisms expressed to us and some specific concerns described, but overall I would say that the response to the implementation of the management finance plan has been overwhelmingly positive. Trustees, administrators, and teachers are very supportive of the idea that the provincial government will transfer money to school boards with far fewer strings attached in the expectation that, for their part, school boards will develop carefully thought out policies, guidelines, and procedures and then will be responsible for the effective use of their resources in the course of operating programs.

Mr. Chairman, I have the unhappy feeling that I have neglected a few of the questions of some of the members, and perhaps they would like to jump to their feet after I sit down. If that doesn't happen, I'll go through *Hansard* and reread the contributions of all of my hon. colleagues and respond to some of them directly.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, I thought I was through before the Minister of Education got up, but his oratory was so great that he tempted me, and now I'm up on my feet.

There are a few things he did miss; one that I raised. It seems to me that that's precisely the sort of arrogance about everything being the best in the province that is frustrating people, not only the opposition but people generally. You can argue and quibble about the figures, but the point is that the minister sent out his own task force to look at educational finance. It wasn't the opposition that sent them out; it wasn't the ATA; it wasn't the trustees' association; it was the minister.

The fact remains that they indicated there are some serious problems in educational finance. The minister is well aware of that. There are some things we agree with, but the basic thrust of that document indicated how educational finance had been going down and more was being put on the property tax payer. Now, here in the House the minister debated that. I was going by his own task force. Obviously, he doesn't agree with that graph. But the point is that they said it was a serious and ongoing problem. Whereas at one point in the early '70s, Mr. Chairman, 80 percent of educational finance had been picked up by the province, that is down to less than 70 percent now. Whether the minister agrees or not, they recommended that we go back to something like 85 percent. The minister said that this isn't necessary, that everything is the best and the greatest in the province. The rhetoric is not good enough. This was a serious recommendation made by his own task force. Rather than just smugly say that it's the best per capita and this and that ...

Whether they were good in the '70s or you could say they were too good or whatever, the reality for people out there is that there has been a gradual deterioration. The minister knows full well what I meant. I said school boards were faced with some alternatives. I wasn't advocating any one of them. But if the provincial contribution is not keeping up, as is true, with the '70s, the fact remains that they're looking at alternatives. They have three major alternatives. The minister can say more efficient use of resources, and I'll come to that. Of course. We hope everybody would use their resources efficiently. But the fact remains that local boards have three alternatives when making decisions. One of them, of course, is to cut back in terms of the quality of education. If the minister feels there's a lot of fat there, I wish he would show them how to do it, because

he must be smarter than the people out there. They are legitimately grappling with their budgets. The other point is user fees. We talked about that. Maybe the minister doesn't like the term. He can use whatever term he likes. The fact is that that could be in some difficulty, but that proliferated somewhat. Of course, the third is property tax, and that has gone up. Those are the alternatives.

MRS. CRIPPS: Come on, Ray. We had to buy our own books when I went to school.

MR. MARTIN: The backbenchers may not like it, but this is the reality people are facing.

The minister says they can use resources more efficiently, and he gave a couple of examples. At one time he talks about boards making decisions; next he's making fun of them and the decisions they make. Talking about use of resources, this is coming from a government that had a \$1.2 billion over-run in their capital heritage projects. This is the last government that should be preaching to people about how they use their resources. These anecdotes we could all use.

We talked about school closures. The fact remains and the point I was trying to make at the time is that it's ongoing. It's going to be an ongoing problem. So he knows one school that did something. Good; I'm glad they did. It's probably a good thing that they did. But the point, Mr. Chairman, is that this is not happening in any significant way in the province. The minister is, after all, the Minister of Education.

The other point he talks about is professionalism. This is interesting; I think we'd all agree. I certainly worked with this a lot, where we ran into bad teachers — trying to help them and trying to figure out what to do in the school system. I've worked with that personally, Mr. Chairman, and it's an actual fact. The point we make, though, is that this is not going to solve that. If the minister believes that this is going to somehow solve that, then he's just wrong. He hasn't been in the school system very long. The point that everybody is talking about — maybe the ATA over-reacted. He may say that to Mr. Ghitter's recommendation. But the fact is, and I quote:

The Minister will appoint six currently certified teachers. The Alberta Teachers' Association will be invited to nominate ... one ...

Then we go through the other ones. The fact is that under a so-called profession, if he wants to call it that, the minister still has the control. It's clear with those numbers. That's what Mr. Ghitter was talking about, as the minister is well aware. Is that professionalism?

When I raised the code of ethics and got everybody uptight, we were told at that time that we shouldn't have a code of ethics; we can trust all the members. The next time we're trying government control on one group. That's the reality of it. If the minister thinks this is going to work and that somehow he's come up with the magic answer, all he's done — and that's the point I'm trying to make — is create a lot of friction. Surely he knows that that friction will carry over into the classroom. Nobody wants it there, not even the minister. He can say he went on for six years. Maybe he did; I don't know all the ins and outs. Certainly he would agree that the ATA has a different version about it than he does. But the point I'm making is that this is not going to work. It's certainly against the intent of the other professions. We seem to be moving away from government control in other areas. I suggest

that this is government control of the worse kind. This is Big Brother, government control and government intervention in the worst possible way, from a government that talks about not having government control.

We can skip over these things, we can be flippant about it, or we can say that I'm un-Albertan because I happen to disagree with the minister. But the fact is that there are a lot of people out there that are un-Albertan, and they're looking for some answers. It's not good enough, Mr. Chairman, to sort of flip through and say that the criticisms aren't valid. People are legitimately trying to grapple. The minister has an important department; no doubt about it. I would be the last one to say that there haven't been some good things happen in the Department of Education, because I was there. But I'm saying to the minister that the people that are concerned are sincerely raising issues with him. They don't feel they're getting a hearing about it. As I said, it's not good enough to go through and make these points.

I can tell you, for example, of a personal viewpoint. If you want, you can argue whether this is correct or not, but in high schools in Calgary at one time there was an 80-minute spare for every teacher. Some perhaps didn't need it, but anybody knows that if English teachers are going to do the job teaching English, there's a lot of correcting. I can tell you that's not the case there now. At best it's 4-3. To say that these things are not occurring is not the reality of what's going on.

MRS. CRIPPS: [Inaudible] elementary teachers.

MR. MARTIN: Elementary teachers have had it bad for a long time; there's no doubt about that. But that doesn't mean that everybody should have a bad situation.

Mr. Chairman, I'm not saying throw money at everything. Of course we need quality programs, of course we need to evaluate, and of course we want the best possible teachers. Nobody argues that, least of all me. But to say that money doesn't have any bearing on the quality of people you get and the quality of programs and to say that class sizes don't have any bearing on how good the teaching is, is just not the case. People who have been in the classroom know that.

So, Mr. Chairman, I conclude by saying to the minister, in all honesty, that I think we should take a serious look at some of these things and not be defensive about it. When people come and have criticism, as even Mr. Ghitter, his Conservative colleague, had criticism, it's not that they are enemies. It's that they believe that there is a mistake being made. Maybe from time to time it doesn't hurt to admit that mistake. But rhetoric, frankly, is not going to solve it. You have to look at the reality. That's the point I'd like to make.

MR. PAPROSKI: I, too, will be brief. As an educator I think I would be remiss, Mr. Chairman, in not entering this debate briefly. I want to applaud, first of all, the minister on his many initiatives in education, initiatives that as far as I'm concerned have shown him not to be a fence-sitter but a person who believes in students and in positive and excellent pedagogy.

While I'm on my feet, though, I also want to applaud the educators in this province. In this debate there has been little applause for those people who are on the front lines. I know the vast, vast majority of them care about their students. They are professional in their approaches to learn-

ing. They believe in involving other professionals and parents and, I know, welcome that. They are concerned about the future of their profession, and they look at their profession as one of the most important in society. I applaud their efforts for our future and, indeed, our children.

Mr. Chairman, many of my questions have already been answered, but I have a few I'd like to pose to the minister. The first deals with the subprofession in education, and that is educational psychologists or counsellors. I know that in many briefs coming from the minister's department, he has underlined the need for expansion of this profession in our schools. I'd like to ask the minister if he could comment on any new initiatives that might be forthcoming. There is a growing need in our schools to have counsellors to deal with students' problems. The feedback I have received from many school jurisdictions is that, yes, it's true, it's great, but finances are difficult. Does the minister or the department have any initiatives for the future that might assist us in having people brought to our particular school jurisdictions?

A second question deals with the secondary review. No question; it is a very, very positive step. My concern, however, and I suppose this is a little bit of a caution flag, is that we don't rush into it. There are only so many hours in the day. I have heard concerns from parents, educators, and students of rumours floating around that this will be cut or that will be cut or this will be expanded. I think the perception out there is that, yes, there are major changes that are required, but with caution, please.

The third area of concern deals with the soaring costs of utilities in school jurisdictions. I wonder if the minister has considered any new initiatives that might be possible to assist school jurisdictions in dealing with these soaring costs. They seem to be a larger and larger area that have to be dealt with annually. I know some trustees have expressed the concern to me that they are escalating to such a great extent that they are having difficulty meeting these payments.

In the review of the School Act, I hope there will be consideration of separate trustee elections. I believe it's time that trustees got out to the front lines when they run for election. I know that the negative could be that this is creating a new bureaucracy and another election, and there's going to be more expense. After all, the trustees handle multimillions of dollars of our funds every year. I really wonder when it comes to an election if the people of the province have sufficient time and the opportunity to discuss with those trustees seeking election. Perhaps we can look at this, and I would be optimistic if it could go forward.

The last point I'd like to make deals with grade 9 departmental exams. I wonder if the minister has received any feedback from his secondary review panel as well as letters from the public indicating that indeed these should be instituted. I know there is a growing interest in them, and I wonder if the minister can comment on those points. Thank you.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, if I could make a few brief remarks now and try to bring stage 1 of this consideration to a conclusion and then on another occasion come back and respond to some of the questions that have been asked this evening.

First, let me say that I think some words have been put in my mouth that I don't feel comfortable having there. There's absolutely no question that all kinds of resources are required for a good educational system, certainly including money. I really don't think the hon. member has ever

heard me say that money is unnecessary. I only make the point that the budget of the Department of Education this year has increased more than the province's budget on a percentage basis. The transfer to school boards is 6.9 percent. So the question is: what would satisfy the hon. member or perhaps many of the other people he represents? Should it have been 7.5 percent or should it have been 10 percent or 15 percent, and on what basis would he argue that? This is a community which has gone through very difficult times. For whatever reason and without debating those reasons, that's a reality. It is a community that is trying to find its feet. I only say that I believe a 6.9 percent transfer to school boards is reasonable and, I think, generous in light of the conditions that many people have to live with in the province. At a certain point we can't argue for yet more. We've got to say: "All right, this is what we've got. We will do the best we can with what we've got, and we'll try to make improvements."

I really didn't mean to suggest to the hon. member that I was making fun of school boards with the two anecdotes I cited. I'm making the point that I can't do anything better than to offer anecdotes like that, because I do not believe it is my responsibility to go through the budget of 150 school boards, line by line, and tell them how to do their job. I don't make it my business to review those budgets line by line. I can only offer anecdotes, and I only mean to suggest that I think they demonstrate that it is always possible to be a more careful steward of the resources you have. That's not making fun of school boards, for whom I have a lot of respect.

I sometimes feel that I'm damned if I do and I'm damned if I don't. I've given speeches in some halls to some groups, and if I criticize the school system one bit, they say I am not doing the job I should do as Minister of Education. Here I stand up, and I have apparently left the impression that I think the entire system is perfect, and so I'm being criticized. Let me assure the hon. member that I don't believe the entire system is perfect. I see lots of room for improvement in what we do with respect to education in this province. But I do think it is important to say that in my view we have in this province the best educational system in North America. I don't apologize for saying that. But if the hon. member is concerned that from that I have concluded our system is perfect, then let me assure him I have not concluded that our system is perfect. I do think there's lots of room for improvement. I think it is important that education should get criticism in this province, but I hope it is always constructive criticism and loving criticism, and certainly that's what it gets from me.

The only reason I offered the example of St. Clare elementary and junior high school was not to suggest that one school in the province has actually done as the hon. member suggested. I cited the example to say that a provincial government program to support that kind of initiative by local school boards has been available and was available before the hon. member made the suggestion in this House last year.

Finally, I want to try one more time with a brief comment about the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards. I'd like to read from the *ATA News* of February 25, 1985, which includes a summary of the decisions made by provincial executive council, and that's basically the executive committee of the ATA, the decision-making body other than annual representative assembly. At their meeting of February 1 and 2, provincial executive council made a number of decisions, one of which is point 13: authorized the president

to tell the Minister of Education that the association is not prepared at this time to reopen negotiations on a total revision of the Teaching Profession Act.

I can only say again that I would prefer that the statute in this province gave the members of the profession responsibility for certification and decertification and the adjudication of competence. That's what I would prefer, but at the moment the existing law doesn't do that. At the moment the Minister of Education is responsible for certification, decertification, and the adjudication of competence. You cannot transfer that responsibility from the minister to the teachers except by changing the statute law. We can wish for it all we want, but it can't be done except by changing the law. So the question is: does the hon. member propose that we change the Teaching Profession Act in this province over the strenuous objection of the Alberta Teachers' Association? Is he proposing ...

MR. MARTIN: It wasn't over just that one issue.

MR. KING: The point is that we have considered a Teaching Profession Act four times — in 1981, in the spring of 1984, in the fall of 1984, and in the winter of 1985 — and we have four times been unsuccessful. The minister cannot simply say, "Notwithstanding the law, I'm going to turn all this over to you or you or you." The minister must discharge his responsibilities as they exist in the current law. That has to be the case until the law is changed. The ATA has said no. Is the hon. member suggesting that we should ride roughshod over the expressed position of the Alberta Teachers' Association? If he is not, what does he have to suggest except that the minister should do the best he can with the law as it is and keep on working for a new Teaching Profession Act? With respect, that's where I think we are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1, departmental ...

MR. MARTIN: No, I'm not prepared to vote on these things yet, because I think it's an interesting debate that we should continue. I think the Member for Edmonton Kingsway also raised some issues. There was some other one I talked about that the minister did. I wanted to know about private education and his thoughts there, from the two different areas. There were a few follow-ups on the

council that I for one — I don't know the wishes of the House on this.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, if I could, I was sort of hopeful that with those remarks I just made, we might rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again. That would give me an opportunity to review the *Hansard* of this afternoon and also get some information that would respond to questions raised this evening.

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the following resolutions and reports as follows.

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1986, sums not exceeding the following for the Department of Transportation: \$16,049,318 for departmental support services, \$673,057,658 for construction and maintenance of highways, \$9,645,000 for construction and operation of rail systems, \$9,422,650 for construction and maintenance of airport facilities, \$15,644,520 for specialized transportation services, \$159,399,905 for urban transportation financial assistance.

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1986, sums not exceeding the following for the Department of Recreation and Parks: \$3,589,243 for departmental support services, \$68,023,235 for recreation development, \$34,105,931 for provincial parks, \$2,813,414 for support to the XV Olympic winter games — 1988, \$10,077,727 for Kananaskis Country management.

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

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 10:25 p.m. on motion, the House adjourned to Tuesday at 2:30 p.m.]