

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Thursday, May 12, 1988 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 88/05/12

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

O Lord, grant us a daily awareness of the precious gift of life which You have given us.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly we dedicate our lives anew to the service of our province and our country.

Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 28
Police Act

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 28, Police Act.

This Bill clarifies the roles and responsibilities of police commissions, chiefs of police, municipal councils, and the Law Enforcement Appeal Board. It also provides a variety of policing options to municipalities not presently available and raises the population threshold at which a municipality becomes responsible for its own policing service. It also addresses issues respecting complaints concerning police practice.

[Leave granted; Bill 28 read a first time]

Bill 17
Municipal District of Brazeau No. 77
Incorporation Act

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 17, the Municipal District of Brazeau No. 77 Incorporation Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to allow for the formation of a new municipal district in the Drayton Valley area in accordance with the wishes of the people of that area as expressed by plebiscite.

[Leave granted; Bill 17 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to file for the Legislature Library four copies of a document entitled Alberta Business Program Guide. Copies will be made available to all members of the Assembly.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Solicitor General for '86-87.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure, sir, to introduce

to you and to Members of the Legislative Assembly, 31 members from the Madonna community school. They're grade 6 students, and they're accompanied by their teacher Mary Annetless and parents Mrs. Cirone and Mrs. Edith Davison. I had an opportunity to meet with them earlier, and it's a real pleasure to welcome them. I would ask that they would stand and receive the warm applause of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of the Environment, followed by Olds-Didsbury and then Dunvegan.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, seated in the public gallery today are four students and a teacher from the Meadowview school. The four students are in grade 6. The Meadowview school is located approximately 20 miles to the west of the town of Barrhead and is located in the county of Barrhead. They're visiting the Legislative Assembly today as part of a school project.

Members may wonder why there are only four students in grade 6 in Meadowview. Well, Meadowview school is one of those small rural schools located in Alberta that has a multigrade approach. There are some people in the area who believe that schools such as that should not exist, but all members should know that the MLA for the area doesn't take that same view, and the school remains in effect. So I'm very pleased today, Mr. Speaker, to introduce to this Assembly the four students and their teacher Miss Karen Aleksuk, who are seated in the public gallery. I would ask all members to welcome them to the Assembly.

MR. BRASSARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, 43 grade 10 students from the lovely town of Carstairs. These students are accompanied by their teachers Mr. Dale Weiss and Mrs. Caroline Brinton, and I would ask that they stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you on behalf of my colleague Bob Elliott, the MLA for Grande Prairie, 60 students from the Bert Bowes junior high school. They are accompanied today by their teachers Bruce Chisholm, Les Ellis, Cathy Green, and Marjorie Allen, and bus driver Marty Clarke. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege for me to introduce today a very ambitious group of people and a group, I might add, that in the area of child care have been very helpful to the minister and in terms of their organization I'm sure have been helpful to one another in speaking to better quality child care in Alberta. This group has been called the Network, a very informal organization to begin with, facilitated by a lady, formerly my constituent, Noreen Murphy, who now is in Calgary, unfortunately not being able to be with them today. We've had several meetings, and we'll have another one this afternoon.

I'd like to introduce them individually and ask them to remain standing until they're all introduced. First is Patti Penner from the Calgary regional association. Next is Gail Millen, Southern Alberta Private Day Care Association; Kitty Brennan, Alberta Association for Family Day Homes; Kate Watts, Non-profit Centres, Edmonton; Malcolm Read, Colleges Early Childhood Development Programs; Kathy Ramstad, Central Alberta

Day Care Directors; Conny Hippe, United Childcare Association; Kathy Barnhart, Alberta Association for Young Children; Karen Charlton, Southern Regional Day Care Directors Association; John Samaska, Day Care Society of Alberta; Marilyn McCord, Edmonton Coalition for Quality Child Care; Sherrill Brown, Early Childhood Professional Association of Alberta; and Wendy Reid, Calgary Out-of-School Care. Mr. Speaker, they're all, as you can see, in the public gallery. I ask them to forgive me if I haven't pronounced all the names right. Please welcome to this Assembly.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Health Services User Fees

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, in Alberta local boards of health have always been very reluctant to apply user fees to their services, especially their preventive health services, and the laws in Alberta have never explicitly allowed them to apply user fees for their services. But now we have Bill 36, which will explicitly allow for such user fees, including for preventive health services. My question is to the Minister of Community and Occupational Health. In setting out to allow this sort of structure for user fees, did the minister keep in mind or take account of the fact that this is probably going to lead to greater health care costs if people are deterred from going to the very preventive services that help keep them out of hospital, keep them out of doctors' offices?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, we were very mindful of that concern, and that is why we have put in the legislation authority for health units to be able to charge fees for certain services pursuant to regulations that will be drawn up prior to the proclamation of the Act. So, Mr. Speaker, the government will have the authority to keep control on those kinds of user fees before they're implemented.

MS BARRETT: Well, supplementary question to the minister then. Is it his intention and will he state categorically on behalf of his government that no preventive services offered by local boards of health will be allowed to carry a user fee with them? Will he make that clear right now?

MR. DINNING: I have to ask the question, Mr. Speaker: what is a preventive service? Because today a number of health units are offering the likes of prenatal classes. In some cases they're offering food for life programs. I think of the Leduc-Strathcona health unit, where I was out at a food for life nutritional meal one evening. Those are preventive programs. But those programs are being charged for today a very modest, a very reasonable fee, those fees having been collected for the last number of years. So in fact what we're doing is authorizing a procedure that in many cases has been going on for quite some time but will now enable us to work with the health units to put a proper control and give some provincewide perspective and balance to the charging of some of these legitimate fees.

MS BARRETT: I think what the minister's doing is opening the door for further user fees to compensate for whenever his department underfunds the local health units, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister will tell us this, tell Albertans today. A parent, say, with three children has a choice: either they get their inoculations for the children and pay a price, or they buy

food. Is that the sort of dilemma that this minister is going to put ordinary Albertans in?

MR. DINNING: Categorically, no, Mr. Speaker.

MS BARRETT: Well, final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister or perhaps the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care explain to Albertans why it is that this most important, the single most cost-saving element of our entire health care system is being opened up, first of all, to user fees and, secondly, to deterrents to keep people away because they have to pay user fees? Where's the sense?

MR. DINNING: As usual, Mr. Speaker, the opposition is trying to create that fear, that unnecessary fear. That is clearly not laid out in either the intention of the government policy or in the legislation that's been laid down. Hon. members know that health units have been charging fees for a number of services in a very narrow area of their delivery of services. But in those areas such as immunization of children, public health inspections, and other mandatory, required programs of the health unit, there will be no user fees for those services.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I think we were all pleased when the minister indicated that family planning would become a part of all of our public health units. However, this piece of legislation flies in the face of what we believed was going to happen. In fact, the family planning units will now be allowed to charge fees and may have to charge fees, discouraging those where the need is greatest.

MR. DINNING: In fact, Mr. Speaker, today those clinics in Calgary and Edmonton that are providing family planning, providing birth control counseling, and in some cases providing contraceptives, are charging those fees today. Those fees are not prohibitive in any way and will not be set in any way that would become prohibitive. In the event that an individual is unable to pay for the services that he receives at some clinics, such as Calgary and Edmonton today, that fee is waived.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, with the growing elderly population tripling, how does the user fee fit with the government policy statement, Caring & Responsibility, that was introduced in this House recently?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, it's a very good question, because today our policies in health units are quite in keeping and perfectly in line with what has been laid out in our Caring & Responsibility paper, that in our health units for home care, including homemaking services, health units are asking those individuals who can afford to pay for the service to pay a maximum of \$300 a month. Those fees are already being charged, and I have not heard from one single Albertan who has been denied service because they are unable to pay the fee.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to designate the second question to the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

Regulation of Franchises

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and concerns the Franchises Act. Not only does the Franchises Act make it impossible for

her department to shield the "little guys," to use her own phrase from earlier in the week, from extortionate franchise terms where the franchisor falls within the exemption provisions of the Act -- of which I'm sure she's aware -- as we saw earlier this week, but also, according to the minister's department, they lack the means to bring to book franchisors who simply ignore their promises to the department and impose predatory terms not even in their approved prospectuses. My questions is: when will the minister move to stop up these two devastating loopholes in the Act?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, the Franchises Act of Alberta is the only such Act in all of Canada. As I mentioned earlier this week, I'm much more used to being asked questions as to why we are preventing franchise operations in Alberta, because the regulations through that Act are so onerous it discourages businessmen and women from going into franchises in Alberta. So I'm pleased to see the interest from the other side of the House on this subject.

The purpose of the Franchises Act, however, is not to make the deal between the franchisor and the franchisee. The Franchises Act aims to have all of the facts known to the franchisee so that that person can make the deal if he or she wants to do so, knowing all of the facts before him or her. There have been from time to time some franchisors who have not kept up to date with their filings. I believe in particular the case that the hon. member was kind enough to discuss with me earlier, before he raised these questions in the House with me -- my understanding is that in fact there are some contractual questions between the franchisor and the franchisee that are in the courts, allegations being on both sides that there were breaches of the contract.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, that's perfectly true, Mr. Speaker, but we're not talking about that. We're talking about the divergence from the filed and approved prospectus in practise, so that they're putting into effect what was not approved. My question, then, is: having gotten, in many cases and then some, the life savings of the franchisees for the franchise -- the particular case I mentioned to the minister, an Ontario company in the photo processing business -- then imposing much harsher terms of trade than in the approved prospectus and the department saying that their hands are tied because they deal only with filing what is alleged to be the material facts at the beginning, will the minister co-operate in untying the department's hands in dealing with such a situation?

MS McCOY: Again, Mr. Speaker, in the case to which the hon. member is referring, I gather that there were several other franchisees who were able to negotiate an acceptable agreement between the franchisor and the franchisee in each case, so that they were not in a position of unfair bargaining. The one case that is not resolved, as I understand, is in the courts.

Now, in terms of the balance in the statute -- on the one hand, helping the little guys and on the other hand, allowing entrepreneurial activities to proceed in Alberta -- that we are always measuring to see whether we have the correct balance. That particular statute has been under review for the last 12 months, watching for incidents just such as are being raised. No conclusion has been finally reached as yet.

MR. SPEAKER: For the elucidation of the House, perhaps the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona could give us the name

of the company. I assume it's not Red Rooster, which was raised the other day, but some other. Because the House is a little bit at a loss as to what is really the issue. Thank you. Please, Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes. I hadn't intended to mention the name of the company, but it's not Red Rooster, Mr. Speaker. I can mention it if you wish.

It's the principle of the thing we're getting at, and it's exactly that point that I'm dealing with. The principle is that there are two huge loopholes that you can drive a bus through in this Act. When will the minister move to stop them up? How about next week?

MS McCOY: The luxury of being on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker, is that one can indulge in fantasies of dictatorship and arbitrary government.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, it's the first time anyone's ever accused me of being fantastical.

The civil remedies set out in the Act are commendable but incomplete and, complete or not, beyond the means of most franchisees to employ, given the high price of lawyers. So I ask: does the minister not recognize the need for her department to have the ability to come down very hard on those who promise the department one thing and visit quite another thing upon the hapless franchisees?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure anyone who is addressing the hon. member on the other side would no doubt have very often said "fantastic" in an enthusiastic tone of voice.

In answer to the question, however, there is always a balance that has to be maintained. What the object of that statute is is to ensure that the framework is in place so that the franchisee on the one hand and the franchisor on the other hand can come to a fair deal, equal bargaining power, no surprises. Of course, we are looking to see whether the statute in practice provides that kind of pragmatic balance for those people in the marketplace.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: To the minister. It is not a luxury for small business to be swamped by large business. Will the minister please inform this House when concrete action will be taken to redress the imbalance that is so clear in this case between large business and small business and will become that much more severe in light of the possibility of a free trade agreement that will allow large American corporations to move into provinces like Alberta and manipulate and usurp the livelihood of small businesspeople in this province?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I think the assumptions with which the hon. member is dealing have somehow leapt from a small case to a universal case, and I think the logic is not following the facts of the case that we've been discussing here. Again I say that the object of the Act is to maintain that balance, and we are monitoring whether it is effective in the marketplace. In fact, of all the franchises that are in Alberta, it would appear to be supplying a good framework for them.

If I am asked a question on free trade, I always like to take the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to point out how many of our emerging businesses, our small businessmen and women, will

have a quarter of a million people to sell to. My prediction would be that it would be Albertans selling into that market and taking advantage of Americans, and that is the message that I would like to leave.

MR. SPEAKER: Westlock-Sturgeon, a main question.

Agricultural Assistance

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question today is to the Premier. It's with respect to an all-party Senate committee that published an April 28 report entitled Financing the Family Farm. It says, amongst many other things:

The very survival of many family farms depends on government support to reduce "unmanageable" debt loads. . . . [Nearly] 31 per cent of those in the industry were . . . "practically insolvent" or having serious difficulties coping with debt.

My question to the minister is: when is he going to realize that this is just too important a matter to leave with his two ministers of Agriculture and appoint a special task force to look into debt of Alberta farmers?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the matter is already being dealt with by the ministers involved.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, this government usually makes great noise about what they're doing. I haven't heard of any special ministers' task force to look into debt management of the farmers. Would the Premier then go at least this far in the interim, before he puts forward this committee that he says is already done, which I still don't understand. Is he prepared to postpone or ask the Agricultural Development Corporation to suspend all capital and interest payments by farmers to the extent of their taxable income? No taxable income, no payments.

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, we've heard about the heartless moneylenders; now we have one on the Premier's side there.

Since he's refused to set up a committee, he's refused to suspend the Agricultural Development Corporation's foreclosures of farms, would he take some action and go this far. that he would set up a special committee on his own front bench -- it needn't be in the policy -- to review any foreclosures or any quitclaims that are now due and are coming due over the next six months?

MR. GETTY: As a matter of course, Mr. Speaker, such things are reviewed by the lending institution.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, this is almost unbelievable. We have one of our major industries, that the Premier is committed to saying are number one in the province, going down the drain. Now, would he go this far: to ask his Treasurer, who has used a lot of imagination occasionally, and his ministers of Agriculture to contact their federal counterparts to work out a solution so that at least in the generations to come the Tory party won't go down in history as those that presided over the dissolution of the family farm?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's unbelievable that the hon. member is now predicting the complete failure of the agricultural industry in Alberta. As a matter of fact, the opposite is

true. The hon. member is trying to make a case, I guess, to scare somebody; I don't know who. So far the only thing he has done by his constant negative pronouncements about the Alberta agricultural industry is prevent people who may well be coming in here to participate in that industry or to lend money to our farmers to have second thoughts. Because why would you have somebody who purports to represent a party in our province who spends day after day being negative about the agricultural industry in this province? And then we are working to try and build up that industry, to bring in lenders, to help our farmers and ranchers lower their input costs and look forward into the future for the time that grain prices strengthen again, taking positive actions to help our farmers and ranchers, lowering their input costs, reducing the cost of energy, reducing the cost of fertilizer, reducing the cost of money, doing the things that are necessary to make sure that is a strong, successful industry in this province and will be long after the hon. member is no longer in this Legislature.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, it's the Premier's own report that predicts the failure of their policies by estimating that 93,000 Albertans will be gone from rural Alberta by the year 2001. I'd like to ask the Premier if he's prepared to stand in his place and tell this Assembly that his government has done enough to respond to the debt crisis on Alberta farms.

MR. GETTY: As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Associate Minister of Agriculture said that with the moves she has made -- and she's constantly reviewing other opportunities to assist the agriculture industry in Alberta. But it may as well be clear even in the NDP's mind that there are some people who will not be able to continue to make it in any industry, whether it be the energy industry where people have fallen out of, whether it be the agriculture industry, or others. There will always be some who are unable to continue on in an industry. That's a fact of life.

Now, if I understand the position of the NDP, and that is you get a great big socialistic program going and you try and prop up everything all over the place until finally the whole thing collapses, because there is no way that the taxpayer can carry these NDP ideas on their back . . . That's why they've turfed them all out of government in Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: Stony Plain, supplementary.

MR. HERON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To try and remove the scare tactics that we've heard and the words like "debt crisis" and that, I would like to ask the associate minister a supplementary question. Given that last quarter farm arrears data from the banks and ADC showed a trend downwards, would the associate minister please confirm the profile of the ADC borrowers to date; that is, that 3,000 of the 9,000 borrowers have prepaid and some 3,300 are current, leaving financially stressed borrowers at 2,700?

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to inform the Assembly that the figures used by the member are accurate. I would also like to say to the leader of the Liberal Party that in all cases where there is a stressed account, ADC, and I'm sure every other lending agency, works through that account with the borrower to see if there are alternatives and ways and means of working through the debt obligations in the long term.

Cargill Plant

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of the Environment. It was my information that yesterday the minister was in High River talking to the Cargill beef packing plant organization. I wonder if the minister would now bring us up to date on the status of the Cargill plant in High River.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Bow Valley is correct. Yesterday I was in High River along with the very dynamic MLA for Highwood, Mr. Harry Alger, and we met with Cargill Limited and the town of High River and Ducks Unlimited and others and basically indicated that a solution had now been reached in dealing with the waste water effluent that would be emanating from the Cargill plant. An announcement was made that construction should begin at the Cargill plant in the month of June 1988, and a solution to the waste water effluent problem would be in place no later than June 1, 1989, at which point in time the Cargill plant will begin the manufacture of processed beef in the province of Alberta.

MR. MUSGROVE: That's great news for the beef producers in Alberta. Now, the solution to the effluent from the Cargill plant. Some of the water users from the Bow downriver were concerned, and it's my understanding now -- and I would ask the minister to confirm it -- that the effluent will not be put in the Bow River.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, as has been stated in the House in recent weeks -- one is that there would be no effluent from Cargill being permitted to go into the Highwood River. There'll be no effluent. As I indicated in the House last week in response to a question from the Member for Calgary-Glenmore, we will not permit waste water to emanate from Cargill into the Bow River. What has occurred is that there's been a tripartite approach that would involve Cargill, the town of High River, Ducks Unlimited, that would see the waste water moved to a lake -- well, a lake, I guess, in southern Alberta without any water -- called Frank Lake, and we would create a wetlands project, habitat enhancement project, for waterfowl using the waste water from Cargill, the town of High River and, it may very well be, other municipalities in the area. Because one of the other conditions of this agreement is that in the future waste water effluent from the town of High River will no longer be permitted to flow into the Highwood River either.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, that is now good news for the Bow River Water Users association.

My next supplementary question is: the amount of water effluent from the Cargill plant in the town of High River, will that be enough water to look after the needs of the wetland project?

MR. KOWALSKI: In all likelihood, Mr. Speaker, that will not be the case. It's projected that at current kill limits that Cargill would originate with on June 1, 1989, the volume will probably be in the area of 450,000 gallons per day. That is not a significant amount of water. In addition to that the town of High River currently supplies approximately half of its waste water to the soon to be on stream magnesium plant that's also under construction in the area. A volume of approximately 450,000 gallons per day will also flow into Frank Lake. But in addition to

that, we will have to -- and we have built into this project an oversized pipeline that will allow us to take at high-flow times of the year excess water that would flow through the Highwood River in the months of May and June. There will be a deflection of water in the future into Frank Lake to ensure that we do have a sustainable water supply in Frank Lake for a Wetlands for Wildlife project.

MR. MUSGROVE: Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. There's been some concern about the supply of water to Cargill and particularly it being withdrawn from the Highwood River. Could the minister tell us what arrangement has been made for water supply to the Cargill plant?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, we will not be permitting water to go from the Highwood River to the Cargill plant. The water supply for the Cargill plant will be from the wells that are currently owned, run, and managed by the town of High River. That will be the source of the water for the Cargill plant.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In view of the rather aromatic solution he has come up with to get rid of the effluent from the plant there and the uses of water drawing down aquifers in the area, does he propose to have public hearings in the area before the final permits concerned? Because the smell and the shortage of water are going to affect a lot more people than just the town of High River.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, there will be no aroma. The process that will be used in terms of dealing with the wastewater will include disinfectant and biological activity. I'm informed by all of the parties involved in the scientific community that in fact the treated wastewater will be odourless -- odourless, Mr. Speaker -- which will be an improvement over the existing situation. The farmers and ranchers in the area who had an opportunity to talk to me yesterday and whom I had an opportunity to talk to indicated that they were absolutely delighted with that and thought that was a magnificent environmental improvement.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Glengarry, final supplementary.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On another aspect of aromatic politics and this deal, as a result of the government's \$4 million gift to this American multinational, does this minister expect an increase in Cargill's donations to the Progressive Conservative Party?

MR. SPEAKER: That question is out of order. Forget it.
Edmonton-Beverly, followed by Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Workers' Compensation Board

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Community and Occupational Health. The minister, by changing the structure of the Workers' Compensation Board to a corporate, board-of-director style, is in fact changing the intended fundamental purpose of WCB, to have equal representation from both the employer and the employees on the board. Why is the minister violating this long-established, fair process and, in fact, developing an empire, or an empire being built within the board?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I'm not quite certain that I un-

derstood the hon. member's question correctly. He suggested that we were changing the purpose, changing the structure. Well, we are in no way changing the purpose of providing benefits to injured workers who are entitled to them. What we are changing is the structure of the organization so that it is a more efficient, a more effective, a more sensitive, and a more service-driven organization.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question.

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister intends to resolve the financial crisis of the WCB by attacking long-term pension benefits and the appeal process rather than increasing assessments. Is this another of the government's economic policies, to promote investment in the province by keeping workers' wages down?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's suggestion is foolish. We are in no way attacking benefits. Benefits will continue to flow to individual workers who are entitled to them, and there are no changes proposed that in any way will change that. We have out in the public a discussion process which is in Edmonton today, tomorrow, and the next day, under the chairmanship of a very capable individual by the name of Mr. Vern Millard, a discussion paper that is out there for public input. It addresses a number if not all of the issues that Albertans from across the province have addressed to me over the last 24 months. We've taken this process very seriously, outlined the deficiencies in the Workers' Compensation Board as we see them and made recommendations for change. If the hon. member would like to appear before Mr. Millard's commission to express his views, I would certainly welcome him to do just that.

MR. EWASIUK: Well, Mr. Speaker, the benefits are so good in this province that we had in front of the Legislature demonstrations and also people going on hunger diets to make a point with the minister. Injuries and fatalities on the worksite are becoming an invisible plague in this province, Mr. Minister, an invisible plague. What programs and regulations will the minister introduce to reduce the frequency and severity of injuries and accidents on the worksites?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, we had an opportunity to discuss the programs and services provided by the occupational health and safety division of the department during the discussion of our estimates, and I'm surprised that the hon. member didn't raise this question then. But I will just mention the oil and gas industry. We have in that one area alone doubled the number of inspections that have occurred this year over last year's inspection period. We have gone to work in a concerted effort with the industry for them to draw up an action plan to ensure that all aspects of the oil and gas industry are covered by an action plan that is effective in making safety a number one priority on the job.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Edmonton-Beverly, followed by Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Shaping the Future report that the minister is so proud of cost the injured workers of Alberta some \$400,000. Why did the minister add insult to injury by expending WCB funds to determine how he's

going to reduce injured workers' benefits?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is suggesting that we should not change the way the Workers' Compensation Board operates. That's the bottom line of what he is saying, and we see it differently. We were not satisfied as a government with the way the Workers' Compensation Board was operating. We set out to change it. We are proposing legislative changes. We're going to change the structure of the organization, and we have put out a discussion paper that gives our vision, our recommendation for making changes so that it is a more effective and efficient organization for the good of Alberta workers and employers.

MR. MITCHELL: In restructuring the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Speaker, will the minister be considering establishing an independent appeals process external to the board rather than having appeals conducted by the board itself, with the consequent loss of objectivity and potential loss of fairness to the worker?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, the structure we have proposed is to separate the administrative and management function from the appeals function, and the administrative and management function will be overseen by a board of directors that is representative of the interests of workers, employers, and the general public. On the appeals side we are setting up an appeals commission that will be chaired by a neutral individual and have one member who is representative of employers and one of workers. They will be independent, and that is what was laid out in our announcement of 31 March.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by Olds-Didsbury and Vegreville.

Hospital Funding

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In reviewing the questions and answers of yesterday's exchange on hospital funding and the crisis, it appears that the minister expects individual hospitals to take the initiative and come one by one, hat in hand, to the government, justifying and proving their need for money. The minister simultaneously gives lip service to not wanting bed closures or reduced services. But it's clear that his process is causing delays which create and perpetuate the very bed closures and dangerous reduction in services that he purportedly rejects. To the minister. Doesn't the minister realize that a number of our hospitals are in fact bleeding to death and that he must go immediately to cabinet for funding that will cover the recent wage settlements and hospital operating deficits?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm angry and upset and hurt at the hon. member's total misrepresentation of both my comments and my actions with regard to hospital budgets.

MRS. HEWES: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have no intention to hurt the minister, but I do want to provoke him into some action. Will the minister agree to appoint an emergency task force in co-operation with AHA to work on assessing the crisis level of hospitals so that a decision can be made immediately?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member obviously can't read, so I will repeat the remarks I've made in this House

on at least five occasions in the last two or three weeks. We are presently assessing with each hospital the budget that they have and the ability within that budget to provide services without reducing any services they now provide and without closing beds. In the event that hospital boards collectively -- all of them -- or individually tell us that there's no way, after looking at all of the avenues that exist, to reduce their budget so that they can accommodate the nonclosure of beds and no reduction of services, we will look at providing some additional funds.

The hon. member knows full well that until very recently there was only one out of five unions that the hospitals deal with where there had been a settlement. That was the United Nurses of Alberta, or the registered nurses under two different unions, I guess. With respect to a couple of others, including the registered nurses' assistants, those settlements just came in very, very recently. We still don't know what some of the additional costs will be. Now, that is the story. When we have those costs, when we determine whether or not the budget that has been provided is adequate for their boards. . . . If it isn't then we will have a look at providing more money.

Now, is it absolutely clear, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member that she's understood that?

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, it's clear that the delays are causing a lot of anxiety and great difficulty in our communities.

To the minister. The minister speaks about hospitals' getting together and has indicated to this House that he supports that kind of co-ordination. What initiatives has the minister himself taken to bring about that kind of co-ordination, an action which would probably save costs, certainly save time, and likely save lives?

MR. M. MOORE: Is the hon. member referring to hospitals' working together on joint hospital programs, Mr. Speaker?

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, the minister just seconds ago indicated that.

Mr. Speaker, my last supplementary is: is it the government's intention at this point in time to rationalize the system, as his former deputy has indicated and recommended, through the development of regional hospital boards, which would be a cost-saving device and make the system far more efficient?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, for the hon. member's information I can provide several examples where over the course of the last two years hospital boards have co-operated fully with one another in order to make the system much more efficient, and co-operated fully with our government. Let me give the first example as one that's very close to the constituency which she represents. The Edmonton General hospital board had approval to open the new Mill Woods Grey Nuns hospital and continue the operation of the downtown Edmonton General hospital with a substantial number of active treatment beds. We sat down and discussed with the Edmonton General board and with the Grey Nuns the requirement for long-term care beds in this city and the fact that we felt there were too many active treatment beds under construction and the population wasn't expanding as we had anticipated to take care of that. A decision was then made that the Grey Nuns hospital would open, a full-service community hospital -- and it's now in operation, as members know -- and that the Edmonton General hospital would be converted entirely to extended care and the geriatric care that's been going on at Youville. That will result

in 300 hospital beds, active treatment beds, becoming empty a year from now when the Edmonton General reopens as an auxiliary hospital. That's just one example.

Then we move to Calgary, where the Calgary District Hospital Group is operating the Holy Cross. . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. One example's pretty fair in this situation. Thank you.

Calgary-McCall, followed by Edmonton-Centre.

MR. NELSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister. Considering the issue that's been raised due to contract settlements, can the minister indicate that the funding is still in place to open the Peter Lougheed as scheduled on the proposed date at the end of August?

MR. M. MOORE: My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that the opening date of the Peter Lougheed hospital, which will be operated by the Calgary General hospital board as part of the Calgary General hospital group, with the operation being one hospital on two sites -- in fact, the Peter Lougheed hospital will be called the Peter Lougheed Centre, as I understand it. The tentative date for opening of that hospital is August 5 for the official opening, and my understanding is that they would expect to have patients going in the hospital shortly thereafter.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, in December of 1986 the minister said that it was his intention to decrease the number of acute care beds from the current seven or eight per thousand Albertans down to four or five active treatment beds per thousand Albertans. Is it the minister's proposal to get this reduction in the number of beds by decreasing the operating funds of hospitals, as he's currently doing?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, in November of 1987 I indicated to the Alberta Hospital Association annual meeting that we had changed our bed-planning guidelines for planning purposes from 5.5 acute care beds per thousand population down to four beds per thousand population. I indicated as well that I thought that with additional outpatient surgery, with the faster turnaround in terms of the length of time that people stay in hospital, and also the additional new equipment that we might be bringing on stream, we could probably reduce in years to come even below four beds. An example would be the lithotripter machines we just announced a few weeks ago that reduce a great deal the length of time that patients would stay in hospital for certain kinds of medical problems.

So the present planning guideline is four beds per thousand. We're above that; I believe that across the province we're in the order of about five beds per thousand right now. We will be moving to reduce that by When we rebuild facilities, particularly in some of the smaller rural communities, we usually reduce the number of active treatment beds, increase the number of long-term care beds, and add substantially to the emergency outpatient capability. Now, that's a trend in medicine that the hon. member would be well advised to look at.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Vegreville.

Ethanol Fuels Industry

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans who recognize the regional economic development, environmental, and

agricultural...

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has ended. Might we have unanimous consent to get on with this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed?
Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans who recognize the regional economic development, environmental, and agricultural diversification opportunities of an ethanol industry are puzzled by the Minister of Agriculture standing up in this Assembly day after day and glossing over the multimillion dollar errors contained in his ethanol reports while at the same time trying to convince us that ethanol is not a viable industry. Now, errors can be corrected and hopefully will be corrected, but the greater concern is the very negative and biased approach the reports take to ethanol's ability to compete with the oil industry, the industry that pays his party's political bills. I'd like to ask the minister if he can explain why these reports ignore ethanol's most important new market opportunity as an octane source in premium gasoline.

MR. SPEAKER: That has a familiar ring to having been asked in the last two days, hon. member.

AN HON. MEMBER: On octane?

MR. SPEAKER: On octane, yes. On octane, yes, b u t . . .

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to repeat for the benefit of the hon. member that the reason the papers were issued was for discussion purposes. To date we have had no formal statements as it relates to the reports other than the questions the hon. member has put to us. It would be my hope, as I've indicated in this House on a consistent basis, that in the event there is information to show that there is a greater economic spin-off benefit to the agricultural community and to a number of other sectors, the hon. member would share that information with us. Because there's nothing that would make me happier, as I've indicated in the past -- contrary to what the hon. member says -- than to have a viable ethanol industry within this province in the event that there were viable spin-off benefits.

MR. SPEAKER: Succinct supplementary.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just trying to teach the minister about his reports. It's obvious that the oil industry and this Conservative government wants the petroleum product MTBE and not ethanol to be used as an octane source in gas. I'm wondering: is the minister aware that his reports on ethanol show a very obvious and regrettable bias towards MTBE over ethanol?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, the more the hon. member puts the questions to me, the more I realize why he doesn't put it in written statements, because he errs. I'm happy to point out to him that he has consistently erred in his analysis as it relates to the reports, and I pointed it out to him on a consistent basis, and I'm more than happy to continue to do so. I should share with

him that he has indicated that there were no calculations within the reports as it relates to the by-products related to the cattle industry. We included a \$20 million figure for that within the report, which he conveniently forgets.

I can go through a litany of errors as to what he's indicated to us. But I would hope, so that we can give serious analysis to his input -- because I wish to give serious consideration to his thoughts, because if there is any way that we can make this a viable industry, we would like to do so -- that he would put it together in a fairly complete text so that we can give it the examination it merits.

I would also ask the hon. Minister for Economic Development and Trade to supplement this.

MR. SPEAKER: No, thank you. The House's time has been extended, I think, more than graciously.

Supplementary, Vegreville.

MR. FOX: You spared us all, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister now admit that to base public meetings on these negative, biased, and error-filled reports is an insult to the intelligence of farmers, whose advice he should have asked for before hiring a bunch of so-called experts?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, again the hon. member is distorting what I've indicated in the past. I'm happy to bring it to light again that that is not the purpose of these meetings. The purpose of the meetings is so that we can have a cross flow of information. I'm looking forward to those meetings being held after seeding is completed so that we can have the benefit of valued input. I'm hopeful that it'll be a heck of a lot more beneficial than the input we're getting from the hon. Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: In other words, he wants farmers to correct his mistakes.

I'd like to ask the minister: is he saying that there is not an obvious bias contained in these reports towards MTBE over ethanol?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I've answered that before, but I am going to ask the hon. minister of economic development to supplement it.

MR. SPEAKER: Very briefly, Minister of Economic Development and Trade, followed by Vermilion-Viking.

The Chair would just like to point out to the House, with all due respect, that we have the longest question period in the country, tied with the House of Commons in Ottawa. But we go beyond them because we daily extend the time of question period, and really it is a bit of an imposition upon all members of the House.

Minister of Economic Development and Trade, followed by Vermilion-Viking.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I'll keep my comments brief. The hon. member is accurate to a point, in that we are enthusiastic about the potential for the establishment of an MTBE plant in Alberta. I'm sure most members of the Assembly share that view. We are also, as the Minister of Agriculture indicated, searching for ways to encourage the use of low-quality grain, and if that use in the production of ethanol is attractive, we'd encourage it and assist it in every possible way. The Minister of

Agriculture has already indicated that, and that view is shared by the entire government.

DR. WEST: To the Minister of Agriculture. Given that it would take some 13 million head in feedlots in the province of Alberta to consume the by-product put out by ethanol industries or indicated by ethanol industries, could you give an indication of how many years it would take to develop a 13 million head feedlot production in this province?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's highlighted some of the concerns that have been expressed in the report. I thank him for doing so, because not only is that an area of concern but also the transportation costs in the event that we do transport the by-products to where the cattle are fed.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Westlock-Sturgeon, final supplementary.

MR. TAYLOR: This is a supplementary to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Mr. Speaker, because Mohawk Oil, one of the principals in the ethanol industry in Manitoba, are one of the survivors in the oil industry and obviously fairly good managers, has the minister met with the Mohawk people to see whether we could put the same type of organization and tax regime together in Alberta making ethanol, as we did in Manitoba?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, part of the analysis that has been undertaken by the Department of Agriculture as well as our own department is an examination of what kind of financial support would be required to maintain in the long term a viable ethanol industry. That's part of the work that's going on right now. We've examined not only the Manitoba operation but two operations in the United States. It's obvious from that examination that all three require a substantial ongoing subsidy. We are searching for ways to cause this industry to be viable with a minimum amount of ongoing subsidy.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Time for question period has expired.

Yesterday the one point of order that was not dealt with completely at the time was raised by the Government House Leader. The issue is dealt with basically on page 985 of *Hansard*, and following. The issue at hand is really the matter of imputations and inferences and casting aspersions upon members of the House. I think all hon. members listened carefully yesterday, as did the Chair, and that hopefully all of this has been taken as an admonition to the House which has been well received.

In terms of today's question period, I would venture the opinion that it has indeed been well received. The Chair also will take the matter to heart and try to cut off such activities if they were to occur in future, whether they be in preambles or in questions or interchanges in the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes first the Member for Drumheller, followed by the Minister of Social Services.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, 14 bright, enthusiastic grade 6 students from the Drumheller Christian school. They are accompanied by their teachers Allen Bird and Hester Borsheim, and parents Linda Fikkert and Connie Russell. I'd like to ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to make a second introduction today of a group of young Albertans who come from almost every corner of this province. They are 52 in number. They are with the Forum for Young Albertans, Mr. Speaker. I had the opportunity to meet with them Monday evening and found they had very penetrating questions. I'm sure they have had an interesting time with speakers all week. They are accompanied today by Brian Tittlemore, Tara Fate, and Jason Rowick.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry today that I can't introduce the executive director, Linda Ciurysek. It will be her 10th year of encouragement of this forum and her last year. I think the Legislative Assembly and all the young people who have had an opportunity to participate in the forum are very grateful for her encouragement and work over that time. I would like them all to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Government House Leader.

head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I move that written questions 178, 185, and 189 stand and retain their positions on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

177. Rev. Roberts asked the government the following question:

- (1) Has any study been undertaken by the government of the costs to the health care insurance plans of Ontario and Quebec of the coverage extended to refugee claimants awaiting adjudication of status;
- (2) has any study been undertaken by the government of the costs of extending to such refugee claimants full coverage as applicable under the social allowance and other programs operated by the Department of Social Services;
- (3) will the government table in the Assembly any studies or other documents identified in response to questions (1) and (2); and
- (4) what are the reasons such refugee claimants are denied coverage under the Alberta health care insurance plan?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Assembly a written response to Question 177.

180. Mr. Wright asked the government the following question:
With regard to each payment of public money made by the

government or any agent of the government to Olympia & York Developments Ltd. or any of its wholly or partly owned subsidiaries, where such payment was made after January 1, 1985, what was

- (1) the amount of the payment,
- (2) the date on which the payment was made,
- (3) the name of the person to whom the payment was made,
- (4) the specific voted appropriation out of which the payment was made,
- (5) the agreement pursuant to which the payment was made, and
- (6) the purpose for which the payment was made?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, in looking at the request on Question 180, with respect in particular to the partly owned subsidiaries of the company Olympia & York Developments Ltd., it would be next to impossible for us to determine with any degree of accuracy just who those companies would be, and therefore we cannot accept this question because of the near impossibility of providing a reasonable answer.

Should the member decide to bring this question forward, say, as a motion for a return, it would be appreciated if he did the following, if I could offer a suggestion. That would be that where it says "government or any agent," he suggest "government departments," and as I have indicated, if he allowed us to deal with the holding companies themselves, then we'd probably be able to provide some type of answer.

186. Mr. McEachern asked the government the following question:

What are the statistics, their sources, and the calculations on the basis of which the Provincial Treasurer said, in response to questions posed by the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway on May 4, 1988: "corporate income tax on average is higher than the provincial individual tax in this province by about .5 percent over the same period the NDP are looking at . . . " ?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, with respect to 186, this question arises from question period where, in fact, there was a debate about the level of provincial and corporate taxes. We cannot accept this question because, of course, it draws us into an unsure methodology as to what was at the foundation of both the member's question and his assumptions with respect to his position. I think all we would do in this case would be to pursue a useless objective in trying to compare methodologies, and therefore we are not able to accept this question.

187. Mr. Mitchell asked the government the following question:

For each person currently holding a position on the basis of an order-in-council appointment, what are the qualifications and experience which made them suited for the position?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file a response to Question 187.

188. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question: How many tickets to Edmonton Oilers hockey games were paid for by the government, what was the purpose of these purchases, who are the individuals who were provided these tickets from January 1, 1986, until March 31, 1988, and why

were each of these individuals provided these tickets?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file a response to Question 188.

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I would move that the following motions for returns stand and retain their place on the Order Paper. Those are motions 184 and 190.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

169. Mr. Taylor moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all documents pertaining to the loan guarantee agreement of \$55 million made on March 3, 1988, O.C. 135/88, between the government of Alberta and Gainers Properties Inc.

[Debate adjourned May 5: Mr. Strong speaking]

MR. STRONG: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to rise in the Assembly today and conclude my remarks. I spoke in respect to the nonanswer and reasons the Minister of Economic Development and Trade gave with respect to not answering Motion for a Return 169. One of the reasons was this, and I'll quote:

But we are not able to meet with the hon. member's request to file confidential documents.

Mr. Speaker, these are not confidential documents. They are public moneys that are being loaned out to individuals -- certain individuals, certain friends, certain favourites of this government. These demand full public disclosure. That is not happening. Why? Do we have an open government here? Does this government have a commitment to the people of the province of Alberta? I think not. It's certainly clear in my mind that when a government will not stand and deliver the information to the general public, to Members of this Legislative Assembly, with respect to loan guarantees they make to their friends, certainly something is wrong.

The other comment the minister made was:

In many cases we cannot because information contained in those documents is commercially confidential and would likely damage the competitive position of a company.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we are not talking about commercially confidential arrangements; we are talking about public funds, taxpayer dollars that taxpayers are going to be on the hook for if Mr. Pocklington and Gainers Properties Inc. goes down the tube. Certainly as a taxpayer I don't appreciate that, and I don't think any Albertans, or certainly the majority I've talked to, want Mr. Pocklington and Gainers Properties Inc. getting any free money or loan guarantees from the government of the province of Alberta. They don't perceive that as being fair.

Again we'll go back to what people, Albertans, think is fair in this province. They think it's fair and equitable that every Albertan, no matter whether they own the Edmonton Oilers or the Trappers or anything else, is treated fairly, equally. That is not happening, which again gives many of the people I talked to cause for concern, where they see inequality and injustice.

The minister talked about the competitive position of a company. Well, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of companies in

the province of Alberta that are involved in the same type of business operation Gainers Properties Inc. is. Is it fair that this government gives Gainers money? What about the people he competes with? Is that fair to them, to give him a competitive advantage over them in business dealings? Certainly you'd have to be fairly naive if you didn't say that yes, it does give that individual, that special friend of this government, an unfair advantage over the people he competes with in the businesses he owns.

Mr. Speaker, what happened over in government? I've heard a number of the ministers, a number of the members of this government, stand up and say: "We're leaders. We're committed. We're everything else. We're number one." Certainly I can appreciate that, but when you get down and peel off the layers of mascara or makeup on top of this government and get down to what it really does, most Albertans are now saying that they don't have fair and open government, that there is a certain amount of inequality, inequity, and injustice now in this province. I think that's what we reflect when we reflect on Motion for a Return 169. Where is the fairness?

Where are the forms you fill out to get these massive millions of dollars in government loan guarantees? I don't think there's an Albertan, Mr. Speaker, that wouldn't appreciate going and buying Palm Dairies, just walking in off the street to Don's office or whoever's office to pick up \$55 million in loan guarantees. I know I'd certainly like to do it. Why shouldn't I as an Albertan, one who has lived here almost all my life, have the same opportunity as this government's special friends? I'd certainly like to be able to walk into the Premier's office, get \$55 million, and go and buy Palm Dairies. I'm certain it would be sold to me if I could get a government to underwrite the loan or provide that loan guarantee. But I guess this is what we're talking about when we talk about fairness, Mr. Speaker. Then for a government that's foolish enough to give the \$55 million in loan guarantees to turn around and say this is a commercial venture, something that is secret and confidential, is almost bizarre, Mr. Speaker. Because where is that commitment to the general public, the public purse, the public that's going to be on the hook if this venture fails?

Mr. Speaker, I'll again state that I'm not opposed to government loan guarantees. I never have been. I think they're a useful economic tool in today's society, certainly one that can benefit Albertans by providing additional jobs, providing that continuity, stability here in this province by creating those jobs. And that feeling is confirmed by people I talk to. But if we are going to provide these loan guarantees, the public is providing them, and I think that's what the minister misses here. Those are loan guarantees the public is making, and certainly they have a public concern. If we're going to make those loan guarantees and we are going to have these special friends of government, these free enterprisers, hooting from the top of city hall about the benefits of the free enterprise system and you gotta make it on your own, you gotta struggle, and if those same individuals come to this government, the Premier, this minister, anybody, they should be told by the minister, by this government, that if we as government are going to provide loan guarantees, those loan guarantees demand full disclosure to the public, all the details, all the financial arrangements, everything down to the dotting of the last "i" and the crossing of the last "t". That's what this government should be telling some of those free enterprisers that come to government for handouts, specifically those who seem to have an open door to this government.

Now, why isn't that happening, Mr. Speaker? It should be

happening, and it sounds fairly logical and makes a lot of common sense that things like this should be happening. That public perception is very important. It's not the best for us as MLAs here in this Legislature, who supposedly make all the laws and the rules for the citizens who live in this province, to be perceived as being shallow, dishonest, not with any commitment to anybody except ourselves, because certainly I don't believe that. I think the people who sit in this Legislative Assembly to represent their constituencies do have a lot of dedication, a lot of commitment, and a lot of integrity, but when we see loan guarantees given out to special people, it causes that perception of a politician to diminish in the public view. That's what's important. This type of thing has to stop. This demands full disclosure. These are public moneys, not commercial ventures with banks.

Thank you.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have followed this debate sometimes in the House and also by reading *Hansard*, and I found it a most unusual one because in some ways I even agree with the hon. Member for St. Albert that the matter of principle in fact should be addressed here. But unfortunately he has gone on at great length to address personalities and not principle.

Mr. Speaker, in the matter of those who have an association with government in terms of business, the parameters there are very broad. I have not heard any hon. members from the opposition speak to the number of people: that if we were to address that principle they are purporting to promote here as opposed to speaking to one personality, we would sweep in literally hundreds of thousands of Albertans. Because it is true that while we have a loan guarantee for a particular company which immediately draws a contingent liability on the part of this government and, yes, by the taxpayers of this province, I think it is well known to all Albertans that the institution that is wholly owned by them, the Treasury Branches, is supported indirectly in precisely the same fashion.

Mr. Speaker, the credit unions of this province are in the very same position. When you look at the decisions that are made there with respect to individuals whose loans have now created a contingent liability for the people of Alberta, I would suggest we will have to make the business plans of thousands of people available to this Legislature as has now been asked for, because we do, in fact, take on the same responsibility for our guarantees there. I think the hon. members in the opposition would not want that, and if they were to apply a principle fairly, they would not be asking for the disclosure of the business operations of all those people who are involved either directly or indirectly with support and guarantee by the province of Alberta.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to first, I guess, set the previous speaker straight about something. She implied that the \$55 million at stake here was borrowed from the Treasury Branches, and that is not the case. It was the government of Alberta that put up the loan guarantee of \$55 million, not the Treasury Branches. That was a separate and different one, \$100 million, you might remember, being the amount on that.

MRS. OSTERMAN: May I make an observation, Mr. Speaker,

if the hon. member will let me?

MR. McEACHERN: Of course.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Thank you. [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Does the Minister of Social Services want to make a statement of fact to clarify something?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would members agree with the hon. minister's request?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Social Services.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I apologize if I left that inference. I was not indicating that the loan had been made by the Treasury Branches. I was indicating that the government supports those other institutions and has the same contingent liability.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you for that clarification, but the implication seemed to be that the acceptance of this motion would mean then that we would be demanding that the Treasury Branch release all its files about all the people who have borrowed money from the Treasury Branches, and the credit unions the same. That is not the case. We are talking here about money directly that the government itself, the Treasurer, puts up in loan guarantees. So that's clearly a false impression you've created, and it is not the case as to what we were asking.

Mr. Speaker, this motion merely asks for the documents pertaining to the loan guarantee of \$55 million made on March 3, 1988, between the government of Alberta and Gainers Properties. Now, nobody is expecting a lot of background documents and other information; it's basically the deal itself once it's signed, sealed, and delivered. Exactly what does it say, exactly what does it commit the government to, and what backing does it have in the sense of personal guarantees or property guarantees, that sort of thing -- the specific contract and relevant and really pertinent information, not anything to do with Peter Pocklington's wife or grandmother or any other companies or anything else, but this deal itself once it's signed, sealed, and delivered? It is an eminently reasonable request.

Now, we've had similar requests before the House before, and we've had a great deal of argument on both sides as to whether they should or shouldn't release the information. I want to rediscuss, you know, at least a couple of the main arguments that have been bandied back and forth and indicate some of the fallacies in some of those arguments.

In the debate on some information about some of the Kananaskis contracts, the Minister of Recreation and Parks went on at great length about all this vast amount of information that's available through public accounts and other sources, and an incredible amount of material, press releases and things like that he said was available connected with that deal. And he said, you know, "And if that isn't enough, what's wrong with you?" kind of thing. Well, what's wrong with that is that the specific information in the contract itself outlining exactly what the deal was, exactly what the government is putting out, and exactly to whom it's being paid is what is wanted. All the other

stuff is extraneous, only half the truth and only half the information needed. What this House needs is the specific and exact information of what this government has committed our tax dollars to, with no fudging, no amount of digging through whole piles of information or anything else, but just the contract itself in its raw and simple terms. That is what was asked for, and that's what should be forthcoming in this resolution as well.

I think the House leader or else the Minister of Economic Development and Trade got up and went on at some length also in that same debate, saying, "Well, you know, it's all very nice for the taxpayers to know, but somehow, some way, that would not be fair for the businessman involved in the deal." Now, I say to any businessman that wants to do business with the government that that's fair enough. He can bid on the contracts the same as anybody else, and he can expect a certain amount of confidentiality of information up to a certain point. But if he wins the contract, when that contract is signed, sealed, and delivered, the taxpayers who are paying those dollars have the right to know the precise and exact information in that contract. That legal contract should be available to this Assembly. It doesn't matter whether it's Peter Pocklington, whom many people do not have a lot of respect for because of certain dealings he's done, or not. The minister that spoke a few minutes ago was quite off topic on that.

So some of the comments were in that regard, but nonetheless the essential principle is not to do -- whether it's Peter Pocklington or anybody else. The fact is that the information should be available. So that's where that breaks down. The person or company that decides to enter into a contract with the government does not have any right to secrecy in terms of the contract itself once that is signed with the government. The government represents the people of Alberta; the people of Alberta's tax dollars are at stake, and they have the right to know what the contract says. There is no reason in the world to assume that that will cause any problem.

The Premier in question period the other day when we were on to questions about information like that said: "Oh, well, you know, the idea of a freedom of information Bill is not a bad idea. Why doesn't one of you put it on the Order Paper?" That was one of his favourite sort of put-offs instead of answering questions. As a matter of fact, we did. Bill 201 was put forward by the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn, and we had a debate in this House. This government voted down that Bill, a Bill that had been championed for years by Grant Notley and Ged Baldwin, somebody they might know and have some respect for, and if they don't, they should have: an eminent Member of Parliament from the Peace River country for many years and a great advocate of freedom of information, the right of the taxpayers to know what was being done with their dollars. This government voted that down. Not only is that scandalous, but the Premier didn't even seem to know it had been voted down. I say to you that it's time you started to release this kind of information. The taxpayers have the right to know through their elected Assembly.

But to go back to this particular company that got this particular loan and just show that there are some rather strange things that are allowed to happen because we don't have the kind of information we should have, this same person involved in that particular corporation, Gainers, was also involved in Fidelity Trust, which most of you may remember cost the taxpayers a lot of money. We didn't know some of the terms of some of the contracts he was getting involved with, but they ended up costing the taxpayers a number of millions of dollars --

I've forgotten the number, so I won't guess at it. In taking over Fidelity Trust he used a technique that was totally scandalous that this government allowed. He used the company to buy itself. That was allowed for the first time in this country by the regulators of this province. It then became accepted practice across the country for a short time. Finally regulators across the country realized how scandalous and ridiculous it was and how much trouble it caused, and then they started to reverse it throughout all the other provinces and say you couldn't do it. The last time it was done in Canada was again in this province.

That's how good this government looks after the taxpayers' dollars in this province and the people that want to invest in companies of this sort. They allowed it to happen with North West Trust. When the Kipneses and Rollingers took over North West Trust in 1983, they used the company to buy itself. I won't go through the details of the process, but it's a scandalous process that should never be allowed by regulators. Yet it was done in this province first, and they were the last ones to get around to doing anything about stopping it. Totally ridiculous, Mr. Speaker, that any government would allow such a process to take place. It's because the government thinks they have the right somehow to act in total secrecy, they have the right to make any kind of deal they like and then stick out a press release, which is nothing more than a propaganda sheet bragging about the parts of the deal that they like and that they think the taxpayers might like and it might get them re-elected again. They don't stop and think about putting out the facts in such a way that it's very clear and precise exactly what's happening and what the commitments are with the taxpayers' dollars. I think of the press release that came out of the takeover of North West Trust, for example, as being just a master of gobbledygook and numbers that didn't make any sense, and we still don't know what the heck went on with that. It was also the one that they said was the last one used to buy itself out as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, the government had best get off its secrecy wagon, so to speak, and start recognizing that the taxpayers who foot the bills in this province have the right to know what's going on with their tax dollars. This is a reasonable motion for a return. I do not see how a government that can consider itself reasonable in any way, shape, or form can decide not to release the information asked for in this motion.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May the leader of the Liberal Party close the debate on this motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking on this motion and the loan guarantee, I guess I'd be gilding the lily if I said much about the responsibility of doing public business in public. Personally, I don't think I've ever been in a deal -- and I've been in a lot of deals in a life -- that if I was borrowing from the government I couldn't release the details to the government. I don't really know what's in the agreement that would make it impossible to release this guarantee. I think the public has a right to be able to evaluate all the number of the deals, the liabilities that the taxpayers are going to be faced with, because the public or the taxpayers are the ones in the long run that if this loan guarantee isn't an intelligent deal or isn't constructed right, it goes wrong in some way, the taxpayer has to pay for it.

I just find it hard to imagine any government that follows a

policy of saying that any deals they make with the private sector have to be private. I'd think that if the sign over your door said, "We are the government; we're handling your taxpayers' Treasury, and any deal you make here will be public," then the people know that when they come in. I can assure you that most people don't rush in to borrow money from the Alberta government or the heritage trust fund or anything else because they're doing it out of loyalty and they want to pay more interest here than anywhere else to keep the money in Alberta. The average entrepreneur, no matter how much he or she tells people how nationalistic they are, will borrow from the devil himself for a half percent less. So to go out and say that somehow or another you've made a deal here that is in the marketplace doesn't wash. If it was in the marketplace, they'd be borrowing from the marketplace.

So they did come in to us and borrow and got a guarantee for a special deal, special favours. Now, those special deals and special favours -- and I've touched on this in the code of ethics and maybe I've ruffled some feathers, but I intend to touch on it because I think open government means doing business in the open. Obviously, there's been a favour or a privilege granted. We would want to know if that favour or privilege meant a loan to a cabinet minister or we would want to know if it was free rides or we'd want to know if it was free accommodation or anything else. Yet we go out and give a privilege to some businessman or businessperson of some sort here, and we say, "Oh no, we can't give it away," because it's obviously a privilege, Mr. Speaker.

But let's go on to the actual guarantee itself. Maybe before I go into the detail for a minute, something that bothers me a great deal here is that we do not -- and I've been on the Public Accounts -- seem to be able to get a list of guarantees or at least a liability for guarantees from the Auditor General. Well, they'll give a list. But the Auditor General is able to say, "Your liabilities in the next 25 years for pensions are equivalent to \$6.3 billion." In other words, you're liable. Because of retirements and death and so on, you have to have \$6.3 billion -- or you should have, because that's in modern day money -- by the time these people retire, and if you've invested it wisely, you'll be able to pay the pension. In other words, the Auditor General put a price on it: a liability. Now, there's no liability attached to these personal guarantees in the Auditor General's report. They list them. And listing them means two things.

If there is no liability attached to the guarantee, then it implies that there is no risk to the taxpayer. But surely even the most wild-eyed, optimistic Tory Treasurer lending to a good old blue and orange card-carrier like Mr. Pocklington would not argue that there's no risk, especially when he took the federal Tories for \$350 million here just a couple of years ago. They must know that there's some risk. It might be minute, Mr. Speaker -- not as much as if he'd loaned it to an ordinary farmer or something like that, where they can go dispossess him and throw him off the land -- but there is some risk involved here, and the Auditor General doesn't list what those risks are. That means to me that if the Auditor General did not take it upon himself to list what these risks were, the total of the liabilities, then the taxpayer and the people reading the reports are supposed to make the evaluation themselves. Now, how can we evaluate, particularly we in the opposition who are representing a great number of the public out there or trying to speak on behalf of the public, a guarantee where the Auditor General says, "I don't know; there it is," and the Treasurer won't list it, won't put it out.

You might say, "Well, guarantees are guarantees." Well, Mr. Speaker, I've been a victim of guarantees, and I've been the beneficiary of guarantees many times around the world. Let me take a couple lessons on simple banking. When you guarantee a loan to a bank, and I believe this one was to the Lloyds Bank -- at least I found that out more through the newspapers than through the Treasurer -- the banker is interested in collecting money. You, in truth, guarantee the bank. When the loan goes sour, the bank doesn't sit out there and wrestle with the one that owes them the money. The bank doesn't go back and forth and say, "Hey, George, when are you going to pay up?" The bank doesn't sit there and cry and wring their hands. If there's a guarantee, especially a guarantee from somebody like the government that has money, they just go zip. The note comes across five minutes after the loan has been defaulted, and you pay up. There's none of this business of hanky-panky or fooling around and trying to collect, and then maybe your guarantee.

So that's one of the first things that I think this government isn't aware of: that these guarantees could come home to roost in a hurry. They can come home to roost when the first payment is 24 hours late, because any banker in his right mind isn't going to fool around playing economic jujitsu with a guy like Pocklington when he can come over to the Treasurer and collect it in five minutes. This is one of the things to remember. This applies to any type of guarantee. So the taxpayers are very much at risk.

The second part I'd like to know -- I'm talking now about the type of guarantee. It's so important. Therefore, we roll into the guarantee itself: does this guarantee step into the shoes of Pocklington, and indeed, if the bank does send you that notice in five minutes, do you then end up with all Mr. Pocklington's property? Is all Mr. Pocklington's got is one of those little tote bags that says "Oilers," standing on the CNR platform thumbing a ride out of town? Or indeed, is all we've done is step in and taken all debts and Mr. Pocklington's been able to take off with his shares, keep his home and whatever it is? The taxpayers would love to know that. What are they going to get left with if this guarantee is called on? Is there any kind of personal guarantee from Mr. Pocklington? Is there a backup? Are there some other corporations? Maybe his mother-in-law signed it and helped make it a little better. It would make us feel a little soft and warm inside. It would make me even feel better if the Tory provincial party had their signature down on the bottom somewhere along the line. Admittedly, Mr. Speaker, they'll probably be broke in five years the same way we are in opposition, because they'll be in opposition. But even now, in the short term, it would make me feel a little better; not much better, but a little better.

The other thing as far as the guarantee is concerned: is it the last guarantee? In other words, do we guarantee that debt, or whatever it is, all the way down till he walks in with his last little penny and pushes it through the the bank teller's cage? Or after the thing is reduced to 50 percent, are we clear? Is there any idea of that at all? You know, there's so many areas that are involved. Or is there a time limit? One of the greatest financial stickhandlers known to western Canada is the person on this note, and if he is able to somehow or another not pay anything on the thing, or maybe juggle it around, refinance it five years from now, is this guarantee still alive? It sure as hell won't be if the Liberals take over, I can assure you. Nevertheless, I want to know if this is in that thing now?

So all I'm getting at, Mr. Speaker, is in order for the taxpayers to evaluate their risk and just evaluate how much they

could get honked for, it is important that not only this guarantee but all the others be public information. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move -- I don't know what I move in a case like this. I just sit down, I guess. Thanks.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those in favour of Motion for a Return 169, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion fails.

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

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Barrett	McEachern	Sigurdson
Ewasiuk	Mitchell	Strong
Gibeault	Mjolsness	Taylor
Hewes	Pashak	Wright
Laing	Roberts	Younie

Against the motion:

Adair	Getty	Oldring
Ady	Heron	Orman
Anderson	Horsman	Payne
Betkowski	Hyland	Pengelly
Bogle	Isley	Rostad
Bradley	Johnston	Russell
Brassard	Jonson	Schumacher
Campbell	Kowalski	Shaben
Cherry	McClellan	Sparrow
Clegg	Mirosh	Stevens
Cripps	Moore, M.	Stewart
Dinning	Moore, R.	Weiss
Downey	Musgreave	West
Drobot	Musgrove	Young
Elliott	Nelson	Zarusky
Fischer		

Totals	Ayes - 15	Noes -- 46
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[Motion lost]

176. Mr. McEachern moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of the capital cost projection for each capital project in the 1988-89 fiscal year which contributes to the total of all such projects on the basis of which the Treasurer said, at page 17 of his budget speech, "... this government's capital expenditure is expected to reach \$2.5 billion in 1988-89."

MR. McEACHERN: I would like to make a couple of comments as to why I think it's important that we have this information. Last year the government in its estimates also said that it had a \$2.4 billion capital projects expenditure planned for the year. I went through the documents and tried to corroborate

that. I had a little trouble doing so and made a point of asking the Treasurer some questions in the House. He stood up and purported to say, "Well, you know, it's because of this, this, and this." I went back and read the *Hansard* very, very carefully, and I still couldn't get anything hard and fast that really added up to \$2.4 billion. So when I saw the number \$2.5 billion, I looked at it with a bit of suspicion this time as well as last year. The capital projects of the budget is only \$1.1 billion, and I'm not quite sure what else he's including to get his \$2.5 billion.

I would also just say that the other day in the Assembly the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services indicated to me that somehow some of these planned projects were coming in under budget, so I'm wondering if the Treasurer has had any chance to take into account the fact that some of the numbers might be smaller than originally anticipated and that perhaps it won't be \$2.5 billion this year. So I look forward to an answer from the hon. Treasurer on this motion.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the government is proposing an amendment to Motion for a Return 176. I have, I think, circulated to all the affected members a copy of that amendment to the motion. The amendment, in two parts:

- (a) by striking out "for each capital project" and substituting "by government department or Crown corporation";
- (b) by striking out "such projects" and substituting "capital projects".

Then the question would be acceptable.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Speaking to the amendment, Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you. To the Treasurer: I accept those amendments as not changing the sense of what I was asking for, and so would be happy to accept the information on that basis.

[Motion on amendment carried]

[Motion carried]

182. On behalf of Mr. Wright, Mr. McEachern moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all

- (1) agreements to lease and
 - (2) memoranda of intention to lease
- office space let by Olympia & York Developments Ltd. and any of its wholly or partly owned subsidiaries entered into by the Crown in right of Alberta or any agent acting for the Crown in right of Alberta where an expenditure of public money was made or likely will be made as a consequence of the agreement or memorandum and where the agreement was entered into or the memorandum signed between January 1, 1985, and March 31, 1988.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, this project is certainly getting to be a popular subject. I believe it was discussed on at least 12 occasions last session, again during my estimates, and again, unfortunately, during a motion for a return that was in no way related to it the other day.

On April 14, 1987, I rejected virtually the same motion put forward by the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, and I am again rejecting this motion for very obvious reasons, a reason that I don't think either the NDP or the Liberal opposition seem

to understand, which is known as commercial confidentiality, which happens to exist out there when you're dealing with the private sector in the lease market industry. I suspect, Mr. Speaker, if we ever had a government in Alberta that was formed by either of the parties I've just mentioned, they would be doing no leasing from the private sector. They would probably be buying up everything and controlling it by government.

But let me say a word or two about the project that the opposition doesn't seem to like because it has too many positives in it. With no money out of our budget we've created 5,400 man-years of employment, much of that in downtown Edmonton; 2,500 man-years of direct employment, primarily in the construction sector; 2,900 man-years of indirect employment. Currently there are 700 people employed on this project, 200 of them construction workers on the site as of yesterday. Secondly, we're participating in the revitalization of downtown Edmonton. Construction is on schedule. Phase 1 is scheduled for completion in November of 1989.

There's another positive related to this project that I have not mentioned to the House before, because it's just currently falling together. This project will be the first private-sector user of Fort Chipewyan granite. If things stay on schedule, O & Y will be using approximately 5,000 cubic feet of granite from Fort Chipewyan, Alberta, in its interior lobbies. Working in co-operation with the two Indian bands in the Fort Chipewyan area, the local Metis association, the hon. Member for Fort McMurray, and the Northern Alberta Development Council, we currently have a granite quarry in operation at Fort Chip. What I'm suggesting to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and the opposition is that the leverage we managed to use in getting this new Alberta product on a project of this nature was made possible by us being one of the major lessees. We could very well end up bringing a new industry to Alberta, jobs to the Fort Chipewyan area, and of course that's another positive the opposition doesn't like.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reject the motion.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Under Standing Order 8 the time limit for this item has expired. Next order of business.

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

Bill 206
Alberta Family Institute Act

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, what a pleasure it is for me to once again rise here in the Legislative Assembly. [some applause] I want to thank the leader of the Liberal Party for that almost standing ovation, that deafening pounding on his desk.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, this isn't the first occasion that this particular Bill has been in front of the Legislative Assembly. I first of all want to compliment the Hon. Dennis Anderson, who has brought this Bill forward on two previous occasions, in 1979 and in 1981. Here we are in 1988, Mr. Speaker, and I think this Bill has as much relevance and purpose today as it did in 1979 and in 1981.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

The purpose of Bill 206 is to establish the Alberta family institute under the direction of a seven-member board of trustees whose mandate is to acquire and collect data and the results of research completed by others into matters affecting the family unit. In addition, Mr. Speaker, a secondary function of the institute will be to advise ministers as to the effect legislation, both planned or enacted under the minister's administration, might have on the family unit.

Mr. Speaker, as a government we are constantly establishing new programs, revising existing programs, setting priorities, making choices, focusing on new directions, new opportunities, and placing emphasis on different directions. We have a magnitude of programs in a wide range of different areas: programs dealing with the environment, agricultural programs, business programs, forestry programs, tourism, oil and gas, a tremendous number of social programs. In fact, in our 1988-89 budget some 79 percent of our total budget, excluding the heritage fund capital projects, was spent on social programs. They deal with a wide range of things: day care; child protection; child welfare; handicapped children's services; Children's Guardian; family relations; advisory committee on the family; services to the handicapped; shelters for adults; Public Guardian; senior citizens' programs; prevention of family violence; our Senior Citizens Secretariat; programs under Advanced Education or through our Attorney General, Career Development and Employment, Community and Occupational Health, Hospitals and Medical Care. Tremendous commitment in the social areas, Mr. Speaker.

But what Bill 206 does, Mr. Speaker, that all these programs do in part but not totally, is focus solely on the family. It would give an opportunity to have a number of these programs co-ordinated, an opportunity to compile existing data and research results. Again, a lot of those things are there, and they're in place through the various agencies and departments, but not co-ordinated. This would give us an opportunity for a central resource centre.

Mr. Speaker, all of us here this afternoon recognize the significance and the importance of the family. This province and our country were built and developed on the strength of sound family principles. Healthy families are the essence of society. Healthy families are the future of tomorrow. It's in families that our children grow up, that our children learn a value system, that our children learn morals and principles, life skills. It's in a family that a parent or parents find support and fulfillment in life. It's to a family that our elderly turn for comfort and assistance. Again, I'm sure no one here will argue or downplay the significance or the importance of the family. Yet in our considerably complex society too often it's the family unit that's overlooked.

Over recent years the institution of the family has been under severe stress and strain. Today's families have many and varied issues to deal with: the rising crime rate; disease, in particular of late, the AIDS issue; drug and alcohol abuse; the environment; world peace; the economy -- and it's interesting to note that both buoyant and down economies seem to take their toll on the family -- endlessly evolving technologies; and of course, the rapid pace that society pulls us all into, the rapid pace of living today. All these things are impacting the way we live today.

Mr. Speaker, we can no longer look at just a classic model of two parents with a small number of young children to define the word "family." We must also recognize that today family can mean childless couples; it can mean blended families; it can mean remarried families and single custodial families. We must

recognize that yet another new form is the form of the family in which young adults are either staying home or returning home, usually for financial reasons. These are older children: 20 and 21 and 22 and 23.

As well, we must note the increasing frequency of family breakdown. Recent statistics indicate that there are, on average, 60,000 divorces each year in Canada. Statistics Canada has predicted that if this trend continues, by the year 2000 one in two marriages will end in divorce. In addition to this, the latest forecast by the demographics department of Statistics Canada suggests that over the period of 1981 through 2006 the growth of single-parent families in Canada will outpace that of two-parent families. By the year 2006 approximately 15 percent of Canadian families will be headed by a single parent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to think that had we had the family institute in place, we would be able to help address this very, very concerning issue in Canada today. It's of interest to note that in 1968, when we introduced the new divorce Act here in Alberta, the immediate consequences were an increased rate of divorce three times the previous rate: tripled. I can't help but think that had we had a family institute Act and had we had the family institute in place, they perhaps could have assessed that particular Act a little closer and found some alternatives for phasing it in.

Added to that, recent statistics for Canada reveal that in approximately 60 percent of all families both husband and wife are in the labour force. Further, in 1986, 62 percent of all female spouses worked as opposed to 47 percent in 1970. The dramatic increase in the participation of married women in the labour force suggests that the presence of children as a structural barrier to the young mother's employment is gradually breaking down. However, the resulting need for care of the children during the day is causing society to re-examine its participation in the support of child care facilities.

Mr. Speaker, there has been considerable concern expressed that current day care policy does not deal with all parents equitably. The women who choose to stay outside the labour market are being forgotten. There is still a significant number of families who've decided to make economic and career sacrifices in order to raise their children themselves. The simple fact is that in most cases the parent that remains at home is the mother, and these women feel that they have been ignored by existing day care programs. In fact, there has been some concern expressed that the current child care strategy, if anything, encourages parents to enter the labour force and utilize formal child care options, and I'm not so sure that I disagree with that concern. Again, I want to say that I fully support the day care that we are providing, although I am concerned when I hear the word "universality."

I personally do not support universal day care. I think there's a place for it, and by all means, in particular as we address single-parent families, I'm delighted to be able to see that there's good day care in place for them. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, I have a difficulty in looking at the process that we utilize to fund day care in this province, where any licensed day care facility is going to receive a basic grant or a basic financial contribution by this province. I have a hard time accepting that, because you see situations where there are professional families where mothers and fathers have both chosen to work; they're making a good living. Business families: again by choice, they've both decided to work. I object to seeing government dollars utilized to subsidize those households, and it must be particularly offensive for those family situations where they re-

ally are making a financial sacrifice to keep one person at home and their tax dollars are going to subsidize families in that other situation. Again, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be helpful to have a family institute in place to assess the impact of our day care policies today.

Another consequence of working parents is detailed in a recent document released by this government. It's in the Caring & Responsibility document, and it points out that approximately 15.2 percent of children ages six to 12 years in the western provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba in 1986 were latchkey children, were not supervised by an adult after school. Now, based on this estimate, of the 242,000 children ages six to 12 in Alberta in 1986, approximately 37,000 children in Alberta on a daily basis were left unattended after school -- 37,000 children.

I recently had the opportunity of visiting with all the schools in Red Deer-South except for one or two. But in all the schools I met with principals and teachers. One of the common issues that kept coming forward was the problem of children with behavioural problems. In discussing the situation with teachers, we were searching for the solution. What's the answer? What do we do with these children? What's the cause? Time and time again it shifts back to the family, and the support just isn't there. I'm not sure what the answer is, but it's something that -- again, I wish we had a family institute to be able to discuss that particular concern, and it is a major concern in the schools today. Class size wasn't the biggest concern raised with me: it was children with behavioral problems, and how do we deal with them?

Yet another developing form of the family results from the demographic trend of the increasing number of elderly in the population. Again, statistics suggest that by the end of the year 2001 those aged 65 or more will represent somewhere between 10 percent and 12 percent of the Canadian population. It's reasonable to assume that many of these may live in extended families instead of on their own or in an institution. In 1986, 8 percent of Alberta's population was already over 65 years of age. By the year 2016 that percentage is projected to rise to 16 percent, well above the national projected average. I know that this is a matter that's being addressed at this time by a number of ministers, by a number of departments, by various groups and organizations across the province. We've just recently had the Mirosh report. But again, the institute would be able to act as a focal point, as a co-ordinating body, as a resource facility, being able to take a lot of the work that's being done and putting it in place at one central point.

Currently Alberta, like all other provinces in Canada, does not have a systematic review mechanism in place to study the implications of various legislation with regard to the effect on the family. I shouldn't say all provinces, because Newfoundland is one exception that I'll talk about later. If such a mechanism were in place, legislators and policymakers would be better able to determine the effects of these policies, some of which may actually be impacting the family in a negative way.

Mr. Speaker, the concern for the family that I bring forward this afternoon through Bill 206 is not unique to Alberta, and I'm pleased to note the focus it has been given right across Canada and throughout other provinces. In Quebec in October of 1984 the Quebec government published the results of a comprehensive study titled *For Quebec Families*. The primary recommendation of that report, or their green paper, called for the reaffirmation of family values in Quebec society. Further, it called upon the government to establish the appropriate administrative

initiatives so that the different agents responsible for family policy may work together, so that government departments and agencies may develop a family program, and so that groups representing families may be recognized and play their role in order to promote and defend the interests, the needs, and the responsibilities of families and parents in Quebec society. Again, Mr. Speaker, I think an excellent recommendation that lends itself very closely to the recommendations within the Alberta Family Institute Act.

Nova Scotia. In the fall of 1985 the Hon. John Buchanan, the Premier of Nova Scotia, announced the establishment of a task force on family and children's services. Again, 65 recommendations came forward as a result of that, and of the 65 recommendations compiled on a priority basis, highest priority was given to recommendations which urged the government to develop and implement a policy on the family, which clearly expresses its commitment to the concept of the family as an essential part of the social fabric of Nova Scotia.

Newfoundland I mentioned earlier. In October of 1987 the Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland sponsored the founding conference of the Newfoundland Institute of the Family. The board of directors appointed in December 1987 are currently in the process of establishing a statement of purpose and an organizational mandate. The primary role already established, though, Mr. Speaker, will be that of advocacy on behalf of the family unit, and again I think that lends itself very closely to what we're proposing here in the Alberta Family Institute Act.

British Columbia. Mr. Speaker, on April 5, 1988, British Columbia Premier Bill Vander Zalm announced that \$20 million was being allocated by his government in support of a new program called: initiatives for strengthening the family. This program focuses on two key messages: one, our future needs responsible decisions; and secondly, initiatives for strengthening the family.

As well, Mr. Speaker, on a national basis we have Family Service Canada doing some tremendous work, and we have the Vanier Institute of the Family. This institute was founded in 1964 by then Governor General Georges Vanier, with a financial endowment from government and industry. It's interesting to note that it was a joint initiative, and I would foresee the private sector and private individuals getting involved as well with the Family Institute Act. But the Vanier institute is there for conducting family research on all matters which impact upon the family unit in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, here in our own province we've just recently brought forward a Caring & Responsibility paper, and again I am very pleased with the initiatives that have been brought forward there, and I'm very pleased with the focus that it brings forward on the family. I just want to quote a couple of the principles in there:

Government policies and programs must recognize the paramount importance of the family as the basic unit of our society and the diversity of family structures, and must support and strengthen the role of the family in Alberta society.

And I know, Mr. Speaker, that an awful lot of our programs are doing just that. I just think it would be helpful to have the Family Institute Act in place so, again, it focuses in clearly on the family.

Again, another principle from the Caring & Responsibility paper:

Government policies must enable individuals, families and communities to build on our strong tradition of volunteerism, and to take increasing responsibility for caring for themselves and for those in need of help and support.

Again, Mr. Speaker, the Family Institute Act would help us to do that.

There are a couple more in there, Mr. Speaker, that I do want to draw to the attention of the Assembly, and I'm just going to take a moment to find them.

Government policies and programs requiring inter-departmental cooperation must operate without duplication and as smoothly as possible for the consumer.

Again, Mr. Speaker, a very important point and something that I think the institute can address and help resolve.

Although changes in family functions and structure have occurred, the family remains the basic unit of society and, as such, retains its most important function: the socialization of its members into the current society. With the complex society of today the increased stress to which individuals are exposed in their daily lives makes the family an even more important source of emotional support and guidance than it was in the past. The challenge before us as legislators is to address these changes in society and to be prepared to come forward with support initiatives which are designed to meet the needs of the evolving family unit. As legislators and policymakers respond to these varied and complex issues, the need for a resource body which can assist in determining the best possible solutions based upon the most current information becomes readily apparent. The establishment of the Alberta family institute will facilitate the development of that resource body of which legislators and policymakers can avail themselves as they seek solutions to the complex issues of today.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude on a more positive note, an overwhelming majority of Canadians feel that the family is still important. In a poll conducted by *Maclean's* magazine of January of 1987, 81 percent of Canadians said that the family is becoming a more important part of their life. Again, healthy families are the foundation of our society. Healthy families are the future of tomorrow.

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak this afternoon. I look forward to hearing the continued debate on this very important Bill.

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

MS LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to this Bill. I guess at the outset I'm concerned about the suggestion that child care may be a threat to the family. I was an at-home mother for 14 years. I never, as I hear often said here, considered it a sacrifice, and the availability of day care would never have enticed me out of my family. It may have made my life a bit easier if there had been quality and flexible child care available, but certainly I think if we have a strong commitment to being in the family with our children, that's where we will be, all other things being equal.

In speaking to this Bill, I have a number of questions that I would raise with the member bringing this Bill to us. The first one I would ask is: how will the family unit, the term used in this Bill, be defined? What constellation of people fit the criteria of family? As he has stated and as we all know, there have been many changes in what we understand constitutes a family.

The second question I would raise is: who will be appointed to the board of trustees? What criteria or qualifications must people possess to be named to this board? I think we've had some concerns raised about appointments to other boards, as to

the real appropriateness of those appointments.

What kinds of funds will be available?

The fourth question that I have is: will this institute of the family not be a duplication of the institute of the family located at the University of Alberta? And do not our faculties and departments of family studies not fulfill the role that the member would see for this institute?

Finally, are there other initiatives that would better serve the interests of Albertans and their families?

The most important issue, as I see it, is the definition of the family unit. It is crucial that the definition of the family unit will be broad enough in scope to include the many different family constellations that now exist in Alberta society and that it does not focus on the family unit as traditionally defined, as mother, father, and a number of children and possibly grandparents.

Historically, the family unit was a legal entity, an economic unit, a social structure, but underlying these definitions was an underlying responsibility for the family to care for, nurture, and protect those that are vulnerable: children, the infirm, and the elderly. At the centre of our understanding of the family is that it is into families that children are born, and that families provide a nurturing and supportive environment that children need to be enculturated, prepared to take their place in society, as the member has said. It is a place of acceptance in which children can learn, make mistakes, test behaviours, share feelings, and develop emotionally, free from the threat or the reality of harm. It is a place where children test limits and learn acceptable behaviour. We would believe and hope that positive emotional bonds join together members of the family, that love and caring are present in the family, that people are responsible for and responsive to other members of the family, that there is reciprocity and sharing, a unit of familiarity and intimacy.

I believe that the impulse to live in family and community in co-operation is a fundamental human impulse that needs to be supported and that there is too much in our society, particularly in our economic system, that does not do that. However, in this century we have discovered that in many traditional family units as we understand it -- mother, father, and children -- there is a lack of reciprocity and loving care on the part of one or several members of that family that puts into jeopardy the safety and security of the other members of the family.

Because of economic constraint and societal expectations and sanctions, family units endure at great cost to some members of those family units. The naming of the pain and suffering endured in some of these families did not cause nor did it increase the incidence of such pain, but it did mean that as a society we had to face it and to find alternatives to these traditional units, which were all too often so destructive, if not to all members, at least to some members of the family. I'm not sure if the hon. member believes that we should not have a divorce Act that would allow people that are bound together in pain to separate and to rebuild their lives in nurturing relationships. Certainly that is my belief of what should be the outcome of divorce. I don't think divorce is ever taken lightly or is ever an easy answer.

It is that reality that I would hope the hon. member in presenting this Bill accepts, and does not introduce this Bill merely to decry it. We need to commit ourselves to family units that are bound together by reciprocated love and concern. We need to commit ourselves to the concept of family as a place in which one is safe and nurtured. We need to recognize that the composition of family units under such a commitment would

vary greatly. We need to recognize that it is not divorce or single parenting that traumatizes and harms children. It is too often the turmoil that precedes and follows divorce and the poverty that follows divorce that limits hopes and aspirations and overburdens.

We know that many children become much healthier after the ending of a traditional family unit which was characterized by turmoil and destructiveness.

The hon. member mentioned the high incidence of children with behavioural problems. I would suggest that many children that live in truly unhappy families, whether or not there is violence in that family but in which there is tremendous pain, are the children that exhibit behavioural problems. It is not children from nurturing, loving families, however that family is constituted. We need to recognize that a healthy family unit can be composed of one loving, nurturing parent and children, and such a family unit may be much healthier than many traditional two-parent families are.

The concern that I bring to this Assembly is that there be a recognition that the nature of relationships is more important than who is in the family. We must not commit ourselves to an arbitrary structure. We would hope that all children would be raised and nurtured in families consisting of mother and father, but we must not categorize as necessarily second best the family with one loving parent and children or a family with a number of loving, responsible adults and children. In addition, a family may consist of two or more loving adults joined together through bonds of care and concern. I would therefore urge the member to consider these matters.

I certainly support objective 4(e) in this Bill, in regard to aiding employers and being sensitive to issues that arise out of family membership. Hopefully there will be support for such initiatives as maternity and paternity leave; leave for family responsibility; flexible work hours and child care hours; on-site child care facilities; part-time work that offers pay equity, prorated benefits, vacation pay, and job security; and consideration of family responsibilities and commitments when proposing transfers and promotions. I would hope that these would be the emphasis of a study. I could go on, but I think that's enough in that vein. We need to recognize, I believe, that many of the technological and economic structures of our society work against participation in meaningful family life, and that's an issue we have to address. It's a much more profound issue than whether we have child care or not.

Mr. Speaker, when the Bill asks for an evaluation of the impact of legislation on the family unit, we must be very careful that there will not be an attempt to hold that one type of family unit is held to be the ideal. Somehow one would question in this proposal which the hon. member is suggesting that individual choice and freedom must be sacrificed in the name of some undefined entity; that is, the family. If we hold, as I do, that all people seek to create and maintain families and communities, we have to ask, as I do: what is the hon. member suggesting? Surely this member holds that adults have a right to make choices about how they shall live their lives, that parents want what is best for their children, and that they want to be able to nurture and care for their children in supportive environments. If this section of the Bill is referring to child welfare legislation, we must again be concerned that the needs and best interests of children are not sacrificed to maintaining a family unit that may be harming or destroying the child or children. We must not shut our eyes, Mr. Speaker, to reality.

I would refer to one of the hon. member opposite's questions of yesterday in which he stated that in a survey of 11,000 wife abuse incidents one in 18 separated women were assaulted, whereas only one in 500 married women is assaulted. I cannot understand how the member could draw conclusions from a specific sample to apply to the population at large. Research throughout North America, including research through the population lab at the University of Alberta, reveals that at a conservative estimate one in 10 women in relationships is being battered. Certainly the vast majority of battered women do not report the abuse. In addition, the majority of separated women who are battered are battered by a former partner, and the incident investigated may be but one of a continuation of what happened during the marriage.

The painful reality of violence that occurs within too many families must be accepted if the study of the family is to have any meaning. Mr. Speaker, we cannot legislate the family. What we need is support for families. We do not need legislation as to how they are to be constituted. We need to recognize that the fundamental ingredient or part of the family is loving, nurturing relationships. In order to support families we need decent social assistance allowances for those who are not employed. We need full employment. I think that one of the most destructive things to the family in this present society is high unemployment. We need support and treatment programs and early intervention in families experiencing difficulties, and we need quality child care. But most importantly we must commit ourselves to understanding the family unit as individuals who come together in mutual care and concern.

So I would conclude with the two questions that I raised: do we really need this institute, given that the one in Calgary exists and given our faculties and departments of social studies and sociology, and what is meant by the family unit?

Thank you.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to debate this Bill not so much for the content of the Bill itself but because it allows us to focus on what I think are some important, significant ideological differences that separate members opposite from those who occupy the benches of the Official Opposition. I think it's important to bring out those ideological issues, because they're very definitely reflected in Bill 206. With all due respect I think that there is what you might want to call a small "c" conservative element in these proposals. In speaking about conservatism as a political philosophy, there are elements of merit within that philosophy. Members opposite might be surprised to hear me say that I think that a respect for tradition is important, and I think that it is important too, as many Conservatives would argue, that we don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

I think there's some merit in trying to ensure that family life is maintained in a way that's reasonable, that children are brought up in an environment where they learn positive values that contribute to a better world. But there's also an element present in conservative philosophy that can be reactionary, and that reactionary element creeps in when members opposite think back to some distant past that may or may not have existed and they want to try to bring it back. From a radical perspective such as the one that our members might embrace, we would argue that, no, there's constant change. There are structural impediments to bringing that past back, and we must address change.

In that context, when we look at family life, there's a ten-

dency again, I suspect, on the part of members opposite to blame those changes that are going on in the family on individuals. I think I heard that in the Member for Red Deer-North's remarks this afternoon, when he seemed to be suggesting that if only we could make better people somehow, we would have better family life. That begs the real question. I think the question really has to do with: what are the problems within contemporary life; what is the real source of the problem? That's the radical perspective: to try to address the issue by looking at what is the source of the conflict. Once you've addressed the source of those problems, then you can in a much more reasonable way introduce the corrective measures to bring about the vision of the society that you'd like to see in place.

So what is the real need for this Bill? If we look at the purposes as set out in section 4 of the Bill -- I'll just go through them quickly. I know that we'll come back to these if we ever get to Committee of the Whole, but just by way of example, it's

- (a) to acquire and collect data including results of research completed by others, into matters affecting the family unit.

And it's to gather information regarding

- (i) changes to the structure of the family unit
- (ii) the effect of community growth and change on the family unit
- (iii) the effect of changing family structure on the economic and social environment of the Province,
- (iv) the impact of change in the family unit on family members.

Well, I just advised the Member for Red Deer-North that that information is all available. He could probably find it in the community college library in his home town. If not, he could certainly find it at the family institute that's located at the University of Calgary or in the sociology departments of the University of Lethbridge or the University of Alberta. So the information that he's seeking is there. It's just a question of whether or not he wants to accept that information as valid, because that information would demonstrate the thesis that I'm proposing right now. That is that those problems the member perceives in family life are really rooted not in the behaviour of individuals, that ultimately they're rooted in social functions and social structures. If we want to improve family life, we have to address those issues, and I'll perhaps provide him with some ideas.

We all know the context in which he probably perceives the family to be in trouble. One out of three marriages in our society today is ending in divorce. As other members talking on this Bill have suggested, single-parent families today are commonplace. So we do have a real change in family life that is taking place in society. Now, I think that there are some problems with defining families. The Member for Edmonton-Avonmore pointed that out, and I think the Member for Red Deer-North acknowledged that. But I think his proposed Bill . . .

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

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: A point of order, Red Deer-South.

MR. OLDRING: Not only has the member misinterpreted and distorted a lot of the comments that I have made, but he keeps referring to me as the Member for Red Deer-North.

MR. PASHAK: Well, I want to apologize, Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Red Deer-North and indirectly to the Member for

Red Deer-South.

MR. OLDRING: We're used to those backhand apologies, Mr. Speaker, but I will accept it.

MR. PASHAK: I thought I'd just touch briefly on some of the structural changes that are affecting family life. I think the way to approach that issue is to look at some of the functions the family has traditionally performed in society and what's happening to those functions in terms of families themselves.

One of the key functions that families have historically performed, not just in this society but in all societies, is to socialize the young. It's in the family that children learn the values and the beliefs and the ideals and the skills that are necessary to become solid, functioning citizens within their communities. At one time most of this instruction did indeed take place in the family. Parents spent a lot of time with their children teaching what the parents, at least, thought the children ought to believe, what they ought to value, and what the skills were that were essential to survive.

Many children in our society 100 years ago grew up in rural communities; they grew up on farms. It was important to just follow in the footsteps of their parents. Boys learned to farm much as their fathers did, and girls acquired the skills that the mother had, which were often skills that were associated with preparing food, milking cows, keeping a house clean, raising vegetables in a small garden, et cetera. Maybe that's a kind of romantic view of the family, and I'm not sure that it ever really existed, but at least that's part of our nostalgic belief about the way families once performed and once functioned.

But now who socializes the children? Who raises young children today? How much time do parents spend with their kids? With most of my acquaintances the parent has been replaced by the television set. The children come home from school at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the TV is put on, and it becomes the big babysitter. In fact, children probably spend more time watching television than they do in school and certainly more time watching television than they do with their parents. I'm not saying that's the fault of the parents, because often both parents are working at two full-time jobs and they don't have time to spend with their children. But the consequence of this is, then, that the values children acquire come from television itself without any kind of organized social direction or purpose.

What are the values that are propagated through the television set? Well, I would suggest that they're largely ones that focus on consumerism: they teach us how to be good buyers; they teach us to be product conscious. I think that in acquiring values of those kinds it says something for the way we relate to each other, not just other members of society but the way in which we relate to other members of our families. We begin to treat people as if they were objects instead of as warm, considerate, kind, loving human beings.

Another important function of family life that has changed -- and this, too, puts pressure on the family -- is the whole economic function of the family. At one time the family was a self-contained production unit almost. It produced much of its own food; it produced its own clothing. It shared in many of the tasks that were necessary to survive materially, but now that's all changed. The father typically goes out to work. He gets a paycheque. Nobody in the family understands really what he does, what the nature of his work is. He comes home; he can't explain to anybody what he's been doing all day. He becomes somewhat isolated. He often becomes isolated from his wife

and begins to associate with other people at work, and therein develops one of the great pressures on family life. That's one of the great reasons why people begin to seek other relationships, and the whole marital structure begins to break down, which, again, has severe implications for family life. The affectional function then begins to become distorted, because if people are meeting their affectional needs outside of the family, then that, too, puts stress on the family and causes it to further weaken.

The point that I'm trying to make -- and I could give many other examples about the ways that functions of the family have now been replaced by other institutions within society, but it means that in some respects there's no real need for families any longer. I mean, if the schools are educating your kids, if the television is giving them their values, if the parents are just providing ...

MS LAING: What about love?

MR. PASHAK: Well, that's what I'm getting to: the whole question of love. But I've got to . . . [interjections] I'm getting a lot of help here, Mr. Speaker. It's rather distracting.

To get back to my main theme here, it's that I think we have to decide what kind of society we ultimately want to live in, because the kind of relationships that exist in families are going to reflect the general social order of the world in which those families are located. That can't be denied. So if we want a world in which children are competitive, in which they don't care for the rights of other people, in which they think the only thing that's important is to acquire goods and to achieve status and to have that status reflected in your material possessions, then it's important that we have a society that teaches those values. If we looked at the nature of the social order that we've created, I think you'd have to agree that that is what the social world is like. Do we judge people on the basis of how kind they are, how warmhearted they are, how loving they are, how much they care about world peace and disarmament? No. We tend to measure people in this society by their material possessions, and we don't care how they acquired those material possessions. In fact, we laugh and sneer at those people.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. I wonder if the hon. member could come back to the subject of the debate, which is the establishment of a family institute.

MR. PASHAK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm still dealing with the family institute here in the sense that I'm trying to explain to the hon. Member for Red Deer-South why it is that this Bill does not address the real problem that I think he's trying to solve by bringing this Bill forward. I think it neglects the really important questions.

If the member would like to go back to a situation in which we have family in the traditional, conservative, ideal sense, in which you have two or more parents who are happily married with one or more children living under the same roof and supporting each other and caring about each other and loving each other and . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Father knows best.

MR. PASHAK: Well, I wasn't going to say: father knows best. I mean, I don't think anybody wants to return to that situation, particularly . . . [interjections] Well, maybe some members opposite do. I think that's part of the view that's reflected in

this Bill, Mr. Speaker. I think there's a sense here that the members opposite would like to go back to a situation where the father figure in the family, the male, would be an authoritarian figure: his word is law and everybody must do what he says, and because of his presumed knowledge and experience, everybody should just obey him without question.

Of course, we can never go back to that situation. There's been a women's movement that's come along, and women today have made it very clear that they're not going to live in that kind of circumstance any longer. They've said t h a t . . . [interjections] Anyway, I think we've heard from the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore at great length on this occasion, not just earlier today but on many other occasions, and I think she's speaking for a majority of women today. They no longer want to be mere chattels of men. They want to be independent, autonomous beings. They want to have equal say in any kind of marital relationship, equal say in terms of the way children are raised. We cannot ever go back to that old patriarchal system of marriage and family relationships.

So, Mr. Speaker, what I'm trying to suggest here is that if we want the kind of families that I think the Member for Red Deer-South may want -- I'm not sure that he would like to see that authoritarian element removed, but let's assume that he wants to go back to a situation where we do have loving, kind relationships, considerate people, people who care about the world in which they live, people who want to protect the environment, people who want to respect the rights of others. I would suggest that if he wants to have that kind of world, he will not be able to bring that about by proposing changes within the family or by studying the family even further. He is going to have to advocate changes to all of our basic social institutions. He's going to have to advocate changes to the world of work. If women want to make that choice to stay at home and be parents and raise children, then women must be guaranteed a sufficiently high annual income in order to do that. That should be recognized in society as just as legitimate a form of work as any other kind of work that's performed. That would be one major reform that would permit the Member for Red Deer-South to get the kind of family changes that I think he'd like to see brought about.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

AN HON. MEMBER: Where are you going to get all the money?

MR. PASHAK: There's lots of money out there. If we can squander money building nuclear submarines, we've got all kinds of money for providing women with a guaranteed annual income in this society. There's no . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: What about men?

MR. PASHAK: Well, if the man wants to stay home and raise children, there's no reason why he shouldn't have a guaranteed annual income, as well, to do that.

Let's put our money where our mouths are. Do we really care about having children that are brought up in a kind, loving way, in a way that doesn't lead them to want to get into drug abuse kinds of problems and delinquency and all the rest of it? We have to think about these things. I'm just saying that's only one minor reform. We'd have to reform our educational institutions so that our educational institutions would reflect those values. Maybe we'll get more opportunity to address

those issues when we have the education Bill before us.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that I've given members opposite a little food for thought. I hope they'll reflect on what I had to say, and I hope they'll become somewhat more radical in their perspective and less reactionary conservative.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Ponoka-Rimbey. Motion to perhaps adjourn debate, hon. member?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, if I might, I would just like to make a couple of comments before so doing. First of all, I did have a number of remarks to make about the merits of the particular approach being taken in this Bill towards focusing on a very important matter, and that is the future welfare of the family unit in our society. I would also comment that although there has been much debate of various degrees of thoughtfulness, much of it has centred around providing the solutions and the judgments of the problems that might be addressed by an Alberta family institute and the passage of Bill 206.

But in view of the time, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Ponoka-Rimbey has moved the adjournment of debate. Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion carries.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, to expedite things this evening, I move that when the House reconvenes this evening at 8 p.m., it do so in Committee of the Whole.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the Government House Leader, those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion carries.

[The House recessed at 5:27 p.m.]