

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Tuesday, April 12, 1988 2:30 p.m.**
 Date: 88/04/12

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our Father, keep us mindful of the special and unique opportunity we have to work for our constituents and our province, and in that work give us strength and wisdom.

Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 229****An Act to Provide for Equal Pay
for Work of Equal Value**

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, I request leave today to introduce a Bill, being An Act to Provide for Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value.

[Leave granted; Bill 229 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report of Lethbridge Community College.

MISS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report of the Consumer and Corporate Affairs department for the year 1986-87.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce 15 students who are taking courses at the Grant MacEwan College at the Jasper Place campus. The students are taking a course entitled Understanding Government. I want to assure them all that we in the Legislative Assembly are constantly increasing our understanding of government all the while, so I want to assure them that they're not alone. They are accompanied by their teacher, a former alderman from our fine city of Edmonton, Mr. Percy Wickman, and I would ask them all to receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to have two very special introductions to do. First of all, I'd like to introduce someone who is well known to this Assembly and particularly in Calgary as a very tireless worker on behalf of her constituents and Calgarians in general. This lady is chairman of the community services committee for the city of Calgary and is, of course, Alderman Barb Scott. Barb, would you stand and receive the recognition of the House.

Also, Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce the

first group of students from the Three Hills constituency. They are 33 students from a grade 9 class at Prairie junior high school. Mr. Jake Paetkau has tirelessly come forward each year with his group of students to impress upon them the functions of government as well as to let them have a little enjoyment here in the city of Edmonton. I understand they're going to the West Edmonton Mall, which is one place the member hasn't been to. I'd like them to rise, along with Mr. Paetkau and Mrs. Donna Brown, to receive the warm welcome of the House.

MR. STRONG: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, a group of 38 grade 6 students from the school of Wild Rose, located in the beautiful city of St. Albert. They're seated in the public gallery, and they're accompanied by Miss Juliet Rush, Miss Patricia Lemiski, and Mr. Tony Sware. I'd ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

MS MJOLNESS: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, 22 grade 6 students from the St. Lucy school in the constituency of Edmonton-Calder. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Dale Dvorack. They are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of meeting 17 lively students this afternoon from the Bellevue elementary school, located in the riding of Edmonton-Highlands. They are grades 5 and 6 students, accompanied today by their teacher Mr. Allan Osadchy and moms Mrs. Druar and Mrs. LeClerc.

We had a grand time downstairs in my office and in the rotunda, and I know we're going to have a grand time in the House today. I ask all members to join me in asking them to rise and in welcoming them.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**Regulation of Financial Institutions**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Apparently, setting up the Code investigation prevents the opposition from questioning the Premier about the government's bungling of the Principal affair. There's nothing to say that this couldn't happen again in the future, especially with this government. My question: will the Premier then clarify what action the government has taken subsequent to the Code investigation to clean up the regulatory system in Alberta?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, those responsibilities fall with the Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in the House last fall, it is our intention to bring forward several pieces of legislation which I think will deal with a variety of the problems which are found not just in Alberta's regulations and legislation but in a review of the legislation across Canada. Significant among those two pieces of legislation, depending on the time before us, would be, first of all, the credit union legislation, an Act which has not been reviewed or changed since 1938. It is also my intention, if the cadence of the House and the time of the House permits, to deal with the introduction of trust company

legislation.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, specifically, then, to either the Premier or the Treasurer. I want to know specifically what changes the government is going to make to make sure that never, ever again will friends of the government be allowed to sell investment contracts which are not worth what people paid for them.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would certainly like to give that commitment, but I think it's perhaps beyond the range of the government and certainly beyond the range of most people to give that kind of a never, never commitment. It is sincerely our hope that the kinds of strengthening and new kinds of legislation which I referred to would deal with the fundamental problems.

It still leaves us the question of dealing with the contract legislation. I think it's fair to say that is troublesome to us as well. Other provinces have attempted to deal with that legislation by a variety of means. I think you'll see, Mr. Speaker, that the B. C. government will make some adjustments in its spring session. I think it would be a touch pre-emptive if we were to deal with the contract legislation before the Code inquiry is completed; nonetheless, a full review is under way. I think the Premier indicated when we announced the Code inquiry that the government was directing its attention to the regulatory side, and we are carrying out that responsibility.

MR. MARTIN: Well, specifically, Mr. Speaker, if I may say so, we didn't have to wait for the Code inquiry. Almost everybody in Alberta knows something's wrong, so clearly at this point the government's doing nothing. My question then to the Treasurer: what action has the Treasurer taken to prevent in the future crass political motives on the part of cabinet ministers interfering with the regulatory process in a way which may harm the public?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that is certainly an objectionable statement for the member to make. There's very little evidence; in fact, there's no evidence that that is the case. But if there is anything that the government is at fault with with respect to the Principal Group, if that's the point of reference the member makes, obviously Mr. Code will take that under his consideration. But I think it is in fact tragic and perhaps slightly out of order for the member, before Mr. Code has had an opportunity to come down to a conclusion, to make any kind of a conclusion himself.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, what's objectionable is that a lot of innocent people lost their savings in a lot of cases in the past. That's objectionable.

Rather than him being defensive about it -- we've been told that the government was told to clean up their regulatory processes in the past. Now, in the future -- my question is to the Treasurer -- does the Treasurer not worry that if something isn't done, if we're going to sit and wait and wait and wait, that we are going to lose our regulatory industry, our Alberta financial base? We're talking about diversification. What are they doing about it?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, I think that on a comparison basis -- and I'll skip over any allusions he made with respect to the efficacy of this government. But with

respect to the process itself, other provinces in fact have looked to Alberta as the guide. Now, I know we have gone through the failure of three financial institutions. Those have been fully investigated. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. JOHNSTON: We're doing everything we can to learn from those failures, Mr. Speaker. It's not a question of being defensive. It's a question of trying to work with what the regulators have suggested, deal with the inquiry, and accept advice from all those who are unfortunately touched by this sad experience we've gone through.

Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, it should be known that we do have significant financial strength in this province, institutions which are unique to the province of Alberta and have been admired by others, including the Treasury Branch, which this year is celebrating its 50th year. I mentioned already the strengthening of the credit unions, which provide financial services to over 500, 000 Albertans. They know the importance of that institution, and they know this province came to their assistance to make it work. Moreover, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister.
Supplementary, Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is also to the Provincial Treasurer. There are a beleaguered group of investors who have been completely forgotten by this government, with Battleford Mortgage. Will the Treasurer put up just a small amount of the money -- the legal fees -- compared to what he's already done for the Code enterprise, to help these investors, all good Albertans who put their money in what they thought was a safe government-supervised corporation? Will the Treasurer put up the money to help their legal costs?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, that action has already been, I believe, before a higher court in Saskatchewan, which one I'm not too sure, but it has been to Saskatchewan, and that court in fact indicated that there was no wrongdoing on behalf of the regulators there.

It's not our responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to provide assistance to every company that goes bankrupt. It's unfortunate, but our unique contribution with respect to Principal is just that.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

Premier's Travel

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, subsequent to yesterday's exchange with the Premier, I happened to recall being in the airports and filling out chits for the airlines when I'm flying economy class, whereby I can volunteer to give up my seat if necessary, and they'll give me a bonus if I do that so that somebody in emergency can hop on my seat. I wonder if the Premier considered trying that route or if his office tried that route when he needed to come home on Easter weekend, if his office asked any airlines to access that sort of bonus replacement system.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is now asking questions about my private, personal life, and I have no intent of answering it.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, the minister said in the House yesterday his office was instructed to inquire as to whether or not there were seats available.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, does the Premier now not acknowledge that an average Albertan wouldn't have access to the kind of flight that he requested and acquired? Does he not acknowledge that this is some special treatment?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if this is in some way related to my responsibilities as Premier, but I might say this: the government at times has provided flights for Albertans when they need help. I think it's a characteristic of Albertans that when somebody needs help on an emergency basis, we try to help one another.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, that wasn't the question.

I wonder if the Premier would like to answer at least one of the series of questions. Does he not understand that he's in a position sort of like Caesar's wife? He doesn't just have to be above reproach; he has to be seen to be above reproach.

MR. SPEAKER: And the next question is?

MS BARRETT: To the Premier who doesn't answer questions any more.

MR. SPEAKER: It's inappropriate.

MS BARRETT: Inappropriate? It has nothing to do with . . .

MR. SPEAKER: It's inappropriate to comment about lack of answers being given, in *Beauchesne*.

MS BARRETT: Fair enough. The record will show it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if the Premier hasn't found a way to pay NOVA -- and I'm sure he can -- in the last 24 hours, will he at least do the honourable thing and make a donation, say, to the Food Bank in Edmonton of the approximate equivalent value of that flight?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I consider that suggestion absolute foolishness.

MR. DAY: Can the Premier, in light of the fact that an airplane flight helping a Premier in distress seems to be a shocking outrage to the opposition, give direction to a private member like myself, whether it would be permissible for me to take, for instance, an automobile ride with a private businessman from Red Deer to Edmonton or even a ride in a private Cessna from Red Deer to Edmonton?

MR. SPEAKER: Westlock-Sturgeon, main question.

MR. TAYLOR: No, it's not the main question, Mr. Speaker. It's a supplementary. I had expected he was going to answer the Red Deer-North one.

MR. SPEAKER: What is the question, please?

MR. TAYLOR: The question is: in view of the rhubarb you've sort of created or precipitated, Mr. Premier, would you not go back to the drawing board or have some of those leprechauns you have on the front bench there go back to the drawing board and prepare a set of regulations that would govern taking free transportation, whether it's in a car or a wheelbarrow or in the NOVA plane?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I would never try and come up with regulations that would prevent an Albertan from helping another Albertan. I think that's a foolish suggestion from the hon. member and an indication of trying to play cheap political games with this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, main question.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. I don't usually get a chance to get back at the Premier. He always saves the cheap shot till my last question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member.

Contraceptive Counseling

MR. TAYLOR: But this time I will direct my question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister of health. As you know, this government last year stopped medicare funding of any doctors' billings for patient visits which were solely for obtaining birth control information or birth control counseling. However, at last week-end's conference it was reported by Dr. Anne Reid, very closely associated to the minister's seatmate there, that Mr. Moore will now, in fact, let doctors bill medicare. They'll not only bill for it; they'll get paid. The question, Mr. Speaker, is: when a patient goes to a doctor solely for birth control counseling that is separate from an annual checkup or other regular visit, will the doctor be allowed to bill health care and be paid?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I've indicated on numerous occasions in the Legislature that there is a number of other opportunities for doctors to be able to bill the health care insurance plan for contraceptive counseling. The fee schedule is quite a detailed one, which most medical practitioners are well aware of. I could go into it at some length, but perhaps it would just suffice to say that there is one general fee schedule code, called an A1, that's for a general visit to a doctor, that can be billed not more than once every six months, that can be billed for any purpose whatsoever, including contraceptive counseling.

There is also an A2 fee schedule, for a first visit where a complete workup of the patient's health isn't required, at a lower amount. That can be billed as well for such things as contraceptive counseling. In addition to that, there's an opportunity at any time -- I believe it's 10 visits that we pay for -- during the course of a pregnancy where contraceptive counseling can be provided. I could go on, Mr. Speaker, to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sure you'll get a chance in supplementaries, please.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, he is caviling and dinging around. The question is very, very simple: the doctors don't want to play games. Just as Dr. Anne Reid said quite rightfully; they do not want to play games. Yes or no: can the doctors bill

medicare for contraceptive counseling? It's that simple.

MR. M. MOORE: Well, the hon. member always has had a lot of difficulty understanding, and perhaps if he'd listen again closely. There was at one time a specific fee schedule for contraceptive counseling in the Alberta health care insurance plan that didn't exist in any other plan in Canada. That was in addition to the opportunities to bill for that kind of service under the A1 or A2 fee schedule or during the course of visits during the course of a pregnancy. We took that out because, very simply, there were some medical practitioners -- some -- who were using the contraceptive counseling fee schedule code at the same time or the following day or week from when they were using the A1 fee code for a general office visit. In our view, it was a duplication of payments for something that should have been provided under the other schedule.

I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, that the medical fee schedule is complicated enough that the hon. leader of the Liberal Party wouldn't understand it, but the facts are that there are still many opportunities for individuals to get contraceptive counseling information and for medical doctors to provide it.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader is not the only one confused. I had a number of calls this morning from medical doctors who can't figure it out either. Can we go a step further, Mr. Minister? Will medicare pay the bills submitted by doctors who give counseling on sterilization, IUD insertions, and vasectomies, which is different from birth control? Will they pay for that counseling?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, some of the medical doctors will be in trouble, too, if they've been calling the hon. leader for their information. Perhaps, the hon. member could ask them to call the health care insurance plan.

Leaving that aside, a visit to a doctor's office for general illness is not something the doctor necessarily has to record on the billing schedule when they bill the health care insurance plan. We don't say to the medical profession, "Tell us the exact reason that everybody comes in your door." It's an honour system, if you like. They bill an appropriate fee schedule for the kind of work they do, and it relates to the time and the nature of the visit and that sort of thing. So there are lots of opportunities for doctors to bill for giving advice to patients about any number of things that might relate to their health. That can be done under what's called the A1 or the A2 fee schedules or, for that matter, an A4, which is another category.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the minister is right. It is an honour system, and the honourable people don't want to go through the manipulations that he asks them to.

Seeing as he has reinstituted vasectomies, sterilizations, et cetera, quite properly back into the medical plan, will the minister consider reimbursing those people who have used or paid out of their own pockets since last July, since they were taken out of the plan? Now they're back in; will he reimburse those people who have paid out of their own pockets?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not up to me to simply decide whether or not I'm going to reimburse them. The matter was one of a cabinet having made a decision originally that we would take those items out of the plan and then having made a decision last week that we would put them back in. Part of that decision included the decision that we would not make

retroactive payments. After all, we were trying to balance our budget last year, and if we are now to make some changes and make them all retroactive, we'll have some difficulty with the Provincial Treasurer.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Does he not recognize that many people may contemplate becoming sexually active six weeks, say, after their annual exam, that they feel perfectly healthy, that they should then have a right to go to the doctor for the specific matter of contraceptive counseling, and then follow up, if they're getting the Pill or whatever, to see if in fact it's working?

MR. M. MOORE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I realize that, and they can.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, if I may supplement the hon. minister's answer. There is also available, not through the doctor system in this province but through the health unit system, an expanded availability of clinical services for birth control counseling. We announced at the same time last week that in addition to Calgary's and Edmonton's clinics for birth control counseling, we would be expanding funding and providing that same service through funding of the health units in Red Deer, Lethbridge, and Fort McMurray.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West.

DR. CASSIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. In this province when an individual has a medical problem, whether that be a headache, a concern about contraception or sterilization, they're entitled to go and see their doctor and ask for advice, and that has always been covered. The problem is the confusion of the opposition and the media, and I would ask the minister. . . .

MR. SPEAKER: With due respect, hon. member, I can let a preamble go only so long. Let's hear the question, please.

DR. CASSIN: Could I ask the minister, then, to address the first question: is contraceptive counseling covered in this province? Yes or no?

MR. TAYLOR: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the hon. leader of the Liberal Party, the answer to the question isn't quite that simple. There are plenty . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Keep it down.

The Member for Little Bow, main question, followed by Stettler, Vegreville, Calgary-Buffalo, Edmonton-Avonmore, Redwater-Andrew, Edmonton-Calder, Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, first of all, on the last one to the minister of health. I've had representation indicating that persons feel that eye examinations by optometrists may have a greater priority than birth control information. Could the minister indicate in their examination of priorities in this matter the placement of optometrists or optometric eye exams?

MR. SPEAKER: With due respect, hon. member, that's not contraceptive counseling, which was the line of questioning.

Now, I recognize the member for a main question. [interjections]

MR. R. SPEAKER: I couldn't see that. [interjection] Right; that's correct.

Agricultural Assistance

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. The grain farmers of Alberta and western Canada are going to be faced with a shortfall on estimate at this time of some 25 percent in terms of income relative to their expenses for their 1988 crop. My question to the minister is whether he has made intensive representation to the federal government to continue the special Canadian grains program so that some of this deficit can be picked up by that means, as it was in 1987.

MR. ELZINGA: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and it was just today that I had discussions with Unifarm and their leadership whereby we are developing a co-ordinated approach so that we can have the greatest impact on the federal government to ensure that there is an additional special grains program next year.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Could the minister indicate when the meetings will be held with the federal government? Is it going to be in the next few weeks, or is the minister going to wait until August before these meetings are held? Is there immediate urgency being applied to this issue?

MR. ELZINGA: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and in view of the urgency we had some meetings some weeks ago with the minister responsible, Charlie Mayer, in our office here in Edmonton, whereby we did participate in discussions indicating to them the essential nature of having an additional special grains program.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister. Could the minister indicate that the federal government is prepared to proceed with the continuation of that program for the crop year 1988, or is there doubt in the minister's mind and, as well, the federal government's mind at this time in terms of allocation of funding?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, in discussions with them they left me with the impression of their willingness to continue with their strong support to the agricultural sector, recognizing that the grains market is depressed. We have not a firm commitment with them, but they have left me with the impression of their willingness to develop another special grains program for 1988.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, final supplementary. The parallel program to the special Canadian grains program is the western grains stabilization program. Could the minister indicate whether that program will be changed for the crop year 1988 in terms of acting as an improved supplement to the net income of farmers?

MR. ELZINGA: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I'm more than happy to forward these specifics to the hon. member. When I did meet with Charlie Mayer, he indicated to us -- and there is presently

legislation before the federal House -- that there were going to be a number of substantial changes to it. As the hon. member is also aware, the federal government did pick up a significant portion of the deficit under the western grain transportation account.

MR. SPEAKER: Vegreville, supplementary.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing that farmers aren't happy with this whole special Canadian grains system being tied to political decisions like an election in Saskatchewan or a pending federal election, I'm wondering what the minister's position is on having target prices wrapped into the special Canadian grains program so that it would be triggered by low prices, not by a government's failing popularity.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, the associate minister has been working very hard on this to the extent that we have endorsed the recommendations of our hail and crop report whereby there would be an actual revenue insurance. We are working with the federal government. I should share with the hon. member, too, that the federal government has given us notice that they wish to change the proportional contributions under the hail and crop insurance. We are going to have in-depth discussions with them so that we can remove that stopgap provision that presently exists and hope we have a consistent program so that we don't have to do it on an ad hoc basis.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, supplementary question to the minister. In his discussions with the federal minister I wonder if the minister could again urge the federal minister to remove the cap on the size of farms on the special grains payout and, in addition, try to work out the problems related to the alfalfa industry, the inclusion and noninclusion of some parts of it in the grains payout.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to report to the hon. member that I have been working very closely with individuals involved in the alfalfa industry. As the hon. member is also aware, the federal government did endorse the recommendations of the various farm groups that came together with their proposals. We have had discussions with those farm groups as it relates to the cap, but again, Mr. Speaker, we respect very much the individual farm groups who have advocated a similar approach.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. In view of the questions pointing out the almost impossibility of getting aid to farmers on a commodity support basis, is this government going ahead and making studies on income support for farmers, just broad general income support rather than commodity support?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, that's why we have been so active with the threefold approach that our Premier has advocated in regard to the agricultural community as it relates to the safety net the reduction of input costs and greater emphasis on market and research development, so that we can ensure a strong, viable agricultural community in the province of Alberta.

Family and Community Support Services Funding

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Min-

ister of Community and Occupational Health. I understand that an announcement was made recently that some 18 additional communities would receive some \$900, 000 in new funding under the family and community support services program. My question to the minister is: what criteria would he and his department use in choosing those communities to participate?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, a number of communities have made application to the government to participate in what I call the family and community support services family. Now, some 90 percent of Albertans are covered by this program, which is a unique program -- there isn't really one like it in the country -- whereby the provincial government provides funding to a local community, and the people of that community, the volunteers and elected people, decide how that money is going to be spent on health and social issues that are a priority in that community. It's not an Edmonton-dictated program. It's a community-directed program, and it's one that I think all Albertans can be very proud of.

MR. DOWNEY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister could provide us with some details of how these new funds will be used in the communities.

MR. DINNING: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, that's the uniqueness of this program. A city like Calgary may use its funds for the likes of the meals on wheels program. I see Alderman Barb Scott, head of our community services committee from the city of Calgary here, and I have visited the meals on wheels program with Alderman Scott in Calgary. The people in the Wabasca-Desmarais area use it for the Let's Talk society, because it's an issue that's of importance to the natives in Wabasca-Desmarais.

Those are just two unique examples, Mr. Speaker. The people in those communities have identified local issues that are of importance -- social issues, health priorities -- and said, "This is the way we want to spend our money, because these are items that are of concern to us and we feel this is the best way to spend our money."

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, through to the minister. In view of the flexibility allowed in local initiatives, I wonder if the minister could outline for the information of the House what regulations or guidelines are exercised in ensuring that those funds are well used.

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, in order for a community to receive funding of some 80 cents for every dollar that a community would spend -- the province provides 80 cents and the community brings 20 cents to the table -- there must be established a local committee made up of elected people and volunteers to determine how those dollars are to be spent. The guidelines are pretty general. They provide all the flexibility that we can provide for those communities to identify local priorities and commit their resources and the province's resources to focusing on and attacking local problems or issues of concern.

MR. DOWNEY: Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering if there's a deadline for applications for FCSS funding and whether it is only municipal bodies or whether any body can apply.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, any locally elected group, in-

cluding various Indian bands across the province, is eligible for FCSS funding. As I mentioned, some 90 percent of Albertans will now be covered because of these 18 new communities within the family, and some 250 communities will actually be involved. So the guidelines are quite clear. Eligibility is open to those communities that apply, and it's through the good fortune of increasing our FCSS program this year by 1.5 percent that we were able to bring all of those who have requested to be part of FCSS into the program.

MR. MITCHELL: Could the minister please inform the House, Mr. Speaker, whether he has considered expanding FCSS funding to include specific allocation for after school care?

MR. DINNING: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, that's the beauty of the program. Locally elected or locally appointed groups -- community service committees, social service committees -- identify the priorities. It isn't an Edmonton-directed program; it is local citizens making local decisions on local priorities. If a community like Edmonton or Calgary or some 17 or 18 other communities across the province decides that out-of-school care is a priority, then they can allocate funds using FCSS dollars. I'm pleased that so many communities across the province have done just that, Mr. Speaker, with provincial government dollars.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. PIQUETTE: Yes; to the minister. Will this funding through FCSS also help fund home care for senior citizens in rural Alberta?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, again, that depends upon the local community. But in a number of cities and towns and villages across the province FCSS homemaker services are purchased by the local health unit such that FCSS is able to deliver those programs. Then in the case of the Athabasca health unit, the health unit there is able to purchase those services. The home care program directly provides home nursing care, but invariably the homemaker services are purchased by the health unit and delivered through the local FCSS program.

MR. SPEAKER: Vegreville, Calgary-Buffalo, Edmonton-Avonmore.

Duvernay Landfill Sites

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of the Environment Three abandoned dump sites near the hamlet of Duvernay have been found to contain a number of chemicals that pose a potential threat to the nearby North Saskatchewan River, as well as to the water supply for the people living in Duvernay. I understand from material received from the minister this morning that tests completed on wells in Duvernay show that the water is contaminated and generally unfit for consumption. I'm wondering what assurance the minister can give the people who live in the Duvernay district that they will have access to clean drinking water as soon as possible.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, today consultation is being provided to the residents of the hamlet of Duvernay and to municipal officials in the county of Two Hills and the town of Two Hills about test results we received yesterday afternoon as a result of tests that we took last week. With respect to potable

water in a series of wells in the Duvernay area the water suggests that there are abnormal levels of chloride, sodium, and magnesium in the water, and as a result we've declared the water unfit for human consumption.

In addition to having provided that information to municipal authorities, we're also providing information indicating that should there be a requirement for special assistance to provide water to the residents of the area, in essence we would be very pleased to co-operate with the local authority in that regard.

MR. FOX: Well, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. If the tests on the water were done last week, I'm wondering when the sites were identified to the department. How long has it taken to get these results and make them available to people?

MR. KOWALSKI: The sites in question, Mr. Speaker, were identified as a result of the help eliminate landfill pollution program that the government announced in July of 1986. As it went through 1987, preliminary investigation took place on three dump sites in the area. As a result of that preliminary investigation and the results of the water contamination that we've received yesterday, we will begin an in-depth analysis by the end of this week through the offices of a private consultant who will be undertaking a grid assessment of the three landfill sites based on a 30 metre by 30 metre sectoral approach that will cover all three landfills.

MR. FOX: A supplementary to the minister. If the tests were done last week, I'm wondering when the sites were identified so that we can determine how long it's taken for the tests to be done. There are a number of other sites around the province that are of concern to people as well.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, it was in July of 1986 that we announced the help eliminate landfill pollution program. All hon. members will know that since that period of time I've made periodic reports to the people of Alberta with respect to the assessment of the 650-odd sites that were looked at. There were several numbers of them that we had set aside. As I indicated at the last public report I made in January of 1988, there were a small number of them that were going to be receiving special attention, and the three sites at Duvernay were those. The three sites at Duvernay go back to the chemical plant that was first created on-site at Duvernay in 1953 and had a series of different owners of the site until 1988.

MR. FOX: I hope that the minister does everything he can to speed up the process for other sites' identification.

But I'd like to ask the minister if the people in Duvernay can have his assurance that funding would be forthcoming from the department to help them secure an alternate and safe supply of water.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, it is in Alberta that the only, only industrial landfill assessment in the world has taken place, and it is unfortunate that the NDP is once again simply coming up with the "I'm sorry, but it's too late and too slow" kind of response. There is no other jurisdiction anywhere that has created a program like the one we have that has led us to the determination of this particular site. I think all hon. members, including the hon. Member for Vegreville, should be very proud of the initiative of this government with respect to this matter.

In addition to taking the initiative, we've also provided peri-

odic reports to the people of Alberta, and I intend within the next number of weeks to provide an additional update with respect to the help eliminate landfill pollution program. There can be assurance, there can be assurance with knowledge, and we are assembling the knowledge base in this province which is unequalled anywhere else, I repeat, in the world.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-Buffalo, followed by Edmonton-Avonmore if there's time.

Impaired Drivers

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In December 1984 the government set up a countermeasures committee to study, co-ordinate, and implement measures to rid the roads of drunk drivers. Since then its recommendations, which have been kept secret in the usual tradition of open government, have been ignored and indeed government departments don't even know which cabinet minister is responsible. In the meantime the government has done almost nothing to combat impaired driving except give give us empty rhetoric. So to the Premier: I'm wondering whether the Premier or whoever over there is responsible, if anyone is, can tell us why the recommendations of the countermeasures committee have been ignored and funding has been denied to the committee.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'll take his question as notice and reply.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, it seems obvious that nobody over there is in charge, and we need . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, just the question. Thank you.

MR. CHUMIR: We need safe roads 52 weeks of the year, not just at Christmas when Check Stops are in full force. I wonder whether the Solicitor General can tell this House why the government persists in refusing to directly fund more Check Stops, when all studies show that this is the most effective way of combating impaired driving.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member perhaps avoided asking me or the press avoided asking me yesterday as to who has the responsibility for this particular program. My department has the responsibility for impaired driving initiatives. This multidepartment committee is under the auspices of AADAC. We had a meeting approximately eight months ago with the full committee, the Attorney General, the Minister of Transportation and Utilities, the minister in charge of AADAC, and myself. At that time there was a proposal made by the committee that was gratefully received by the government but entailed far, far too much money for the aims they were attempting to achieve. We asked that they go back, restructure it, bring it back with some realistic funding requirements and some realistic initiatives, and we'd follow through. We're still waiting.

MR. CHUMIR: And we're still waiting for an answer to the questions we've been asking.

Now, the government has been soft on drunk driving offenders who continue to drive after their licence has been suspended for impaired driving. If money is an issue, I'm wondering why the government doesn't do something that doesn't require money and follow the precedent of the government of

British Columbia and impose a seven-day jail sentence on those who . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. This is supplementaries. Thank you.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I take issue with the comment that we are doing nothing in the area of impaired driving or Check Stop or that it relates to dollars. I would ask that the member be in attendance for the estimates of the Solicitor General's department, which will expand on the budgetary announcement that said there would be major initiatives in impaired driving.

MR. CHUMIR: To the Attorney General. The government is also soft on second offenders, and the Attorney General has instructed prosecutors, and it's his policy, to seek a mandatory 14-day jail sentence under the Criminal Code only when the second drunk driving offence has occurred within two years of the first. I'm wondering why the Attorney General doesn't follow the precedent of other provinces and take a tougher line and prosecute second offences which occur within five years, as in B.C., or without time . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Paragraph 2.

MR. TAYLOR: He's asking a sensible question.

MR. SPEAKER: That's fine. It's taking too long; that's all. The Attorney General, please.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo knows well what the policy is. We are reviewing those other policies of other provinces. As the Solicitor General has indicated and as the throne speech indicated, efforts will be made during the course of this coming year to further step up prosecutions against impaired drivers in an effort to prevent reoccurrences and also to engage in a very substantial education campaign relative to the dangers inherent in driving while impaired.

We are also co-operating with voluntary organizations in Alberta to try and deal with this very serious problem. It is, of course, something that is not condoned by this government. We are going to do all we can to prevent these repeat offenders. Of course, we do require the co-operation of the courts in that regard, but as the hon. member is well aware, courts do exercise discretion in making their judgments, and it is not possible, as he well knows as a lawyer, for us to direct a judge as to what the decision will be.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, can I ask the Solicitor General whether the designated driver program instituted by the city of Edmonton police last fall shows a promise of success such that he is prepared to implement it across the province?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that one on notice. I don't have the information from the Edmonton city police department, but I will provide it to you.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, to the Solicitor General. Does the minister plan on reviewing any current legislation dealing with the problem with impaired drivers?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my previous comments to the member . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we complete this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you. Solicitor General.

MR. ROSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned to the Member for Calgary-Buffalo, there's a major thrust in impaired driving and in driving initiatives. If the member will wait for the estimates, I will then announce them.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Might we revert briefly to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today to introduce on behalf of my colleague the Minister of Tourism, the Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc, 67 young, bright, grade 6 Caledonia Park school children. The question period has been so long, Mr. Speaker, I haven't been able to look up into the public gallery to see if they're still there. I hope they are there.

MS BARRETT: They're waving.

MR. STEVENS: They're waving. That's terrific.

MR. TAYLOR: They're all waving at the opposition.

MR. STEVENS: I can tell you this, Mr. Speaker, having just visited a grade 6 class in my own constituency: they all asked much better questions than we've heard today from the opposition.

They're accompanied by their teachers J. Murugan, P. Foley, J. Schultz, and three parents: Mrs. Irwin, Mrs. Stadler, and Mrs. Arnold. Would they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I move that the questions and motions for returns on the Order Paper stand and retain their places.

[Motion carried]

head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

204. Moved by Mr. Day:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government of Alberta to consider implementing strategies designed to evaluate the effectiveness of social programs on clients.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that we under-

stand the purpose of this motion under consideration today and have a very clear idea of where we're going with it. The purpose is really to determine which social programs would bring the best results for which recipients. It's plain and simple. We do know that government interventions of various types can have either positive or negative effects on the recipients of that intervention. The question that needs to be determined when it comes to social programming is: how do we determine which programs indeed are best for which recipients without knowing what the long-term effects of the particular programs are?

Let me give you an example of what I'm getting at and what we'll be looking at today. There is in central Alberta a particular group home which has as its mandate not just the care but the treatment of disturbed adolescents. That particular group home cost \$500,000 to construct and operates on a program with a budget of \$400,000 a year. There are six beds in that particular group home. So with an initial first-year outlay of \$900,000 for six beds, the question arises: is the particular program that's being used in that group home effective, and is it going to have a lasting effect in a positive way on the recipients of the programming? If the answer to that is yes, then I can say to taxpayers and constituents that \$900,000 is not too small a price to pay to see young lives stabilized and prepared for adulthood. I don't think we can put a cost on that type of positive result.

But, Mr. Speaker, I have to be able to say or to know that that is indeed the case and that that type of expenditure indeed is having an effect on those people occupying those six beds. If we had a follow-up program in place to determine long-term effects of this type of program, then we could look and determine whether an expensive program like that is the best way to go. I reiterate that if that is having results, then we have to be prepared to look at it because we can't measure the cost of a life being straightened out and taken care of. But if it's not having positive long-term benefits, then maybe those adolescents, even though they are classified as disturbed adolescents, would be just as well off in the hands of loving, caring foster parents who would care for them until adulthood. We've come to a place where we have to be able to determine those types of things.

Now, when you bring up the whole question of success or results in terms of social programming, sometimes you run the risk of being seen as mercenary minded. I want to emphasize that that is not at all the intent of this particular motion but rather to see what we can do in the best way throughout our province for recipients of the various types of programs that are made available to them. As we know, in this province we spend billions on social programs. I'm not here suggesting any of that is misspent, but I am saying: what is being best spent? I'm not talking about research; I'm suggesting that evaluation should be an integral part of the social programming that we make available to people.

If I can quote briefly from a newspaper report out recently, quoting Mr. Joe Hornick, director of the Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family. He says that "there is a serious lack of after-care research in Canada." He says something here of interest, and maybe our medical doctors here can identify with this. He says:

If you look at Canadian medical practice, doctors consider prescribing an untested drug unethical . . . but people who run social programs just assume they are doing good and never, never follow up to see if they've done damage.

Mr. Speaker, with the rise of social distress and problems facing families and individuals, we can no longer afford ourselves the luxury of either expensive or inexpensive programs

without knowing what kinds of results those programs are having on people. I want to emphasize that just because a program is low cost does not mean that it should be accepted over a program that runs a much higher cost, but rather what follow-up is built into the program and what results can be expected in the lives of those receiving the treatment or the program. The question or the suggestion comes up, "Well, this type of research costs money." Of course it costs money, but I believe that in the long run, when evaluation and follow-up become an integral part of social programming, you're able to cut down or eliminate programs that are not having any effect, and you're able to maximize your dollars on the programs that are having effect. So on the matter of initial costs, yes, there may be initial costs in terms of evaluation but savings in the long run, both in a monetary way and, of course, more importantly in the effects of the individuals receiving those programs. I'm talking about having ways and strategies of determining what is best for the client, what is best for the recipient of the program.

Examples of this type of evaluation are rare, but I do want us to look at what I see to be a classic example of an evaluation program. I'll be drawing information and some quotations for the next few minutes from an extensive research project which has been documented in a landmark publication. The title of this particular publication -- and I've checked and it is available in our library here -- is *Losing Ground*. I believe Andrew Murray is the author or the person who compiled the data. What it is is a study of social policy over a 30-year period from 1950 to 1980, a very extensive study. Unfortunately, it's a study that was done south of the border and not in Canada. But I'm using it as an example of a type of follow-up and research that really can happen, because this particular one did happen.

The title of the particular program in this document is the Negative Income Tax Experiment. Now, negative income tax is a term which -- we're probably more familiar with the term guaranteed minimum income whereby there's a philosophy that as long as a person is guaranteed a basic minimum income, that will solve the poverty problem. That's the question this experiment resolved to answer. The social scientists who were conducting the experiment felt very strongly that poverty could be virtually eradicated by guaranteeing every adult person a minimum income, a level below which their income would not fall. The popular wisdom of the day as it exists, the vox populi, seems to suggest that, no, that type of program would actually be a disincentive. So here, Mr. Speaker, we're going to look at exactly what I'm talking about: evaluation to determine results. I want to use this as a case. I'm not here advocating or for or against minimum income. What I'm saying is that here's a case where evaluation was used extensively, and if we look at how it was done in this case, we can apply it across the board to other cases.

So the particular program . . . As I think back now, the compiler of that data was, I think, Charles Murray, not Andrew Murray. Here's what happened in this particular program or this particular evaluation. We know that the foundation of all scientific method is the controlled experiment. In a controlled experiment we know that the investigators take two identical sets of subjects. They expose one set of subjects to certain specified stimuli or conditions and make observations, and the other group or the control group you do not expose to those stimuli and you observe what the results are.

We know that over the years it's been increasingly taken for granted that some kind of guaranteed annual income would, in fact, eradicate poverty. Before reading this particular experi-

ment, which was incredibly extensive, my own feeling probably went along the lines of popular wisdom or vox populi, the voice of the people. I believe that if every Albertan in this province today were given \$1 million in cash, by the end of the week we would have billionaires and we would have people hopelessly in debt. So mass infusions of cash, according to my thinking, are not the answer to people pulling themselves out of poverty. However, proof has to be established on something like this, and proof needed to be established that a guaranteed income would not cause people to reduce their work effort, would not cause marriage disintegration or increased instability, and would not have a negative effect.

Now, this particular experiment has been categorized as "the most ambitious social-science experiment in history," and I quote that. It went under the name of the Negative Income Tax Experiment. It began in 1968, used 8,700 people as subjects, and lasted for 10 years. It's important to say here that it was the government of that day that was launching the experiment, and the government was proposing that this type of guaranteed minimum income would indeed have a desirable and favourable effect. It was not some extreme right-wing group that was trying to doctor up facts and figures. It was in fact the social scientists of the day. In fact, at the outset that created some difficulty for those who were to watch this program begin to evolve. They said that the social scientists would doctor the figures because they would want to prove that it works. But the social scientists in the various departments of that government said, "No, we are going to be faithful to the facts and the results, and we will publish whatever the results are."

As I said, 8,700 subjects were used. It lasted for 10 years, and actually a remnant of this experiment is still going on now. It resulted in a body of literature that as of 1980 included more than 100 published titles and countless unpublished reports. The costs of the published accounts of this experiment literally ran into the millions.

[Mr. Musgrave in the Chair]

The point of the negative income tax or guaranteed income was not to get people off welfare; rather, it was to try and take up the slack of the welfare system's function and hope for fewer unwanted side effects. Even the social scientists were not saying that guaranteed income was necessarily good in itself, but they considered it was better and would be better than any of the alternatives. The proponents of the system were really out to slay the folk wisdom of the day that welfare causes disincentive in people, and they really felt that properly designed, a guaranteed minimum income would provide work incentives and would actually get people off the welfare rolls.

The procedure followed classic scientific experimentation. A sample of these 8,700 low-income persons was selected at random and split into two groups, the experimental group and the control group.

The members of the experimental group were told that for a specified number of years (usually three) they would have a floor put under their incomes. The benefits varied among participants [across the United States], to test the sensitivity of the results to the generosity of [various incomes].

On average, the benefit level was set at about the official poverty line. So people were told, "For three years you will be guaranteed at least this much money."

For the next 10 years the results came in. The New Jersey and Pennsylvania sites opened their experiment between 1968 and 1972. Then there were tests with rural populations in Iowa

and North Carolina, and those took place from 1970 to 1972. A large population was tested in Gary, Indiana, between '71 and '74. But the largest and best evaluated experiments were done in Seattle and Denver over a seven-year period from '71 to '78. They're referred to as the SIME/DIME experiments, Seattle Income Maintenance Experiment and Denver Income Maintenance Experiment.

As the results came forward, they were subjected to all the standard methodological critiques. Experimental and analytical procedures were tightened for each round of experimentations, results were compared across the sites, data was analyzed and reanalyzed, and finally, by the end of the '70s, a body of facts and results was established that both sides to this day have widely accepted as being valid. It was done with energy and incredible detail, and the scientists validated not their hopes but their fears. The results were more or less what the popular wisdom said they would be, and I want to look at them in some detail.

Remember the key question was: would a guaranteed minimum income reduce work effort? The results were a resounding yes; work effort was reduced. The reduction, unfortunately, was not insignificant but was substantial. Quoting from the Seattle and Denver sites, because these didn't have either the largest or the smallest changes but were the most accurately measured and probably produced the balance, the negative income tax or guaranteed minimum was found to actually reduce desired hours of work. First of all, we're going to look at it in different classes: for husbands, by 9 percent; for working wives, by 20 percent. Now, the results among husbands -- that was disappointing. But it's important that we look and see where the largest negative effects of a guaranteed minimum income lay, because it was with those who were in a position to actually cause the most long-term damage to their own goals of reducing poverty.

The first group I want to look at is the working wives. This is not an exercise in either advocating or not advocating whether women with children should be working. I'm simply looking at this, showing an experiment and the effect it had on work incentive on the particular group and on working wives. We know that from the Second World War and through the early '60s

wives represented for poor families a . . . marginal income that could push a family out of the poverty trap and into a more secure long-term future -- either by continuing to work indefinitely, or by providing income that [maybe] permitted the husband to upgrade his skills, move to another labour market,

or make some kind of investment that would be a short-term pain but give long-term gain. Therefore, when we look at this, a group of working wives who had traditionally over a 20-year period been a factor in the family's coming out of the poverty trap, we see that their reduction in work hours was 20 percent compared with the control group. That's substantial. Whether they knew it or not, this guaranteed minimum income was causing women to climb off one of their most promising ladders to prosperity.

Now, the second group of special interest were "young males who were not yet heads of families." In the reports these young men are called "nonheads," and I'm not saying that in a derogatory way at all. It's simply the jargon that was referred to in the studies. So these are young males who weren't heads of families. These young men were at a critical age in their lives, many of them about to enter responsibilities of marriage, and were just beginning to establish themselves in the labour force. If they were ever to escape from poverty, this was the time in their lives that they would be most sensitive. The minimum income guarantee "had a disastrous impact on their hours of work

per week." For those young men who were nonheads, their hours of work per week dropped 43 percent. For the nonheads who later married within the three-year term, there was a drop of 33 percent.

Now, factors were considered and variables. Maybe they were going to school. No, that possibility was thoroughly investigated and rejected. Maybe it was only a temporary effect on them. No, that wasn't true, because the response was stronger with those who were guaranteed the minimum income for five years than it was for those guaranteed for three years. And the most alarming factor was the increase the guaranteed minimum income produced in periods of unemployment when a member of the experiment lost his or her job. Such periods of unemployment for those who are guaranteed minimum income actually lengthened by 27 percent for husbands, 42 percent for wives, and 60 percent for single female heads of families. In other words -- this is in the same control group, in the same city, in the same neighbourhood, under the same circumstances -- when those given the guaranteed minimum income lost their jobs, their period of unemployment increased dramatically over the people in the same apartment building who were not under the program.

Then came the other question: does this type of welfare undermine the family? What was the effect on the families? The experiment and the massive bodies of data showed indisputably that the effect on the families was devastating. In the Seattle and Denver sites -- and this is very important for all members to be aware of here; please take note -- the dissolution of marriages, marriage breakup, was 36 percent higher for whites receiving the guaranteed minimum income than for those in the control group who did not receive it. For blacks the figure was 42 percent higher in terms of marriage breakup. Now, it's interesting that in the New Jersey site

there was no difference among the white families . . . but black family breakup was 66 percent higher in the experimental group than in the control group, and in the Spanish-speaking sample it was 84 percent higher.

One very enlightening result was in Gary, Indiana: no effect was observed on family breakup. So after three years the researchers looked into the reasons why the families had stayed together at a far greater rate. The couples informed them that they had been under the impression from the outset, falsely given to them by those who explained the program, that if they split up they would lose their guaranteed minimum income. In Gary, Indiana, where no effect was observed on family breakup, they thought they had been told that if the family broke up they would lose the guaranteed minimum income. All of these results were exhaustively analyzed; researchers checked out all alternative explanations. The only salient difference that seemed to explain the substantially higher rates of marriage breakup in the two groups was the treatment itself, the guaranteed minimum income.

These results are staggering just on their own, but the true negative effects of guaranteed minimum income are actually larger than the data indicate, for this reason: the control group was not a pure group of working people. In fact, the control group was a population that was already receiving all the normal welfare benefits of the '70s. So it wasn't a group of people traditionally on welfare compared with people who traditionally were workers, but in fact the entire experiment came from people who were receiving welfare benefits. So already some were under some disincentive. Then that group was split up. This shows that the effect of the guaranteed minimum income was

extremely drastic, because it reduced, far more than those already on different forms of welfare, work effort and was highly destructive in terms of effects on the family. This experiment directly answered the question that was posed, at least for the outcome relating to recipients of welfare and what would be the effect on work and marriage.

Mr. Speaker, that's an example of a program being very closely evaluated. We must be taking our programs and studying the effects of them in a long-term way to see indeed what is happening and what is the result and the effect on recipients.

AADAC, it is interesting to note, has and uses fairly extensive follow-up. Once a person has left the program, they follow them up and ask them very basic, simple questions three months later, sometimes six months later, questions like: "Have you returned to drinking alcohol all the time? Are you still on the wagon?" They are then able to look at the recipients of their programs and compare and say, "Well, here at a particular site in Edmonton a year later, this is the percentage of people who are remaining stable." Then they might look at a program that was run in Calgary and say, "Well, in that particular program there's a high level of instability a year later." They're able then to look and say, "Are the programs different?" Oh, look, the programs are different. Let's go with the program that is producing the best results." That's what we're talking about: evaluating the social programs we have in place with follow-up strategies and procedures to see the effect they're having.

Now, talking about AADAC again, in 1981 they launched a long-term, large-scale social and drug prevention program. Since the program's inception in '81, AADAC has conducted ongoing program development research to evaluate and monitor the impact of that particular program -- that's just one of the programs they ran in 1981 -- and the primary prevention program carried a heavy resource commitment. Through follow-up studies it was discovered that parts of the program had become too costly for what they were achieving. They were achieving very little. Therefore, those parts of the campaign were phased out, a beautiful example of people not being afraid to evaluate their own programs, looking for results, not seeing them, and then saying, "No result there; we're going to change the program; we're going to alter it."

As we look at strategies for evaluation, we have to be careful to communicate to the people in the various social agencies that we are not out to hound them to see if they're doing their job, but rather to encourage them to look at the effect of their programs on the clients. And if they find that a program is not having any kind of measurable result they're to be congratulated for finding that and encouraged to develop other methods of programming.

In foster homes or foster-home programs there's nothing formally done in our province as far as follow-up of individuals who've lived in foster homes. That type of follow-up is necessary so that we can do a comparison, as I indicated earlier, with, for instance, the stabilizing effect of children once they move to adulthood who've gone through a foster-home program as opposed to those who may have gone through a group home program. Following them up six months, a year, two years later and trying to get -- and yes, we recognize there are all kinds of variables. But surely, using the type of scientific approach that was used in the Negative Income Tax Experiment we can at least come up with a feel for what types of programs are affecting what types of people.

In the William Roper Hull Home in Calgary they've just completed a program called the secure treatment program, de-

signed for children who are quite disturbed, and that program contains a consumer evaluation section. It's actually built right into the contract. I know that our Minister of Social Services is concerned about and interested in this type of approach and actually has made initiatives in some of these areas. She's to be congratulated for that. The William Roper Hull Home is an ideal example of one where a situation is looked at and evaluation is built into the contract. Follow-up is built in. The director of that particular program at Hull Home said that he would love to do a Hull Home study which would follow clients to adulthood. He's going to need resources for that, and hopefully we can encourage resources to be allocated for that. Now, there's a case where a program developer is wide open and he's saying: "Absolutely. Let me have the way and the means to follow these people up right to and into adulthood, and I can determine which of my programs seem to be producing the most beneficial results."

The Alberta adolescent pregnancy rate is high -- we're told that -- the highest in the country. As responsible adults, we need to be able to look at first some general facts and then break the evaluation down. We know in a general way that sex education has been more extensive steadily over the years, and yet we see pregnancy rates going up, we see alarming STD rates, birth rates dropping but abortion rates rising. We need to be able to use our programs to say . . .

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member's time for debate has expired.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

MS LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had some sympathy for this motion until the member started talking about some of his examples. I think we do in fact have to build in evaluation as to effectiveness of programs, but the thing that concerns me is: what are the criteria of effectiveness? Who determines what success is? How shall it be measured? At what point? I think we need long-term assessment, but we have to say whose expectations are to be met. What is successful treatment for a battered woman? That she go back to her husband? That she leave him for the rest of time? What about the mother whose husband has incestuously assaulted her daughter? Is success reconstruction of the family as it was before or the family to be reconstructed around the healthy family member? So we have to be very concerned about who sets the criteria of success.

Again, I think that we have to see it in human terms, that human beings benefit from treatment, from programs that vary, and through varying lengths of time, and that sometimes they get worse before they get better. We have to be concerned about when the intervention, when the assessment is to be made. The concern I have, though, is when we're looking at the results of a treatment program, what are we measuring? Have we identified all the variables that go into the identified problem?

Now, we heard an example given of a guaranteed annual income causing some problems; that is, that people didn't want to work. Particularly women didn't want to work as long as women that didn't have a guaranteed annual income. Well, what were those women's values? Maybe they valued a great deal more being at home with their children. Did they assess how many children each woman had, how old those children were? What were her values? If she could live and stay at home and mother her children, that for many women would be a very important thing to do. They would rather be at home.

So the concern I have is: what do we look at when we're

looking at success? In the same way, marriages broke up. Could it be that those marriages broke up because there was violence and abuse in those homes? We know in fact that particularly in cases of unemployment, there is greater incidence of violence. Do we suggest that it is successful for families where there is violence to stay together and not successful if they break apart? So I think what we have to look at and be very careful about are: what are the variables; what are the criteria?

Another example I would give to you -- being a researcher, I know these pitfalls very well. Most research proves the hypotheses of the researcher. They are based on assumptions and the questions are founded in such a way that the hypotheses of the researcher are proved. I would give you an example. In the issue of day care we hear a great deal about the impact of day care on children. Does it cause children problems in bonding later? Well, I've seen different studies, and they have taken the very same behaviour and, depending on whether the researcher is a proponent or an opponent of day care, have interpreted exactly the same behaviour as signifying two exactly different things. That is, when the mother leaves the child, does the child continue to play? Those that oppose day care say the child is not bonded with the mother and will have trouble bonding in adult life. Those that support day care say the child is bonded with the mother and feels secure when she leaves. So I think we have to be very careful. I believe we have to assess what we're treating.

More than saying do these programs work or not, I think we need to have a longitudinal study of programs -- and that is helpful, but what we need to do is be open about that. Does it prove this or does it prove that does not help, because we start setting up self-fulfilling prophecies. We have to describe the process, the outcome, and then go back after a period of time and say, "What were all the variables that came into this problem, what variables were treated, what variables were missed?" and in that way establish better programs.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Calder.

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to have the opportunity this afternoon to get in on the debate on this particular motion. I was interested in listening to the Member for Red Deer-North, because I wasn't sure what kind of angle he was going to take when I read the motion originally.

Mr. Speaker, this motion asks us "to consider implementing strategies designed to evaluate the effectiveness of social programs on clients." Mr. Speaker, no one can be against evaluation. Certainly through evaluation we have the potential to recognize and determine what our strengths are in a particular program and if, in fact, we have weaknesses in a particular program. If we set long-term goals, it gives us an opportunity to determine whether or not those goals are met, if we have effective evaluation.

Now, when I read this motion, Mr. Speaker, I feel that it implies the government now is not evaluating, and in fact they are evaluating certain social programs in certain areas. Of course, in other areas they're not. Much of the evaluation, however, that does take place often is not meaningful evaluation nor very effective evaluation. Often, I feel, it's a symbolic gesture done by the government so that it appears that we are evaluating, and out of an evaluation we may get a glossy report saying that everything, indeed, is wonderful.

Now, as I've said, we do have some evaluations and monitoring taking place in the province, but there are some problems with that, Mr. Speaker. For example, there are evaluations and monitoring taking place by people that aren't trained in those particular areas to do effective, meaningful evaluations. So that's a problem. Right now, social workers who work with many clients in the field of social services are in a prime position to evaluate and monitor. However, in this province, when we've got high caseloads like we do, they don't often have the opportunity to do that sort of preventative, pro-active type work. They're attempting to put out fires, and they don't have a chance to actually evaluate.

Another problem, Mr. Speaker, is that we don't have enough people doing the evaluating in the first place, and in some cases we don't have any evaluation taking place. We haven't had any standards, so if evaluations are being done, no one quite knows how to measure those evaluations. Certainly the government does have some weaknesses in the system, and I think these are some of the areas that must be addressed, that I've mentioned just now.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's very essential that when evaluations do take place they're done in co-operation with service deliverers. I think this is crucial. I don't think that evaluations should be done in a confrontational way, and many times this has been the case. We need that consultation so that it's a positive move on the part of the government, if they are to evaluate, so that people feel a part of the process, and that something positive can come out of that process.

Mr. Speaker, the present situation in fact is that -- I know in examples of where services have been privatized, oftentimes service deliverers, clients, families, whoever is involved, are not told about what is going on; they feel left out of the process. And this is a real concern. So I would think that if the government were to really get active in evaluating, the same thing would happen: they would not consult the various service deliverers. This would cause, in my opinion, some real, real problems.

I think, as the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore has pointed out, that some services are much more easily evaluated than others. I think we have to be very, very sensitive to this and, in fact, look very carefully at the various criteria that we would use to evaluate the various programs. Programs such as counseling programs, support programs for families, are very, very difficult to evaluate when we're looking in the long term. If we're looking over a long period of time, these types of programs are much, much more difficult to evaluate. Any type of preventative program is very difficult to evaluate because again we're looking at the long term. I think that is why, in so many instances, we have a hard time getting governments to acknowledge preventative programs and support them, because they are very, very difficult to evaluate; there are no quick, precise, positive results that we can get immediately. We have to look at the long term, so it becomes more difficult to evaluate.

Mr. Speaker, a group of people that would be very, very knowledgeable -- and in my travels I have found that they have a wealth of knowledge -- are the people that are actually delivering the services right now and also the people that are using those services. I think that far too often we forget these people, that they know what's going on. They try and make representation to the government to tell them where the weaknesses are in the system or where the strengths are, and so many times, Mr. Speaker, they're not heard or they're not given the opportunities to give input into those areas. I think we neglect to lis-

ten to these people -- and they're our key. If we want to really implement evaluations, we have to start listening to these people, people who use the services and people who deliver the services. They will tell us how effective the programs are.

But if we're being optimistic and feel that, in fact, evaluations could be a positive move -- and they certainly have the potential to do that -- they also have the potential to make a lot of improvements, if they're meaningful and done in an effective way. So whether we're talking about social workers in the system that need fewer caseloads so that they can, in fact, do evaluation and make representation to the government, then we have to look at that.

There are many improvements that need to take place in the system, Mr. Speaker. Certainly it's been my experience that if we start listening and paying attention to what actually is happening out there, we could learn a lot, and we could certainly improve the system. If we take a look, for example -- and this has been brought up in the House on previous occasions -- at the mentally ill right now living in our city, living in conditions that aren't fit for human beings -- and I mean that literally; I have seen some of them; we know this is happening -- we don't need expensive, immaculate or very complex, complicated evaluations to determine that these people need proper housing. I think that is a good place to start, Mr. Speaker. We should start listening to the workers that are working out there and start listening to the clients.

So whatever the problem out there, Mr. Speaker, I think that proper evaluation -- if we're very sensitive to that evaluation -- could be, in fact, a very positive move. So I would say that this motion is a positive move in that I think evaluation could make some improvements if it were done with the best interests of people in mind. Certainly we know that there are a lot of improvements to be made. But I would also like to say, again, that we know there are a lot of problems out there right now, and I would think and I would hope that the government would start listening. Certainly this is a good place to start making some of those improvements.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for St. Paul.

MR. DROBOT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the Member for Red Deer-North for bringing such an important issue, the assessment of social programs, to the attention of this House by introducing Motion 204.

We are very fortunate in Alberta to have one of the best funded, most comprehensive systems of social programs in Canada, a system that is based on our responsibilities and care. The Minister of Social Services, the Hon. Connie Osterman, announced on March 24 of this year that the government of Alberta will be committing \$1.4 billion to provide a social service, an income support, to individuals and families across Alberta in the coming year. This is most impressive, Mr. Speaker, and it shows that we are committed to helping Alberta and Albertans. This money will be spent on support for children, foster parents, the handicapped, senior citizens, and funding of women's shelters, et cetera, to mention a few.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from the Alberta foster parents' magazine, *The Bridge of Concern*:

One hundred years from now,
it will not matter
what kind of car I drove,
what kind of house I lived in,
how much I had in my bank account,

nor what my clothes looked like.
But the world may be a little better
because I was important
in the life of a child.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the government is interested in the family and in the welfare of the child. But we must continue with an assessment of our social programs and follow up with evaluations.

In Alberta the Department of Social Services is responsible for the administration of over 35 different programs which are available in some seven different delivery regions across the province. This is a big operation. It is very difficult to co-ordinate services and ensure uniformity of delivery across the province, it is very difficult to curb bureaucratic growth and inefficiency, it is difficult to eliminate the abuse of the system, and it is difficult to know whether the services are being provided in a quality manner and whether the needs of the people are being met by the services available.

I think anyone would agree that in order for such a complicated infrastructure of programs to run smoothly and effectively, a system must be well managed and the programs must be constantly monitored to ensure that they are meeting the specific needs of the people they intend to help. The intent of Motion 204 is to ensure that this is in fact accomplished through strategies designed to evaluate the effectiveness of social programs. It is a good idea, Mr. Speaker, so good, in fact, that the Department of Social Services seems to share it. On March 15 of this year, Connie Osterman released a paper detailing core standards for services provided by Alberta Social Services.

The standards outlined basic expectations the department will have about the quality and delivery of services in the areas of child welfare, services for individuals with disabilities, et cetera. The standards will provide basic requirements and at the same time allow for flexibility in how individual agencies operate. These standards focus on the manner in which agencies are run and how services are provided, and this will result in ensuring the best service possible for clients.

The proposed standards will be reviewed by more than 300 agencies and provincial organizations before they are implemented. This process of consulting with all levels of people involved in Social Services programs will deliver and ensure a final set of standards that are both reasonable to work with and, as well, assist in the improvement of the efficiency and quality of our system. These proposals for core standards should achieve the results that Motion 204 is asking for. Once the core standards have been implemented and more specific standards have been formulated and put into practice, the implications will be the same or similar to what Motion 204 is proposing.

This government is progressive, Mr. Speaker, and we realize the value of constantly updating and evaluating our approach to getting the job done. This is a changing world that we live in, and the needs of Albertans are changing. We have to constantly be aware that management must not become outdated and that services we are providing are, in fact, the services that people need and that they are constantly reviewed. For example, Mr. Speaker, the department is right now in the process of reviewing its social allowance program, and we can look forward to amendments in the Child Welfare Act as well as reforms in child care policy, all reflecting changing needs of Albertans.

In 1987-88 the Department of Social Services has been moving towards a new approach in management and evaluation of programs. This new approach is reflected in the core standards recently announced. The proposed core standards are straightforward and will set minimum standards that are to be

met. There must be a planning process, which details what the clients need, how they will be met, and how the service provider will monitor and assess progress towards the client's objectives. The service must also meet administrative requirements related to financial management, staffing, and accountability. The fundamentals of a good management system are apparent. The objectives of the department are clear and understood by the service providers. The programs will make sense in regard to the problems or conditions they are supposed to be responding to, and fiscal responsibility and accountability must be in place. For the first time ever, Mr. Speaker, the department will incorporate work planning, a concept similar to zero-base budgeting, another good idea of the Member for Red Deer-North that the department seemed to agree with.

The new plan will call for management to account for everything from future plans to core programs. The work plans outline the department's expectations for each quarter. The goal is for the work plans to be reported on a quarterly basis. This will ensure accountability and cost-efficiency operations and, most importantly, that the department's expectations of the provider are being met. The core standards will also ensure that uniform services are provided in every region across the province, as these core standards will require service providers to review their service plans at varying intervals in order to determine whether service objectives are being met, whether the service is adequate, whether the service is still necessary, and whether other services are needed.

Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to providing high-quality social programs. This government is also committed to fiscal responsibility. That both these priorities can go hand in hand is completely evident in the new proposal for core standards. The result of their implementation will certainly be what the member introducing Motion 204 had in mind; that is that Albertans receive the programs, that care is specific to their needs, and that those programs are available in an efficient and inexpensive manner.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that both Motion 204 and the newly proposed core standards reflect the fact that there is much innovative and progressive thinking going on on this side of the House to ensure that social services are provided in the best way possible in this province.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I have a few very brief comments about this motion. I must admit that when I first read it, I had a certain kind of sympathy for it. In one way it's an interesting admission -- that a government member would put forward such a motion that we need strategies to evaluate the effectiveness -- because I think the general public thinks the government knows that their programs are effective, and that if they weren't effective we wouldn't be doing it or we wouldn't continue to do it. So in some ways it's an interesting admission.

But, Mr. Speaker, there's one question that is often asked of me about social programs, in particular community health care programs as well, and that is: "Well, yeah, but does it work? We're spending a lot of money. Does it work?" Then I have to say: "Well, what does 'work' mean? What does that mean to you relative to that particular program?" Of course, we're a very caring society, and we're more caring about some groups than others. We're more caring particularly where children are involved. It's offensive to us to see people in need and in want,

and we do care. But, Mr. Speaker, programs are usually judged by a number of elements, and they have to do with the dollars spent, the number of persons served relative to the dollars spent, the absence of complaints, and the presence of support. Those things are measurable, and you can quantify them. They also have to do with cultural attitudes: contemporary and conventional wisdoms which, in fact, change from time to time.

Now, the generic standards that have been developed have been spoken to just briefly, and I'm glad to see they're there; we've waited for years for them. Once again, the general public have thought that they were there all long. In fact, we've waited a long time, and now we have them. They are, in fact, only generic. I'm glad they're there, but they are not very specific, and I guess most members already recognize that.

Now, if we are going to find out ways to evaluate the effectiveness, we've got to decide: what are the results we want? What is the desired effect of program A or program B? And a good deal of this is qualitative judgments based on community attitudes at the time.

I've been around the social service field for a long time -- I don't care for any comments from the other side on how long -- but the whole business of institutional care versus community care has taken some very dramatic changes. Now, who decided and on what basis, that institutional care didn't work as well as community care? And for whom? Was it based on those four categories that I mentioned, or is it based on something else? But we all believe instinctively that community care is better, and community attitudes have changed. So we presumably support that, and it was done without a great deal of empirical data to say what worked or what didn't.

Mr. Speaker, are the measurements to be human growth? Are they to be human participation in society? Are they to be how much money is expended? Are they to be restricted only to what is provided by the so-called public purse, or are we going to talk about the huge amounts of money that are generated and expended by private purses on social services? Because they, too, need to know what works and what doesn't.

Mr. Speaker, some years back -- I guess it's close to 30 years now; the minister will know, but I'm not exactly sure. I think it's well over 25 years that FCSS was started. It was called preventive social services, and it was started by a very creative, forward-thinking government, who had a real social conscience and cared a great deal. It was one of the most creative programs in legislation regarding social services that I know of across the nation: preventive social services, now family and community support services. I have always supported it, both in its beginning and as it has continued. I've complained about not enough government funds going into it, but in theory I do indeed support it.

At the time it began, Mr. Speaker, community people who were working along with the government of the day to develop that program pleaded, begged, coaxed the government to put in the evaluative and research component. It was never done. There has never been enough money. There have never been enough funds to provide the actual on-the-street service to people that is so essential and to be able to do the constant measuring that's necessary. And there has been a great lot of competition, unnecessary duplication, buildup, in the whole field of practice of private, nonprofit versus public services; private, nonprofit versus commercial services. We don't have much in the way of qualitative and quantitative data. We make judgments based on the other kinds of factors rather than on real data about what works for people.

Now, I was interested, Mr. Speaker, to hear the hon. member talk about it, and it seems to me that while the idea is born of a real and sincere desire, perhaps the understanding of rate of change and measurement is not as deep as I would have liked. Whose measure decides when change has occurred? How long does it take? My own work in social agencies in this city and province has taught me to help other people going into the field of practice to be able to understand what is a gain, because change takes a minimum of three months, usually three years, and closer to 30 years.

Had we set up some evaluative mechanisms, had we provided resources for measurement of change at the time that preventive social services began, 30 years later we might know some things, but we've never been committed to do it and consequently it has never happened. We have robbed ourselves of being able to state categorically what works and what doesn't.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there are agents that do measure social change in general terms, and I would hope that organizations such as the social planning councils across our province would be invited to comment on a motion such as this, because I think they would have some very important things to say. This motion seems to float out as a motion designed to find out something about how public dollars are expended, and I feel that that is too faint, too small, of too little consequence, in the scene that we are looking at.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that evaluation should be a consumer/client driven mechanism, and there's been no discussion of that here today. This is not like going to school, where there is an evaluation done by the teacher in the form of exams, and you know when you're there what is expected of you, and you know what that means. This is not what we're talking about at all. This is a far more subjective measurement of whether something is working and it should, in fact, be consumer and client driven. It reminds me of when you go to training sessions or meetings. You're invited to fill out an evaluation sheet at the end of it. What did you think about it: what was good, what was bad? And sometimes you get a scale to mark on. Well, how would you feel if every time you went to one of those, the only person who evaluated the meeting was the person who produced it?

I think we've got to be very careful to make sure that when we talk about what works and what doesn't measurements and methodologies are client and consumer driven and not driven by the wish of the professionals who produce the service or governments who pay for the service to relate it only to dollars spent and numbers served, without fully comprehending the length of time that change takes, or improvement or benefits take, and the types of measurements that can be used.

Mr. Speaker, I find that the motion -- while, as I say, I have sympathy for the idea of evaluative research, I have some difficulty in supporting the idea as it was presented with the restrictions that were contained by the hon. member.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

MR. PAYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before addressing the motion and its focus of evaluating the effectiveness of social programs on clients, I want to comment on the broader principle of evaluating the effectiveness of any and all government programs.

I don't know that this has been the experience of others of our colleagues, Mr. Speaker, but it's my impression, certainly in

Fish Creek, that there is somewhat widespread perception that once a government program is devised and implemented, it's there forever, with staff committed to career survival and personal development, and with funding increased periodically to trace the inflationary curve or better. I recognize, Mr. Speaker, that this perception is not accurate and that most government programs maintain their relevance and effectiveness. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, we all know of instances where that public perception is warranted. I know that I speak for the constituents of Calgary-Fish Creek, who say they want to see more mechanisms and procedures in place, more commitment by our government to seriously and systematically evaluate our programs and reassure ourselves that a particular program is still accomplishing what it was originally set up to do by the legislators.

With that general principle as a backdrop, Mr. Speaker, I obviously want to support the motion sponsored today by the Member for Red Deer-North, but with certain qualifications.

A few days ago the Social Services minister mentioned to me that over the past two decades Social Services spending has gone from \$37 per capita to \$518 per capita. Even allowing for inflationary factors, it's obvious that these programs take a great deal of our resources, and surely we have an obligation as legislators to ensure that program goals are in fact being met. Although I am supportive of the motion, Mr. Speaker, I do have some questions or reservations about the hows of its implementation, and I would hope that time would permit the sponsoring member to maybe speak further to the hows of his motion's implementation.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that not all social programs are equally capable of having their effectiveness evaluated, a point to which one or two members have already spoken today. Some programs, it seems to me, wouldn't be too difficult to evaluate periodically. But on the other hand, I remain skeptical as to how some other programs could be easily evaluated.

Perhaps I could make the point with two examples. First, influenced positively, of course, by my seatmate the member responsible for AADAC, I would like to make the point that the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission is one of the most successful treatment programs ever implemented in the province. Part of its success, I'd like to suggest, is related to the comparative ease of evaluating program effectiveness within AADAC. I understand from my colleague the Member for Calgary-McCall that AADAC has an ongoing mandate to continually improve its services and programs.

As mentioned earlier today by the Member for Red Deer-North, follow-up and aftercare have traditionally been considered by AADAC as an integral part of client case management. Follow-up and aftercare, of course, provide one means of collecting information for any necessary adjustments to the programs which are serving the client group. Results of AADAC's investigations clearly illustrate the efficiency of deliberate follow-up and aftercare initiatives. A review of recent studies reveals that about one-half of inpatient clients and 35 to 63 percent of outpatient clients reported abstinence during a two- to three-month period prior to follow-up, and with follow-up the proportion of clients reporting satisfaction with family, health, social life, and self was considerably higher than at the program's start. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, implementation of Motion 204 would be a natural. In fact, it's largely being done now at AADAC.

On the other hand, how about social allowance programs? I suspect that they are far more difficult to have their effective-

ness periodically evaluated. It seems to me there's no question that social allowance payments vary in their effectiveness, because different people respond differently to the same element of those programs. Different people respond differently to the same program, and that surely must be acknowledged as a complicating factor in this motion that we're examining today.

I'd like to make the point with two personal examples. Many years ago I was a married and somewhat starving student living in low-rental accommodation here in Edmonton. One or two doors from our little place was a family on welfare, and periodically my wife and/or I would babysit for them. We had a hard time walking through the pantry of that place, because there were a number of gourmet foods and very expensive convenience foods that were just clearly beyond our budget. We were puzzled as to why we were forced to eat the way we did because of our circumstances when we found somewhat the reversal in this family that were on social allowance payments. The unfortunate postscript to that unfortunate situation was that that family had been on social allowance for some prolonged period of time, and as I recall, their dependency on social allowance extended for yet another considerable period.

Contrast that experience, that social allowance experience, with a young woman who is a member of my extended family. She married as a teenager, a high school dropout, two quick children, and then a deserting husband. She was left with no assets, no skills, virtually no education, and two preschoolers. She went on a social allowance program, and with the advice of a very effective social worker and with very judicious, skillful use of her social allowance payments, within a matter of months, perhaps a year, she was able to upgrade her skills, return to the work force, and become virtually completely independent.

It seems to me that a very complex answer would be required to answer the question of: what are the measurable variables that constitute two such different responses to a very well-intentioned government program? From these two examples, Mr. Speaker, I hope I've been able to illustrate some of the potential difficulties in attempting to design strategies to evaluate social program effectiveness. Notwithstanding these potential difficulties, I would like to applaud the sponsoring member for his initiative today, and I would recommend that members on both sides of the House consider the merits of passing this motion this afternoon. I am certain the Social Services minister herself has a strong interest in program evaluation. Let's give her some of the additional tools to do it.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to participate in this debate as well. I note right away in the reading of the motion under consideration that we have as its concluding clause: "the effectiveness of social programs on clients." The emphasis is on the word "on." That's an important prepositional bridge there, because ordinarily one would assume that if it's a program that is for clients, it shouldn't be having an effect on them; it should be having an effect for them. I think this is very revealing. I think we are being told just by the very motion itself that the people who need to access social service programs are not getting services that were really meant for them, to help them. In other words, things are being done to them, Mr. Speaker, and I'll leave the colloquial phrase at that.

Now, a number of members have talked about the various

programs that operate within Social Services and how it is that you could have a look to improve them and all the rest of it. It occurs to me, Mr. Speaker, that there's something real simple here that's not being talked about. That is that we have in Alberta hundreds of organizations, each of which is dedicated to a particular cause, many of which would be of interest particularly to the Social Services department but perhaps to many other departments of the Alberta government. And every single day one organization or another pumps out a report full of observations, full of recommendations, and says, "Here, government, have a look at this."

Now, it seems to me that the problem with respect to the delivery or efficacy of social services in Alberta is that the government hasn't been reading those reports or they haven't been responding to them or they don't care about the contents of those reports. And that worries me. Because you know who drafts those reports? By and large, it's frontline workers, Mr. Speaker. By and large, it's the people who really know the stuff. They work in the agencies; they work on the streets helping people; they work in the schools; they work in the Social Services department; they work in advocacy groups; they work all over the place. These people really have the frontline experience of the problems that are associated with the delivery of social services.

Now, the other real simple notion that is not being talked about here at all is a concept that is used every day by members of the Official Opposition. Every single one of us works with an advisory committee, because we don't assume that any one individual has so much ability. Really, we don't assume that anybody is an octopus and can handle a whole bunch of information responsibly. We believe the process of consultation is the means by which you can filter the wheat from the chaff. It is the means by which you can ask questions and find out the answers when it comes to whether it's a position you might take or a policy you might enact. And the committee structure works.

Now, I notice that when it's politically expedient, this government is more than prepared to strike certain types of committees. For instance, Mr. Speaker, it's prepared to completely destroy an elected board of people when it comes to multiculturalism and re-establish one that is appointed by the minister and that's run by an MLA. See, when it's politically expedient, the government can sort of figure out that committees work. They don't like them to be elected, of course; good heavens, you wouldn't want democracy to be activated, would you, Mr. Speaker? But they do like the show for committees.

Well, I think if you want information from committees, the best way to get it is to let people decide. Don't you decide who's going to be on the committee; let people decide who's going to be on the committee, and believe it: they'll find a way to make sure that the best, most well-rounded advice is going to be represented within that committee structure.

See, Mr. Speaker, I have an inner-city community office, as you probably know, and I deal with a lot of poor people. I deal with a few people that aren't poor, but I do deal with a lot of people who are poor, which is why my office is located in the inner city. And it will be no surprise to anybody in the Assembly that the bulk of the work that we do in the community office of Edmonton-Highlands is related to income security, and I guess the second greatest one would be workers' compensation. Over the last just about two years we've come to see an awful lot of the problems as they exist and as they are seen by the frontline people. Now, frontline people are both the users and the deliverers of the service.

One that has been brought to my attention as to changes that were made with respect to the AISH program about a year ago is that there is no real incentive for the severely handicapped to attempt to find part-time or worthwhile full-time employment if there is no sliding scale with respect to the benefits that they would lose from the AISH program. Of course, what we're talking about here is what amounts to a guaranteed annual income program that has no flexibility. It does not acknowledge a sliding scale so that the more you earn the less you would collect from AISH, but you wouldn't be completely uncompensated from AISH. The reason that's important to severely handicapped people is because it's very difficult for them to get both rewarding and decently paying employment. At the same time, they don't like hanging around their homes feeling like their lives aren't useful simply because they have a physical or mental disability that prevents them from getting reasonable quality work where that work exists under the circumstances, Mr. Speaker.

So they have mentioned, I know, to the government that it would be a very wise move to implement a sliding scale mechanism in the AISH program to offer reasonable incentive to go out and find work. As I say, they know that a lot of them are never going to get jobs that are going to pay them 40 or 50 grand a year, and they don't kid themselves. On the other hand, there isn't much merit in them working for \$3.80 an hour knowing that the minute they go over whatever the allocation is -- \$720 a month -- they're going to have to start losing money rapidly and the minute they get over \$850 combined AISH and earnings, I think, they get no AISH at all. It doesn't make sense.

The same is true for social allowance recipients. As you probably know, Mr. Speaker, the growth opportunities in employment are actually more in the part-time than in the full-time sector. A number of people, often single moms but a lot of other people as well, find themselves unable to secure full-time employment. They're not unwilling to work part time. They would like to do that, but because there is this fixed amount that they can earn over which any additional amount shall be directly deducted from their social allowance cheques, it is, again, not worth their while to do so.

Now, a number of organizations that I know of have brought this matter to the attention of the government, at least since the commencement of this decade. Currently the limit, I believe, is set at about \$120-125 per month maximum earnings, after which deductions would be made from the social allowance cheque; I hope I've got that right. But the part that I do have right for sure, whether or not I've got it down to the penny on the exact amount, is that this applies whether you're a single person or whether you're a person with six dependants. There is no flexibility in the program at all. I know this has been brought to the attention of the government, Mr. Speaker, because I've seen the reports, and it's not a new concern.

One of the concerns that is new, perhaps, although I believe it's been brought to the attention of the minister -- at least one of my constituents says it has -- is that they're so understaffed over at the Social Services department that they can't keep up with the phone demands for information and help. So what people end up doing is they sit there for a couple of hours dialing and redialing and redialing ad infinitum, trying to get through to the Social Services office. The problem they run into is that they keep getting a busy signal, and it seems to me that if practically every little mom-and-pop shop in town can rent a telephone banking system that allows calls to stack up and then come

through automatically in the order in which they were received, surely the Social Services department's offices could do the same sort of thing. It may not be so awful for those people who might not have other things to do, but it is really awful for the people who are trying to help them. It is really hard on the advocates.

Now, as I was saying earlier with respect to just taking good old input from the frontline workers, I can think offhand -- and I've just been, you know, sitting here writing notes off the cuff -- of a number of different organizations that serve different constituencies that have made recommendations over the years that would enhance the efficacy, the cost efficiency, and the long-term effectiveness of Social Services for its clients by adopting certain measures. One that comes to mind is the provincial organization of battered women's shelters, which has argued for several years -- basically, since the provincial organization was established, and prior to their establishment, since the individual battered women's shelters came into existence -- that one needs to put an emphasis on long-term prevention with regard to wife abuse; beating up women, in other words. They've argued that we need to change our educational curriculum in a way that will reflect new values, values that say that beating up women is neither fashionable nor honourable, to change the curriculum to encourage all people to understand that violence is not a satisfactory or acceptable means of conflict resolution, and that if we don't teach children these sorts of things, then you're not going to be able to get rid of the need for battered women's shelters in the long run.

They've also argued for years for more spaces so they don't have to turn away women and their children, and they've argued for subsistence core funding. This may be the first year in which they will actually receive that. We'll see if the dissemination of the announced budget actually delivers on its promise.

The educators in the schools have called for years for various preventive programs and for authority to help rewrite school curricula to include sexuality education in the classroom from fairly early ages so people understand that their sexuality also brings with it a commitment to responsibility, so they understand that they may end up, without planning to be, parents, and that they better know in advance all of the options that are available to them in order to make sure they don't accidentally end up as parents.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, organizations that have been really active in the inner city over, I imagine, dozens of years -- although I've only come to know them over the last maybe 15 years -- have made recommendations with respect to, for instance, housing in the inner city. The need for anything above substandard housing in the inner city is really desperate. A number of organizations have made pleas to the government over the years to be innovative in helping to provide housing that is not strictly owned by slumlords for the purpose of making a whole lot of money, very often off the social allowance cheques of the individuals.

It seems to me that we have all sorts of organizations, even theatric troupes, which over the years have been able to offer an important role in changing the way people think, changing the way people respond, so that in the long term, certain social services wouldn't be needed. I brought this up last night during the culture estimates, and I raise it again this afternoon because it's such a good one; that's the Catalyst Theatre program *Feeling Yes, Feeling No*. It's just one of many examples where people, whether volunteer or paid, whether performing artists, visual artists, or any other sort of artists, are prepared to bring to a

broad clientele a message that is both entertaining, artistic, and useful to them in both the short and the long run.

Now, the Member for Calgary-Fish Creek was talking about how it is that social allowance payments vary according to the recipient. I believe what he's really getting at is an issue that is constantly being referred to by the Social Services minister, and that is that the money is enough for those who must live on it; it's just whether or not they know how to balance their budgets. But every social agency that has had a serious look at this issue says that that's not true. The only time you can be more confident of saying that the money that people are given to live on on a daily basis if they have no other wherewithal for survival is significantly below the poverty line and significantly below that level for which most people can reasonably budget -- we operate on the assumption, of course, that they do want an acceptable standard of nutrition and also want to be able to provide, you know, sundries for their household, including laundry soap and that sort of thing.

Now, I've heard the minister say that there's no such thing as an objective basis upon which she can make those assessments. She has argued in the past that everything is subjective. Well, that's true. I mean, you know, there is almost nothing in this world that isn't subjective. Our definition of a table versus a desk is subjective. Our definition of a ladder versus a whole bunch of sticks of wood is subjective. Everything is subjective. But one attempts to be objective, and if one is serious in that attempt, one listens to all sides. It seems to me that not all sides have been listened to in this case and that in fact the subjectivity is expressing itself in arbitrary measures such as the recent announcement that the food allowance for social allowance recipients shall be increased by 13 percent. Now, I don't argue that that was needed. In fact, I suspect that if you went out and sampled your average basket of goods, you'd find out that since the last increase for the food allowance for social allowance recipients, the need would actually be greater than 15 percent.

So I put to you, Mr. Speaker, that all you have to do is get the AMHC and CMHC statistics that show you the average price for various apartments and dwelling units and you start to get the picture that, in fact, on the current social allowance/shelter allowance raise you'd need more than two social allowance recipients living in a one-bedroom apartment in order for them to make ends meet; that is, somewhere between two and three human beings in a one-bedroom apartment. Of course, you're not going to get two and a half people in an apartment. It's not very likely that any landlord is going to accept three in a one-bedroom apartment. Therefore, the objective reality is that even two people living in an average priced one-bedroom apartment, depending on the district and town -- I'm not talking about the high end of the market -- even two people sharing such a one-bedroom apartment are still going to be spending more than they are allocated for their shelter allowance on the very rent that they pay.

Now, there is nothing mysterious about this. One doesn't need to, you know, invent a brand-new evaluation structure and a brand-new bureaucracy to figure out the solutions to the problems I have enumerated. One needs only to have a genuine commitment to listening, a genuine commitment to sifting through information, a genuine commitment to democratic dialogue, and a genuine commitment to serving the needs, not only in the short term but also the very long term, of Albertans who find themselves relying on social services of any or several descriptions.

My colleagues the members for Edmonton-Avonmore and

Edmonton-Calder have discussed some of the other aspects of this issue with respect to day care, family violence, et cetera. Fundamentally, ultimately, we shouldn't even have to be talking about this, Mr. Speaker. It should be that the department is working with an ongoing committee, a voluntary committee -- you don't have to pay anybody; I don't pay anybody to be on my advisory committees; none of us do and the committees work -- comprised of people who really do know what they're talking about, who are at the front line either as recipients or deliverers of the service. I'll just bet you a million bucks, not that I even have 10 to bet, but I'll just betcha that a lot of problems would get solved very quickly.

There is nothing the matter with implementing a strategy that calls for a working committee to be an advisory committee to the Department of Social Services, but I'm not so sure that all of the other implications as enumerated by the member sponsoring the motion are exactly what's needed. Check your soul and see if you have a real commitment to serving the needs of those who need your help. If you really have the commitment, get a committee together, start listening to the people that are on the front line. You'd be amazed how quickly things fall into place.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Olds-Didsbury.

MR. BRASSARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak in support of Motion 204, and I find that it is in keeping with our government's efforts to ensure that Albertans receive the quality service they deserve without paying for redundant and top-heavy services.

I congratulate the Member for Red Deer-North on his foresight, because just on March 15 of this year our hon. Minister of Social Services announced her proposals for core standards for service providers funded by her department. These proposals are very similar to the recommendations made here in Motion 204.

Let me just address the proposed core standards and how they relate to the direction of service availability in this province. Each department has a mandate for which they are funded, and they are reasonable and expected outcomes of the success of the department's programs. The mandate of the Department of Social Services is to alleviate the more severe disadvantages that people face, whether they be handicaps, money, or child welfare, for example. The resources provided by the Department of Social Services to service providers are given for direct service only. Core standards and the suggested program studies and evaluation would make program managers more accountable for their programs. The managers would have to ensure that the programs they ran were providing results and were therefore worthy of continued funding. The core standards are designed to ensure that agencies will be more accountable for their programs and that the services they provide do indeed show results.

At this point in time the standards that will eventually be implemented will be general in nature, while program-specific standards will be developed. The proposed standards outline the basic expectation of the department regarding the safe and effective operation of services in the areas of child care, services for individuals with disabilities, women's shelters, and residences for homeless men and women. Basic requirements will be established while still giving agencies flexibility in how they operate. The population that will be served, the variety of social

services provided, the variety of treatment methods, and the diverse nature of the change brought about by those treatments will be addressed, and strict general standard requirements would interfere rather than enhance the services that this program would provide.

The core standards proposed are to ensure that the services provided by Social Services meet minimum requirements in several areas. First, clients' legal rights and physical safety must be protected. For example, while reports of inappropriate care are rare, there is a proposal that will require personnel and clients to immediately report instances of alleged client abuse to a senior officer of the organization. These will be documented, investigated, and provisions provided for legal representation for the client.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Another area that is stressed in the proposed standards is a call for a service planning process which would establish what the clients' needs are, how the needs will be met, how the service provider will monitor and assess progress towards the clients' objectives. It is proposed that the service provided to each client will be set out in a general written service plan or an individual written service plan. These service plans would specify, for instance, the client's or guardian's perception of service needs, an analysis of the individual's needs, the service that will be provided, arrangements for the client's special needs, and objectives of the service or indicators to determine when the objectives are being met. These specifics are important because they would ensure that evaluation of the services provided is an ongoing process and not just a reactive process to be implemented when there is a problem or a perceived problem.

In the past the many services provided by the Department of Social Services have been very difficult to monitor. The seven regions in the province which deliver social services have at times been considered far too autonomous, far too independent. This meant that in many cases a program or even an entire region would have difficulties in their program and may not have met the needs of the individuals they were supposed to serve. Because the regions were so autonomous, it was difficult or even impossible to correct this problem. Often program managers, being human, endeavoured to protect their own pet programs or people, so problems would remain uncorrected.

The proposed core standards should really make a difference in terms of helping to ensure that each region and program is indeed meeting the needs of the individuals they are intended to serve. They will help evaluate the effectiveness of services and will indicate which treatments or programs are indeed the most effective, for whom the particular treatments or programs are most effective and, finally, how the programs would be better managed.

With core standards it would be a manageable task to compare programs and their success rates across the province. As this is done, these programs with higher success rates will indeed be identified, and it will be a matter of determining what they are doing that is different from other similar programs. If it is possible, their methods will then be adopted by the other programs.

There's another consideration in this accepted move towards privatization in many of these programs. The minute we talk about privatization, Mr. Speaker, we automatically imply a profit motivation or concept. This movement towards privatiza-

tion would bring into the program people who are driven by profit, and it would be a simple matter for profit to dominate the program if the parameters were not clearly defined and well spelled out by the core parameters and philosophies.

Mr. Speaker, this core of information would help employees to work on common goals and to draw support from the experiences of others. Evaluation is an ongoing exercise. These standards would put in place the vehicle to ensure that the service provider reviews the service plan -- at appropriate intervals, of course -- to determine whether the service objectives are being met, whether the service is adequate, whether the service is still necessary, and whether other services are needed. There is also a call for the service provider to document its overall performance, including performance in terms of achieving desired results for clients, and report to the department at least annually and more often if it is stipulated in the contract.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to again state my support for Motion 204. It is important that the people of Alberta receive the best possible service from programs that are accessible, effective, and cost-effective. The proposed core standards recently released by the Minister of Social Services are a very good start in that process.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make a few comments, bearing in mind the admonition by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands that indeed we should be listening, and I have been attentive all afternoon. But I thought it was important not only to listen to my colleagues and the members of the opposition because all of us will have had considerable experience in working with constituents who find themselves in a position to need access to government programs and, therefore, have something to offer.

I am most appreciative of the hon. Member for Red Deer-North in bringing forward this motion, because indeed right across the province, since I have become Minister of Social Services and prior to that as a private member and with a former ministry, I have had people raise with me a concern, and a wondering concern, I guess, and that is: are you sure that the programs you have in Social Services are indeed the best you can do for our citizens? That concern is raised in a way that -- and I believe the hon. Member for Red Deer-North has alluded to it in citing one of the studies he has read, and I believe it is important that we read all the information that is made available to us. Most of the information, of course, comes about as a result of studies that are put in place by the so-called experts in our society, and we can deal with, I guess, what an expert is.

But I was most troubled by some of the comments that were made, particularly by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, because I think she indicated that her perception is -- and I stand to be corrected -- that you can get whatever results you want and there really isn't any such thing as an objective study. It makes me wonder about the people we have in our postsecondary institutions.

Mr. Speaker, what I wanted to add was . . . First of all, a bit of information. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands indicated some of the perceptions that she shares about our programs, especially in the income security area and in the AISH program, and also indicated that she has a number of these people, particularly poor people, in her constituency. I sat here and felt very badly that a member of the opposition -- given, I believe, that she is their government House leader as well -- with a constituency such as she has does not understand

or have the correct information about a program. I would urge her to read my comments, and I would welcome her to my office to have a full explanation, particularly about the AISH pension program. We not only have a very generous basic exemption when it comes to earned income, indeed after that we have precisely what she was requesting, and that was a sliding scale. So I would urge all hon. members to make sure they have accessed all the information so that they can better serve their constituents.

A final comment, Mr. Speaker. The discussion is an important one. Indeed, because we all have different life experiences, it is hard for us to clearly view all situations, in that as we speak about programs that are made available for our citizens, we may have a different perception as to what the public purse should pay for, and therefore that would affect our evaluation of them.

The academics in our society, and they have been around for a long period of time, and so often we will look for their guidance, indeed have taken what I would call pretty significant swings in the pendulum. They have held onto that pendulum and have been the major group that has held onto that pendulum as we have seen the advocacy for particular programs. So I think it is inherent in all of us and it moves all of us to take the step away from the advice given by the academics in our society, and given that they are training all the people that are coming forward and working in this programming area, it does indeed -- and I would agree with the hon. members -- move us to speak to the people who are being served and the community people who are serving those people.

But I can only say this: those very same community people across this province also differ in their advice. The Member for Edmonton-Highlands is dead wrong when she says that all of them advocate thus and so. They do not. They have absolutely, categorically, in many instances said to me that the shelter allowance is enough, if we're talking about income security; the food allowance is enough, if we're talking about income security. I'd be delighted to afterwards share that information with hon. members. But the critical factor is the sharing of information as to how to best utilize those allowances.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the support of this House, of the members of the Legislature, for this motion, and I also look forward to written comments. The motion may or may not be passed, but I would look forward to their written comments to myself and to the department with suggestions as to how evaluations can occur, in that they can occur with the best interests of society at heart and those individuals out there whom we all seek to serve in order that they may once again resume a productive role in our society and one that enhances their dignity, because after all, I believe that is all that is in the minds of the hon. members who have spoken today.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. member sum up?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Red Deer-North.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd be pleased to sum up, and in doing so, I'd like to thank all members of the House today, on both sides, for their input.

In summation, I'd just like to address quickly a couple of things. We did hear a lot of talk about variables when we're talking about doing evaluations, and certainly there are variables. There always will be. That reality, though, should not in

any way keep us from considering this motion in terms of wanting an evaluation to be in place.

Then there was the question of who is doing the evaluation. Of course, who is doing the evaluation is a factor, and there has to be a genuine attempt to do all that can be done in any evaluation to remove the possibility of personal bias. I believe I addressed that in my initial remarks, and I would like to stress that. We know that personal bias can enter into the evaluating process, and because of that it is crucial who is doing it.

The Member for Edmonton-Avonmore, I believe, expressed some concern on the one particular item which I was citing as an example of evaluation, being the minimum income experiment. It's instructive to note that the people, social scientists, who conducted that experiment were indeed the ones who thought that the minimum income experiment would be effective in eradicating poverty. So in line with what that particular member said, it is instructive to note that in that particular experiment the ones who conducted it were actually hoping that the results would be different than the results in fact were. I think that particular case shows that though there can be bias in an experiment like this or in an evaluation, if the evaluators are truly being scientific in their approach, then they will be willing to accept the result whether or not it happens to support their own particular bias.

So yes, who is doing it? -- that is an important question. But we have to believe and hope that enough different things can be put in place to overcome the possibility of that bias coming through. I think we also have to be realistic and accept the fact that all of us, in whatever approaches we have and wherever we're going, have biases one way or another. But certainly when we're considering a motion like this, which is asking that we evaluate the effectiveness of programs on the recipients of those programs, surely we are mature enough to be able to transcend political ideologies and say that we're about this motion because we want what is best for the recipient of the program. We're determined that it's the welfare -- and I use the *Oxford Dictionary* definition of the word -- of the recipient of the program that is at stake. That is the prime motive.

Certainly financial factors come into play; there's no question about that. That is why, in summation, again we have to realize this is not a motion that is driven by strictly a mercenary spirit, but in fact we realize that if we're going to care for people . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question, question.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I don't think this is a supplementary where I'm only permitted three sentences.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about caring for people. If we're going to care for people, we obviously have to be cognizant of the resources we've got to do that. If we have pro-

grams in place in which we are expending large amounts of money and, in fact, not caring for people, then it's the people themselves who are missing out.

Another point that came up, as I wrap up here: different people respond differently. An opposition member suggested that that might be a reason why we should not pass this motion: because different people respond differently in different situations. The Member for Calgary-Fish Creek brought out very clearly a situation where two people responded very differently. Certainly that's a factor, but that should not keep us from passing a motion which is asking us to evaluate our programs.

That's why we can use the example of the negative income experiment, in which 8,700 people were used. When Mr. Gallup or Mr. Reid do their respective polls, they only select 1,000 and a few odd people -- not that the people are odd; just 1,000-plus people -- and yet they say that those polls are good and accurate within 2 or 3 percent 19 times out of 20. Whatever that means I'm not exactly sure, but even with just over a thousand people you can counterbalance the effect of different people responding differently is what I'm trying to get across, and therefore an evaluation of the magnitude of the one which I cited, 8,700 people, certainly is far in excess of any requirement to balance out those types of variables.

There was a suggestion that people in certain situations could use an evaluation in a mean-spirited way. Again, Mr. Speaker, that's just another example of something that has to be taken into consideration when an evaluation is ongoing. Yes, people could use an evaluation in a mean-spirited way, either to get back at an individual or to try and prove their own point at the expense of other results coming forth. But again, those possibilities, those things happening, should not in any way keep us from actually going ahead with the evaluation procedures.

Those are some of the items that were mentioned, and I believe that if we carefully give those consideration, take all those into effect, realize the sensitivities involved -- again, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is the care of the individual, the program being such that it is going to be beneficial.

With those remarks I thank the members and would urge everybody to vote in the affirmative, and I would ask that the question be taken.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion carried]

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, when the House reconvenes this evening at 8 o'clock, it will do so in Committee of Supply with the estimates of the Department of Economic Development and Trade.

[The House recessed at 5:22 p.m.]

