

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Thursday, June 5, 1975

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 15 The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Amendment Act, 1975

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Amendment Act, 1975.

[Leave being granted, Bill 15 was introduced and read a first time.]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, it's a great deal of pleasure for me to introduce today to you, and to the members of the Assembly, 90 Grade 9 students from the St. Bonaventure Junior High School in the Calgary Egmont constituency. They are accompanied by 3 of their teachers, Mr. Dave Beatty, Mrs. Margaret Case, and Mr. Randy Miedswcki. They are seated in both the members and public galleries, and I would now ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the answer to Question No. 129.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Motion for Return No. 121, ordered by the House; in addition, the annual report of the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority, and a report on regulations made under the authority of The Coal Mines Regulation Act.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table copies of the 1974 annual report of the Alberta Department of Agriculture.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to announce a Government of Alberta mission which will visit Europe this fall between September 29 and October 13. There are a number of general objectives to be achieved during the course of the visit. The mission will stress trade and tourism, urban transportation, housing, regional planning, reclamation techniques, capital investment, and exchange of technology.

The mission will also have a number of specific objectives, Mr. Speaker. Included are: to encourage closer and increased trade relations between Alberta and the countries of the European Economic Community as a logical follow-up to the recent initiatives by the Prime Minister of Canada; to observe and study new modes of urban transportation, innovative housing, and advanced urban and regional planning; to study reclamation techniques in the mining of coal and other minerals found in European countries included on the tour; to invite the participation of European capital investment and technology in the expansion of Alberta's economy through the development of secondary industries and exploration for oil and natural gas; also to promote Alberta's abilities to provide equipment, systems, and consulting services for the drilling, servicing, and production of petroleum and natural gas.

In addition to these specific stated objectives, Mr. Speaker, the mission will display Alberta's outward-looking perspective -- its willingness to learn from others, and to expand its international ties.

To this end, the Premier will be speaking to such international groups as the Royal Institute for International Affairs in London and the Mid-Atlantic Club in Brussels, as well as holding meetings with leading officials of the Commonwealth, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the European Economic Community, the International Energy Agency, and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Members of the European mission to be headed by the Premier, accompanied by Mrs. Lougheed, will include the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, the Provincial Treasurer, the Minister of Business Development and Tourism, the Minister of Government Services and Culture, plus 6 senior public officials and approximately 20 to 25 representatives of various segments of Alberta life in the private sector. During the two-week mission members will visit England, Scotland, Belgium, France, Germany, and Austria.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in responding to the announcement by the government today, we plan to ask a number of questions in question period. We're somewhat puzzled that the announcement was made to the media this morning at 8:30 and in the Legislature several hours later.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Europe Mission

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs or to the Premier. In the course of the junket to Europe, what countries and areas will you be looking at specifically in the study of reclamation techniques in the mining of coal?

MR. HYNDMAN: The mission, Mr. Speaker, will essentially involve the review of those techniques particularly in areas of Germany, and possibly France. There is a number of innovative ideas which we think could be of use in the future planning of Alberta.

MR. CLARK: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Of the six designated senior public officials, will one of the members of the Environment Conservation Authority be making the trip?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, no final decision has been taken with regard to those approximately six members. We'll certainly take under advisement the suggestion made. It would be a "maybe" situation with regard to that particular representative.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. In light of the concern expressed both inside and outside the Legislature regarding the eastern slopes, is the government prepared to consider adding the Minister of Environment to the group making the junket -- unaccustomed as I am to encouraging more public expenditure in this area, but in light of the very important decisions the government has to make in this area in the next year?

MR. HYNDMAN: We'll take that under consideration, Mr. Speaker. Certainly the efforts made by the mission in acquiring new ideas and approaches will be used to reflect all those various areas where there are new policy developments. Appropriate ministers or officials and those in the private sector will be blended to assure that the most balanced approach is possible to achieve the objectives of the mission.

MR. CLARK: A further supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. What criteria will be used in the selection of the 20 to 25 representatives of various agencies or sections of Alberta life? What approach is going to be used in the selection, and have those selections been made? If they have, could you tell us who they are?

MR. HYNDMAN: The question of a selection, Mr. Speaker, is still under close assessment at the moment. Certainly we would be striving to ensure that the people who come from the private sector are able to bring with them knowledge of a wide variety of Alberta business, industrial, and financial life. Also, in going on the mission, they could bring back for Albertans in both the public and private sector information which would be of benefit in furthering government policies and the energy and work of the private sector.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the minister. In light of the minister's answer, will the government be going to various organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and asking them to suggest individuals to go on the trip, or will the government in fact be making the selection itself?

MR. HYNDMAN: No, Mr. Speaker, we wouldn't see proceeding in that way. I think the selection will essentially be made on the basis of past and potential special personal contributions of people who have wide experience in the various public sectors.

MR. CLARK: Further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister able to confirm the statements on QT in Edmonton that the projected cost of the junket to Europe will be in the vicinity of \$300,000?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't be able to confirm something I haven't heard and which is still a problematical matter at the moment. But undoubtedly at a future date the costs will all be made available to the Assembly.

MR. CLARK: One further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister in a position to give an assurance to the Assembly that a rather comprehensive report of the trip to Europe and delegations met with would be filed with the Assembly?

MR. HYNDMAN: Certainly there would be a report to the Assembly at a later date, Mr. Speaker, either verbally or, if it's preferred by members to also have one in written form, that would be done. The objective of the report would be to indicate in detail what has gone on and what was achieved by the mission.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Will the 25 people include representatives from both the organized farm movement and the organized labor movement?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, members of the very important agricultural community in Alberta and the equally important labor community will probably be involved in the mission.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Among the six additional government representatives, will the Alberta Export Agency be involved in any direct way, either on the junket or in planning the tour?

MR. HYNDMAN: It's certainly likely the Alberta Export Agency, in terms of the work they've been doing, would be involved in some way, either directly or in a peripheral way but certainly involved, bearing in mind the activities they're carrying forward.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, one further supplementary question. In light of the examination of modes of transportation in Europe, can the minister advise the Assembly -- I'm not making a brief here for the Deputy Premier -- why the Deputy Premier isn't going along on this visit to Europe?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the Deputy Premier will be in charge of the government during the absence of the Premier. [interjections]

School Renovation and Construction

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, on that rather reassuring note, my second question . . .
[laughter]

. . . is to the Minister of Education. Is the minister aware of the concerns of students, teachers, and parents of the Eastglen Composite High School in Edmonton with regard to the needed capital renovations?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, the matter of capital renovations, of course, is one which should be decided by the local school board and brought to the attention of the School Buildings Board under the Department of Education.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Would the minister be prepared to contact the Edmonton Public School Board to discuss the need for increased capital grants for repairs and renovations to some of the Edmonton schools?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the school boards would be able to make that decision, inasmuch as under Section 91 of the act the provision of facilities for educational purposes is a responsibility of the school board.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Would the minister or one of his representatives be prepared to meet with the students at Eastglen high school so they more clearly understand some of the problems which have just been elaborated, plus the position of the provincial government?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I, and I think members of the Department of Education, would be loath to interfere with the local autonomy of the school boards throughout the Province of Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of this concern and of the minister's advisory committee noting they did not examine the construction grants for schools, is the government going to be reviewing the total question of construction grants under the school buildings branch? If so, when will a report be made to the Assembly?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, the practice has been to look at the support for new construction every six months. The support prices now in existence are for the period January 1 to June 30. I believe the last adjustment in the support price was made some time in the very early part of this calendar year.

The matter of support prices for the ensuing six months is presently under consideration, although I can't give the hon. member an exact time a decision will be made on the support prices for that period.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Can the hon. minister advise the Assembly what the criteria are for reviewing the support prices? I raise this question because the support price is falling rather sadly behind the actual cost of constructing schools in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. It would appear that a list of criteria governing a situation of this kind would be something that might be sought on the Order Paper.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, if the House would permit me. Just as a matter of interest so the House won't be misled by the present state of affairs in construction, the present support price by the provincial government is \$27 per square foot. My understanding is that the two most recent bids on core schools in Calgary came in at under \$27 a square foot. So it's difficult to measure the trend at the moment.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Will the hon. minister give an undertaking to examine school construction costs in northern Alberta to compare the assistance under the school buildings branch, the support program, with the actual construction costs?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, this is in fact being done on an ongoing basis to determine support. As the hon. minister is probably aware, there is additional support to those communities which are, at various intervals in terms of space, from [not recorded].

Property Tax Rebate

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, regarding the provincial tax rebate formula for senior citizens on the guaranteed income supplement. Last year's formula, I understand, was \$200 minus the school foundation tax. Could the minister elaborate on the formula to be used this year?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Calgary Bow advised me of the question, so I can probably handle parts of it, sir.

With respect to The Alberta Property Tax Reduction Act, the minimum benefit claim is still \$200, as the hon. member suggested. The process is that, should the education tax reduction be less than \$200, the individual has the right to have a \$200 minimum benefit applied. The difference would have to be under application, and these forms have been circulated with the property tax notices. The application will be made directly to the municipality levying the tax.

Oil and Gas Leases

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address this question to the Minister of Energy. The other day in answer to a question raised by the Member for Calgary Buffalo, he suggested that the government is considering a new land tenure system for oil and gas leases.

As the answer to the question indicated that perhaps large companies were holding large blocks of land, does the government anticipate having a different system of land leases for small companies versus the large?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker, that is not one of the alternatives we're considering.

MR. MUSGREAVE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister advise the House if he anticipates making studies, say for the last 5 or 10 years, of reserves discovered by company categories, which would give the government some indication in which direction they should move in the holding of land?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The previous Department of Mines and Minerals, and the present Department of Energy and Natural Resources has been conducting those types of studies. They are matters which will go into our deliberations in determining the revised system of lease and land tenure in mines and minerals in the province.

MR. MUSGREAVE: One last supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the government be prepared to have this data available to the industry before they develop a new policy?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, previously there was considerable discussion on this matter with industry. It is our intention to again have detailed discussions with them and the various associations representing them, during the course of this summer. I'm sure this matter will be one of the positions discussed.

School Programs -- Safety

MR. HANSEN: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Education. A few years ago we had a tragic drowning in our district on a school program which entailed canoeing. I see in the paper that M.E. LaZerte Composite High School has a project to go down the Saskatchewan River. According to the pictures, they have no life jackets on. What safety regulations has the school got for a program like this?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, this project is taking place outside the school and outside the normal school grounds?

MR. HANSEN: Yes, it is, but it's under the school program -- outside education -- and it's directed by the teachers.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I'm not knowledgeable about the particular project to which the hon. member refers. I would like the opportunity to look into the matter and report.

Auto Insurance Board

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Consumer Affairs if the so-called watchdog committee established by a legislative committee on automobile insurance is functioning -- the committee that was supposed to have MLAs and other people on it to monitor increased auto insurance rates?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member might expand on that question. He has given me a note which referred to 1969 and 1970. Is this the subject?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, that is the year the legislative committee brought in its report and made the recommendation that there be a watchdog committee set up called the auto insurance board. I would like to know if that watchdog committee is functioning.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. member knows that there were appointments to the Alberta insurance board. That board consists of an insurance agent, an accountant, and a lawyer.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, have there not been any MLAs on that watchdog committee?

MR. HARLE: There are no MLAs on that board.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, does the hon. minister contemplate having MLAs on that board, as recommended by the committee?

MR. HARLE: I will have to look at the recommendations of the report to which the hon. member is referring, Mr. Speaker, and I will consider it.

Comfort Allowance

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. In view of the recent proposed increase for senior citizens to \$255 a month, is the minister considering increasing the comfort allowance of a dollar a day allowed to patients in the nursing homes of Alberta?

MISS HUNLEY: I'm assuming the hon. member is referring to those who are not over 65 but who, through their misfortune, are forced to be patients in a nursing home and as a result have special needs.

We have attempted to meet that. I believe a program was instigated about two years ago. It was not previously in existence. It's a dollar a day, as the hon. member indicated, Mr. Speaker. I do realize that inflation catches up even to those who are in nursing homes. At the present time I have the matter under consideration. But I have no funds in my budget -- which will be discussed -- which would make an increase possible at this particular time.

Rehabilitation Institute -- Calgary

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the Minister of Social Services. Would the minister advise the House what progress has been made in regard to the Vocational & Rehabilitation Research Institute, a special training school for students in Calgary that is running into financial problems in developing their future programs? It may even be curtailed if assistance is not forthcoming.

MISS HUNLEY: I have met with the board of VVRI, Mr. Speaker, and listened with appreciation to the problems they expressed to me, due once again to inflationary costs. The budget has allowed some money for inflation. They indicate to me that that is not adequate for their needs. We are attempting to assess exactly how great the need is and what the problems are. We will do the best we can to help resolve them.

Beverage Container Disposal

MR. LITTLE: I will direct this question to the hon. Minister of Environment. Would the hon. minister inform the House what success has been achieved by the provisions of The Beverage Container Act in combatting litter problems?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I think we are fairly pleased with the results accrued from that program. In reviewing the most recent statistics, we're looking at literally -- didn't mean that -- virtually millions of dozens of bottles, pop containers, and liquor bottles being returned. Many citizens have commented on the improved state of our roadside ditches and traditional areas where litter has collected in the past. I know there are still some exceptions to that rule. It's interesting that I'm getting comments from citizens asking if the program couldn't be expanded to other kinds of containers. We'll be looking into that.

Coal Royalties

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Energy. It's a follow-up to a question posed last week on coal royalties.

My question is: has the government set out guidelines or criteria yet to determine what is a fair coal royalty?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what the government is presently considering in our deliberations.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Are any studies taking place at the present time as to international market prospects, Canadian market prospects, as well as profitability and cost of production in the coal industry?

MR. GETTY: I'm sure there are within the coal industry. We are also doing studies of this nature ourselves, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: A further supplementary question. Can the hon. minister advise the Assembly who is doing the review on coal royalties? Is this done by a committee of Executive

Council, or is there a special task force already set up? To what extent is there input on the coal royalty from both the owners and the United Mine Workers?

MR. GETTY: There is an interdepartmental committee within the government, Mr. Speaker, which is preparing the various options the government will consider at the cabinet committee and Executive Council level in establishing coal royalty policy and guidelines. We have constantly had discussions with the industry, and recently I've had some discussions with the United Mine Workers of America. However, I'm not certain as to the meetings the interdepartmental committee may have had with the union officials.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Has the government given any consideration to the proposal of the Alberta Fish & Game Association that the royalty for top-grade bituminous coal be \$5 a ton?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, we're always pleased to assess and evaluate suggestions and recommendations by individuals in Alberta or groups of individuals with a particular association. The representation to which the hon. member has just referred is one the government obviously will consider as well.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question for clarification. Is the government considering coal royalties as high as \$5 a ton as one of the matters specifically under study?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, my answer was to the effect that we were considering all options, including the representation from the group the hon. member mentioned.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister considering exchanging or trading our coal to other countries for other materials, such as phosphate rock from Mexico for fertilizers?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that would not be something the government would trade. It might be something an alert company within the industry might consider advantageous.

Land Tenure -- Stoney Indians

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Attorney General and ask if he could advise the House on the status of negotiations or the court case, whatever it may be, between the Stoney Indians and the Government of Alberta regarding the land tenure question in the Rocky Mountain House area?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take that question as notice.

U.S.S.R.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the hon. Premier. Mr. Premier, traditionally, before a man moves to higher office, he makes a world tour. In light of the fact that the cabinet is going to Europe, I'd like to know if the Premier will be fulfilling his commitment. A year or two ago he made a promise to go to Russia. Has that been delayed, or is he going through with it?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall it being placed in the nature of a promise. It was one of the factors we were considering. We decided not to proceed with that trip, even though we thought it would have important benefits to the province in terms of an appreciation of some of the things which are going on in Russia today relative to coming to grips with northern climatic conditions. We were at that time involved, as the hon. member recalls, with the scheduling of the Western Economic Opportunities Conference. For that reason, that particular mission or trip was deferred and indefinitely postponed.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary to the minister responsible for energy. Can the minister indicate to the House if his department has had any correspondence or information traded back and forth with the Russian government as to drilling in the northern regions?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether there could have been correspondence in that regard in the past, whether industry may be carrying on that type of information exchange and providing the department with copies, or whether the Alberta research council or one of the various agencies of government is involved in that. However, I think it would be wise to acquaint myself with it and report back to the hon. member.

Europe Mission (continued)

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Premier. I note in the ministerial announcement the suggestion of increasing our international ties. Is any consideration being given by the government to developing any kind of formal relationship with the European Common Market or with any of the countries you propose to visit?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, no, that would not be the approach of the Government of Alberta. It would be our intention in the federal state to work with and through the federal government in terms of any formality regarding international ties.

It's the view of the government, as expressed during the 17th Legislature and reflected again that by the very nature of the economy and social diversity of this province, we will have a stronger province if we spread our perspective on an international basis. It's with that objective in mind, as the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs pointed out, that we consider one of the prime purposes of such a mission.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Will there be any consultation between Alberta officials and either the Department of External Affairs or the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce before the tour is made?

MR. HYNDMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. There will be consultation at a number of levels through both departments. Indeed, there has already been that degree of consultation, and it will continue in the months ahead as the organization for the mission proceeds.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. In the announcement and in the news story which came out this morning, there was supposed to be some consultation with some of the OPEC nations or the Arab leaders. There has been no mention of that.

Can the hon. minister inform us if there will be consultations with the people of the OPEC nations?

MR. HYNDMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. As I noted, there will be meetings with leading officials of a number of groups, five or six at least, including the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Grasshopper Control

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. In view of the recent statement by Dr. Neil Holmes of the Lethbridge Research Station that southern Alberta could be in for the worst grasshopper infestation in 13 years, what is the Department of Agriculture prepared to do to help farmers combat the grasshoppers?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the pest control division of the Department of Agriculture has some 32,000 gallons of insecticide available, which is sufficient to treat approximately half a million acres. In addition, we have assurances from the private chemical trade that an amount sufficient for another half million acres is available. This leaves us with enough chemical to treat a million acres, which is equal to the worst grasshopper outbreak experienced in Alberta up to this time.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that officials of my department are involved in trying to make sure there is co-ordination of available aircraft in the event large-scale aircraft spraying operations are required.

Oil Industry

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Energy. Last week the minister indicated he would do some checking with regard to problems small Alberta companies were having.

I wonder if the minister has any figures to indicate whether small Alberta- and Canadian-based companies have, in fact, had to give up some of their land tenure in the last short period of time, also some indication of the geologists unemployed in Calgary? And -- perhaps those two to start with.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there has not been a report from the department yet. However, I have asked them to look into the matters which we discussed during the question period last week.

Rehabilitation Institute -- Calgary (continued)

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Speaker, once again I would like to direct this question to the Minister of Social Services. Is the minister in a position to give some indication to the people in the Calgary rehabilitation research institute of the latest date the money would be forthcoming, so they can plan?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, I'm aware they have a problem. They've been advised of the amount being allocated in the Estimates to their particular project. This is the only information I am able to give at this time.

Cow-Calf Loans

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture and ask whether he or his department has written or contacted bank managers recently with respect to the cow-calf loans.

MR. MOORE: No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware we've made any contact with respect to collections. As hon. members would be aware, the cow-calf loans were made on the basis of one year interest-free from the date of application, or until the animals in question were sold.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister. No letter or communication has gone out asking for the loans to be paid within 60 days of the expiry of the year then?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge, not a general notice to all individuals involved. However, I should take time to check that out and make sure. I could report to the hon. member, perhaps tomorrow.

MR. NOTLEY: Further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is any consideration being given by the government to writing off a portion of the cow-calf loan?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, no consideration has been given to that at this time. We expect the improvements that have come about in recent weeks with respect to the feeder cattle and calf markets will be of the nature to make everyone realize that the decision of last fall to provide interest-free loans will leave those cow-calf operators in a much better position than had they sold their calves last year. We are hopeful all of them will be able to meet their payments and retire those debts.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question. I hope the minister's encouraging words are true.

My question, however, is: are any contingency plans being prepared for the fall in the event the market situation does not improve?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm a farmer and, therefore, an optimist. I think the question is difficult for me to answer because I don't know what the market's going to be next fall. I certainly have a number of things in my mind with respect to contingency plans that I've discussed with officials of the Department of Agriculture and others. But I'm not in a position now to be able to discuss those in the Legislature. We're not, in fact, in a position where we're able to announce any plan with regard to a market that may be good or bad next fall.

MR. SPEAKER: There's a request by an hon. anonymous member to revert to Introduction of Visitors. If he identifies himself, may he do so?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS (reversion)

MR. MILLER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. At this time it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, 34 students who are with us today from the Lloydminster Public School. They are a Grade 7 work study group. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Butcher and Mr. Isaac, and their bus driver, Mr. Latimer. At this time I would ask that they stand and be recognized.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

2. Hon. Mr. Hyndman proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
Be it resolved that the Assembly adopt the following Standing Orders to be effective until the prorogation of the first session of the 18th Legislature:
- 9.1 (1) The Leader of the Opposition may, by written notice, designate a motion to be the first item for consideration of the Assembly when Motions other than Government Motions are called on Thursday afternoon.
- (2) The motion designated shall be from those set down under Motions other than Government Motions on the Order Paper for the preceding Monday.
- (3) The motion designated shall not be a motion that has been previously debated during the session, nor shall it be a motion set down by a government member.
- (4) To be effective, such notice must be given by 4:00 p.m. on the said Monday to the Clerk who shall cause it to be inserted in Votes and Proceedings for that Monday.
- 36.1 Notwithstanding any established precedent to the contrary, a member not being a government member may have two notices of motion in that member's name on the Order Paper at the same time.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move Government Motion No. 2 on today's Order Paper. The motion essentially concerns private members' days.

My remarks will be brief, because I believe the motion is essentially self-explanatory. By way of background, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out that if the Assembly were to review the time available for private members' activities across Canada, in the other provinces and the federal government, it would find the Province of Alberta and the Legislature of Alberta provides the largest amount of time, in terms of hours, of any jurisdiction in Canada. In fact, I think if a review were made of those jurisdictions in the world operating under the British constitutional system, it would show that few, if any, other countries in the Commonwealth provide as much time for private members as the rules of this Assembly. Approximately one-third of the time of the House, as reflected in the rules, is for private members in Alberta. In most other jurisdictions, members' time for debate of private members' resolutions is about 5 to 10 per cent of the total.

This motion, Mr. Speaker, extends special privileges to the opposition in the Assembly. It provides new and extra opportunities for its participation in private members' day. The changes involved in the resolution are essentially three in nature. As the rules now stand, on Thursdays from Orders of the Day until 4:30, the opportunity for debate on motions is afforded to members of the opposition and other private members. By this motion, the members of the opposition would have a special opportunity to use that roughly one hour on Thursdays.

The second major change involves the option, given to the Leader of the Opposition by the resolution, of a choice of the resolution to be debated by the entire Assembly on any given Thursday. This provides an opportunity for issues of a more current nature to be brought forward by him, in consultation with opposition members.

The third aspect of the motion, Mr. Speaker, is the second part of it, which changes the present rule allowing only one resolution on the Order Paper by a member at any given time. That opportunity is doubled for opposition members and allows each to have 2 resolutions on the Order Paper at any time, for a total of 12.

Other items which might be mentioned are, first, the fact that the resolution provides that the change in the Standing Orders is not permanent but simply temporary, effective until the prorogation of the first session of this 18th Legislature. I think the purpose of that is clear to see. It will be important to assess the workability of these changes in the months ahead, and whether there should be modifications for the course of the other sessions of the 18th Legislature.

The final comment I'd like to make, Mr. Speaker, relates to the requirement of notice. I think most hon. members would feel it appropriate, as the motion does reflect that there be a requirement for notice by the opposition leader of whatever motion the opposition intends to bring forward for debate on Thursday, in order that all members can have an opportunity to assess the motion, deliberate upon it, arrange their arguments, and end up with a debate on Thursday that is effective and current and useful for the Assembly and the people of Alberta.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the motion before the Assembly, let me say that I welcome the move being made by the government on this particular occasion. I concur in the statements by the Government House Leader with regard to the time available to private members. Tuesday and Thursday afternoons have been available to private members during at least the 14 years I've had the opportunity to be in this Assembly. I think it indicates the importance this Assembly, over a period of years, has placed on private members.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, might I say that it's my intention to ask my two colleagues to my right -- one of whom is, generally, to my left -- to designate to me the motion they would feel appropriate to come forward in accordance with the proportions, small as they may be, on this particular side of the House.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, might I say that should this Government Motion No. 2 be passed today, it will be our intention that a new motion dealing with municipal finance will be on tomorrow, sponsored by my colleague, the Member for Clover Bar. That's the motion we would advise the Clerk on Monday that we would call next Thursday.

[The motion was carried.]

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

143. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question:
With reference to supplementary mill rates for school purposes as at March 31, 1975;
- (1) How many municipalities have no supplementary mill rate?
 - (2) How many municipalities have a mill rate of 28 mills or more for supplementary requisitions?
 - (3) How many municipalities have a mill rate under 28 mills but over 10 mills?
 - (4) How many municipalities have raised their supplementary mill rate since:
 - (a) April 1, 1973,
 - (b) April 1, 1974,
 - (c) April 1, 1975?
 - (5) What was the total amount of money requisitioned for school purposes during the fiscal year ending:
 - (a) March 31, 1973,
 - (b) March 31, 1975?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I've consulted with the hon. Member for Drumbheller who placed this question on the Order Paper, and discussed with him certain amendments which I would now like to make to the question.

The amendments would be as follows: one, by striking out the words, "as at March 31, 1975" in the preamble and replacing the same with the words, "for calendar year 1974"; two, by striking out the word "municipalities" wherever it shall appear and replacing the same with the words "school districts"; three, by striking out the word "since" in Clause 4 and replacing the same with the word "for"; four, by striking out the words "April 1" in Clauses 4(a) and 4(b) and replacing the same with the words "calendar year"; five, by striking out the words "April 1, 1975" in Clause 4(c) replacing the same with the words "calendar year 1975 to date"; six, by striking out Clauses 5(a) and 5(b) in their entirety and replacing the same with "(a) calendar year 1973" and "(b) calendar year 1974".

With those amendments, Mr. Speaker, we would be prepared to accept the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree that the question may be amended in that manner?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

149. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question:
What was the total cost, to the public treasury, of the general election held on March 26, 1975?

150. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question:
- (1) What is the total amount of money paid out under the Crimes Compensation Act, since its inception to March 31, 1975?
 - (2) Was any amount of this total sum not recommended by the Crimes Compensation Board?
 - (3) What percentage of the amount paid in each fiscal year since its inception was because of:
 - (a) the use of alcohol,
 - (b) the use of drugs?

MR. FOSTER: I accept the question, Mr. Speaker.

151. Mr. Clark asked the government the following question:
- (1) How many complaints about job discrimination were received by the Alberta Human Rights Commission between April 1, 1974, and March 31, 1975?
 - (2) Of these complaints:
 - (a) How many have been investigated?
 - (b) How many were deemed to be justified?
 - (c) How many have been rectified and what compensation has been made in those considered justified?
 - (d) How many are still under investigation by the Alberta Human Rights Commission?

- (3) Of the 64 cases which were listed as "still under investigation" in Sessional Paper 167/74:
- (a) How many were deemed to be justified?
 - (b) How many have been rectified and what compensation has been made in those considered justified?
 - (c) How many are still under investigation by the Alberta Rights Commission?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I have only a slight amendment to propose to Question 151. It's otherwise agreed to. I'm sorry the hon. Leader of the Opposition isn't here just now in order to hear what I have to say. But I regret that I didn't have time to give him a call just before the House opened this afternoon to discuss this with him.

In any event, the first one proposed is that in the first paragraph three months be added, in effect, to the time period covered. This is a request of the Human Rights Commission, based on the fact they are switching from a calendar year last year to a fiscal year in the coming year and would like to report for 15 months instead of 12.

The only other one, again at the request of the Commission, is in paragraphs two and three. They believe that complaints being "rectified" is a matter of judgment over which parties may well differ even after the event, and have asked that that word be changed to read "resolved".

MR. R. SPEAKER: We agree to those changes.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree that the question may be amended in this way?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

156. Mr. Clark asked the government the following question:

- (a) How much money is forecast to be spent by the Alberta Export Agency in the 1974-75 fiscal year? From which appropriation in the 1974-75 estimates have these funds come?
- (b) What amounts on what dates and to and from what persons, agencies, and sources have moneys been paid from Appropriation No. 1159?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, yes, we accept the question.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

146. Dr. Buck proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) Total number of hours logged by Lands and Forests Aircraft CF-AFD (King Air) from January 1, 1973 to December 31, 1973, for transportation of:
 - (1) cabinet ministers and assistants,
 - (2) deputy ministers and assistants.
- (2) The number of flights and hours logged for each Lands and Forests aircraft during the period of January 1, 1974 to December 31, 1974, for the purpose of transportation of:
 - (1) cabinet ministers and assistants,
 - (2) deputy ministers and assistants,
 - (3) all other government personnel.

[The motion was carried.]

152. Mr. Clark proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:

- (1) The total amount of debts written off by each department of the Government of Alberta during the fiscal years 1972-73 and 1973-74.
- (2) The total amount of debts written off by each agency of the Government of Alberta during the fiscal years 1972-73 and 1973-74.

[The motion was carried.]

153. Dr. Buck proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:

- (1) The titles of all reports commissioned by the Government of Alberta since September, 1971, regarding the development of a petrochemical industry in Alberta.
- (2) Copies of all reports which have not been previously tabled in the Legislative Assembly.
- (3) The name of each person or agency responsible for each of the reports mentioned in (1).
- (4) The cost of each report mentioned in (1).

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, in addressing a few words to this motion, at the outset I would like to urge the House not to approve it.

All members will know that the petrochemical industry is a very complex one, and such minor questions, or questions that immediately appear to come forward are: the type of feedstock we should use, whether it should be one which produces a single material, or a number of materials.

We have been examining our policy relative to petrochemicals, and there have been substantial changes in external factors since we first started to examine the development of a policy. The prices of oil and gas, and transportation costs have risen; the petrochemical market has softened then hardened again; inflation has had its effect on both construction and labor costs; there are still substantial delays in some areas in filling orders for production equipment. These factors and others, Mr. Speaker, give rise to an extremely fluid situation in the petrochemical industry. The position as established some six months ago may not necessarily apply today. As a result, careful consideration of all factors, all forecasts of change and alterations of any kind must be constantly reviewed. In order to establish a final position on petrochemicals, it is obviously extremely vital that we understand totally the situation on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, studies using consultants from the private sector have been commissioned, and this is in keeping with a stated policy of the Premier some time ago. These private consultants utilize data and statistics furnished by the private companies on a confidential, privileged basis. The studies obviously assist in defining the parameters of the problems associated with the petrochemical industry in Alberta. In some cases, they present alternative solutions to the problems, discuss cost benefits, and the difficulties associated with many of the alternatives. The policy of commissioning these studies through the private sector is, as I said, in keeping with an earlier announced statement.

The results of these studies are of benefit not only to government, but eventually to all the people of Alberta, and enhance the expertise available to Albertans in one of the indigenous business sectors. In having background studies undertaken, the government does so with a clear understanding with the firm engaged and the companies whose data is used that the content of those studies will remain confidential and privileged; that the information in the main is obtained from those companies operating in the private sector. Information obtained, I said, is there clearly on the understanding that it is privileged and confidential. Information released to the public could seriously prejudice the competitive position of any company involved in supplying that information. If information contained in these documents, which could have some effect and influence on the eventual outcome, were made public -- bearing in mind the source of the information -- those sources would eventually dry up.

There's also the possibility that if we made these documents public the consultants, in taking on a study of any kind, whether it be the private sector or otherwise, would establish a rather subjective view on how they should deal with the subject, rather than being objective.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is our belief that these documents should not be tabled. However, that doesn't preclude any member of the House from discussing and debating the decisions once they are made. Once government makes its decision, we would welcome debate. Even prior to that debate, we would welcome alternative proposals from any member of the opposition or the government side.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure it is pretty obvious that the government's position in a competitive international marketing situation would be truly jeopardized if documents such as this were made public. It is not, in my view, in the best interests of Alberta or Albertans. I would urge all members to defeat the motion.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question? Would that preclude me from engaging in the debate?

Mr. Speaker, the question I would like to ask the hon. minister is: would he consider tabling 1, 3, and 4 and permit me to look at Section 2 in confidence?

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, our position is fairly clear. I believe the motion should be defeated in its entirety and it should not be tabled.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, rising to say a word or two on this motion, I would have to suggest that if we had private sector involvement strictly on its own, which risked money raised from the private sector without any shielding of natural gas prices, without any other commitment, either direct or indirect, from the public treasury of Alberta, I think the comments made by the hon. minister would be valid. It certainly would not be the business of this House to ask for detailed information or studies where, in fact, the private sector was doing the job exclusively on its own.

However, Mr. Speaker, that is not likely to be the case. If we are to develop a petrochemical industry in Alberta, there will have to be substantial public involvement. Mr. Speaker, bearing that in mind, it seems to me pretty self-evident that for the Legislature to make any decision or, indeed, for the public as a whole to render a valuable judgment on whether we should get into the petrochemical industry, pertinent information must be made available.

The government can argue all it likes about the risk to the competitive position of Alberta, but I really question whether we, as members of this Legislature, can sit idly back and allow decisions to be made of far-reaching importance to the province and then

debate after the fact, or perhaps attempt to debate beforehand, but without the information on which to base a sound or solid judgment.

Mr. Speaker, if the Legislature is in fact to control the expenditure of public funds, which is one of the historic rights of any Legislative Assembly in our parliamentary system, we need information. There may be the occasional report which is so sensitive that on both sides reason would dictate that that information not be disclosed. But surely an amendment can be proposed by the hon. minister to make allowance for that. I'm sure most of the reports which have been done in the petrochemical industry would not injure either the competitive position of the companies involved, nor for that matter make any meaningful difference to the competitive position of the petrochemical industry in the province.

That being the case, Mr. Speaker, the proposal in Motion for a Return No. 153 is, in my judgment, simply to obtain the information which is absolutely crucial if Albertans are to be able to render an objective judgment on whether a petrochemical industry is worth the cost involved. It may well be worth the cost involved, Mr. Speaker, but we have a right to know what we're getting into before vast expenditures are made.

When will this government learn, Mr. Speaker, and when will governments, period, learn that the public has a right to know before major decisions are made? We had the example of the former Conservative government, headed by Mr. Roblin in Manitoba making a commitment to a pulp and paper mill in The Pas, refusing to table any of the documents. He said it would injure the competitive position of the Province of Manitoba in the pulp and paper industry. By the time the pieces were picked up, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Manitoba and the people of Manitoba found they were sucked into a deal that cost more than \$100 million of public funds.

I submit that because this is inevitably going to involve large amounts of money, either through cushioned natural gas prices, through relocation grants, or through equity or debt financing in whatever world scale petrochemical industry is developed, we have a right to this information.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope the government could reconsider its position, table the information, and allow the motion for a return to pass.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in making a remark to this particular motion for a return, the hon. member who made the request for the return has indicated that we want some very basic or bare information: titles, the name of each person or agency responsible for each one of the reports, and the cost.

Now really, I can't understand how that would ever affect the petrochemical industry in such detail as the hon. minister has indicated this afternoon. There is just no way I can see that information would be harmful to anybody, but certainly it would be helpful to us, as a group, to understand what kind of research went on, what kind of background work is available. Following that, if there are certain reports we feel we would like to have a look at, we could make a request for the copies to be tabled in the Legislature, or review the reports on a private basis and look at the details in confidence with the minister. I see no problem with that. So for the minister to stand up and just give us a flat no -- knowing well he has that kind of power, that many people behind him will stamp that big speech he made which really, I don't think, was totally on the topic, and sort of knock us out of the road and give us nothing -- certainly he can do that. But I think this would be a time for him to be a little more diplomatic and understanding, and change his mind.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker . . .

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, it's becoming quite obvious that we are being asked more and more to debate after the fact in this Legislature, and this seems to be a trend which has developed in the last four years. It's very similar to the occurrence in this province when the decision [was made] to allow advertising on radio and television of liquor, wine, and beer. It was an after-the-fact case. The report came in in the spring session. We asked, was there going to be a debate, and the government assured us there would be one. Then the House dissolved. We had summer holidays. The order in council came through giving the media the opportunity to advertise liquor, wine, and beer on radio and television. It was a fait accompli. In the fall we asked, why was there not an opportunity? The Premier, I remember, said to me, put it on the Order Paper, bring it in as a resolution. What in the world is the point of debating something after it has been in effect for four months? That's just exactly what is happening here.

We have heard rumors around this province that the government is going to be involved, directly or indirectly, in the petrochemical industry. Now are they, or are they not?

MR. GETTY: Wait for the decision.

DR. BUCK: Wait for the decision, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: In the dark. That's where they want it.

DR. BUCK: That's right. In the dark is exactly right, Mr. Speaker. Surely we, as responsible members of this Legislature -- and even when you speak to government backbenchers, they don't know what's going on. So if they don't know what's going on, how are the taxpayers supposed to know? How are we supposed to know?

It's fine for the new Minister of Housing and Public Works to sit there smugly and smile, because they've got the numbers. But for a government which professes it is going to bring open government to this province, it is going to bring the action back to the Legislature, I just don't know how the hon. minister, in all conscience, can sit there and even smirk.

Mr. Speaker, the information we ask is for the benefit, we feel, of the industries and the taxpayers of this province. That is what we are all here for, not to run a tight little dictatorship. Our concerns and our desire for information are sincere.

The first order says, "The titles of all reports commissioned by the Government of Alberta . . .". That, in case the hon. minister doesn't know, happens to be the taxpayers' money. The government over there loses sight of that fact. They try to bamboozle the people in this province into thinking that we are going to give you some money. Well, "we" just happens to be all of us collectively, the taxpayers of this province. The government had better not lose sight of that, because I would hazard a guess that within four to eight years there is going to be a new premier sitting there. It is not necessarily going to be my friend from Spirit River, but there is going to be someone sitting in that chair. And it is not going to be the party in power, because I know where the man who should be sitting in that chair is going to be. But that's another question. [interjections] The Deputy Premier isn't going to be in there either; it doesn't look like it.

Mr. Speaker, all facetiousness aside, our requests are sincere. We feel there are public funds involved. Because of the continuing rumor that there is going to be involvement of taxpayers' money in the petrochemical industry in Alberta, we feel this information should be available. If it is not available, Mr. Speaker, I submit this is strictly a mockery of the parliamentary system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

[The motion was lost.]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, relating to tonight's business. I would just like to advise the Assembly of a change. Previously I had indicated to members that we would be proceeding in Supply at 8 o'clock with the departments of Attorney General, and Advanced Education and Manpower. The hon. Opposition Leader has indicated he will be absent from the House this evening and wished to hold those departments. Accordingly, there will be a change in tonight's business. At 8 o'clock, after doing Government Motion No. 3, which is a routine one, we'd proceed, in Supply, to the departments of Social Services and Community Health, and Hospitals and Medical Care.

154. Dr. Buck proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
- (1) Copies of any agreements or contracts made between the Alberta Export Agency and Canadian Cane Equipment Limited from May, 1973, to the present.
 - (2) Copies of all correspondence between the Alberta Export Agency and Canadian Cane Equipment Limited from May, 1973, to the present.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister has asked that there be an amendment, adding at the end of Section 2, "with the concurrence of Canadian Cane Equipment Limited". Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: We have a somewhat difficult situation with the hon. member moving an amendment to his own motion. Perhaps we could do it in a different way, either an informal agreement of the Assembly or a motion by the minister.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, I move that Motion 154 be amended by adding at the end of Section 2, "with the concurrence of Canadian Cane Equipment Limited".

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the amendment, does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The motion as amended was carried.]

155. Dr. Buck proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
- (1) The date or dates since 1971 on which Mr. Walter J. Levy entered into a contract or contracts with the Government of Alberta or any agency of the Government of Alberta.

- (2) The date of each trip made by Mr. Walter J. Levy to Alberta and the names of those members and/or representatives of the Government of Alberta or any agency of the Government of Alberta he met with on each occasion.
- (3) The date of each trip made by members and/or representatives of the Government of Alberta or any agency of the Government of Alberta to places outside of Alberta to meet with Mr. Walter J. Levy including, for each trip, the names of those members and/or representatives.
- (4) All remuneration paid to Mr. Walter J. Levy, including that for expenses, from the beginning of his employment by the Government of Alberta.
- (5) Any information held by the Government of Alberta relating to present or former employment of Mr. Walter J. Levy by:
 - (a) The Government of the United States of America,
 - (b) The government of any state in the United States of America,
 - (c) Any corporation incorporated in the United States of America and/or any state in the United States of America which is engaged in exploration for oil or in the production of oil-based products.
- (6) The names of any other candidates considered for the consulting position held by Mr. Walter J. Levy.
- (7) The criteria used in the selection of Mr. Walter J. Levy.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I will table Motion 155.

DR. BUCK: Nice to see you've got a job.

157. Mr. Notley proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

A copy of all studies which the government has in its possession regarding the economic feasibility, the environmental impact, and the social impact of a hydro-electric dam on the Peace River at Dunvegan subject, in the case of those not commissioned by government, to the concurrence of the authors.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to offer a slight amendment to Motion No. 157, by adding after "authors", the last word in the motion, "and/or the owners", merely getting the concurrence of the owners of such reports. They might be in the hands of third parties.

[The motion as amended was carried.]

158. Mr. R. Speaker proposed the following motion to the Assembly:

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:

- (1) All delegations which came to Alberta, upon invitation of the Government of Alberta, to examine Alberta cattle, during the fiscal years 1973-74 and 1974-75.
- (2) The government agency, minister, or civil servant responsible for having arranged the visit of each delegation to Alberta.
- (3) An explanation of the general reason for the presence of each delegation.
- (4) An itemized itinerary for each of the above delegations, including specifically the names of all agricultural businesses, including farm operations, which they visited, and the exact order in which they made such visits.

[The motion was carried.]

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

1. Moved by Mr. Mandeville:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government of Alberta to make available to municipalities grants to finance the servicing of residential lots.

[Adjourned debate: Dr. McCrimmon]

DR. MCCRIMMON: There are just a few other points I wanted to bring out with respect to this motion. Although I again state I'm in favor of the principle of the motion, I fail to see how it could possibly work. It may create some inequities, rather than cure the problem.

One of the difficulties with this motion as it is written -- lots within a town or a city that are already in a serviced area, where lots change hands and are not built on. It would be an inequity in a situation such as this. I can see where the motion would work in the case of new subdivisions, but in the case of lots within a town or city, I see where it would cause difficulties.

A similar situation is that a person purchases an old house on a lot and tears it down to build a new home. This would again be an inequity, causing him to be in a situation where he wouldn't be eligible for the grant under the municipality that a person building a new home on a newly serviced lot would be.

There are other difficulties that would come in under this. One is the change in local zoning, the difficulties with zoning and problems in this respect.

Although I do agree with the principle behind the motion, I'm afraid I can't go along with it as it is written, because I can see it creating too many problems as far as our towns and cities are concerned.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JAMISON: In speaking on this resolution, Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the hon. Member for Bow Valley for bringing this subject to the Assembly for discussion and debate. It is a matter of significant importance to the policy of this government which encourages decentralization and dispersal of our citizens more equally throughout the province. That is a wise policy, I think, Mr. Speaker. There is no doubt whatsoever. I am delighted that the Third World conference to be held next June in Vancouver will consider human habitat as one of the questions on the agenda, how to reverse the emigration of people from larger cities.

The resolution before us deals with a situation facing far too many of our small municipalities, which is a serious impediment to growth. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, any community which cannot provide adequate water and sewage disposal is doomed to a slow death. If we agree decentralization is the right policy, the ability of municipalities to provide proper sewage and water systems is an important factor in carrying out that policy.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we have a number of points to consider. I would like to raise a few. Number one, would the grant proposed in the resolution encourage or discourage initiative and sound business management by municipalities? In the 22 years I have been in business, I have never been able to understand why municipal governments have consistently and persistently set monthly water and sewage bills at rates far too low to provide a reserve fund for expanding these 2 absolutely essential services. Presumably, it was done because periodic increases would have brought some flak from ratepayers. Surely, Mr. Speaker, there are situations in which governments must lead in long-term financial planning. Realistic water and sewage charges, with built-in reserves for future needs, could be explained to ratepayers to gain their acceptance.

I was, therefore, pleased to note recently that the City of Edmonton saw fit to raise both water and sewage rates. When the M.D. of Sturgeon, the County of Strathcona, and the towns of Fort Saskatchewan and Redwater combined their resources some 10 years ago to put in what is known as the northeast water line . . .

DR. BUCK: The former government.

MR. JAMISON: The former government -- primarily to provide a water supply to the fast-growing towns of Fort Saskatchewan and Redwater. Behind the thinking of the municipalities, Mr. Speaker, was that future industry could locate along this water line. It was a wise move, in my estimation.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, going to an annual meeting of the council of the M.D. of Sturgeon when it heard flak from its ratepayers as to why it was involved in a \$750,000 water line that wasn't going to be of any value to them. Mr. Speaker, this water line has never cost the ratepayers of the M.D. of Sturgeon one nickel. It is paid by the user, and in its first year of operation showed an \$18 profit. Mr. Speaker, [because of] the wise foresight of this council and the councils of the County of Strathcona and the towns of Fort Saskatchewan and Redwater, this line is now paying off in great dividends. It's going to supply the fast-growing centre of the Village of Gibbons. The water line is to be constructed this year.

Industry is badly needed in the M.D. of Sturgeon, for additional assessment. The M.D. of Sturgeon has the lowest assessment of any of the municipalities in the greater Edmonton area. As an example of that, the County of Strathcona has an assessment base of \$129 million. The County of Parkland has approximately \$87 million. The M.D. of Sturgeon, where high taxes are paid by the ratepayers, has a measly \$24 million assessment. This foresight in setting up a water line, Mr. Speaker, is now proving to have been the right thing, as it is going to locate industry and give the additional assessment to this municipality.

Mr. Speaker, in my estimation, rates for water and sewer are just too low. I can't understand the thinking of municipal governments which control water and sewer. Why is the cost of water and sewer to a resident, a very essential service, sometimes as low as \$7 a month for the two services, when you consider that today you can't even buy a bottle of good whiskey for \$7? I wonder, Mr. Speaker, would further grants, as proposed in the resolution, cause this unrealistic approach to continue?

The second point I would like to raise, Mr. Speaker, is how far should the government go in providing grants for specific municipal services? We now have what I consider a good program to aid municipalities to put in sewage systems. I refer, Mr. Speaker, to this pamphlet: Municipal Sewage Treatment Assistance Program, which was initiated by the Hon. Bill Yurko two years ago. I can assure you it's a good financial set-up for municipalities and I can't see why more aren't taking advantage of this tremendous program.

The St. Albert constituency, Mr. Speaker, has both kinds of municipalities recognized in that program as having magnified difficulties: rapidly growing communities, such as St. Albert, Morinville, Bon Accord and Gibbons; and very small communities facing declining populations. The residents of the Hamlet of Vimy, with a population of only 135, showed considerable initiative and good management in solving their problem. They were faced with a report from the public health inspector that they could no longer use their present inadequate sewage disposal system, which consisted of septic tanks not functioning properly, overflowing into the streets. In some cases raw sewage was reported in the ditches of the streets. This provided a very unhealthy situation.

I'm pleased the residents of Vimy took the responsibility, in conjunction with the reeve of the M.D. of Westlock, the health inspector, Mr. Ken McAmmond, their MLA, and the Department of Environment. A delegation from Vimy, almost two years ago today, Mr. Speaker, visited the Town of Marshall, Saskatchewan, to investigate that centre's low-cost sewage system, a system which did in fact save a dying community. Marshall today is enjoying healthy growth as a satellite of the big City of Lloydminster.

[interjections]

Thank you, Mr. Miller.

With the help of the Department of Environment, the Hamlet of Vimy installed a plastic pipe sewage disposal system and a lagoon capable of accommodating a population of 1,500, at a cost of less than \$60,000. Mr. Speaker, this is compared with the estimated cost of \$194,000 for a conventional tile system from an engineering firm from Edmonton. Presently the Vimy system is under a 2-year observation by the Department of Environment.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the members of this Assembly take a look at the system in Vimy. If it proves to be satisfactory, I think we've come up with a low-cost sewage system which could be used in roughly 400 hamlets in the Province of Alberta.

I mentioned this project, Mr. Speaker, to raise three points. Had a government grant been available, would this initiative have been shown by the hamlet and the M.D. of Westlock? Would the cost have been held at such a low figure, less than \$60,000? Thirdly, could this project be copied in other small centres to save expensive and time-consuming studies?

This brings me to the third consideration I'd like to mention regarding the resolution before us, Mr. Speaker. Studies in providing adequate services to residential and acreage lots will, I believe, enter the picture. I think the government can come to the assistance of municipalities. We have larger resources in this area.

Particularly, when we request a study, we should pay for it. The cost of studies, consultants' fees, and the delays which add greatly to the cost of the project because of inflation concern me, Mr. Speaker. For example, as the hon. Dr. Buck mentioned, 67 studies were done by the previous government, on the Sturgeon River. Yet, Mr. Speaker, there wasn't one inch of work done on that river. Where studies are in fact needed [interjections] let us be sure no research is repeated. I believe also, Mr. Speaker, both municipal and provincial governments should do careful shopping around to get studies at the best cost, compatible with the degree of competence required.

The fourth point I would like to make on this resolution has to do with the thinking behind government grants to municipalities. With this resolution, we move into an area traditionally the responsibility of municipalities. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the role of senior governments should be to create a healthy climate in which municipalities, business, industry, and the people as individuals can manage their affairs sensibly and responsibly. This government is, I believe, doing much to create such a climate through the municipal Sewage Treatment Assistance Program, the roads and street improvement program, transportation assistance, supplementary taxation legislation, low-cost borrowing for municipalities -- 8 per cent money from the Alberta Municipal Finance Corporation, possibly the lowest interest money today in Canada -- removing a large portion of our education cost from property owners, hospital tax, STEP and PEP assistance programs, preventive social services programs of which 80 per cent is paid by the government, the new program for recreation facilities, the long-range benefits which will assist municipalities under the decentralization policy of this government, and joint federal-provincial programs such as DREE. This is not to refuse recognition that probably every municipality in Alberta and Canada wants more assistance from senior governments and does not want to come hat in hand for it.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, the spreading of industrial and commercial development into municipalities throughout the province is going to produce the answer. As this development proceeds, the municipalities will have a taxation base on which they can manage their own affairs with autonomy. If we are to offer further assistance now, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest it should be by way of aid to service property situated in industrial parks, a self-liquidating program. Grants for servicing residential lots would, I am certain, be a grave mistake on the part of this government. I cannot see how such grants will make any real difference in the cost of a home.

Today, Mr. Speaker, developers are paying their fair share of the servicing of residential lots. I'd hate to think we were taking this away from the developers, who in many, many cases are good corporate citizens. Once the government starts such a grant program, it could get locked into it. Let's not make that mistake.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to refer to Department of Environment Appropriations 2936 and 2939, headed Municipal Pollution Control Assistance and Municipal Water Supply Assistance, which we discussed in Committee of Supply the other night. I would suggest to the members that these two programs would solve a lot of problems that we are facing today in the small municipalities.

Thank you.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few brief comments on this motion. I would like to suggest to the hon. Member for St. Albert that some municipal politicians make sure the citizens of their cities pay for goods and services on the basis of use, not on some emotional debate which may or may not occur at city hall.

The intent of the motion, Mr. Speaker, may be to make more financial help available to municipalities by way of servicing lots. But in my opinion it overlooks the present situation. For example, in some areas right now there are grants available in municipalities to service lots in residential areas. In some areas you can also receive the total cost of primary sewage plants. Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation allows for large loans for larger cities with forgiveness clauses and lower rates of interest than the current 8 per cent for secondary sewage disposal plants. We have, as the hon. Member for St. Albert pointed out, low-cost loans through the Alberta Municipal Finance Corporation at 8 per cent. We also have subsidized programs through the federal Winter Works Program which allow for works to be undertaken by municipalities at reduced cost.

But I agree that the grant philosophy runs against the grain of many civic elected officials. They resent the paternalism which was exhibited for many, many years by the previous government of this province: the system whereby the rich father in Edmonton always knows best what the local level of government should or should not do. I would hope this government would get rid of that system.

In so doing, we have to make a very careful examination of financial services to municipalities of a wide nature. For example, Mr. Speaker, we have to know what tax sources are available to the cities. We have to know whether the cities are discriminatory. The Member for St. Albert said that some cities increase the water rates based on the costs of the service. But I would point out that some cities increase the costs of utilities to multipurpose housing versus the single-family home. I think this is a most unfair practice and one that we, as a senior government, should try to eliminate.

We should also make sure whether the actions of the local level of government are in conflict with the fiscal policies of the Alberta government. We should also appreciate whether local labor unions will, in effect, lever some cities one against the other to get higher wage settlements to the detriment of the whole province.

Mr. Speaker, I agree it's a very complex situation. I agree that on the surface it looks like a desirable thing helping particularly first-start families get their first home. But I suggest that we could be getting into the same predicament we are already finding ourselves in with regard to health services. We have total funding by a senior government with the operation being run by the local government. There is an abandonment of responsibility. I think we should try to avoid this at all costs. As long as the local levels of governments can run to Edmonton for handouts, they will continue to do so.

As I mentioned earlier, I think it's a very complex and very urgent problem. But I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, it's the kind of problem that should be examined by the Provincial Municipal Finance Council. I would hope that this council will be commencing its work very soon and will be reporting back to the House on a continuing basis with interim reports. But I really feel that the matter should not be debated any further here without more information available to all members.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move an amendment to the motion, and I would suggest the amendment should read: "Be it resolved that we refer this motion to the Provincial Municipal Finance Council so they can consider the integration of a grant system to finance the servicing of residential lots."

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. member have copies for the two House leaders as well as for the Clerk and the member whose motion it is now suggested be referred?

Are hon. members prepared to proceed with the debate on the motion to refer, or do they wish to wait until the Chair is able to read it to the Assembly?

Are you ready for the question? Is there anyone who wishes to speak on the motion to refer? As hon. members know, any debate on that must be strictly relevant to that motion. Are you ready for the question on the motion to refer?

[The motion was carried.]

2. Moved by Mr. Taylor:

Be it resolved that this Legislative Assembly urge the Government of the Province to make representation to the Government of Canada to amend the Criminal Code to provide that:

- (1) A sentence of death passed by a judge which is not reduced on appeal shall be duly carried out unless a recommendation for mercy or clemency is given by the judge or jury in which case His Excellency the Governor General in Council shall have the authority to commute such sentence.
- (2) A sentence of life imprisonment shall mean imprisonment for not less than 20 years.

[Adjourned debate: Mr. Musgreave]

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to comment on a few points I think are worthy of consideration that were brought out in the debate by various members.

Quoting from the McRuer report on the treatment of the sexual offender, the following points were made: there is no known form of medical treatment of the sexual psychopath or the sexual pervert. But the commission did recommend that these prisoners should be kept in . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I apologize to the Assembly. We perhaps should not have dealt with the previous motion until after the Chair had received a copy. There may be some difficulty with regard to this motion. It doesn't seem clearly, on reading the text, to be a motion to refer. I'm not sure whether it's an amendment either.

The wording of the motion is: "that we refer", and I assume that means the Assembly, "to the Provincial Municipal Finance Council" the "integration of a grant system to finance the servicing of residential lots". It would seem to me the motion would have to be clarified in some way before it could be dealt with. Taken in its broad sense it might even be a money motion.

The intention is that Resolution No. 1 under Motions other than Government Motions be referred to the Provincial Municipal Finance Council, then if that's the intent of the Assembly, I'm sure the Clerk can arrange an appropriate text.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, that was the intent we agreed to.

MR. SPEAKER: [Not recorded] provide an appropriate text.

MR. MUSGREAVE: I apologize to the House, Mr. Speaker. That was the intent of my motion, but I was trying to write it and speak at the same time.

Going back to the McRuer report, I would like to suggest that the treatment of psychopaths in a mental hospital can greatly interfere with the well-being of the psychiatrically sick patients. As a result, the attitude of the nursing staff towards the psychopath and the psychotic is very different, and it is most difficult for the staff of nurses to change from one situation to the other.

Unfortunately, some medical people feel that there are some illnesses for which medical science can do nothing and, regrettably, the money spent on mental health has been very small over the years, so the necessary research has not been carried out to enable the medical person to treat some of these illnesses.

Now, one hon. member suggested that castration would be effective in reducing the crime rate of sexual repeat offenders. But it is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the socialistic countries of Europe were the first to introduce castration, led by Denmark in 1929. It is also in effect in Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands. A study of the European experiment has indicated that castration, whether voluntary or not, may produce physical changes that complicate the problems of the deviate and increase his danger to the community rather than reducing it.

The McRuer report, in commenting on Canadian views of civil rights, says of castration that it has not removed the risk of new crimes, or at least considerably reduced crime by this method of surgery.

While many feel that hanging or incarceration for 20 years, as recommended in the motion, would help our society, it should be remembered that there has been no successful psychiatric or medical treatment for any type of delinquency. As Dr. Michie, who supervised the Ponoka mental institute in this province for 30 years, once stated, no criminal was ever successfully treated for criminal tendencies in his years of service at that institution.

So, Mr. Speaker, I again return to my original position: without research, without study, without a lot of talk with citizens, without knowledge and feeling and understanding, we cannot vote wisely on this matter. Mr. Speaker, this matter is not in our prerogative as legislators. We are wasting the time of everyone here when we should be discussing matters of concern to this province, matters of concern to the citizens; health, housing, education, and the development of new jobs and business opportunities in our province. These are our concerns, Mr. Speaker, and we should get on with the job of looking after our responsibilities.

Therefore, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, we would be very wise to vote on this bill and get on with the proper business of this House.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a comment or two about the resolution proposed by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

I sat and listened to members from both sides of the House in the debate. Although I was of firm conviction as to how capital punishment should be treated, if treated, I have begun to waver a little bit. I begin to wonder about the intent of the resolution. For example, I don't see where in the resolution the word "hanging" is mentioned. I don't see where "capital punishment" is mentioned.

I get the impression, Mr. Speaker, that the prime motivation of the hon. Member for Drumheller in making the resolution is really one of frustration. In my knowledge of him, he obviously has wisdom far greater than I as to the procedure one takes in making the proper authorities aware of the shortcomings, if any, of the system. I can only get the feeling, Mr. Speaker, that he's become extremely frustrated at the way law and order, or the appearance of law and order in Canada, particularly with those responsibilities related to the federal government, have been eroded over the quarter-century or longer he's been in this Legislature.

I myself have some rather firm convictions, as I mentioned at the outset. Although I don't really think it is a matter of discussion for this House, I do appreciate and feel very sincere about the feelings of the hon. member who moved it. We've heard expressions by the hon. Member for Calgary McCall, and statistics, and an admission that even should we discuss it, the statistics based on Canadian experience are really inadequate. We've heard other members saying that total rehabilitation is to be found in hanging because then you are not concerned with the problem again.

To me, Mr. Speaker, it really boils down to something far above the responsibilities and jurisdiction of this House. I'm referring mainly to the royal prerogative and the basis of our country and parliamentary system. As far as I can see, the royal prerogative involves the government of the country commuting a sentence of death. Although we may or may not agree with the actions of the central government in the past 13 or 14 years, they are a fact of life. I do not believe them to be the responsibility of this Legislature. So I have to agree with the hon. member who spoke before me, that they are not within the jurisdiction of this House, although I don't believe that's any indication as to how this House itself should feel on the question.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, I'd simply say that it would appear to me the motion we should be discussing is whether we should be adhering to the royal prerogative, which has been the basis of our parliamentary system.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, it's been a pleasure to listen to some of the extremely good debates we've had on this motion. However, I have been distressed, as a member of the provincial Legislature, to find that the provincial Legislature is, in my opinion, presuming to or being encouraged to intrude upon affairs which are rightly the responsibility of a higher body. Mr. Speaker, I have to support the point of view which says the resolution should be defeated, inasmuch as I, for one, sitting in this House would not wish the federal House to make a motion to direct us to do something in this House. I think we have responsibilities which are sufficiently broad and grave that we do not need to be directing in an area which is clearly a federal matter and a federal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, I have appreciated some of the very good points of view. They are some of the best debates on this subject that I have heard since this debate commenced in this particular Legislature. But when I am asked to vote to make a representation to the Government of Canada to do something, I am just not of the opinion that that is what we should be doing. I think we have sufficient matters within our own jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to advance another aspect of this to members of the House. I realize the members of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition may disagree with me on this, but I would submit that for this House to pass this resolution, when it is well known that we are largely of one political party which is a party quite different in view from that in the majority in the federal House, would surely be construed not only as intervention by a provincial legislature into the responsibilities of the federal Parliament, but perhaps intervention by one political party in the affairs of another political party, and an attempt to create some political embarrassment. Mr. Speaker, I'm not above creating some political embarrassment for the federal government of the day, but I just don't think on a matter of this nature that is something we should even seem to be trying to do.

So, Mr. Speaker, on two counts I have very severe reservations about approving this resolution. I want to make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that my hesitation and, in fact, what will be my negative vote on this resolution, are not related to anything other than what I construe to be directing the federal Parliament in an area which is clearly the responsibility of the federal government and the members elected to that parliament by all the citizens of Canada. By our constitutional division of powers, it is beyond the responsibility and powers of this Legislature.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I wish the hon. members would read the resolution. This resolution does not deal with capital punishment. It is not asking for the restoration of capital punishment. It is simply asking that the Criminal Code be amended in two respects.

One is that life imprisonment be made to mean at least 20 years. The other is that when a sentence of death is passed by a judge, without clemency being recommended by the judge or the jury, it be carried out.

I have difficulty following the arguments of a great number of the members who have gone all around, but have not touched the two items mentioned in the resolution. Again, I want to make it abundantly clear that when the hon. members of the House vote for this resolution, they will be voting for or against life imprisonment of 20 years, and/or whether they want the Criminal Code amended so that when a judge issues a sentence of death, without mercy or clemency recommended by the judge or the jury, death will be carried out.

It says in the Criminal Code now that the penalty for killing, murder, is death. We're not changing that. We're simply saying that when people go through the process of our laws, and a judge finds them guilty, that then be carried out.

A jury made a recommendation to a judge a short time ago about another Criminal Code offence, and this was presumed to be changed by a higher court -- unheard of before. All we're asking is that we don't make our courts a mockery. If we're going to continually have the courts make a decision, and then the Parliament of Canada change it, we're simply creating a spirit of disrespect for the courts. I don't think there should be disrespect for the courts.

The courts hear the evidence -- not the federal cabinet, not anybody else -- the court hears all the evidence, the judge and the jury. Then they find the man guilty or not guilty. If a man is found guilty of murder, cutright murder, so bad that the judge or the jury wouldn't even recommend clemency or mercy, we say that man should meet the penalty laid down in the Criminal Code of Canada. No one should change that.

If there's some doubt about it, or circumstances that were considered, then the judge or the jury makes a recommendation for mercy, and it becomes a different matter, because then the cabinet would be able, under this amendment, to change that death sentence to one of life imprisonment. But it wouldn't be for 2, 3, or 7 years. It would be for at least 20 years.

I think even one of the great statesmen of Canada, the former Prime Minister Mr. Diefenbaker, has strongly urged that point a number of times. Laws are not respected by the man on the street, because they hear somebody has a life sentence and they see him out in a very few years, sometimes seven years, and sometimes less. As a matter of fact, sometimes they see them out on day parole in a matter of two or three years. If we expect our courts to be respected, then orders by those courts have to be carried out. In my view, this would simply help that decision to come about.

There's another point which has been mentioned by a number of members, and I don't know why they're using it. Time and time again, this Legislature, and every Legislature in Canada, has made representations to the federal government. The federal government listens to the representations of the representatives of the people of a province. We all represent quite a number of people. I think we help the federal members when we pass a resolution saying something definitely should be done, or something definitely shouldn't be done.

I refer to the resolution which follows mine by one -- issued by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View, Mr. Kushner -- which is asking the federal government to amend the Old Age Security Act, and properly so. The federal government today would probably be far behind where it is now had it not been for representations of various provincial legislatures and provincial governments on various items. I can't see an argument at all why people would say we have no right.

After all, the people of my constituency -- and I expect the others have their own decision from their people -- my people haven't any wishy-washy opinion on this. As a matter of fact, they want a federal referendum on this matter they're so concerned about. They've asked, if the federal government isn't going to do something about it, why can't the Alberta Legislature at least let their wishes be known? I think we can -- legally, properly, and constitutionally -- as the representative of the Crown and the right of the province, make representations to the Crown and the Dominion of Canada. I see nothing wrong with that, nothing irregular, nothing out of the usual. It's done time and time again. During the life of this Legislature, it will be done time and time again too. So I don't think we should argue that this isn't our jurisdiction.

The old age pensions aren't our jurisdiction either, but we can certainly feel for the people who are not getting enough, and ask the federal government to increase them. The matter of more for our crippled can certainly be improved by the federal government. It goes beyond what we're doing here, but after all, we are Canadian citizens first. I don't want at any time to go to any part of Canada and find the conditions so bad that they are a disgrace to every Canadian. There's no reason legislatures shouldn't make representations to the federal government any more than a municipal government shouldn't make representations to the provincial government -- even though they are the children of the provincial government. Their thinking represents a distinct set of thinking of a segment of people who want certain things done. That should be welcomed by any provincial government, because it does help it to make a decision in line with the majority of the people.

That's another thing I want to mention. We're talking about disrespect for Parliament and for legislatures. There are a number of things going on today building that disrespect. It was debated in the House of Commons the other day. A number of members there on both sides of the House are concerned how Parliament and the legislatures are coming into disrespect.

A couple of items were mentioned. Here we have a mess in our post offices and mail not being delivered. In spite of the fact that the Postmaster General is trying to do something about it, it's still a mess and has been a mess for several months. We say, who is running the country, those working in the post office or the Government of Canada? The federal government finally took a decision the other day in regard to the strike, going on for weeks there, that is affecting a great number of people. This at least will build some respect, even though it may make some people angry.

I want to cite another instance. Time and time again, the people of Canada, particularly the Prairies, have suffered. Through this Legislature we have asked that certain things be done by the federal government so our wheat can be delivered and we can be creditable among the people who are buying our wheat and barley. Members on both sides of the House have asked that this be done, and properly so. There has been little or nothing done in regard to stopping the wildcat strikes, and the strikes which lead to

boats sitting in the ocean waiting for our wheat to be put into them. We have lost barley markets that we never regained, and we'll be very lucky if we don't lose 20 or 30 per cent of our wheat market. No wonder Prairie farmers are saying, what's the use of going to Parliament or the legislatures. Are you going to ask me that we shouldn't ask the federal government to do something about that? This is in the same category.

People feel strongly about this matter. This is a matter of justice. This is a matter of what is going on right in our streets in Edmonton, in Calgary, in Drumheller, and Grande Prairie. These people are . . .

I'm sorry. I have several other things to say, but in the interest of time I'll say I feel strongly that this resolution should be passed. I ask the hon. members to think clearly and carefully before voting against it.

[The motion was lost.]

PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT ORDERS
(Second Reading)

Bill 205 The Alberta Health Care Insurance Amendment Act (No.1)

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to second reading of Bill No. 205, The Alberta Health Care Insurance Amendment Act (No. 1), I would like to say that I feel this bill is very timely and certainly of much interest to the people of Alberta. As I've travelled in my constituency and to many towns I have found many, many people saying this is a priority area for consideration at this point in time. I think with the opportunity of revenues, with the opportunity of a growing and stable economy in Alberta, Albertans are prepared to take this particular step.

The principles of Bill No. 205 are to make available all dental services for children under 7 years of age. It also supports the procedures that are used by the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission at the present time. So there would be no administrative changes beyond adding this type of health care for the people of Alberta.

One other thing this bill does, Mr. Speaker, is add to the present Section 46 of the health care insurance bill, which is already operative for the present health care services. It adds dental service to Section 46. This is one area I have been very concerned about in the last while. For example, in my constituency I have a family that has a hereditary dental problem. The children have the capability to inherit dental defects from the parents, and some have. To cure these defects costs the parents \$600 a year for a period of 3 years. There are 5 children in the family. This could mean a sum of \$1,800 times 5 for that particular family.

Now, by bringing in this amendment to include dental care in the Alberta health care program, Section 46 would also include the possibility of taking care of situations such as that, where there are foreseen or undue burdens of cost on the family. I think that's very, very significant and important to many Albertans at the present time. At present I have no knowledge of any legislation or government programs that have that particular capability. I think it's time we add that capability to our health care program.

Now, what are some reasons for dental care? The Hall Royal Commission on Health Services in 1964 said this: "Dental disease is one of the most common of all kinds of illness, and one that causes a good deal of pain and misery, inconvenience and economic loss." In a study in the United States at St. Louis, of 119,000 school children, 51 per cent had dento-facial abnormalities, of which 80 per cent could have been prevented if early treatment was available.

People say, well, we could have done this as individuals. But other studies have taken place to show that there are three factors which depend on and determine whether individuals receive dental care. First is income, second is education, and third is the urban and rural setting, or their environment or community.

When looking at these 3 areas, the studies show that persons receiving dental care were usually in the high- and middle-income groups. These people received two and a half times as much dental care as the low-income groups. This was especially predominant for children under 15, where it was shown that 4 times as many children in the upper-income group received dental care as in the low-income group.

What are some of the reasons that showed lack of dental care in that group? The main item was cost to the parent. The second thing indicated in the studies was the group values on where the money was to be spent. It was shown that families who did have the funds placed dental care as a very, very low priority. Dental care was only sought in emergency situations. I think, Mr. Speaker, those types of studies indicate to me that certainly dental care at an early age, and an opportunity through the health care program, could be of great benefit.

What about the administration of the program? I think there are some questions that can be answered. I would urge that even after passing this kind of legislation, the government should set up some kind of commission, hearing, or body that could study the matter further, hold public hearings across the province, receive some briefs and take recommendations, because I think there are some basic questions to be answered.

One, what about the expansion of the program? How should it be expanded? Should it stop at 12 years in the next step? Should it go further? Many studies feel this is a bad time to stop and that we should have across-the-board care for dental services.

What about personnel? Should dental hygienists be used? Should there be encouragement of more dentists, more dental training facilities, at the present time? What about administering the program in schools, in mobile clinics? How can we better use present facilities to meet the dental needs in the province? What will be the cost to government?

Studies must be done for government to be able to predict the cost and its responsibilities, to be able to know, to have good data. I think that type of thing should be carried out.

We should ask the question, should coverage of orthodontic and prosthodontic care be made available? In special circumstances, how would we deal with this? Could a board be established, so that where that type of care is necessary the board can make some kind of judgment on an application in that specialized area?

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that we need to place an emphasis on prevention. Certainly this bill, I feel, is an initial start in that direction. There can be some other things to go along with that, through educational programs and the urging of government.

We can look at the area of water fluoridation, and certainly support that particular concept. Custom-fitted mouthguards can be used by children who are involved in many of our contact sports. As I observe children in their competitive activities in many communities, this is becoming part of their equipment, which I think is a very, very good idea.

We could look at the possibility of removing a number of the distributing machines for refined carbohydrates from the school systems, because we're finding that, in turn, causes a lot of dental decay.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, I have found that my constituents and many people I talked to desire this kind of program. What is better evidence? During 1974, and during the time of the last Legislature, four or five of us, as members, put together questionnaires and surveyed not only our constituencies, but other areas of the province, the cities of Edmonton, Calgary, and rural constituencies.

We found, in my own personal survey -- 67 per cent of my constituents surveyed, and that was about 300 questionnaires sent out -- that 67 per cent of them favored a denticare program up to the age of 12. In the constituency of Olds-Didsbury, we found that 69.5 per cent of them favored denticare. In the constituency of Sedgewick-Coronation, 78 per cent of those constituents wanted provincial denticare. In the constituency of Calgary Bow in Calgary, 85 per cent of the constituents there favored denticare for all Alberta residents.

To me, Mr. Speaker, that is excellent evidence that people at this time in our social growth and our social responsibility, the people of Alberta, the grassroots, are saying it is time we bring forth a denticare program so that type of service can be made available to Albertans. I think that's the kind of information we have to listen to.

Ten years ago I'm sure I couldn't have been convinced of the position I'm supporting at this point in time. But Albertans are giving us that kind of direction, and I think we have to listen to that grassroots response at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I'd urge all of the members to support the idea of this bill, and I certainly support it in second reading. Thank you.

MR. FLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, if I may vary from this topic just for a second, in my previous presentations to this Assembly I have been remiss in not paying tribute to my predecessor, Bill Dickie. I would like to indicate to the House now that his whole constituency is grateful for his tireless contribution over three terms and is genuinely sorry to see him withdraw, as I'm sure the rest of the members of the House are.

[applause]

I'd like to give thanks, also, to the hon. Member for Little Bow for bringing to our attention his concern for the child dental care problem. I don't pretend to be an expert in the child dental care area. My remarks will be fairly brief, and based mostly on whatever research I have been able to do since this bill was introduced.

My information is that the House wrestled with this problem in 1965, and again in 1970. At present, Canada's position is that four provinces, Mr. Speaker, intend to introduce some type of legislation; two have already introduced some type of legislation; and four, at this time, seem to have no intention of doing so.

Alberta's policy is one of comprehensive dental care for senior citizens, coverage for social assistance recipients, and pretty comprehensive public health preventative programs. I see the improvement areas without a broad brush program as being concentrated in education of parents for the use of these preventative programs. I see the province perhaps being in a position where they are going to have to actively support fluoridation. It's my information also that there is a study available on the statistics between the results in Edmonton and Calgary on fluoridated water.

I think we can also look at the presence of rotating teams of dental technicians going out on a regular basis, particularly to outlying settlements. I think we should, perhaps, concentrate more on the use of schools as a focal point of gathering in the children for regular dental inspection, rather than leaving it as a responsibility of the parents.

The one thing the program has going for it is that it's easy to administer. You simply give money. On the other hand, the opinions of the experts are, or seem to be, that money is not necessarily the only solution to this problem, that those who can afford

it now are not always sending their children for dental care. But if they are, and can afford it, then we'd simply be subsidizing those people. For those who can't readily afford it and are sending their children, it wouldn't improve the situation by affording them more money. So it seems to me, the first step we have to take is to advertise the facilities we have, make a clear definition of what basic service is required under the plan, and see to it that the program is applied where most needed, that is to the children who aren't presently getting it.

The costs of this program, from what I'm able to read, vary considerably according to your source of information. Quebec appears to indicate that the costs are around \$16 a child a year, based on 1975 costs. The best information I have for Alberta's estimate is that in 1971 they estimated \$42 per child 6 and under. We seem to have a population of around 220,000 people, Mr. Speaker. If you expand the program into age groups up to, say, the age of 12 or 16, and take into account the inflationary factor, the numbers are absolutely mind-boggling.

This is another place where money seems to be in a position to be committed forever, because I've never seen a provincial plan, a dental plan, or a medical plan anywhere back down when, in fact, the future of our revenues is not that certain over a long period of time. On that basis, I can't support this scheme. It seems it would be an abdication of our responsibility as legislators simply to give money to a full spectrum of cases, when I think with some detailed study we can get the money and the technical care to where it should be.

Finally, I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that if parents don't have some kind of financial participation in the problems of their children, it would seem to me there is not much possibility of them maintaining their children's dental health on an ongoing basis after their ages cause them to leave the plan.

Thank you.

MR. MCCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to offer a few comments on this subject. I think the bill is a timely one, I think it's well-intended, and I'd like to compliment the mover on sponsoring the bill at this time. I'm a little surprised to hear the number of people in his constituency, and in others, who supported the bill, or the concept of a denticare program: upwards of 65 per cent in some of the constituency.

I have to think, Mr. Speaker, that the support may be similar to the experience the Member for Drumheller had recently when he spoke to some of his constituents about the feasibility or the concept of a heritage fund. As I understood his remarks, his constituents indicated to him that they did support the concept of putting oil and gas revenues away into a heritage fund for future projects for the benefit of future generations of Albertans. They supported the concept, but then immediately each of them came forward with a recommendation or suggestion for spending the money at this particular time, which of course derogates from the concept of a heritage fund.

I suspect that is the reason so many of the hon. member's constituents and others support the denticare program. It sounds good. We would all like it. We would all like to be relieved of the responsibility of the cost, but we don't know the cost of the denticare program. True, if we had a program we wouldn't individually have to pay for it, but the overall cost of a denticare program, I suspect, is beyond the capacity of the province or the provincial Treasury at this time.

I say that, Mr. Speaker, because of the present high costs of health, hospital medicare, and the social services and community health care plan. These costs are so high, Mr. Speaker, that they caused comment in the Speech from the Throne this year. If I might just read from that:

... my government is increasingly concerned about the rapidly escalating costs of health services, and their impact in the years ahead on our tax paying citizens. Accordingly, a new Ministry of Hospitals and Medical Care will be proposed -- it will seek to ensure quality in health services at reasonable cost.

I don't think the bill is bad, Mr. Speaker. I just think it's premature. We don't have any idea what the cost would be, not only for the total population, but even for those under 7. I think we can agree that if we get into a universal care program the cost would be astronomical. The first thing we would need would be a survey of the potential costs. We could do that. It wouldn't be difficult to find what the cost of a program for those under 7 would be. I think the population figure for those under 7 is suggested at 120,000, and I'm sure we could project the cost of a denticare program for them.

In any event, I understand that the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care and the Department of Social Services and Community Health are presently undertaking some sort of study, or will be in the near future. When we have that it will be more opportune to discuss a bill on this question.

We are already, Mr. Speaker, having extreme difficulties in financing our present care programs for different categories of people who have handicaps of one sort or another. In Alberta we already have the highest standard of social benefits anywhere in Canada. Our recent budget expanded on that. We have a \$255 assured income program for senior citizens. We have expanded programs for the workers under the disability program. We have the lowest income tax in Canada. We have the lowest gasoline tax. We have a host of other social benefits here. So I don't really think there is the extreme concern in the denticare area.

Might I comment, Mr. Speaker, that we do have a denticare program for senior citizens. They are already adequately covered. Also, there is a program available for those under social assistance. It's the in-between group we have to be thinking of when we get onto

this topic. I know it's easy to be in support of a bill like this. None of us would like to close our hearts to a denticare program if it is feasible. The critical question is, is it feasible at this time? I don't think it is without a complete study.

Many industry groups do have programs right now. They set up a volunteer insurance program where you pay a premium and denticare programs are made available to you. I think that's quite a common practice in the United States, and I am sure it will catch on and expand here. I think that's one opportunity citizens have for getting involved in a program like this without involving the government. I don't think there's any doubt at all that if we embark on a program like this it's just one step towards a total denticare program. I am sure that comes out from the hon. member's remarks, because not only does he suggest a program for those under seven, but he then projects it going into the area of those who have continuing and very high medical or dental bills.

I can sympathize with him in wanting to extend it into that area, but I think we have to be cautious, because once you get going on these programs there's just no stopping them. I appreciate that he would keep the administration of the program to a minimum by having it administered through the present health care plan. But again, regardless, it would take extra people and would cause enormous extra costs to the province.

I think some of the things we can do to prevent dental problems would be to give a little more encouragement to this type of thing: dental hygiene in the Early Childhood Services Program, which is substantially funded and financed by the government. I think if we encouraged the use of the toothbrush and dental hygiene programs on a regular basis among these young people, we would have far, far fewer dental problems than we have right now.

Also, I think in the elementary schools there could be great encouragement given to the youngsters to carry out their own dental hygiene programs. When I was a youngster that was the common thing. We were asked daily to stand up and identify whether we had used our toothbrush that morning. I think those kinds of programs should be encouraged and will be beneficial in reducing the health problems in this area.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate that I could support this program; it's the kind of thing that does touch a sympathetic chord. But until we have a handle on our present health and medical care costs -- they're consuming far in excess of 25 per cent of our budget -- I think that is too much. We don't want to deny anyone medical or hospital care, but we do have to understand where we're going. With our increasing population, with inflation in all areas and with particular inflation in those areas of hospitals and medical care, I think it would be irresponsible of us not, as I said, to get a handle on those costs, and then project what a denticare program might cost for various age categories before we attempt to go any further in this area.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I would like to be able to support the bill. But I cannot, in good conscience, do it at this time. I think we need the costs, surveys, before we go any further at all.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LITTLE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a few remarks to this subject. I would like to congratulate the hon. member for introducing this bill. It's certainly something we must all be in favor of. However, I can see many problems in instituting it. We have little experience, and little research has been done up to the present time in prepaid dental care.

However, it is not quite true to say that we do not have dental care in Alberta. The previous speaker already mentioned the aged who receive free dental care. There are over 130,000 of them in the province. Those on public assistance, 80,000 of them, also receive free dental care. If we are concerned with the philosophy of the ability to pay, I am sure that a good number of those without the ability to pay are included in these two groups, and it would be an overlap if denticare were introduced.

In addition to these two groups, Alberta Health Care also provides for oral surgery, and Public Health Services is also engaging in prevention and education at the present time. It would appear that our most pressing problems are those of the remote areas where there are not sufficient dentists available. However, I understand the province is engaged in two programs: the volunteer dental program, and the mobile program where equipment is taken to the area.

I think it would be very commendable if we could look at the care for children, and once again it's very difficult to estimate the price at this particular time. There are 30,000 to 35,000 children in each age year, so it would make a tremendous number. The hon. member introducing the bill stated he had high response from the various constituencies recommending this program.

Apparently we're regressing in certain areas. When I attended school in Calgary many years ago -- that's over 20 years ago now -- we did have a dental program. The dentists came round to the school, examined the teeth right in the classroom, and a card was given that must be taken home to the parents for signature. The problem we found with the program was that the parents who already cared for the welfare of their children signed the cards, and they got free dental treatment rather than paying for it; whereas the parents of the children who didn't care too much didn't sign the card, and these children didn't get the care anyway. I really don't know of any method to compel a child to take dental treatment.

However, I think it is in the area of prevention that we should aim all our guns. I believe mandatory fluoridation should be part of any particular program, education both in dental hygiene and possibly in sugar consumption, which has been identified as one of the

major culprits in the high incidence of dental caries. I have some figures. At the turn of the century, the per capita consumption of sugar in this country was 9 pounds, and in 1974 we were up to 118 pounds. If the sugar industry is the culprit, this would be a possible source of revenue in order to finance the dental plan.

Dental insurance is not all that encouraging. Dentistry is a predictable illness, so a person could enrol in a dental program, have the work done, and immediately get off the program again. A compulsory program, of course, would be rather expensive.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest education and prevention is our logical thrust. However, I wouldn't feel at all badly if the denticare plan were introduced before the end of the session, as I've got a bill facing me.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. PAFROSKI: Mr. Speaker, to speak on this bill, Bill 205, The Alberta Health Care Insurance Amendment Act (No. 1), to provide "all services by dental surgeons that are dentally required, which [would be] rendered under the age of 7 years".

Mr. Speaker, it gives me an opportunity to review and reflect on issues surrounding such a bill. First, as I stated in October 1974, as recorded in Hansard at that time, in the debate on the motion requesting non-compulsory denticare -- and I intend to expand on those comments -- I indicated quite definitely, Mr. Speaker, that I was in favor of a quality dental care program for all Albertans, but I was concerned that a non-compulsory dental program would not get to those people who need dental care the most.

So from the outset, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear that I am supportive of quality dental care for Albertans, and, as a matter of fact, for all Canadians, as I am sure all members of the Legislature are. I'm sure we're supportive also of a quality total health care program. Dear God, I've stated that many, many times, and I'm sure many, many other people here have stated that.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure I reflect the feeling of all constituents, all MLAs, all government representatives anywhere, that indeed we're supportive of top-rate health care for all people, in spite of bureaucracy, in spite of resistance that we may get from time to time, or misunderstanding, or what have you. Mr. Speaker, total health -- and denticare is a portion of that total health picture -- equals happiness, and what else is there? It's what it's all about. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the members of the Legislative Assembly are here for just that: happiness, quality of life, call it what you want. You can call it social issues, social concerns.

Mr. Speaker, with all the wealth, knowledge, and expertise we have in Alberta, Canada, and North America, I am surprised that we still, from time to time, flounder and flop around and look ridiculous when it comes to dealing with issues of health for man. Denticare is one of those areas. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. members of the Assembly recognize, and I'm sure they do, the tremendous amount this government has already accomplished in this area of health and denticare specifically. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that Alberta is second to none in Canada.

AN HON. MEMBER: Keep trying, Ken.

DR. PAPROSKI: I don't have to try. It's been done. It's documented, and the citizens of Alberta have recognized that very well, by the count in this Assembly.

In spite of what's been said by the opposition members in their mumbling and their comments, Mr. Speaker, to cite a few examples, and I think it's very relevant -- I hope, Mr. Speaker, you consider this relevant to the debate, because the issue today is whether we should have denticare for a certain age group, and whether this is a priority relative to what this government has already done in denticare and other areas. I'll be very brief, Mr. Speaker. The assistance to the senior citizens has been mentioned already . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Even a very brief irrelevance should be discouraged, in fairness to the hon. member of whose resolution notice has been given, and which is duly before the Assembly for debate.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'll try to focus on those areas, if I may have your indulgence, where we have already contributed to denticare programming so that to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If the hon. member wishes to have a vehicle for extolling the accomplishments of the government in other areas, then the Order Paper is that vehicle. But this resolution is not.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, if I read you correctly, I cannot discuss the areas that we have contributed in denticare. Is that my clear reading, or can I just elaborate on those areas of denticare programs we have carried out already?

MR. SPEAKER: It would be in order for the hon. member to debate if he wishes that there is something adequate, more than adequate, or inadequate done in this area of denticare up till now.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I've got it straight and I thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I think there are adequate areas of denticare programs for the people of Alberta. One is for senior citizens, and has been mentioned already under the Alberta

Health Care Insurance extended dental program. We spend some \$6 million per year for 160,000 eligible pensioners or senior citizens in this province. Under social assistance, Mr. Speaker, we spend some \$2.5 million for some 80,000 people . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Would the hon. member please deal with the question of denticare and resist the temptation to discuss social assistance in other areas.

DR. PAFROSKI: Mr. Speaker, it's a difficult issue with all those things we've done already, but I'll try to zero in even a little closer. So I'm saying [that for] those people on lower and fixed incomes, we're spending, in fact, \$10 million for denticare.

Mr. Speaker, the essential question here is, does government provide more services in the area of denticare when we, as a government are, in fact, spending approximately \$9 to \$10 million per year in Alberta for a variety of citizens, primarily those on lower and fixed incomes and those who are not able to help themselves, through various measures that we have provided already? In all sincerity I hope the answer, Mr. Speaker, is yes, we should go as far as we can. There are dollars and we know this. But surely we don't want to jeopardize our whole physical structure and take away the individual's responsibility in this area. For we all know, Mr. Speaker, nothing is free. Someone, somewhere, sometime has to pay via work, effort, and dollars. I hope this Assembly has the wisdom to maintain some balance in that area, and priorities for people.

Mr. Speaker, we have hardly satisfied denticare and assistance in a number of areas for senior citizens, those on lower and fixed income, and across-the-board reduction in taxes. The question arises today about denticare. As I stated before, I have no hesitation in supporting a program such as this. I feel the hon. Member for Little Bow should be congratulated for focussing on this area. Other members have already indicated they want a form of denticare. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, when they mention denticare in the broadest sense, they are merely indicating they want a dental program available, and not necessarily what the hon. member has indicated in the bill.

I believe the people of the Province of Alberta are willing to pay for denticare via provincial dollars or premiums or both, because, Mr. Speaker, in either case we must pay. The individual pays. The question must be dealt with here and now: what else is there to consider before we have a denticare program for children?

Mr. Speaker, in any dental care program -- and I refer especially to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health -- I hope she will consider a basic standard dental care program, which would include such things as examination, consultation, diagnosis, X-rays, cleaning, fluoride therapy, filling, extraction, and anaesthetic services. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure she has those documented in the upper left-hand drawer of her desk somewhere.

Mr. Speaker, of course there's prevention to consider, a very vital area which has already been mentioned by some of the members. And there's education.

Mr. Speaker, as to phase 1, I support a priority for children, because early prevention and treatment are vital to alleviate future problems and resultant dollar loss and work losses. So basically, if we were bringing in an all-encompassing program, Mr. Speaker -- and there's much more to be said about that item -- I certainly support children first; certainly, to set the age arbitrarily at 7 is satisfactory and acceptable. And 7, 8, 9, or 10 would all be acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, as to phase 2 though, I would suggest that we not ignore, that we address our minds to the teen-aged group up to at least 14, 15, 16, or even 18. Statistics and studies have shown that dental caries is a very, very common problem even in that age group. What we do up to the age of 7, we could lose during the later years up to 18. Mr. Speaker, these are the considerations. I agree, again, we should bring about some program.

Mr. Speaker, to intensify the utilization of every method of prevention and education for dental disease, as the hon. Member for Calgary Glenmore has already brought out, is an important area of consideration. For example, Mr. Speaker, fluoridation of communal water, use of topical fluorides via school programs and health units or health centres, dental health education from Grade 1 -- we should have education regarding health generally -- and nutritional guidelines have been mentioned at one time or another. For example, the hon. Member for Calgary McCall has mentioned we should decrease our refined carbohydrate intake. Mr. Speaker, I agree that we should probably remove pop and chocolate bars from schools, but I challenge any member in this Assembly to try. I certainly won't.

Mr. Speaker, we have formulation of treatment programs to provide dental care for all children in the age groups I have mentioned under phases one, two, and three. Phase three would include all people. So, Mr. Speaker, the consideration is widespread. The hon. Member for Little Bow indicated there are many questions regarding personnel, costs, and programs. He even indicated that pain, economic loss, and inconvenience are priorities but certainly not the urgent, emergent priority of health.

Mr. Speaker, we have to consider other areas in a dental care program, even for phase one up to age seven. The limitation of dentists and the maldistribution of dentists across the province are important considerations. I suggest to the hon. member that if he had consulted with the dental association, he would have recognized this is a top priority. If we bring in any program and are not able to provide the services we project on a bill, then, Mr. Speaker, I suggest it's a paper bill. We've had too many from that side in past years. We need a bill we can, in fact, follow through on. So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest we expand our educational facilities to increase the number of dentists.

Mr. Speaker, another dimension has been added in recent years, and that is dental assistants and hygienists, mentioned by the hon. Member for Calgary Glenmore. These hygienists and assistants offer a very important measure of prevention, cleaning teeth, applying solution, developing X-rays, and so forth, to improve the efficiency and productivity of dentists or of the dental team, if you wish.

Mr. Speaker, another consideration is the development of a new type of dental assistant known as the dental auxiliary or dental nurse. A new entity in Canada, Mr. Speaker, but not in New Zealand which has used these dental auxiliaries since 1923 to provide education prevention, including limited dental treatment for children for primary or secondary teeth, including extraction. Here is a team approach concept, Mr. Speaker, that as a matter of fact will be needed if we really believe we can provide a comprehensive dental program for the population of Alberta.

As one study has indicated, in a team approach setting, 1 dentist, 6 dental auxiliaries, and 12 dental assistants form this team and can carry out the task very, very efficiently and at a most lower cost. It has been estimated such dental teams working together can result in lowering costs from \$40 to \$50 per year per child to an estimated \$20 per year per child. Mr. Speaker, I think this is very substantive and certainly worth exploring. If we brought in a program at this time, unfortunately or fortunately our costs would be up, because the private dentist indeed merits and charges more money.

Mr. Speaker, the other consideration is getting the service to the children or people or population at large, especially in schools, by busing if necessary and, as has been indicated by some of the members, by portable dental clinics, mobile clinics, and of course utilizing the private dentists.

It's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that dollars are not the only item, because people who have money to utilize dental services don't necessarily do so. Statistics have borne this out very well. If I may just quote one item here. Of those on social assistance, Mr. Speaker, and our province has been providing dental services for them for years, only 40 per cent use the dental service efficiently when, in fact, they have so-called free dental services. Senior citizens, Mr. Speaker, despite the assistance they're getting, only utilize the dental service to the extent of 60 to 70 per cent of their actual needs. So, Mr. Speaker, here again is another area. It's not a matter of mere dollars and cents, it's a need to carry out a vigorous advertising and educational program.

Mr. Speaker, I've mentioned priorities of prevention, and it's a top priority because it has been estimated, by studies and by those in the field, that preventive techniques could eliminate all but a small percentage -- somebody indicated 20 per cent left over, I think it's even smaller than that. Only a small percentage should be left over for so-called restorative needs, that is, actual definitive treatment. Prevention can indeed assist to a great degree.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if you would bear with me -- the cost implications. We know there are two considerations here. One is the training of the additional personnel that is necessary and vital if we're going to carry out this program effectively. Otherwise we're carrying out a paper bill and a paper program, which is useless. So the training of additional manpower, including dentists, dental nurses, dental auxiliaries and dental hygienists -- who knows the dollar costs here. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure it's great. I think it's necessary. I think we should certainly pursue this direction, especially regarding hygienists and dental nurses to assist the dentists and decrease the dollar costs.

Then, Mr. Speaker, the other consideration is the service costs, or the dollars necessary. This depends on the number of people being served and, of course, the percentage of use of the service. Considering, Mr. Speaker, the statistical evidence that a team approach would cost about \$20 per person per year, and with the present situation we have now of costs of \$50 per person per year, it's going to cost in the vicinity of \$1 million per age group per year. This does not include, of course, the training of personnel.

So, Mr. Speaker, in addition to the \$10 million we're spending here now, this particular bill would undoubtedly cost another \$7 to \$10 million per year, not including the personnel or the capital investment for facilities such as mobile clinics.

The question, Mr. Speaker, is: can we afford this? Of course we can. We can go ahead right now, providing there are personnel and resources, and providing there is appropriate consultation with the dental association which should approve any programs such as this, because they are the front-line workers in this area.

The final question, Mr. Speaker, that should be answered is: how is this to be funded? By government? We talk about denticare. As soon as we say denticare, are people interpreting this as solely government funding, or premium and government funding? Is it a combination of both, or a shared federal funding?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I accept phase 1, because our children, the youngest children in our society, are our heritage. Maybe if we have the appropriate manpower or resources, provincial-federal funding exclusively without any premiums might be an accepted item. Then, depending on that experience, Mr. Speaker, I suggest we might pass on to phase 2, age 7 to 18, on provincial-federal funding and premiums.

Mr. Speaker, it's easy. The only issue is: the taxpayers we represent here in this Assembly -- and we are taxpayers too, of course -- must pay for it, either by premiums or forfeiting other benefits, because we decide to go into this area which we consider a priority at this time.

So, Mr. Speaker, I support such a program, because it's important, it's essential, I think it's a relative priority, but I question whether it's a priority over and above

handicapped children and mental health which are not completed yet. In either case, it's a relative priority.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by this. Let's move on this program, providing that the minister, after consultation with the dental association, has an ability to review the program and manpower needs very carefully, and the training that's required for hygienists and nurse auxiliaries. Let's be sure we can carry out the program, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure the minister has this in mind -- in my conversation with her -- providing she's confident and satisfied that, in fact, this program can be carried out, and there is no illusion that when we bring in a program, the people's expectations are not falsified.

So, Mr. Speaker, let's not bring in a bill merely for bringing it in on a paper basis. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the minister will review this carefully, and when she is ready, in consultation with the experts in the field, I'm sure an appropriate program of denticare will be brought in for Albertans.

Thank you.

MR. NOTLEY: In rising to address a few comments to this particular bill, I support the bill in principle. I was rather interested, Mr. Speaker, listening to the views of the hon. Minister Without Portfolio for Calgary expressing a great deal of concern about the cost. He related the cost of this program to the general exploding costs of medical benefits in the Province of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I think, for the record, it would be a mistake not to observe that the annual statement of the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission shows -- this is the most recent one, Mr. Speaker, and I think it refutes the views expressed by the hon. minister -- the increase in the basic health services in this province between June 30, 1973 and June 30, 1974 was about \$7 million, or approximately 6 per cent, substantially less, Mr. Speaker, than the growth in government services as a whole.

I might just point out, Mr. Speaker, that the budget we are looking at at the present time has an increase of somewhat in excess of 20 per cent. So let's not get carried away with the idea that bringing in a dental care scheme for children 7 years of age and under is suddenly going to get out of hand, and that the costs are going to explode. The evidence, in looking at the operation of the Alberta Health Care Commission, clearly demonstrates that that is just simply not true.

Mr. Speaker, I must confess, too, that I found it rather hard to follow the rather pained movement of some of the government members through the cost of health benefits being extended to denticare for children. This is going to cost, according to the Member for Calgary Glenmore, between \$16 a child in Quebec and an estimated \$42 a child in Alberta. Very quickly, taking his figures as well as those of the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway, if we use Quebec as a yardstick, this is a total of about \$3.5 million. If we use the higher figure the Member for Calgary Glenmore talked about, it would be a total of \$9,240,000.

Mr. Speaker, before we get overly concerned about the impact of \$9 million on the provincial treasury, I would point out that would represent only about 8 per cent of the tax cut we are proposing in the present budget. It wouldn't even have to affect the tax cut, because it could be incorporated, Mr. Speaker, within the budget surplus the province is going to enjoy this year. When we talk about not being able to afford it that's just absolute balderdash and nonsense.

I notice other provinces by comparison, and I'm not looking at some of the obvious provinces like Saskatchewan, but let's take a look at Newfoundland for example. In 1971, Newfoundland, a very poor province with no resources at all, introduced a denticare plan to cover children up to the age of 11. Mr. Speaker, if Newfoundland can move in this area -- and I notice also, in reviewing what other provinces are doing, that little P.E.I. has moved with a denticare program for children. Nova Scotia, another of the have-not provinces, has a denticare program for children. Here in Alberta, sitting on this surplus -- it used to be \$1.5 but now \$1.3 billion -- in the heritage trust fund, we have members going through this can-we-afford-it routine. It's just absolute nonsense to suggest we cannot afford a denticare program.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's a shocking commentary on the priorities of this government that, faced with the evidence of other provinces moving to at least a denticare program for children, we have made so little progress. Some of the hon. members have talked about denticare programs for the aged and people on social assistance. Fair enough, nobody argues that point. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, and I'm no expert in the field, the place to start in denticare should surely be with the children. That should be a priority item.

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of other comments to make. I see the time is now 5:30, so I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned until 8:00 o'clock this evening.

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

* * * * *

[The House reconvened at 8 p.m.]

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS (continued)

3. Mr. Hyndman proposed the following motion to the Assembly:
That the report of the special committee appointed under Standing Order 46, and presented to this Assembly on May 29, 1975, be now received and concurred in.

[The motion was carried.]

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair.]

* * * * *

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair]

Department of Environment

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, although the resolution with regard to the income and capital estimates of the Department of Environment was passed at the last meeting of the committee, there were a number of questions posed to the Minister of Environment with regard to two or three points on the estimates. He is now in a position to give some further information on them.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Leader of the Opposition posed two specific questions during the estimates. I have had the answers to his questions prepared in writing in fairly detailed form. I'd like to table these with you, sir, for submission to him. I think there is a fair amount of detail with respect to the new positions in the department he was asking about. We've had these prepared in a form which shows the number of people under each vote, the description of the job, the cost of each job, and the reason for the new job.

He also asked a question about special warrants which were passed by the department last year. There were 10. We've had those researched. There's a description of each and, of course, a record of the orders in council that accompanied each of those. So I hope that will be sufficient for the hon. leader's purpose.

I'd like to deal with one other point in closing the discussion on the estimates, Mr. Chairman. He asked a specific question insofar as the power studies on the proposed Dunvegan Dam were concerned, the involvement of Calgary Power and if they were participating in any of the costs. I said no, which is correct. However, the consultant the government hired for that dam study is Calgary Power. They are doing the study for the government. This was announced in a press release August 14, 1974. I would like to make that point perfectly clear so there is no misunderstanding about the role of Calgary Power in that Dunvegan site study which is being paid for by the provincial government.

Department of Social Services and Community Health

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, prior to considering the details of my estimates, I would like to say a few words concerning the general operation of my department.

The budget of the Department of Social Services and Community Health for this fiscal year is a mixture of consolidation and expansion. The rapid implementation of necessary programs, particularly in the fields of mental health, mental retardation and some areas of the social services and community health services requires a period of consolidation and development. I look forward to the coming year for a period of smoothing out and honing the various programs that have been started and which need some refinement in the community.

Our emphasis in these areas will be on the assessment of program effectiveness, improved management information systems, and improved services delivery. There are, however, important exceptions to this consolidation in a number of areas, and I will refer to them later in my remarks.

At a time of consolidation, there are inevitably some programs that will require careful monitoring to insure that financial resources provided are sufficient to maintain the program, particularly at a time of rising staff costs and inflationary pressures on services and supplies.

I will maintain close communication with organizations and agencies facing these difficulties, and take whatever steps that are open to me to ease their difficulties.

In my general remarks, Mr. Chairman, I should say that it never was a dream of mine, nor is it now, to be the last of the big-time spenders. When I review the estimates and the total of this budget, I find that I seem to be moving into that category whether it is my wish or not. But the programs are essential and valid, and I hope they will be acceptable to the members of this Legislature and to the people of this province.

We estimate that the percentage change in budget from 1974-75 to this fiscal year will be an increase of 34.7 per cent. The lowest percentage increase by service delivery area will amount to 19 per cent in mental health services, and the highest, a 40 per cent change in the social services area. This reflects the substantial improvements to be made in services, availability, and financial security for the aged. We estimate a total expenditure of \$294.4 million, an increase of approximately \$76 million over the forecast expenditures for 1974-75.

To carry out the programs proposed for the department, we forecast a staff increase of only 76 people, a change of 1 per cent. Overall, manpower costs represent approximately 23 per cent of the department's estimates for 1975-76. This of course does not include negotiated changes that may take place in this fiscal year.

I am pleased to report that no special warrants have been necessary in the past two years due to expenditures exceeding estimates. A major effort has been made to achieve effective financial management within each of the department's divisions. There have been special warrants in order to implement some program changes.

Some of the highlights, Mr. Chairman. The aged: major and significant expenditures will be made in this fiscal year to assist the senior citizens of Alberta in leading an independent life. The Alberta Assured Income Program is estimated at approximately \$37 million. In addition, funding for medical examinations, increased ambulance benefits for senior citizens, the development of the division on aging, assistance for training in gerontology and funding of special projects will require additional expenditures of new funds of approximately \$500,000.

Public assistance: it is the policy of the Government of Alberta to maintain the financial security of those on public assistance by increasing these expenditures at the rate of changes of costs generally. I'm also pleased to be able to say that the rate of increase of people receiving public assistance is estimated to be only 2.8 per cent in terms of number of cases. This rate is compatible with the increase in the population of the province.

The budget will allow for consolidation of public assistance delivery systems by relieving municipalities of employable cases if they so wish. A major innovation in this area of my responsibility will be the earnings exemption and assets limitation, outlined in the position paper on public assistance. These changes will be in excess of \$1.4 million.

I should mention that 25 of the new positions proposed in the estimates will relate to the expansion of the Employment Opportunities Program. The expansion of the Opportunity Corps and the concentration on the Employment Opportunities Program are designed to stress the importance of encouraging recipients of social assistance to become employed. Nearly \$800,000 is the proposed expenditure for this purpose.

Two major areas of expansion are proposed in the preventive social services budget. Additional funds of \$1 million have been allocated for new day care services, and additional funds of approximately \$940,000 are requested for new programs relating to senior citizens. It is my expectation that senior citizens will receive significant benefits through the expansion of community-based services.

A number of additional programs are reflected in the estimates I am proposing, and I would like to draw attention to some of these. I propose to enter into a contract with the Native Counselling Service to enable them to provide six additional court workers at the cost of \$130,750. The estimates also propose an increase in the provision of school lunch programs at a cost of \$179,000. Funding for additional public health nurses for local health units to provide the beginning of a community-based senior citizens' nursing service is proposed in the amount of \$225,000. New premises for the Edmonton Rehabilitation Society have been proposed, and \$312,000 has been allocated to this society to renovate the Canora school to provide new sheltered workshops for the handicapped. A grant of \$112,000 is proposed to enable the Alberta Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled to employ specialized staff to work with the physically handicapped. I have also proposed a capital grant of \$50,000 to be provided to the rehabilitation society of southwestern Alberta to assist them in expanding their premises to house the vocational rehabilitation program they have developed.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to the comments and suggestions of the members of the Legislative Assembly. I consider the work of the department to be an essential part of the services required by many vulnerable people in the Province of Alberta. Your proposals and suggestions will assist me in more effectively undertaking this major responsibility.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, are we dealing with specific votes? We don't want any general discussion at this time?

MR. CHAIRMAN: [Not recorded] general topic now, if you like.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes. I want to deal with just two items. I think it is an excellent idea for the hon. minister to give an outline, as she has.

I would like to deal with this matter of public assistance. It seems wherever you go in Alberta someone stops you and wants to know when we are going to eliminate the abuses in public assistance. I think everybody realizes and believes that if someone is having a hard time through ill health or [inability] to work or sickness, every assistance should be given to him. I have never found any difficulty in that regard. But there are always a few who abuse this and who are somehow apparently able to get public assistance through devious means.

I don't think any minister of the Crown can trace these down himself or herself. Whenever people come to me with these abuses, and they do quite often, I always ask them, would you give me the names so I can go out and check this. Invariably they say, well, I don't want to get involved. I have, however, recently had two or three people who have volunteered to give me specific facts in regard to excessive taxi bills, some 13 or 14 miles -- incidentally in my own riding -- where other people who are not on welfare have to either catch a ride or hitch-hike. Those on welfare would go down, the allegation is, to get their liquor. That's generally part of the story. Now I don't yet know how true this is. They've given me names and some definite facts; I still have to research it. I was hoping this vote would not come up until I had had the opportunity to do so.

Others have said certain people on welfare are faking marriage or separation, I suppose you call it, and living with each other on weekends while collecting welfare through the week. Again, I finally have one case in which they've promised to give me the actual facts. When I have them, I will be bringing them to the attention of the minister.

I have said to many of these people that no government wants these abuses to be continued, but we have to have definite evidence. Simply making the allegation is not satisfactory, and is not fair to the genuine bona fide people on welfare who need assistance.

So I simply say now I think every hon. member of the Legislature and every citizen has a responsibility to assist in eliminating abuses of welfare. If these abuses are as rampant as some people say, they shouldn't be too hard to trace. If they can be found, they should be prosecuted to the letter. They are simply parasites who are ruining it for genuine cases, and I have no sympathy with that group of people at all. I have every sympathy with those who need assistance.

The second point I'd like to mention is, I was glad to hear the hon. minister say some special attention is going to be given to the handicapped, particularly the physically handicapped. It was my pleasure to sit with some of the ministers and the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview on the MLA/Handicapped Committee during the last two years, and I was amazed at the attitude of these people. All they want is assistance to help themselves. I think that's an excellent attitude. When you see these people in wheel chairs pleading for others -- not themselves -- in regard to jobs and being able to get into apartments and stores, it really makes one's heart bleed. You realize what wonderful, genuine people they are. I don't think we can do too much for this group of people. I'm glad the minister is going to follow the excellent attitude of the previous minister, who was also on that committee, so during the life of this Legislature we can materially improve the position of the severely handicapped who have to spend their lives in wheel chairs and so on, so they can live as close to normal lives as possible.

There's just one other point I want to mention now, also in connection with public assistance or social development. The previous government eliminated the disability pension. I come across people -- I wouldn't say monthly, but a number of people every year -- who are disabled; who have always looked after themselves, but through some disease have become disabled. Their only source of assistance is social development. It really goes against their grain to go to social development. They think they're going on relief.

The federal government also did away with the disability pension. Unless you have five years under the Canada plan, you cannot get a disability pension. That's going to help some, but it doesn't help those who haven't got that five-year service under the Canada Pension Plan.

We also did away with what we called the widows' pension. It may have been difficult to administer, but it did a tremendous amount of good. Now widows who are suddenly left, when the older one passes on and they are not yet old enough for a pension, are in a pretty serious position. Their medicare is no longer paid for, they become very worried about that. They are generally not old enough for a pension, but too old to get a job. The disabled and the widows, I think, are two groups that need special attention.

I don't know whether we should reinstate the widows' disability pension or not. If we don't, I would hope there would be some avenue other than public assistance for this group of people.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make one or two remarks. I certainly appreciate the objectives the minister has outlined, and I certainly think those are good objectives.

I would like to comment on the Employment Opportunities Program and the increase in staff. I always felt that one of the growing needs was in this area of giving assistance to people to get back into the employment stream or into the regular way of life, and I would certainly like to support the emphasis the minister is placing in that area.

One of the things I would like the minister to comment on -- I think it is a general area -- is with regard to the sliding scale of allowable income for welfare recipients.

Earlier, I think in 1975 or late '74, there was an announcement that this type of program was going to be implemented in public assistance. I haven't heard just what has happened in that area.

The other thing I would appreciate the minister commenting on is the ministers' meeting last April with regard to the guaranteed income program. It was indicated that the federal government was prepared to pay either 50 or 70 per cent of different programs the provinces may involve themselves in. That was one thing. The second was that some priorities were established where rehabilitation of people would be number one, and work with the aged and handicapped was a sort of second priority. I was wondering what progress the minister has made in that area also. I think that type of program or that kind of direction is certainly basic to where we are going in the whole social services field at this time.

MISS HUNLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The sliding scale the hon. member inquired about has been implemented. The regulations have been passed, but only recently. I forget the exact date.

The negotiations with the federal government are still in the negotiating stage. The communique to which you referred was the result of the last meeting, which was held April 30 and May 1. We're very encouraged that our main efforts have been to work with the federal government and the other provinces, but to allow the maximum flexibility in order that the program may be tailored to best suit the people of Alberta.

But the objectives you have outlined are our objectives also. In achieving those, we feel that perhaps the terms "disability pension" that the hon. Member for Drumheller mentioned and regretted were no longer in use -- those may again become part of our terminology, but I wouldn't want to guarantee that. But that seems to be the kind of trend that's starting to develop as we negotiate. I don't think this will be completed. There are at least two more meetings before the final solution will be arrived at.

MR. R. SPEAKER: In line with that, Mr. Chairman, has the department here in Alberta -- I believe it was also mentioned in that news release that there was going to be an ongoing study on different kinds of delivery systems. I understand that back in '69 or so, a study of that kind was completed.

Secondly, is someone in the department assigned the special task of monitoring and negotiating on a continuous basis this guaranteed income or this new approach.

MISS HUNLEY: Yes. If we go through my estimates, you will find there has been an increase in personnel in the research and planning department and in the administration department, which I think is critical particularly at times like these. It's essential that we not start broad programs without having some idea of our ultimate destination. Personnel and money have been provided for that purpose. I feel the negotiating team that goes to Ottawa is very skilful, and I have great confidence that it will make a very good presentation on behalf of the people of Alberta.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, because I think she's a person of compassion and understanding, I'd like to bring one area to the attention of the hon. minister. This is the really forgotten people in Alberta, the people at home with multiple sclerosis or diseases such as this, who would rather stay in their own homes than go to a nursing home or an auxiliary hospital. All they really want is possibly \$200 a month to have some nursing care or some baby-sitting care ready to come in and help them.

I've brought this to the attention of the hon. Premier once or twice. He was in agreement that it was an area of concern we should look at. When we look at the dollars and cents saved, it's certainly an approach we can take.

The way the system is set up now, the bureaucracy says we can put them in a nursing home. Well, the nursing home costs the taxpayer \$40 a day. If we had some outside help come in to act as a baby-sitter, or someone come in to help these people out a little bit when their husbands or their wives are working, it certainly would provide a service and save the taxpayer some money.

I know the numbers in Alberta are not that large. But it's an area of concern to myself, because I have in my constituency two or three of these people who are either multiply handicapped or have diseases such as multiple sclerosis. They want to be home; their families want them to be home until they just have to be institutionalized.

I would like the hon. minister to look into this area, as there are not that many people involved. It would save the taxpayer some money and provide a compassionate means of help for these families.

MISS HUNLEY: I certainly appreciate the comments of the hon. Member for Clover Bar. I know in the short while I've been responsible for this department, I have read of cases where we do indeed provide housekeepers and homemakers. I would assume it's based on financial need. Assessments are done in that manner. We would not just automatically extend it where there was no financial need. Certainly this can be looked into. If you would like to send me their names, hon. member, I can have it investigated.

It is an area in which we will be concentrating, that is, to move people out of institutions and instituting home-care programs. As those become more sophisticated and more efficient, hopefully we will be able to keep people in their homes, freeing expensive hospital beds in active treatment or auxiliary hospitals or nursing homes, and retaining

people in their home environments. I think it's a very desirable objective as well as being a good cost-saving benefit.

Appropriation 2501

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, on this appropriation I would like to make a comment that is rather disturbing to me. The government says the increase in the civil service has been very, very small -- 3.3 per cent, using their own figures and their own statistics. But I'm not sure if this is what's going on in all the departments, where we have what we now call contract -- personal service. So we take away from the numbers of people in the civil service by having this new section, contracts for personal service.

In the committee and subcommittee the other evening, I was informed that these people do not go into the civil service per se. But you can cut the cloth any way you want to, hon. minister and Mr. Chairman. They are still people who are paid out of the public purse. I'm quite alarmed at the trend; we have sort of by-passed the system to put these people into a category which doesn't reflect the numbers of people who are increasing the civil service.

I would like to know, Mr. Chairman, if the hon. minister, the Deputy Premier, or the Treasurer can indicate to us if this has become a new bookkeeping practice to try to keep the numbers down. I mean, I'm not suspicious, I'm sure you appreciate that. I would never think the government would ever try to do anything like that. But I would like to know from the Treasurer, the minister, or the Deputy Premier, if this is a new practice.

MISS HUNLEY: Well, I couldn't say, Mr. Chairman, whether it's a new practice or not, because I don't know what went on prior to 1971.

DR. BUCK: We were honest.

MISS HUNLEY: In many instances, I favor contracts. There are short-term -- we're doing a number of research things, we hire some special consultants. Maybe we need them for a year, or maybe even a two-year period. But I'd much rather have a contract and have it finished, than have somebody lurking about and finding work for them after their initial job was done. So I defend the use of contracts. They appear fairly often in my estimates, and they are there purely for that purpose. Their term will be finished; there's a definite time when their work will be done and they will then be on their way, working somewhere else. But it's certainly not to circumvent or distort the number of employees in the department.

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Chairman, in connection with the remarks just made, I would like to draw the hon. member's attention to page 5 of the Estimates, where we have under the general heading, comparative summary of manpower, an item for wage and contract employees. Now, I'm not able to say, without actually checking, whether the particular ones mentioned here are included, but I would expect they are.

DR. BUCK: Well, Mr. Chairman, as I say, I am not suspicious. I just believe everything the government tells us, because they're such a fine group of people.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, we know the government would never be above doing anything that's not quite right. But on the other hand, Mr. Chairman, being of a suspicious nature, [interjections] I would like to say that after associating with some of the hon. members for a few years, I think that maybe I don't always believe everything they tell me. I'm sure the deputy minister sitting up in the gallery there, as many as we have, and the assistants -- I see we don't just have one assistant, we have ministerial assistants with the "s" at the end. Does this possibly make them uneasy, that after one year they may be gone? Is this the purpose of bringing in the contract basis, so if you don't like your deputy minister or your ministerial assistant after one year, you can say well, old buddy, your contract is up, go back to digging ditches. Really, Mr. Chairman, that's what they tried to do last year. I heard the Deputy Premier say, well, we sent Buck back to fixing teeth and he's still here wasting his time in the Legislature. [interjections]

Mr. Chairman, it really is a matter of concern. If you take the number of ministerial assistants, you take the number of deputy ministers -- and they're proliferating like bunnies -- then you can very, very easily knock a hundred people off the civil service, so your percentage looks beautiful. The government told us that they were . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Nonsense.

DR. BUCK: If the hon. minister would like to . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Stand up . . .

DR. BUCK: Well, maybe it's garbage. Then the hon. minister can stand up and tell us why they've gone to this system. Okay, then let's hear from you. Don't just sit there and

mumble and mutter. Get up on your feet and tell us. Okay, stand up then. You can have your turn next go, Mr. Chairman.

But the thing is you could certainly cut the civil service by 100 people by going to this system. So we've had the hearts and flowers speech about, we've only increased the civil service 3.3 per cent. But, Mr. Chairman, I challenge that figure, because I don't think it's a true indication of the increase in the civil service. I'm not trying to hassle the honorable front bench, but I certainly want to know just how many of these hidden civil servants don't show up in the statistics. Now the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower can have his go at it and explain to us.

MISS HUNLEY: I've already offered an explanation for the contracts in the estimates. I think they're valid. I accept the hon. member's protestations that he's not a suspicious character. I'm pleased to hear that. When this altercation started, I thought, what's all this going on with a nice girl like me.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, can the hon. minister indicate to us how many of these people they have under Contracts -- Personal Service in her department?

MISS HUNLEY: Are we talking now about 2501?

DR. BUCK: Yes.

MISS HUNLEY: There are two, an administrative assistant and a secretary.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, to save the hon. minister going through this appropriation by appropriation, can she indicate to us how many people she has in the entire department under Contracts -- Personal Service?

MISS HUNLEY: I'll have to get that information. I don't have it actually, Mr. Chairman. I'm more familiar with the operation of my own office than I am with the others.

Appropriation 2501 agreed to:

\$110,790

Appropriation 2502

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask one or two questions on the same line as my colleague has asked. In the area of research and planning, how many people has the department on contract at the present time? When do their contracts terminate?

MISS HUNLEY: There are eight in Appropriation 2502. There are five consultants to provide advice to the chief deputy minister and the acting deputy minister of health services. They are involved in health planning, community health services, special health projects, and native home planning. There's one special project co-ordinator who advises the deputy minister on special health projects. That relates to the extended health benefits negotiations with optometrists and that nature. One legislative planner advises the chief deputy minister on legislative matters. One solicitor advises the chief deputy minister on general legal matters and drafting of contracts for the department.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, in our questioning in the 17th Legislature, I think it was November or December, there was one consultant we raised in the Assembly, a fellow by the name of Joonson, who was doing some consulting for the department. Is he still doing consulting work and, if so, what type of projects is he working on?

MISS HUNLEY: Yes, he is doing some consulting. He is doing a special health study for the department, concentrating on the isolated communities and native areas.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. When will his contract terminate? Is it a one- or two-year contract? Is it a continuous contract?

MISS HUNLEY: I believe he has one more year to fulfil his contract.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Is he doing work in departments other than the Department of Social Services and Community Health?

MISS HUNLEY: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Chairman. I am really only acquainted with him in his particular field of endeavor. I don't know whether anyone else is making use of his services.

MR. NOTLEY: I'm sorry I missed the minister's answer on the use of contracts and personal services, but I wonder if the minister could perhaps give us some comparisons. I assume the contracts are for the budgetary year. By and large, would they not be, hon. minister? And if so, what would be the average cost of a contract compared to someone in the public service?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, sometimes they are on a hourly basis, which I believe is standard for professional people. There would be a standard contract: lawyers have a standard contract, on an hourly basis, as do doctors. We employ a number of doctors for specialized areas. I have not personally read the contracts so I don't know whether we have some by the month or year, or whether we're paying some a per diem or hourly rate. I would imagine it varies according to the assignments we have given them.

MR. NOTLEY: Are the people you've outlined -- the five consultants, the legislative planner, and the solicitor -- under contract for the entire year? Would they be full-time with your department?

MISS HUNLEY: I haven't met them all, but I would assume they're full-time because I know we make a great deal of use of them. But the fact remains, once perhaps some co-ordination is done -- for example, the initial study on special health projects -- that person's job is no longer required. If on contract, they would no longer be employed by the Government of Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY: I take it the average hourly fee paid by the government for people on contract would, if taken over the entire year, be somewhat greater than a comparable job in the public service. Would that be an accurate assessment? If so, do you have some comparisons, in total amounts, for comparable jobs and contracts so we can assess the cost benefit?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would assume in some instances it might be, but over the long haul I don't think so. Over the long haul, if year in and year out we require this type of service, I think it would be to our advantage to have the continuity of the same individual. I would actually have to take it as a particular project -- and I'll be doing that in the course of the coming year as I get more familiar with it, because I'm also very interested in cost control and effectiveness.

Some people we hire would not be available on a yearly basis. They're consultants because they prefer to have flexibility and be able to pick and choose their jobs. I've encountered some whose skills are so desirable we're very pleased to get them.

I have just received the information that there are less than 100 in the entire department. This includes almost all psychiatrists in two mental hospitals. Many people prefer to be on contract.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, to the hon. minister. I can appreciate the argument for contracts as it relates to people you want to hire for a specific task, that's a month task or two months or six months or something of that nature. For people who are ongoing staff that you assume you want to have for two, three, or four years, it would seem to me that the preferable course would be to actually hire them as civil servants so they come under the public service association. It seems to me, if we want them for that period of time, that would be a better way of spending public funds rather than hiring them on a contract. I am sort of repeating myself, but I think a contract situation is more adapted to short-term or special projects than to ongoing input.

That's why again, and I apologize for not being here for your initial comments . . . Is the chief deputy minister under contract, or will he be hired as a . . . He is under contract, is he?

MISS HUNLEY: The chief deputy minister is a permanent member of the staff.

MR. NOTLEY: Are the other deputy ministers all permanent civil servants as opposed to being on contracts? The contracts listed here for \$186,900, then, would be for the five consultants you mentioned, the one legislative planner, and the one solicitor. I take it these would be for positions you don't see as permanent, but of a transitory or temporary nature.

MISS HUNLEY: We have one deputy minister, not the chief deputy minister, who is on a contract for the present time, the acting deputy minister of health.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, just to follow that up. The reason for that, I take it, is that the individual chooses a contract situation rather than becoming a civil servant. My question then is: is there any difference between the amount we are paying that individual in the form of a contract compared to the amount we are paying civil servants in a similar position of responsibility?

MISS HUNLEY: Once again, Mr. Chairman, I have to say I haven't read the terms of the contracts. They were in effect when I assumed the responsibility. I certainly will be looking at the contracts. I understand that the one acting deputy minister who is on contract may or may not remain with us, or she may remain in a different capacity, because the position of deputy minister of health is not really established completely, as yet. She is there as an acting deputy minister at the present time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is more a comment than a question. It seems to me the government would be ill-advised -- I am just offering you my view and you can take it for what you usually take it for -- to hire people on a contract basis in a deputy minister

capacity. It seems to me you are going to have a situation with both fish and fowl, and that is going to present problems within your civil service.

I am not just talking about your department, but the government as a whole. Deputy minister X, who may make \$35,000 a year, is not going to be very happy to remain a civil servant for long if deputy minister Y is on a contract at \$50,000. I raise this because I notice the Deputy Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is also under contract. It seems to me at some point the government is going to have to decide whether all the deputy ministers are going to be civil servants -- and I think that's the proper approach to take -- or whether they're going to be on contract. I suspect if you have half of them in one category and half in the other, you are going to have nothing but turmoil in your public service.

MISS HUNLEY: I appreciate the hon. member's comments. I would like to just refer to the Deputy Minister of Health who just left us to go back to the University of Calgary. We were delighted to have Dr. Cochrane join the Government of Alberta staff. We felt he made a real contribution, but he was under contract. He wished to have it that way. I think it was a great stroke on the part of my predecessor to get Dr. Cochrane, because he made a very real contribution.

There are times when that's desirable, if you wish to attract someone. They can make a very, very good contribution, whether it be from industry or in the professional fields. They may not wish to take that as a full-time career, but they may be able to contribute a great deal, then go back to their chosen field, having broadened their own experience. They certainly made an impression upon the government service and going back to their own field have taken the experience they've gleaned from us, and there it has done them some good also.

I am not that disturbed about trying to attract very capable people to the public service, even though it's only for a short time. I find that a very appealing way to go, although it's never comfortable when you have someone of the stature of Dr. Cochrane leave you and go back to what he was doing previously. We'd have been very happy to keep him on.

Appropriation 2502 agreed to: \$936,280

Agreed to:	
Appropriation 2503	\$3,964,560
Appropriation 2504	\$744,120
Appropriation 2505	\$1,015,610

Appropriation 2506

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I think this is the appropriate appropriation to mention that I have had some concern about stability in certain of our services because of staff turnover. That's the allegation made to me by some of the staff of non-provincial government services, which presumably relate closely to some of the provincial services. I wonder if this appropriation will in some way relate to that problem, and whether indeed the minister does regard it as a problem. What I am speaking about is long enough continuity of an individual in a given position to establish the necessary rapport with others.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, I believe that's not a unique problem. In every paper you pick up there's advertising for staff. When you talk to industry, they also have a turnover of staff. There are certain areas where it lends itself. Perhaps they join the government service in order to get experience, perhaps social workers would be a good example. I don't know what particular area the hon. member is referring to, but I believe that might be one of them.

Of course, I'm a great believer in staff development. They should have an opportunity to improve their qualifications and status, and increase their capabilities. Staff development, I think, is just essential if we are to get and keep good personnel. I am not aware of any great shortage of personnel at the present time, although this may be so. I would prefer that I had something more specific.

MR. YOUNG: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't wish to belabor it. All I want to do is to express a concern about what information has been brought to my attention. I realize it's difficult to keep people. But from my point of view, the social worker-type person and position, that particular function if you will, is one in which a continuing turnover is a uniquely serious problem, in the sense that it takes a certain amount of time for these people to establish and relate to their clients. By the time they do, and relate to the other assisting services, it seems they are either moving on to a different position, or perhaps leaving completely to go into private industry, or wherever they do go.

I just wanted to draw it to your attention, it having been brought to mine as a problem uniquely in the area where your staff happened to be working with people requiring assistance, and which requires this kind of long-time build-up of rapport.

MISS HUNLEY: I will take note of the hon. member's comment.

Appropriation 2506 agreed to: \$436,100

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2507 \$307,000

Appropriation 2509

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. This partly comes under preventive social service too, but I notice this provides for sharing of the government commitment of 10 per cent of the welfare costs in unorganized areas.

The reason I raise this is, I wonder just what the policy of the government is, since it does pick up this 10 per cent for the unorganized areas of the improvement districts. What is the policy of the government with respect to bringing those improvement districts into PSS? It is my understanding that many of them aren't in preventive social service, and it would probably be up to the government, through provincial funding, to pick up the local requirement of PSS.

MISS HUNLEY: We encourage PSS programs throughout the province. When we come to that particular vote, Mr. Chairman, I will have additional remarks to make on it, because it has caught on quite enthusiastically. We have not budgeted for additional programs in it. But I agree. I'm familiar with the improvement districts and their concerns, and I believe they should have equal access to public PSS programs if they so desire.

MR. NOTLEY: Just to follow that up, if local advisory boards make an application for or a request to the government to get into preventive social service, where would the funding for that come from? Improvement districts are so much the creatures of the province, as opposed to municipalities. Would that have to come under 2509, or would there be some fund where the local portion could be raised?

MISS HUNLEY: We're not talking about the preventive social service vote right now, so it wouldn't come under 2509. This relates to the welfare costs in unorganized areas. It's not really related to PSS, although we have made an offer to all municipalities to handle the administration of all the welfare costs, and pick up that 10 per cent if they so wish. That was part of our incentive paper, and we've advised them. Some have indicated interest, but the letters have only recently gone out, so I don't know whether it will be widely accepted or not. That is the vote under 2509.

Appropriation 2509 agreed to: \$33,300

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2510 \$499,440

Appropriation 2511

MR. R. SPEAKER: If I could just comment on the public assistance appeals committees. I ask every year, why quit now? Are you activating them a little more than in the past year, are you maintaining the status quo, or are they on the decline?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, there were 89 appeals heard by the committee during 1974. There were 228 administrative reviews.

Perhaps the hon. member would be interested in the reasons for the appeals. Refusal to grant social allowance was 20 per cent; cancellation of social allowance, 16 per cent; suspension of social allowance, 3 per cent; reduction of social allowance, 4 per cent; inadequate social allowance, 35 per cent; and other reasons, 21 per cent. Only 1 per cent of appeals were by citizens. The results of the appeals were: decisions confirmed, 70 per cent; decisions reversed or varied, 30 per cent. There are 34 citizen appeal and advisory committees situated at centres throughout the province.

MR. NOTLEY: Just before we move from 2511, it seems to me, hon. minister, in terms of public assistance administration -- I should preface what I'm saying by telling you I think both your offices in the Peace are doing a very good job, are extremely obliging in terms of dealing with problems -- extra costs may be involved in terms of the very centralization which is necessary. We have one regional office in Grande Prairie, another in Peace River.

Let me just give you a case in point. In the Peace River office you have a first-rate administrator. If there is a problem in the western portion of his district, the social worker has to drive from Peace River, perhaps 160 or 170 miles to the western end of the district. That means 3 hours driving, at least 3 hours driving. I see the Minister of Transportation is looking and well he might, considering the disgraceful condition of the roads. It's at least 3 hours driving on good roads, probably 4 hours considering the roads there. You deal with that client, then have to come all the way back to Peace River. I'm wondering whether the department has given consideration to actually having the social workers live in their assigned districts, and whether or not there would be some lowering of cost in that situation. I can see in-service training, staff meetings, and what have you. But I'm wondering if there wouldn't, in fact, be some value, in a

large region, in having the social worker actually live in the district he or she is serving.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, I can say with great confidence that I know they've considered it, because we've talked about it within the last two weeks in meetings with my officials. I know it's being considered. So far, I think I have an open mind about it. I'm not too sure of the most effective way to use their services, but we'll be taking an additional look at it. I happen to be quite familiar with the problems of taking care of people in distant areas.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I think the department would probably be wrong to make a hard and fast rule, because obviously there are some areas where it would be counterproductive. A person having to drive 30 or 40 miles is one thing. But it seems to me there are districts in the province where you have such vast distances to cover -- what might be right in the Peace River district, for example, would be totally wrong, say, in Vegreville or an area where you had a smaller district to cover, as in the City of Edmonton.

MISS HUNLEY: I believe in great flexibility in order to serve the people.

Appropriation 2511 agreed to: \$523,050

Agreed to:
Appropriation 2512 \$14,580,700
Appropriation 2513 \$52,465,100

Appropriation 2514

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to just relate a couple of the estimates here. In 2514 the grants are up 13.6 per cent. At the same time, in 2514 the transportation money is down from \$118,000 to \$51,000. Over in Vote 2517 we have no increase in grants, but transportation is up in that particular area, and that's just general assistance. I want to relate those statistics to my basic concern that handicapped people are saying, one of the greatest cost factors they face is transportation between home and work. Some days it's anywhere from \$5 to \$12 just by taking a taxi. I'm wondering if the decrease and the increase are to take care of that kind of thing. Is there a scale that's flexible enough to meet the common needs of different handicapped individuals? If not, I think we should consider it.

MISS HUNLEY: The point is well taken. The only thing is that in referring to transportation in Vote 2514, the decrease in transportation costs is due to a transfer of 75 per cent of the costs to Appropriation 2517. It's a matter of budgetary procedure. That doesn't relate to transportation of the handicapped. Part of the money they get is allowed for transportation as well. This doesn't relate to our common concern about how people who are physically handicapped get about, because I think it's a very valid concern.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Is the minister reviewing some kind of formula, and are some of the research staff looking into the kinds of people and distances, maybe looking at a more flexible formula than we have now?

MISS HUNLEY: Yes, we are. That whole area is getting rather intensive review. Also, it's part of the ongoing discussions with the federal government. Transportation of the physically handicapped is one of the areas we have on the table down there for negotiation.

Appropriation 2514 agreed to: \$18,700,000

Appropriation 2515

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to bring a matter to the minister's attention. I still believe it's the responsibility of the individual to try as much as possible to look after himself or herself. At the same time, there are instances where a child may be mentally handicapped, not sufficiently handicapped to be institutionalized, but they are in nursing homes or areas such as that.

In a situation where the parents are able to provide assistance to the child, I think they are morally responsible to do so. But I have several instances where the parents themselves are physically handicapped by hard conditions or are too old, et cetera. They are not able to provide assistance for their child who is in, say, a nursing home. I really think the minister should have her people look at some of these special cases where the parents are just not able to provide above and beyond what the department supplies to this dependent child. I know the caseworkers are limited to what the rule book says, but I think there should be some flexibility in the system so they can make exceptions in certain cases, help some of these mentally handicapped people who just do not have any outside source of assistance and just barely get by. So, I'd like the minister to look into that area.

MISS HUNLEY: If you would be good enough to give me the specifics, I'd be pleased to have the cases examined. Could you send them around to me?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if the minister knows something that I don't. On 2514, the burial expenses are going from \$32,000 to \$86,000. It's a sort of ominous forecast.

MISS HUNLEY: It's the high cost of dying.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's cheaper than living.

MR. BRADLEY: Maybe this is a morbid question. Under Appropriation 2515 there's no allowance for burial expenses. Does that mean people in our mental institutions in the province don't die, or don't we provide burial expenses for those people? Under 2512, 2513, 2514, 2516, and 2517 there is allowance for burial expenses.

MISS HUNLEY: It isn't that they don't die, but there are very, very few of them. It's very minute as compared to 2514, Mr. Chairman. It will be covered [under] another appropriation.

Appropriation 2515 agreed to: \$5,988,400

Agreed to:	
Appropriation 2516	\$9,798,600
Appropriation 2517	\$2,644,200
Appropriation 2518	\$6,326,000
Appropriation 2519	\$373,600
Appropriation 2520	\$178,980
Appropriation 2521	\$5,772,900
Appropriation 2522	\$1,979,350

Appropriation 2523

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to speak about women's hostels, but I'd like to speak about men's hostels for just a moment.

I have received a lot of complaints in regard to theft from men who have stayed in these places, generally just for one night. One chap told me he'd been up three nights, and he went to sleep. He had his little bit of money at the bottom of his bag, and someone went right through the whole thing and found his money in the sock at the bottom of the bag. I've had so many complaints about theft in the single men's hostel. I'm just wondering if we shouldn't give some thought to providing lockers where a person can be given a lock and key. It doesn't give the hostels a good name when they come out and say they were robbed in the hostel. I think we could provide lockers at a very reasonable cost and do away with this very serious complaint.

MISS HUNLEY: At the risk of sounding reckless, Mr. Chairman, I would advise the Assembly that I intend to visit all these places, including the single men's hostel. But I'll take some of my staff with me when I go. I would assure the hon. Member for Drumheller I'm not treating it lightly. Certainly when I visit there I'll keep that in mind, and we'll take your observations into consideration.

MR. TAYLOR: I'll make a deal with the hon. minister. If she'll go through the single men's hostels, I'd be glad to go to the single women's hostels.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, an interesting point has been raised. If these men have money to be stolen from them, exactly what are we charging them to get into the hostel in the first place?

MISS HUNLEY: That's a good point.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, \$1.50 won't buy them a room anywhere, but \$1.50 is a lot of money when you're broke.

Appropriation 2523 agreed to: \$94,480

Agreed to:	
Appropriation 2524	\$117,450
Appropriation 2525	\$1,042,150
Appropriation 2526	\$2,543,350

Appropriation 2527

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might ask the minister a question with regard to policy and group homes. I realize that when young fellows and girls are graduated from

Westfield, the idea is to put them in group homes. I wonder how you go about selecting locations in the city.

I'm thinking of a specific problem I had where a group home was purchased. The people in the area were not familiar with the concept and weren't aware that the group home was going in there. I think they had a degree of fear with regard to the type of child going into the home, plus a possible fear of depreciation of their property values. So they resisted. I think the reason the home was bought in advance and the people weren't forewarned was -- at least the reason given was that property values would accelerate if they held a meeting, then attempted to acquire the home and land afterwards.

I wonder if there isn't some other answer to this. In other words, if people in the area were made aware of the type of children who graduate from Westfield and are ready for this kind of neighborhood environment, probably they would be more readily accepted. I don't know what the answer is. I'm asking if you have given this any thought, and what sort of policy you have in this area.

MISS HUNLEY: I've given it some thought, Mr. Chairman, and I'm aware of the problem to which the hon. member refers. I think probably the complaint is not unusual. I think it is necessary that the property be acquired first, because of the skyrocketing real estate values. At least an option could be taken, then the community could probably be involved. It's our real intent to involve the community, and these children must someday return to the community. The greatest resource we have is that they will take an interest in the group home and encourage the group home parents, as well as take an interest in the children. I think we could solve a lot of problems that way, and we will be working towards that end in the future.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, could the minister indicate how many group homes there are in the City of Edmonton?

Mr. Chairman, rather than hold up the work of the committee this evening, perhaps the minister could communicate that to me. I wouldn't mind if I had the addresses too, because I have a particular problem that came to me during my dinner this evening.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister. Does it go for [inaudible] categories at all? In Calgary.

MISS HUNLEY: [Inaudible] Appropriation 2528, youth receiving centres.

Appropriation 2527 agreed to: \$402,640

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2528	\$180,150
Appropriation 2529	\$534,020
Appropriation 2530	\$11,923,900

Appropriation 2531

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if we could ask the minister to outline the plans for expansion. I see there is a substantial increase. Generally I would approve that, but I was just wondering if the minister could give us some explanation of what programs are going to be added this year, or what expansion of existing programs will take place under this appropriation.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, there will be additional work at Janvier and Slave Lake. There have been requests for the Opportunity Corps in other areas, but we have not yet seen fit nor budgeted for a large expansion, although we have, as you have already noted, a considerable expansion. We believe in the program. We think it's very useful.

Just a moment. I'll check the manpower change. There is an increase in the manpower change, although I think this is the one that reflects a problem, because we were showing the employees in a previous year. They were actually gainfully employed, although they are in and out kind of thing. But we believe in that particular project. They will be doing the same thing they have done before. They are working on community projects -- anything to teach them work habits and get them into gainful employment.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Is any part of the Opportunity Corps program cost-shareable with the federal government? Also, while I am on my feet, what is the present status, to your knowledge, of the Company of Young Canadians and the coverage of their work in the province?

MISS HUNLEY: I'm sorry I can't answer anything at all about the Company of Young Canadians. I'm not sure they're still around. I don't have any information about them.

I believe under the Opportunity Corps it would be 50-50 funding, the same as other projects.

Appropriation 2531 agreed to: \$1,673,660

Agreed to:
Appropriation 2532

\$191,160

Appropriate 2533

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. In the position paper the minister sent to members of the Legislature, dealing with the assured income program, it's my understanding that a number of the additional benefits are related directly to preventive social service areas.

My question to the minister is: what provision is there for those services that come under PSS for senior citizens, those services that were talked about in your position paper in areas that are not included in PSS? Is there any sort of program for these areas, or is it contingent upon the municipality or the locality getting an active PSS program?

MISS HUNLEY: Our initial position is that we hope the municipalities would adopt the PSS program because of the local involvement. That's the premise on which we are basing the funding for the particular programs. If we find there are a number who are not eligible, and the demand and need is there, I think we'll have to reassess it. I would like to have some flexibility on it, but in the meantime we are structuring it for this initial year in this budget under this particular appropriation.

MR. NOTLEY: Just a follow up, Mr. Chairman, to the minister. I would take it, as things presently stand, that if a municipality decides it just isn't worth it to get into PSS, those programs in the position paper which presently come under PSS would just not be available to senior citizens in that locality. In order to take part in those programs they would then have to move to a community where the municipality had voted to join PSS.

MISS HUNLEY: I would hope that wouldn't be necessary. You can appreciate this is a new development. It is part of a package in which we are concentrating on senior citizens, and we have put considerable money into that particular project. I would like to run with it for this year, then take a look to see what the need is, how it's being developed, and how we can best implement the programs, whether we have to get into them ourselves in some other way or find another route.

There are many ways, other than this particular program, where senior citizens can get some assistance, but this was supposed to be the main appropriation in which we implemented community programs.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Do you have any statistics which would advise the Assembly what percentage of communities in the province is covered under existing PSS programs, and what percentage remains outside the program?

MISS HUNLEY: No, Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry I don't have that information, but I'd be pleased to provide it to the hon. member.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, a further question if I may. I would hope the department would attempt to contact the various municipalities, or make a special effort this year to convince them of the merits of getting into PSS, especially because some of the extended benefits for senior citizens we're talking about seem to be contingent upon membership in PSS.

I believe one of the problems with the whole PSS program is that many municipalities tend to be a little sceptical of the program. It's perhaps scepticism which is based on a not full awareness of the range of programs and perhaps an inadequate understanding of the objectives of preventive social service.

I think it would be worth while to ask the various regional directors in the province, as an assignment this year, to attempt to contact or visit all the municipalities, the municipal districts, the counties, and the towns in their region, or have someone make a pitch, so there would be a first-hand understanding of just what is involved in PSS. It would not be just a case of responding to a letter or a request or a general form that has gone out from the government, but a one-to-one discussion with the local council by someone who is fully knowledgeable of the total range of programs under PSS. I know of instances where local levels of government have voted it down and, in my judgment, have decided not to go in, largely on the basis of faulty information, ignorance, or suspicion which is not at all founded on fact.

MISS HUNLEY: Approximately 90 per cent of the population of Alberta is now under PSS, but I think I would go slowly, certainly for this year, because there's been a great demand for funding under the PSS programs. I'm stretching my budget to the limit at the present time, although I don't believe we've exhausted the programs and the funds available under senior citizens' or day care projects. Certainly it's a point well taken, and if we don't change the method of providing funding for the senior citizens, more and more people may decide to come under it. But 90 per cent of the population is really not that bad.

MR. SHABEN: A question to the minister concerning the funding of day care centres. There's been quite an increase, I understand, in the number of day care centres being initiated through the PSS program. I congratulate the minister on this type of program, because it does involve local people. They themselves initiate it.

I was wondering if any consideration is being given to changing the formula. At present, I believe, it's 80:20, 80 per cent by the provincial government and 20 per cent by the municipalities. Is any consideration being given to changing that, because it is a very expensive item for the municipalities.

MISS HUNLEY: Not at the present time, Mr. Chairman. They are not giving any consideration to making that recommendation to my colleagues. I still think it's a pretty good bargain for a municipality that wants to enter the PSS program, that they only have to pay 20 per cent. As I have indicated to hon. members, it's already oversubscribed. So if you want any more money for other programs, you have cut back somewhere.

Appropriation 2533 agreed to:

\$8,418,450

Appropriation 2534

MR. TRYNCHY: Just a question, Mr. Chairman. Could the hon. minister tell us, if possible, why the Old Age Security Pension to a number of senior citizens in senior citizens' lodges and to disabled people living on their own, has gone back to the basic of \$132? They are paying rent of \$150. This has just happened, and I can't get an answer from the federal government. Is there anybody in your department who can talk to them and give us a reason why it's been cut back? They don't know themselves, and I'm really confused.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would guess they haven't applied for their Guaranteed Income Supplement, if they are over 65. That must be applied for every year, but many of them forget. They open their envelope, and if there's no cheque in it they just junk it. They don't fill in the application. This is a very common complaint; it's a matter that they don't apply to the federal government. If they don't apply to the federal government, they also don't get our supplement. I presume that's the problem to which the hon. member is referring.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, no, that's not the case. As a matter of fact, the matron of the lodge fills out everybody's form. They were all sent in, and out of the lodge, four people didn't receive it. They have no record of their forms ever getting there. It's been going on about three months now, and they still haven't got any retroactive pay. I can't seem to get to the right people. That comes from one person filling out all the forms.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, I can only say to the hon. member, join the club. I have constituents who have the same problem. All I can recommend -- when you are dealing with the federal government, you must be persistent. This occurs; it seems strange and unbelievable, but it does occur. I think they would just have to try again. We've had some success in my office, but it sometimes takes many phone calls before we ever get it resolved. That's the only thing I can think of, that you have to keep trying.

MR. TRYNCHY: In other words, hon. minister, you don't have a person who is in contact with them on a day-to-day basis, somebody who could go from your department and meet with these people? We have to do it ourselves? You don't have anybody in your department who can talk to them?

AN HON. MEMBER: Get paid for it.

MISS HUNLEY: Now he wants me to handle his constituency.

Mr. Chairman, the officials in my department do work very closely with them, because of the fact that our assured income plan ties in with the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Certainly I could give the hon. member a name of someone in my department who could at least put him in touch with someone who surely could help.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Has there been any discussion at federal-provincial health and social development ministers' conferences dealing with the guaranteed income supplement? The minister pointed out that every year the forms have to be filed again. I can appreciate that process where you have those people who do earn some money, but we have a large number of people who don't. Is there not needless red tape in the federal government insisting that every year these forms be filled out again? Is there not some way they would just automatically continue receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement, unless there is a change in their income? Has there been any discussion of that at federal-provincial conferences?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, there has been discussion, but, in my opinion, it hasn't been at a very high level. I can appreciate the fact that there is some concern, but in view of the fact that the Guaranteed Income Supplement is based on income and not on assets, these do fluctuate. A person can have interest from a mortgage, for example, or from a

savings account and accumulate too much over the year; that's the reason it's based on income. I realize it's a matter of concern. Red tape is always red tape and it's always difficult, especially for our senior citizens.

I know we've made some moves since coming into office in an attempt to cut down. I can refer now to the Blue Cross Plan, simply because I was aware of the difficulty. But I don't know that I should be reckless enough to try to tell the federal government how to run something as massive as that Old Age Security plan. But there is merit in the hon. member's suggestion.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I can appreciate the problems all right. It's just that, in dealing with some of the senior citizens in my constituency, the maze of forms, the qualifications and the various categories really represent an intimidating obstacle to an individual. As a consequence, I think there probably are some people who, frankly, just give up. So it does present a real problem.

This is probably an area where MLAs should advertise their services and make themselves available to help fill out these forms because they are very difficult, especially for senior citizens who have some problems with the language, those whose first tongue isn't the English language. For them to try to go through this maze of forms is indeed an obstacle.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, hon. members might be interested in promoting a local community service. If it were brought to the attention of someone who was knowledgeable -- I know in one area where the retired and semi-retired have someone who specializes in that and acts as a consultant.

It's extremely complicated, as I've learned in trying to help my own constituents. In fact I think, Mr. Chairman, I spend more time in constituency problems with the Old Age Security than I do with any other. But I see that as a very real role, whether it's under PSS or not, for some service club or some of the sharper retired and semi-retired senior citizens. Many of those have managed affairs and could manage anyone's affairs. If they were only encouraged I think they could be of very real service to others. Personally, I would like to see more of that encouraged.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, one short question to the minister. If people move into Alberta from another province, is there a waiting time period for them to become eligible for our supplement, or do they automatically receive it as soon as they fill in the application forms?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm not positive, but I don't think there's any residency requirement. You must be eligible for the GIS, and then ours is taken in automatically if you qualify for the GIS.

Appropriation 2534 agreed to: \$42,440,000

Agreed to:
Appropriation 2535 \$576,720
Appropriation 2536 \$19,126,050

Appropriation 2538

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like the minister to clarify a few reports I have heard. This is the sum provided to recover some of the maintenance orders that are issued to the father of a family where the balance of the family has become a ward of the province. How much money have we really collected this year on the basis of the figures that are available to us now? Could you give us a figure?

MISS HUNLEY: I believe I can, Mr. Chairman. It will take me a few minutes to look it up, but we make money on this particular project. It's one of the few revenue producers we have. I'll check it and perhaps be able to reply to the hon. member before the final vote this evening, if that's satisfactory.

MR. ZANDER: Thank you, hon. minister. I've looked at the figure of \$311,810. Do we recover \$300,000, a million, whatever. Is it a large percentage gain?

MISS HUNLEY: Yes it is, but I don't know exactly. I'll be able to provide it before the evening is over, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NOTLEY: Does the minister have any information on what progress has been made in working out reciprocity agreements, I guess they are called, with other provinces, so that when you have a judgment for support by an Alberta court against a husband or father who has gone to Newfoundland, for example, payments can be collected in Newfoundland. To what extent have we worked out or finalized reciprocity agreements on this matter of recovery?

MISS HUNLEY: We have reciprocal agreements with some provinces. I can't tell you exactly which ones. It's not entirely to our satisfaction. We're continuing to negotiate in

order to have them throughout the entire nation. But I can't tell you which specific provinces we have those agreements with at the moment.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Could this not be settled by one of the federal-provincial conferences? It would seem to me this is an area where federal leadership could set certain ground rules for all of Canada. Is there an obstacle because of certain policies in some of the provinces, is it a lack of federal initiative, or has it always been considered to be up to the provinces to work out their own agreements with other provinces in Canada?

MISS HUNLEY: I've only been involved in one conference with the federal government to date, so I'm not really aware of their particular interest in it. Certainly, I'd be pleased to investigate it and find out what progress we're making, and the reason for the delay. I could advise the hon. member.

Appropriation 2538 agreed to: \$311,810

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2539	\$1,622,040
Appropriation 2540	\$114,950
Appropriation 2541	\$97,420
Appropriation 2542	\$570,130
Appropriation 2543	\$383,940
Appropriation 2544	\$120,390
Appropriation 2545	\$3,171,000
Appropriation 2548	\$18,080,170

Appropriation 2551

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, may I ask a question of the hon. minister. I'm not sure if she has the answer, but maybe somebody in the House can help us out. This is establishing citizenship, because now you can be born and live in Alberta but you don't have anything to say you are a Canadian. This may enter into the Dominion field, but can the hon. minister tell us just exactly in 10 easy lessons or steps, how you can prove you're a Canadian citizen and have an identifying certificate saying you are a Canadian citizen.

MISS HUNLEY: I'm starting to branch out into federal affairs, Mr. Chairman. I can't answer it specifically, although I have been involved in helping a variety of people. I refer most people to the citizenship court in the Federal Building downtown. I can't tell you specifically how you prove you're a Canadian citizen.

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: Mr. Chairman, if I might. I'm a former district registrar. As I understand it, if you have your birth certificate, that is good enough to get a passport -- whether that answers the hon. member's question. But I think that would prove you're a Canadian citizen if it's good enough to get your passport.

DR. BUCK: I just thought I'd bring it up because the new members here are going to get requests for help in this line.

AN HON. MEMBER: Don't worry about it.

AN HON. MEMBER: You mean you don't know after all these years?

DR. BUCK: You can laugh all you want. You're going to have somebody cranking the phone and saying, look I've got this problem. I have to get a passport and I've lived in this country all my life. I was born here but I don't have anything to prove I'm a Canadian citizen. [interjections] Get a few Conservatives in Ottawa. But it's a problem and you're going to be called upon.

Appropriation 2551 agreed to: \$366,760

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2554	\$498,820
Appropriation 2557	\$486,900
Appropriation 2558	\$860,920
Appropriation 2560	\$513,470
Appropriation 2561	\$3,229,350
Appropriation 2562	\$933,660

Appropriation 2563

MR. KUSHNER: I'd like to ask a question of the hon. minister. Is there any explanation of a change of staff from 57 to 67? That's an old established organization. Some extra programs, or what's happening here?

MISS HUNLEY: Is the hon. member referring to Vote 2563? There have been changes, as hon. members are aware, in the Alberta Hospital at Ponoka, and the actual decrease is four. We transferred 10 to other appropriations and 6 new positions. The new positions would be community health nurses and specialists in that field.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the hon. minister . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Lacombe, I believe, has the floor.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. We had a report produced with regards to a program, I don't know whether you'd call it decentralization, but certainly an attempt to transfer patients out into the communities several years back. Was that the Blair report? I'm just curious to know whether that report had any substance.

MISS HUNLEY: Is the hon. member asking whether or not we've taken action on it? The answer is yes, we have. We've been dealing with mental health group homes and residences under Vote 2566.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, I agreed to provide information about the amount recovered under maintenance and recovery under Vote 2538; it was over \$2 million.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, as I understand, the population of Alberta Hospital has decreased over the past year or two years, or even three years. However, when I look at the number of staff, it has remained rather constant. What type of shift and emphasis has occurred? Is a lot of that staff working more at the community rather than the institutional level at this time, or is there just a maintenance of that number?

MISS HUNLEY: I don't know what the population of Alberta Hospital at Ponoka was at one time. I know we have 565 beds at the present time. Knowing what our thrusts are and what we're attempting to do, I would assume there is additional staff on hand for work in the community, for counselling, and more one-to-one work with the patients. I don't have a breakdown of what each person employed in the hospital does.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I think I was asking for a more general answer rather than trying to get that specific. Is it the intent of the ministry, in policy determination, to continue the decrease of the population to below 565? If so, how much? Have you got a target at this point?

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, I think it would be unrealistic for me to say I had a target at this particular point. It seems to be an ongoing program in which people do need hospitalization in Alberta Hospital at Ponoka. I think there's a limit to how small it can become. The long-range plans may call for smaller institutions, although I can't see that happening in the immediate future.

Appropriation 2563 agreed to: \$7,977,840

Appropriation 2564

MR. NCTLEY: Three questions to the minister: how many autistic children are there in the province? What is the provision to the families for residence in Calgary? Is there any consideration for a centre in Edmonton?

MISS HUNLEY: There is provision in Calgary. I don't know how many autistic children there are, because that's a controversial term. Some people accept it and some do not.

There is a residence in Calgary. I believe it's called Margaret House. It's handled on a contract basis for us. One will be developed in Edmonton. I believe it's an ongoing program right now, but I don't know when it will be ready. They've been using the basement of the School for the Deaf, which has not been too satisfactory. Better arrangements have been made, and we're working closely with the Edmonton group in order to have better facilities for those children.

MR. NCTLEY: I see we have \$174,200 down for funding. Does that cover the cost of the program, or is there a charge to the parents? Are the costs for these children resident in the Calgary centre paid from this appropriation, or are the parents expected to pick up a per day or per month amount, whatever the case may be?

MISS HUNLEY: To the best of my knowledge the parents do not contribute to this one. I would like to have the opportunity to come back and correct that statement if I'm incorrect.

Later on, when we come to some of the other votes, we will have the amount of money that is contributed to Margaret House, which pays on a per diem rate.

Appropriation 2564 agreed to: \$174,200

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2565 \$10,340,100

Appropriation 2566

DR. BACKUS: Mr. Chairman, I know various groups under the mental health agencies throughout the province have made application to the minister for additional help. Is this additional help forthcoming in this appropriation? Is this just mental health, or does it also cover retarded workshops and so on?

MISS HUNLEY: Appropriation 2566 provides for halfway houses, community residences, and group homes. It also provides for grants to mental health agencies. The new grants allocated in this particular vote are: to Langevin Enterprises in Calgary, a planning grant to the Wood's Christian Home Board in Calgary, to the Foothills Hospital, to the Autistic Children Society in Edmonton -- I alluded to that earlier -- a \$57,000 grant. There is an increase in funding to a full year for a Calgary group home. Also, the Calgary Association for Self-Help and some other small grants.

Appropriation 2566 agreed to: \$846,500

Appropriation 2570

MR. KUSHNER: Mr. Chairman, all the way down the line, 2575 and so on . . . I just don't seem to grasp it: contacts and personal services, \$41,640 this year; nothing in 1974-75. I think it's pretty well all the way through the department. I wonder what the policy is.

MISS HUNLEY: On this particular one, there is an associate director who is a consultant on mental retardation.

Appropriation 2570 agreed to: \$182,100

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2571 \$1,357,580

Appropriation 2572

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Chairman, surely this ministry is filled with causes that must by their nature be most difficult to grade by priorities. Therefore, I am not going to endorse Appropriation 2572 as being more or less important than several others.

However, I have received letters from some of my constituents who, by the fortunes of genetics, have assumed the responsibility of raising mongoloid children. These children have made very real progress and gained a level of self-sufficiency at the Vocational & Rehabilitation Institute in Calgary, beyond their wildest hopes of a few years ago.

The turnover of teachers is accelerating this year, and the talent drain is at a stage now where programs may have to be curtailed. The problem is one of wages, which was overcome by staff loyalty and dedication until recently when the disparity between these incomes and those for similar job classifications in the provincial government service has become unrealistic. To quote the letter from the director:

We have been concerned for a long while that the grants received from the Provincial Government do not enable us to pay salaries which are anywhere near those paid to staff within Government agencies working in a similar area.

This is not a request for grants for families or individuals, but is one to retain staff so this unit can help itself. I recommend the passage of enough extra funds in Appropriation 2572 that these ends can be accomplished.

MR. KIDD: Mr. Chairman, I'd also like to say a few words about this. In going through these votes, I've totalled up something over \$40 million in which the province is providing 100 per cent support for the physically and mentally handicapped. I fully endorse that. However, in this grant, we are dealing with a matter where a great number of people, and a great many professional people, are providing voluntary services and money to do the work. Some 29 associations and societies are involved. As we were endorsed as a free enterprise government, I think we should fully support this sort of action. Therefore, I would ask the hon. minister, in preparing her next estimates, to carefully consider sufficient money to continue this work and to increase it where necessary.

Thank you.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Chairman, it's a point well taken and it's something of which I have been made aware. Sheltered workshops particularly, and those working in the field of the mentally retarded, have found the costs of inflation are just more than money they can raise and money we have allocated in grants. We did allow for a 15 per cent increase just to take care of inflation, but wages, in particular, have eaten that up, and some programs have suffered. I agree with the hon. members when they say we should not allow these programs to falter or fail. They are filling a very valuable need. I appreciate the comments of the hon. members, and will certainly take them under advisement and do what I can with the means I have at my disposal.

Appropriation 2572 agreed to: \$2,876,680

Agreed to:
Appropriation 2573 \$571,940

Appropriation 2574

MR. JAMISON: I understand the hon. Member for Lethbridge West lives at Hillside Apartments. I wonder if this is the right address.

Appropriation 2574 agreed to: \$230,380

Agreed to:
Appropriation 2575 \$16,637,480

Appropriation 2576

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could identify whether or not the grants to the rehab. society for the improvement of the Canora school are in this appropriation.

MISS HUNLEY: Yes, I believe they are. I'll check, though, and advise the hon. member. I have the list.

MR. YOUNG: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to alert the hon. minister to some representation I've had from the community. If rumors they hear about what is being spent on the school are correct, they question whether that should go forward. As the minister probably knows, it's one of three or four schools which were built in times when the inspection and the requirements of the structures were apparently not very high. It is my understanding that the building was considered to be of such a nature that it was not economic to repair it for school purposes. It may well be that the difference in use makes it economic to repair for these purposes, but there is some representation being made to me in the community. I think it's a problem that we have with three structures in that part of the city. The Minister of Education is familiar with one, and it seems that one of the others has come to your doorstep. I'll just leave it at that, having drawn it to your attention.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. I think this is the area where you grant on a per diem per student or per enrollee in the rehabilitation program. Is there a set level per day for each of the people enrolled, or is it based on differing factors in each of the rehabilitation societies?

MISS HUNLEY: It depends, Mr. Chairman, on the type of rehabilitation that's being offered -- if they are sheltered workshops or residences and whether there is a program and so on. I can't be more specific than that unless I know what particular institution the hon. member is referring to.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Chairman, I was particularly concerned with the Medicine Hat Rehabilitation Society. As I had mentioned the other day, perhaps improperly in a few remarks, I was wondering if a proposal had been advanced from Medicine Hat for the construction of a new workshop or whether this is the appropriate place in your estimates that such a grant would be found? How much per day would be granted to that rehabilitation society, and what increase are you proposing over last year particularly? Perhaps I could get the information from the minister by memorandum rather than in the House.

MISS HUNLEY: I would appreciate that, Mr. Chairman, because I don't have it conveniently located.

Appropriation 2576 agreed to: \$1,778,360

Agreed to:
Appropriation 2578 \$431,100
Appropriation 2579 \$447,910

Appropriation 2580

MR. ZANDER: I wonder if the hon. minister could possibly -- I don't think she can do it now -- but for my own information, I would like to know how much that part of the budget that we are expending now, for the mentally and physically handicapped, has increased in the last 5 years. I would certainly like to know that by memorandum, if that's possible.

MISS HUNLEY: Yes, that can be provided. I will take note of it and advise the hon. member.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, one question for the hon. minister. I don't see anything in the appropriation that we just went over in regard to the Misericordia Hospital which changed over a wing for the handicapped. Is that still functional, and where will we find that?

MISS HUNLEY: Yes, it's very functional, Mr. Chairman. I had the pleasure of visiting it. It's called the Cormack Centre and it's Vote 2571.

Appropriation 2580 agreed to: \$2,547,400

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2581	\$664,850
Appropriation 2582	\$1,640,200
Appropriation 2583	\$280,945
Appropriation 2584	\$205,650
Appropriation 2585	\$741,167

Appropriation 2586

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, just a question -- have we improved in Edmonton that much that we can get a negative increase in the cost of this program? Why would that be?

AN HCN. MEMBER: Better people.

MISS HUNLEY: Well, I hope that's not a complaint. It's in part of the reorganization. I believe it reflects in another area, but I'll have to pick it out for the hon. member.

Appropriation 2586 agreed to: \$1,031,290

MR. KUSHNER: 2586 to the hon. minister. Fees and commissions: I noticed they have dropped, as well in 2588 and so forth. Has there been a change in policy here? For what purpose was there such a change?

MISS HUNLEY: Our whole policy in the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission is an attempt to decentralize. Fees and commissions is rather a miscellaneous term. It could apply to doctors. The doctors who are treating in Calgary do some of the treatment at the Foothills Hospital and the billing goes to Alberta Health Care rather than having a doctor on staff.

Appropriation 2587

MR. COOKSON: On 2587 whether Red Deer had become that bad. One thing while I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, if I may ask the minister. I've had some pretty good reports from certain individuals who attended the Henwood in-patient active treatment location in Edmonton. In view of the fact that we've escalated by 31 per cent with regards to alcoholic and drug problems in the Red Deer region, has there ever been any consideration of locating a Henwood in that area?

MISS HUNLEY: The southern Alberta Henwood, if you will, is located in Claresholm. That is in use now, but it is only being officially opened this Saturday -- no, that's not so -- it was opened last August. There's a detoxification centre being opened. Claresholm is intended in part to take the place of Henwood. There are no plans at the present time to have another facility of this nature.

Appropriation 2587 agreed to: \$104,100

Agreed to:

Appropriation 2588	\$802,616
Appropriation 2589	\$66,765
Appropriation 2590	\$187,417

MR. PURDY: I should have asked this of the minister under administration. When can we expect an announcement of a new Chairman for the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission?

MISS HUNLEY: When I hire one I guess, Mr. Chairman. We're doing an executive search in an attempt to find the best qualified person. When we've completed that and surveyed the applications, we'll be selecting a chairman. The present chairman is remaining on staff and on call for the present time. I don't foresee any great difficulty if I don't fill that vacancy in the very near future, although I feel optimistic we'll be able to get some good candidates.

MR. PURDY: I understood that the present chairman, Mr. Anthony, was supposed to be leaving for B.C., July 1. Now, I may be wrong in that.

MISS HUNLEY: Mr. Anthony is still here. He has given a change of address, effective June 15. He will be moving, but he intends to come back. In fact, he suggested to me that he perhaps should stay on part-time, on a per diem basis, up until Christmas. He's willing to do so if I feel that's necessary. I've not yet made that decision. I thought I'd prefer to wait and discuss it with the new chairman.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, before we close, I'd like to take an opportunity to ask the minister a question. It wasn't covered earlier, so I want to make sure that I get it in now.

It appears that senior citizens moving into Alberta because they're receiving the income supplement, may only be here a day, and they'll be receiving, under the Assured Income Plan, \$45 a month. This is in relation to a question I asked in question period. I see we're spending \$300 million. In my constituency there are 12 people, 8 of whom are 64, not 65, so they don't benefit from this. To my knowledge, they've been here all their lives, and they receive in the nursing homes a dollar a day comfort fund. I would deeply appreciate it if the minister would be cognizant of that for the estimates next year, and if somehow a few dollars could be squeezed out during this coming year, to at least bring those people up to the position where somebody only one month in the province would be getting the \$45 assured income.

MISS HUNLEY: I'll keep the hon. member's comments in mind. But I'd like to suggest to the hon. member that we're talking about apples and oranges. We're talking about someone who moves in and is not necessarily in a nursing home, and a person who is in a nursing home. So we're really not talking about the same thing. He's made me aware of the concerns that the \$30 a month is not adequate for some citizens who do not receive any other additional supplements in the nursing home. I'm aware of that.

Total Income Account agreed to:

\$300,128,560

MISS HUNLEY: I move it be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. HYNDMAN: I move that this committee report progress and beg leave to sit again.

[The motion was carried.]

[Dr. McCrimmon left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

DR. MCCRIMMON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the following resolution, begs to report same, and asks leave to sit again.

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$300,128,560 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1976 for the Social Services and Community Health Department.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move the Assembly do now adjourn until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion for adjournment by the hon. Government House Leader, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

[The House rose at 10:20 p.m.]

