

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Monday, March 21, 1994**

8:00 p.m.

Date: 94/03/21

head: **Committee of Supply**

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll call the committee to order.

head: **Main Estimates 1994-95**

Economic Development and Tourism

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd ask the hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, the Deputy Premier, to make a few comments and perhaps answer any questions that were left over from the last time and begin.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Chairman, so little time and so much to report. At this second opportunity before the committee I'd just like to bring all members up to date with a number of things that were raised the last time there were estimates. I know that my colleague the minister without portfolio responsible for a number of the votes of this department and my colleague the chairman of the Alberta Research Council will probably want to add a few things as well.

Since the last appearance before the committee, Mr. Chairman, we've had quite a response from municipalities in the province of Alberta with respect to the Canada/Alberta infrastructure program. I daresay that most municipalities in the province of Alberta have responded to us in anticipation of the March 15 deadline. In essence, we've been signing letters on a daily basis since that time basically telling municipalities that have written to us that we are signing them up for the national infrastructure program.

All members will recall that in the current fiscal year, not the budget before us but in the current fiscal year, the Legislative Assembly has now approved some \$40 million with respect to the national infrastructure program, and the budget before us also has an additional \$10 million being requested for 1994-95.

I would point out to all members of the committee that letters have been sent back to the vast majority of municipalities that have now signed up. Usually our return time is about one day to two days maximum with respect to the letters. We're now advising these municipalities, those that have signed up, that in essence we will be able to cut cheques presumably by the latter part of the first week of April for their participation in this program.

I should point out as well, Mr. Chairman, that there seems to be an overwhelming amount of endorsement among the municipalities in the province of Alberta for this particular program, and if my memory serves me correct, of the 350 municipalities throughout the province of Alberta only one has basically said that it wasn't interested in participating in the national infrastructure program and one has indicated that it only wants to participate in the second year rather than the first year. Both were small population municipalities.

So that is well under way. We don't have all of the applications in terms of all of the subject matters that are being requested, but it would appear for the most part that the vast majority of the projects being identified by the municipalities of Alberta have to do with roadway, water and sewer infrastructure, and that sort of thing. When I say the vast majority, I would think that perhaps upwards of 90 percent or so would fall into that category, which basically meets the criteria that were outlined by

the federal government when it was introducing this program to the citizens of Canada last fall in which they had an opportunity to participate.

As well, Mr. Chairman, in the last few days there have been some interesting developments with various municipalities in terms of what they want to do. I'll just alert and point out to all members that here in the city of Edmonton last Thursday the economic development organization in Edmonton came up with an innovative new idea and attempted to create a greater element of pride within the community of Edmonton. They've introduced a program called Edmonton: Turning up the Heat. Basically, what they're doing is encouraging all citizens of this city to circulate postcards to people around the world inviting them to come to Edmonton and pointing out a myriad of positive and important things about the city of Edmonton. They're colourful little postcards, and all citizens of the city have received one in the last couple of days pointing out that program. That's the kind of positive creativity that I think is really important throughout Alberta and is being echoed by a variety of municipalities in the province of Alberta in terms of doing their own municipality.

The next big event that we're going to be initiating here in the province of Alberta will occur in Edmonton on the 5th and 6th of April when we're going to be putting on a symposium for world companies, major trading houses around the world, a symposium called World Markets at your Doorstep, '94 Conference and Trade Show. It'll be held in Edmonton on April 5 and 6 at the Edmonton Convention Centre, and what it will do is introduce western Canadian companies to major trading house connections from around the world. There will be representatives from a variety of European countries and countries from the Americas, meaning north and south, basically trying to tie it into the buy and sell concept. That again is kind of the proactive kind of thing that we talked about the last time I had an opportunity to participate before the committee and one that we're going to continue doing as well.

In the next day or two all members of the Assembly will receive a copy of the investment matching service of Alberta, our latest edition, part of again identifying business opportunities in the province of Alberta, literally hundreds of them, where we have entrepreneurs in the province of Alberta wanting to meet with investors from around the world. I haven't had a chance yet to circulate it to all members, but they'll probably get it in the next couple of days. We circulate these documents to nearly 5,000 contacts worldwide. In terms of a matching kind of thing we've got everything in here from firms in Alberta who are in the personal golf simulator business to an educational toy manufacturer to a home warranty service to a truck and auto accessory manufacturer to a firm in the city in the province of Alberta who's in gold mining and is looking for investors around the world. What we do: all of our offices, including all Canadian embassies throughout the world, point out these opportunities in the province of Alberta. There are always hundreds of them at any given time, and we try and mix and match.

As well, I think we've been rather successful in terms of marketing skiing in the province of Alberta in the last couple of months. In looking at some of the assessments in terms of the penetration of various markets in western Canada, it appears to be producing rather significant dividends for the ski industry in our province in terms of the mixing and the matching.

We're attempting to be proactive, Mr. Chairman. It's also becoming clearer to me as each week goes by that the competition that exists for the entrepreneur in Canada and North America – very few jurisdictions in North America are following the philosophy of this government, a philosophy that basically says that the business of government is to be out of business. As each

week goes by and as each month goes by, there are increasing numbers of businesses that are basically finding themselves being bought by incentive programs or subsidy programs being put forward either by other provinces in this country or states in the United States. From a competitive point of view, it's continuing to put Alberta in a difficult position, because on the one hand while many of these entrepreneurs are saying to us, "Yes, it's true you do have a beautiful sky, and, yes, it's true you do have clean air, and, yes, it's true you do have a quality of life," from a business point of view we're being told that if we were located in this province or this state, these certain incentives or subsidies are available. It is not our position in the province of Alberta to provide subsidies of any kind that would attract business.

I want all members to understand that there is, however, a competition in the marketplace. One of the things we have to do is try and clarify in no uncertain terms what these opportunities are and what the competition is in other provinces in Canada and states in America, because while we continue to try and be very aggressive in bringing buyer and seller together and making things happen in the marketplace, the reality is that entrepreneurs are entrepreneurs, and in essence on the one hand they might say, "Yes, your philosophy is very, very good; however, we were offered this subsidy or this grant or this inducement to locate in another province." If we're not careful, in essence this may cause us some real negatives. Now, this minister is not advocating that we should have programs to do that, but we have to be incredibly aggressive in terms of trying to point out all of the advantages that do exist in the province of Alberta with respect to this matter.

There were a number of questions that were raised the last time that I was here, Mr. Chairman, and I attempted in summing up my comments at the conclusion of the last session that we had before this committee to answer a number of the questions. If hon. members feel that perhaps there was a question that was not answered at that time, I'll be very happy to hear from them again, because I sort of looked at *Hansard* and concluded that I had, at least generically, provided most of the answers to most of the questions that had come forward at that time.

Tonight the *Academy awards* is on, and we'll see how successful film development has been in the province of Alberta with production levels in this province. I did point out recently that we have been rather successful in the last 12 months in terms of attracting film production to the province of Alberta. We're currently dealing with a total volume of between \$50 million and \$60 million a year. When you compare that to the amount of film production and television production and commercial production that's going on in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, we should be rather pleased because we're at a level about 10 times higher. However, we're at one-tenth of the level of commercial film development that does exist in the province of British Columbia. British Columbia has focused itself, in essence, on trying to turn itself into, quote, the Hollywood of the north. They have an ocean. That's the only thing they have that Alberta does not have. We have a very talented and creative grouping here in the province of Alberta that can do films and commercials, and we have been able to attract some of them to the province of Alberta. But, once again, the competition is very, very stiff from neighbouring jurisdictions.

8:10

The last point I'll make is that in the first week of April I'll be attending a meeting with other ministers in Canada responsible for internal trade. We'll be meeting in Halifax in the first week of April. There is some resistance by various provinces in this country to reduce trade barriers across the country of Canada.

Our best ally in this matter, out of interest, is the federal government. The current minister responsible, the Hon. John Manley, is very determined to break down interprovincial trade barriers that do exist in this country. He's been very co-operative with Alberta, and we're working hand in hand with him. Quebec is on side with this matter as well. Manitoba is on side with respect to this matter as well. Several of the maritime provinces are to a degree on side with this matter, although they still view in their mind that they should have some degree of protectionism for Canada's maritime provinces. The provincial governments that are headed by a New Democratic government are rather hesitant, rather resistant, and in fact are in some cases being very difficult on this particular matter. Alberta believes that there should be no trade barriers across this country at all. There should be free movement of people, goods, and services throughout Canada.

Alberta also happens to be bordered by two provinces in the Canadian west, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. All members will recall that it was only just a few days ago that the province of British Columbia came out and unilaterally declared in no uncertain terms that in terms of the \$1 billion worth of transportation construction going on in the province of British Columbia, the only people who will be able to bid on those contracts and the only people who will be able to work on those contracts will be residents of the province of British Columbia. In essence, what they've done is effectively shut out entrepreneurs from the province of Alberta, as they have shut out entrepreneurs from other provinces in this country. That matter is very significant to the Canadian economy.

There are upwards of 600 barriers to trade in the free movement of goods, people, and services in this country, and a very conservative estimate is that the drag or the drain on the Canadian economy is a very conservative 6 and a half billion dollars to \$7 billion a year. That matter is very significant. Our chief negotiator, Mr. Horsman, has basically been working on almost a day-to-day basis, and he consults with me on almost a day-to-day basis in terms of what's happening. My most recent consultation with him was only about two and a half hours ago, and he's now departed for central Canada and another meeting in this regard.

As I say, I will be attending a meeting early April, April 5 and 6. It'll be in Halifax. We'll be going there knowing that we do have some allies, and we're going to be taking our direction from the direction of the first ministers. It was outlined in the meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada just prior to Christmas when all first ministers indicated to their negotiators in their provinces and their various ministers responsible for this in their provinces that they wanted some degree of an agreement signed by June 30, 1994.

This is a matter that we cannot lose on, Mr. Chairman. British Columbia's intransigent attitude with what they have done is going to motivate us to make a list of all the concerns that we have with the province of British Columbia, and the worst thing that can happen to the economy of these two provinces in western Canada – the only two provinces, by the way, in the country that are showing growth in terms of their economic development and economic growth are Alberta and British Columbia. It is truly unfortunate, because some of us were in this House and we had to endure the difficulty brought on by a New Democratic government when Mr. Barrett was the Premier of the province of British Columbia. In a three- and four-year time frame there they basically, in my view, set back the economy of British Columbia some two decades in regard. Some of the items that are happening now have the potential to be very, very difficult for interprovincial trade and in fact for an opportunity for Canada to really experience the great potential that it should have. Several weeks from now I'll be able to provide more definitive information with

respect to that, but at least for the next two or three weeks the prime thing that will be on this minister's agenda will in fact be attempting to convince more and more provinces in Canada to come onside with what it is that we do want to do.

Mr. Chairman, in a very general way, in a very brief way there are some overview comments with respect to that, and I'd ask my colleague for some updates from the last time that we had an opportunity and some of those other votes associated with Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

The hon. minister without portfolio.

MRS. MIROSH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This evening I want to speak again about the Alberta Opportunity Company, and my colleague for Cypress-Medicine Hat will talk about the Alberta Research Council. I'll end my comments talking about the Alberta Tourism Education Council.

The last time we had the estimates, Mr. Chairman, I spoke about the performance of the Alberta Opportunity Company. It has worked very hard to meet its mandate in providing financial and managerial assistance to support growth and development in Alberta businesses. AOC has authorized almost 2,000 loans totaling \$152 million in the last five years. The direct impact of these loans has created a large number of jobs, retaining 10,000 jobs and adding 3,000 jobs, which is quite significant. I had already mentioned a number of key businesses throughout Alberta who have benefited from being recipients of these loans. I won't go through the list, but if any members are interested in knowing who were the beneficiaries of this successful program, I'd be happy to outline them. There has been assistance in business anywhere from Oyen to St. Paul, from Lloydminster to Camrose, and everywhere in between. AOC has helped meat processors, radiator shops, insurance brokers, horseback riding operators, and many, many, many other companies.

Mr. Chairman, I'd also like to add that the successes I mentioned last time – and I would be pleased again to give a list – have had accomplishments through the AOC and have also adhered to the strict internal policies and have also been successful in returning those dollars. These policies that AOC has: they're really a company that lends money where there are no other lending agencies available to them; they avoid providing financing where excessive competition would be created in the market; and they avoid providing financing which would give the borrower an unfair advantage over other businesses. So these are the policies that they adhere to. As I have said before, despite the three-year reduction in its grant from \$17.5 million to \$9.3 million, AOC will continue its mandate to provide direct term financing for all types of medium to small businesses who cannot get financing from the conventional lending sources.

The restructuring as set out in AOC's three-year business plan will enable the company to continue to provide business plans, and it's important, Mr. Chairman, that I announce that the interest rates will be changing with regards to the AOC in the next two weeks. There will also be some changes with regards to closure of two divisions – venture and seed and corporate marketing – as well as closure of one lending agency in Lloydminster. These changes together with the reduction in number of support personnel at our head office will result in the abolishment of 15 employee positions.

In addition, it is the intention of AOC to apply a fee for service where applicable, particularly in our consulting division, which will offset a large portion of its operating costs, with the eventual goal of making it fully fundable from user fees to discontinue this

particular service that AOC is involved in. This is answering questions from the member opposite with regards to the question on debt reduction.

In summary, AOC is maintaining the ability to fulfill the major part of its mandate, which is to provide financial assistance to the small business community, again where funds are not available. This substantially reduced contribution of the province will continue to allow entrepreneurs to start up and expand their business and play a major role in diversification of the economy and creation of new jobs where applicable. If there are any further questions on AOC, I'd be happy to answer them.

8:20

One concern members opposite raised was the Alberta local opportunity bond program. It's a joint program of the Alberta Opportunity Company and the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation administered by the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation in Camrose. This program provides a vehicle for communities to pool capital through the issuance of local opportunity bonds for investment in specified local business projects. The terms of each investment will be negotiated in advance between the bond purchasers and the project owner with assistance from the Alberta Opportunity Company and the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation. There will be three pilot projects selected in the upcoming year, and the budget and details for this program will be included in the budget for Agriculture Financial Services when the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development presents his budget.

The Alberta Tourism Education Council. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to talk briefly about the role and the outstanding job that they have done since its formation in 1987. The mission of the Alberta Tourism Education Council is to meet the training and education needs of Alberta's growing tourism industry. It provides training and education such as the Alberta Best program. Tourism industry workers maximize the vacation experience of tourists, encouraging repeat visitation, and promote word-of-mouth, out-of-province tourism.

There have been over 100,000 hours of industry volunteer time provided in the development and implementation of standards and certification of the ATEC programs. Today ATEC is leading the country in the development and implementation of tourism standards and certification. It has contracted to every jurisdiction in Canada for the development, validation, and implementation of standards and certification. Over 2,700 industrial professionals are enrolled in ATEC certification across Canada, and 6,000 ATEC occupation standards are in circulation across Canada.

The Alberta Best program is a vital part of the network performance by ATEC. Alberta Best services excellent seminars and equips tourism employees and managers with the skills to provide quality customer service and the attitude to help create a positive customer experience. Two-day service management seminars concentrate on planning, hiring, training, and coaching practices, which all contribute to improved financial returns. Employee customer service seminars show how to meet and exceed customer expectations, maintain a positive attitude, and solve customer problems quickly and decisively.

The Alberta Best program is a program that we're all proud of, and it's offered through a provincewide network of 77 host organizations. Over 17,000 staff and managers have participated in these seminars in the Alberta Best program just over the last three years. Over 2,000 businesses in over 1,200 communities have also participated in the Alberta Best program. There is also an involvement in 350 businesses displaying the Alberta Best decal, and over 105 high school teachers in 60 Alberta high

schools are also talking about the Alberta Best program through their tourism 10, 20, and 30 curricula. All studies show that 70 percent of businesses who have participated in Alberta Best report bottom-line benefits to their business as a result of these training programs. This leads to increased customer satisfaction, decreased turnover, and high productivity in sales. Mr. Chairman, the program speaks for itself. Many, many hotels and restaurants participate in the Alberta Best program.

I am pleased to report that the work of ATEC is now officially under the chair of Mr. Mike Miller, who is with the private sector. This work will be provided by ATEC. In three years it will become totally independent from government. ATEC's budget is being reduced by \$1 million in 1994-95, by \$400,000 in 1995-96, and the remaining \$600,000 in '96-97. The industry has indicated to me that they accept this change and direction and the challenge in keeping education and Alberta Best programs.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now I'd like to just refer comments to the chairman for ARC.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Cypress-Medicine Hat.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to take a few minutes this evening and talk about the Alberta Research Council. There have been a number of allegations and comments made about it in the last couple of weeks by members opposite. I'm going to talk about them for a minute. What we're talking about here, Mr. Chairman, is an organization in Edmonton that brings into the Alberta economy \$100 million per year. Over the next three years we will bring into the Alberta economy, much of it centred here in Edmonton, \$310 million. It presently employs almost 500 people, most of them in Edmonton. We will create 9,300 jobs in the next three years, many of them, unless these people across get their way, in Edmonton.

I guess I have difficulty understanding why members from Edmonton want to attack an organization that is promoting Edmonton, promoting their economy. In fact, when I was home in my riding this week, I had people saying to me: "What's the matter with those Edmonton MLAs? Don't they want the Research Council? Bring it to Medicine Hat; we'll have it. Bring the hundred million dollars. Bring it to Medicine Hat." [interjection] Bring it to Calgary.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Stony Plain comes first.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Stony Plain comes first.

These members attack an organization which is just developing a reputation, and they attack that reputation. This area of research that they're attacking is an area that is based on reputation, Mr. Chairman. Not only did they attack it, but they and their colleagues in the press attacked it. Those articles can go right across the world, right around the world, attacking the ARC. When we are getting into something that is new for us, that is based on an emerging reputation, a reputation that we are just developing - this organization has an international reputation, and when we are getting to that and those members attack it to damage the ARC, to damage jobs in their constituencies, it is absolutely mind-boggling. It is absolutely mind-boggling why members on the other side would not be promoting the ARC. If it were in my riding, I'd be out there saying, "What a job they're doing." I'd be saying: "Look at the research they're doing. Bring your research here. Bring it into my riding. Let us do your research. Develop my riding." Mr. Chairman, for some reason that is unknown to anybody, including colleagues and public all over this province, they don't do that. What they do

is attack. Do the members opposite not want the jobs? Do the members opposite not want the investment? I certainly have no idea.

I would like now after those few general comments to deal specifically with some of the allegations that were made, Mr. Chairman - specifically. Now, I am new in this whole process, and I'm not sure sometimes what is parliamentary and unparliamentary language, so I trust you will correct me if I tend to use some unparliamentary language on occasion here because I'm not quite sure as a new member which words I can use.

8:30

I'd like to talk about the Mill Woods exhaust leak. The Mill Woods fermentor exhaust leak was a safety threat that could have caused strong allergic reactions among some people: that was the allegation. Here are the facts. In January 1994 the biotechnology division of ARC was performing work at the Mill Woods facility. A technical problem occurred, and exhaust filters on the fermenting unit became clogged. To fix the problem, two of the eight filters were removed. Those are the facts. The machine was run for six days. That is a fact.

Now, we get into some more facts that were never released by the opposition. During this time . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whoa. Order. [interjection] Order.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Would you like me to speak louder?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, thank you. I just wanted you to stop for the moment. I just want to clarify. We are on the estimates of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

DR. L. TAYLOR: I'm talking about the ARC. ARC is part of the estimates of Economic Development and Tourism.

Now I will continue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. members, we have two people or more.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, we're dealing with vote 7, natural sciences and engineering research, which is the Alberta Research Council. Very, very appropriate. My colleague is providing very important information, extremely important information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll listen with anticipation to its relevance.

DR. L. TAYLOR: It's certainly relevant.

I'll go back to what I was saying, Mr. Chairman. During this time an organism may have been released. There's no evidence whatsoever that any organism was released. Yet we have those people saying that the people in Mill Woods are in danger. We have no evidence of any release. Furthermore, this organism was a common food yeast. It was not an environmental or safety risk. It could not - could not - have caused allergic reactions in humans. In fact, there would be no more damage to anybody from this yeast than walking around the brewery, and I think that in many cases that's where those people have been before they come into this House and ask questions.

**Point of Order
Improper Inferences**

MR. BRUSEKER: Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. The hon. Member for Calgary-North West rising on a point of order.

MR. BRUSEKER: Yeah, 23(h) and (i), imputing false motives, making allegations. This member is clearly out of line with those last comments, and I'd ask that he withdraw them.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I certainly don't accept that. I can only judge by their actions, and certainly their actions appear to me like they spend much time walking around in breweries.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, saying that someone looks like something is quite different from saying that they have been. If you would clarify whether you were alluding that they may have been or that they were – if you're saying they were, then the point of order is well taken.

DR. L. TAYLOR: They look like that quite often.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I see.

Debate Continued

DR. L. TAYLOR: Second allegation: dumping hazardous material. Here's the allegation. Hazardous materials from ARC labs have been dumped in the Edmonton sewer system, and ARC employees were told to put waste outside and "call it garbage or sawdust."

Can I use the word "lie" in here, Mr. Chairman?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No. No.

DR. L. TAYLOR: It's far worse than stretching the truth. This is totally false and without any evidence whatsoever, totally false. It's a falsehood. It's totally an untruth. I guess I can use that word.

AN HON. MEMBER: Fibbed.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Fibbed? Well, I suppose.

The allegation that ARC has a long history of safety incidents, that ARC has a secret history of incidents and spills: another patently untrue allegation with no facts. Over the past five years ARC has only had three accidents. Three accidents.

In 1994 a large glass container cracks and explodes from pressure during sterilization. No one was injured. Proper authorities were notified and no bacteria was released.

In 1993 a malfunction causes 200 litres of liquid to discharge onto the floor of the ARC site. The liquid is immediately treated with bleach, rendering it inactive and then totally safe. The liquid contained a harmless natural mould which was going to be used by ARC's client in a food product. I repeat: in a food product. Very dangerous when the client is going to use it in a food product, not a brewer's yeast, which these people are familiar with.

In 1989 an accidental spill of bacterial culture. Although the bacteria is genetically engineered, the culture itself is totally harmless and poses no physical or environmental threat. In fact, the culture is used as silk in textile production. For all we know, the members opposite are wearing that bacterial culture today.

Now, as well it was alleged that these incidents had all occurred since I was chairman of ARC, and it's quite obvious that it's another untruth. One incident has occurred since I was chairman of ARC.

Another allegation: ARC's biotech division does not have a full-time, qualified biosafety officer and hasn't for a number of

years; this is unethical and in contravention of Canadian/American safety guidelines. The facts about this allegation, Mr. Chairman: ARC has had a full-time safety officer since 1980.

Point of Order Relevance

MR. BRUSEKER: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, a point of order.

MR. BRUSEKER: Dealing with relevance here. We're talking about 1980, 1989. As I look at the title of the book, it's estimates 1994-95 fiscal year. I realize he's trying to cover up his own lack of understanding of his own department and what's happened in the past, but I'd appreciate it if he could deal with what's planned in the future rather than what's happened in the past.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, the Chair has already questioned you on relevance, and I am sure that with this guidance by Calgary-North West you will bring that in and make it relevant to your estimates.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Certainly, Mr. Chairman. The relevance of all this, of course, is that all these allegations that they have made and that I am presently going through proof to deny have to do with our budget. Fifty percent of our budget is made up from outside sources, from contracts with business, and unless I can provide proof denying these falsehoods provided by the members opposite, they . . .

Chairman's Ruling Parliamentary Language

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, there is such a thing as provocative language, and accusing others of falsehoods is . . .

DR. L. TAYLOR: I certainly wouldn't want to use provocative language, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Nor accuse them of falsehoods. You wouldn't do that; would you?

DR. L. TAYLOR: Well, I might do that if it's not considered provocative.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, it's unparliamentary and it is provocative.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Well, then, I certainly wouldn't do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You'd withdraw it then?

DR. L. TAYLOR: Yes, certainly.

If I cannot clear up these allegations, it will affect our budget because we depend on that \$50 million from outside sources. So it is very necessary that I clear up these false allegations.

ARC has had a full-time safety officer since 1980. I should point out . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, we just a moment ago went through the point of accusing falsehoods, and you withdrew the remark and said that that wasn't what you wanted to say. Yet 30 seconds later you're back into saying "falsehoods" again.

DR. L. TAYLOR: No, I didn't say falsehoods.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, mine ears deceive me.

DR. L. TAYLOR: No, I didn't say falsehoods. I'm quite clear. You can check the Blues. I did not say falsehoods.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's put it this way. We will check the Blues, and I'm sure, hon. member, that you are right.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Yes, I know I'm right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But if it did happen to slip out, are you withdrawing it?

8:40

DR. L. TAYLOR: Yes, certainly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. [Mr. Woloshyn stood at another member's desk]

MR. BRUSEKER: You've got to be in your place, Stan.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Mr. Chairman, I really do not want to convolute the debate. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, hon. gentlemen. You do not exist. [Mr. Woloshyn moved to his desk]

The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to very quickly draw the Chair's attention to *Beauchesne* 490. To put into perspective my hon. colleague's comments, it says: "Since 1958, it has been ruled parliamentary to use the following expressions." If you look under *Beauchesne* 490, you'll see "false" is a parliamentary word. "Falsehoods" is a parliamentary word. So, in fact, if my hon. colleague did use those terms, I humbly submit that they're quite appropriate to be used in these debates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you wish to address that particular point of order?

MR. BRUSEKER: Certainly. I would also like to draw the hon. member's attention to *Beauchesne* 491, which is just one further down. It says:

The Speaker has consistently ruled that language used in the House should be temperate and worthy of the place in which it is spoken.

No language is, by virtue of any list, acceptable or unacceptable.

"By virtue of any list": I'm emphasizing that myself, Mr. Chairman.

A word which is parliamentary in one context may cause disorder in another context, and therefore be unparliamentary.

I just wanted to read all of 491 to the hon. members and just as a suggestion to yourself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. member.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, who to believe? Do I follow your directions, or do I follow . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right now you follow mine unless the Assembly overrules me.

DR. L. TAYLOR: So I certainly will withdraw "falsehood." The first time I withdraw it. The second time I didn't say it, but if I did say it, I will withdraw it. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. [interjection] Order.

The hon. Member for Stony Plain is directed to look at 489, in which, if you look under the Fs, we have "falsehood" as prohibited. [interjections] You bring new meaning to peripatetic.

The context in which the words are uttered: we were trying to get the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat to be a little less provocative. If you recall, a few minutes ago we had quite a little stir going here. In any event, we've interfered much too much. What we would like is for the hon. member to finish his comments so that we may continue with the debate on the estimates of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

Hon. member.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Yes. Thank you very much. I'll try to be more temperate in my comments.

Debate Continued

DR. L. TAYLOR: Once again, we have a safety officer. Safety inspections are conducted. Safety committees exist on all ARC sites. This includes a biotech safety committee. ARC follows well-established, industry-certified safety standards.

Allegation regarding unfair advantage to ARC employees. This is the allegation: ARC has put together the business plans . . .

Point of Order Relevance

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, we have another point of order.

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Chairman, I believe we're on the estimates for 1994-95. Now, the fact that the member hasn't been able to answer questions in question period, quite frankly, is not relevant to what the committee's attempting to do this evening. Could we get back to the estimates, please?

DR. L. TAYLOR: I must emphasize that if we do not correct these allegations, the public portion of the funding will simply not be there. Our budget is made up of 50 percent private money, getting money from the private sector in joint research ventures, licensing contracts, royalties, and other ways. If our reputation is destroyed by these people opposite, not only will there be no jobs in Edmonton, not only will there be no investment in Edmonton, but it damages all of Alberta. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whoa, hon. member. We must rule on this point of order.

The hon. Member for Calgary-North West has made a good point. You've been already called to account a couple of times. Your explanation was that your comments are based on the need to clear up the allegations because an important part of your budget is not in fact in front of us but is from the private sector, which is presumably quite unlike many other departments. On that fine point, we'd permit you to go ahead but would hope that we could have more fact and fewer provocations.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Well, certainly all I've been telling you, Mr. Chairman, is fact. It might have been said in a provocative manner, but it was straight facts. I will certainly try to be less provocative in the way I give my facts. I didn't realize you could give straightforward facts in a provocative manner, but I'll try to prevent that.

Debate Continued

DR. L. TAYLOR: The allegation of unfair advantage to ARC employees. I have quite a bit to cover, Mr. Chairman. Is there a time limit on how long I can speak?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I know it does seem endless, but there is a time limit, yes. When we are interrupting on points of order, normally the clock is stopped, so all of us will not be robbed of your time.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Well, thank you. I was quite worried about that, as you can well imagine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Cypress-Medicine Hat, please continue.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is the allegation: the ARC has put together business plans that support the establishment of companies to commercialize ARC technology, and these companies will give ARC employees an unfair advantage and allow for profiteering.

ARC supports the concept of getting technology out in the marketplace where it can attract investors and be marketed and earn a return on the investment. ARC stands to earn back its investment in technology development through royalties and licensing arrangements plus significant further earnings. Technology transfer has proven to be most successful where people are transferred along with the intellectual property. ARC employees may or may not be employed in these new companies. However, ARC policies will not – and I put: will not – allow any unfair advantage to employees of the ARC. Employees who join these companies take full risks with others in the new company. Employees would obviously have to be fully qualified and bring a skill and knowledge to the company.

Spinning off technology is an accepted and proven practice in many well-established research institutions: MIT, Stanford, University of Alberta, and so on. It is the core approach of MIT, Stanford, UBC, the former Canadian telecom research centre, and countless others.

Project Aspen, which has been attacked, simply does not yet even exist. It was a project concept only, designed to see if ARC could attract out-of-province investors. Investors want to see market data, personnel, et cetera. At the present time there are no plans to transfer employees to Aspen even if it is created. Specific pharmaceutical company expertise or experience is required, which can be better found in employees currently in the private sector. That Aspen business plan that was submitted here is simply out of date, no longer valid, doesn't exist. I trust the members opposite understand that.

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

There were allegations regarding a \$6 million lawsuit against ARC. Since this is before the courts, I can only make several general type comments just to give a little background. Several years ago Chembiomed – it wasn't even ARC – signed an agreement with a small Japanese pharmaceutical wholesaler. The agreement made the wholesaler the exclusive distributor of a Chembiomed product until the end of September 1993. ARC had the obligation to this agreement when it absorbed Chembiomed. The stipulation was that the agreement would remain valid only if the Japanese wholesaler had a customer for the product. Subsequently, ARC learned that the wholesaler did not – I repeat: did not – have the customer it promised, thus rendering the

agreement void. On December 17, 1992, ARC notified the wholesaler that the agreement was terminated. In January 1993 ARC was served with a lawsuit. ARC's legal counsel indicates that the lawsuit is nothing more than a tactical manoeuvre to delay ARC from entering into an agreement with a competing wholesaler. Those are the facts.

8:50

Another allegation: some Chembiomed products are now on the verge of making money; scientists at ARC are attempting to profit from Chembiomed products. The facts are that two of ARC's top managers in its biotech division, including the division head, are on leave of absence until a review of these allegations is complete. The review was voluntarily – note, please: voluntarily – initiated by the ARC president, Brian Barge, on March 3, 1994. The review was comprehensive and looked at potential, one, conflict of interest; two, contravention of ARC's code of conduct and ethics; three, intellectual property and contracts management; four, human resource management practices; and, five, safety and environmental issues. The review was and is conducted by Martin Kratz of the Bennett Jones law firm. He is a patent lawyer specializing in this area of biotechnical research. ARC provided full co-operation during the review. Martin Kratz delivered his report to ARC on Friday, March 18, 1994. The ARC board of directors will meet tomorrow morning, March 22, at 8:30 to report and decide what actions, if any, will be taken against the two suspended managers. ARC will respond on March 23. It will be a decision of the board whether we release that report. However, I must add, I am encouraging and will argue as fervently as I can that this report should be filed in the Legislature as a public document.

MR. BRUSEKER: Good. Get in there and make it happen. Make it so, Capt. Jean-Luc.

DR. L. TAYLOR: I will do my best, sir.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Just your best?

DR. L. TAYLOR: Well, I'm sure I'll get it done.

Allegations regarding Chembiomed. Chembiomed in fact did lose \$37 million in tax dollars. Chembiomed was absorbed by ARC. ARC – this is the allegation – is now giving away the technology at taxpayer expense. Just incredible allegations.

The facts. ARC took over 27 patents, or \$37 million, when Chembiomed was restructured. Since that time, six strategic alliances have been established by ARC which allow these technologies to be fully supported by private-sector dollars. Through these six business partnerships ARC is currently recovering \$5.1 million per year from private companies outside of Alberta, all of which goes directly into further research, 5.1 million bucks a year coming in so far.

An example of how that technology has benefited Alberta as a result of ARC's strategic alliances is Glycomed of Alameda, California. This agreement, just this one agreement is worth \$10.3 million, \$10.3 million just from that one agreement plus . . . [Dr. Taylor's speaking time expired]

Mr. Chairman, will I be allowed to speak again?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The answer is yes, if there's time available.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman. My comments are directed towards the Alberta Research Council, the

\$22,547,000 that are in the estimates under program 7. I'd like to raise a number of points in comment to the previous statements.

First of all, the hon. member displays a remarkable sense of ignorance as to what are standard safety precautions with biotechnology material. There are protocols, and obviously the member cannot distinguish between a protocol, that which is required, and what is legally required. Protocols require you to do certain things with genetically altered material, Mr. Deputy Chairman. It requires you to provide for containment and for sterilization, no ifs, ands, or buts. In at least two of the incidents that we have referred to that fall in the estimates here, in terms of issues of safety and investment in biotechnology pollution abatement, they were not followed. The protocols are very clear, whether they come from Washington, whether they come from Ottawa. When you deal with genetically altered material, there are protocols that must be followed. You do not presume it's going to be safe; you must ensure it is safe. You do so through sterilization and containment.

The hon. member displays a remarkable sense of indifference to the safety of people within the ARC and within Mill Woods. To stand here and say, "Well, there's no evidence that anything escaped," obviously demonstrates that this hon. member does not know his proverbial rear end from a hole in the ground. Let me make it very clear, Mr. Deputy Chairman. We're talking about eight filters that are on a plane like this. When you remove two of them, the material just goes straight out where the two filters are not. For six full days there was an air flow of 1,600 litres per minute out those two empty filters into the air around the Alberta Research Council and Mill Woods. That is not an allegation; that is a fact. Two things happen, one of which is that people within the establishment get an allergic reaction. With repeated exposures to this type of material, you do get an allergic reaction. That is not an allegation; that is a fact. Since the air intake for the ARC is on exactly the same plane as the exhaust, it's recycled. That is not safe, is not good science, is not good health.

Point of Order Relevance

MRS. BLACK: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: A point of order.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Chairman, I must ask the hon. member to stick to the estimates. I know they claimed that on the other side. Now I must ask that you follow what you preach, please.

DR. PERCY: Certainly, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I would expect that you would allow the same degree of latitude. It would be apparent favouritism for you to do otherwise. [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order. I did allow the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat to linger and linger. It had absolutely no relevance to the estimates. I do hope - I will allow a few more minutes to even it up, but your comments have no relevance to the estimates whatsoever. So if we could get on and you finish your debate, then we'll get on to the estimates. I'm sorry I didn't call the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat to order.

Debate Continued

DR. PERCY: Again with respect to the estimates, program 7, the hon. member has alleged that contained within these estimates are expenditures for a safety officer. Well, obviously the hon. member doesn't realize that you need a biotech safety officer,

which is not present nor is contained, I would hazard a guess, within these estimates.

The hon. member talks of, you know, sterilization techniques at the Alberta Research Council, and he talks about pouring bleach on this material. Where I come from, that is not actually well defined as a scientific method of dealing with genetically altered material, nor are sweeping it out the door and throwing it on the snow considered good safety practices.

Now, we're dealing here with the estimates for this year. For the hon. member to argue that members on this side of the House and members on that side of the House should not have concern with how taxpayer dollars are spent when we're considering approximately 23 million of taxpayer dollars in these estimates is a travesty. For him to throw up a smoke screen and argue that this is really just bad business and you're making these allegations . . .

9:00

Mr. Deputy Chairman, we took up the hon. minister without portfolio's invitation to visit the ARC. Three members from our caucus did. The members of the ARC were forthright. They were open. They allowed us in. They discussed the issues with us. They acknowledged that there had been lapses in safety practices. They acknowledged that in their dealings with Biosys they did not get the best deal possible. They were forthright, they were open, and it was refreshing.

Now, I'd like to turn in the estimates to program 3, partnership in economic development and research projects. I see there that there is an item, biotechnology, that has an operating expenditure of \$225,000. I would wonder, Mr. Minister, how this item, biotechnology, ties into the expenditures of the Alberta Research Council. Is this overlap? Is this duplication? What is the degree of integration, then, between the biotechnology component in 3.1.1 and the expenditures for the Alberta Research Council?

In fact, in the estimates as well there is an item I would draw the hon. member's attention to, 3.2. It's called commercialization of advanced technologies. Within there, Mr. Deputy Chairman, there are expenditures of \$6,351,000. Now, commercialization of advanced technologies strikes me as very much what the Alberta Research Council would like to do, which is to commercialize some of the patents that had fallen into their hands when Chembiomed had gone bust, the patents of which had been taken over by the ARC. I would argue that if in fact we're going to be spending \$6,351,000 on commercialization, clearly one would hope that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism is advising the Alberta Research Council, because time and time again it is high-tech biotech firms that go out of business because they have the technical expertise but not the ability to either commercialize or market. That's clearly why Chembiomed went out of business. So one would expect when one sees expenditures here of \$6,351,000 that that money would be productively used. It would be used in a way to ensure that the full commercial value of the patents of Chembiomed presently handled by ARC would be commercially applied.

One would also hope, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that this was a process that was transparent and that it was not business plans that were circulated within the ARC to those that were known to the ARC. This was an investment by Alberta taxpayers over a sustained period of time, and it appears to be bearing commercial fruit. Obviously, the ARC would not circulate a business plan that was misleading or fraudulent, and those business plans set out very clearly the commercial expectations that they have with regards to the revenues from the Chembiomed patents. So either the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat is suggesting that the Chembiomed revenue projections contained in a business plan,

which he acknowledged was legitimate and was circulating to the board – either he's acknowledging that they are fraudulent or he's acknowledging that in fact those estimates are true but that revenues are going to accrue to a small group, not in fact publicly tendered, not put out for public tendering or any way in a process that was transparent.

I would also draw the hon. members' attention to the business finance section, vote 2.5, and the business finance development and the financial projects management. Again it's very clear, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that there are management problems within the Alberta Research Council. There was a study undertaken last year that cost Alberta taxpayers \$70,000 by the Alexander Consulting Group. It identified management problems. Here we are again putting more taxpayer dollars into another study, again with the biotech division of the Alberta Research Council. What's happening? Why in fact was nothing done in the first instance when in fact the hon. member was there as chairman? Was he just collecting a stipend, Mr. Deputy Chairman, or was he actually doing something to earn it? I would think not. Otherwise, we would not have another investigation under way right now.

To the hon. Deputy Premier with regards to questions about the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, I would ask questions relating to . . .

Point of Order Imputing Motives

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Excuse me hon. member.
The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

DR. L. TAYLOR: A point of order. Alleging motives in regards to the Alexander report. The report was commissioned by management to make recommendations to improve service and organizational systems, period. The report led to the establishment of a total management quality approach and other changes in human resources at ARC. What he's suggesting over there is completely inappropriate and simply not true.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, it's very fine in this House to have points of order on everything and everywhere. However, there's always a disagreement between opposite sides. I guess that's the way business is done in this House, and to suggest that you don't agree or one doesn't agree with the other obviously always happens.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

Debate Continued

DR. PERCY: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman. My question would be to the hon. Deputy Premier, and it concerns in fact the issue of either policy development or tourism, trade and investment. I'm not sure where this would go, but it relates to the issue of tradable business services. It's very clear when you look at the emerging pattern of trade for the province of Alberta that there are emerging and very vibrant tradable business services. You see this in consulting activity related to living in a cold climate, related to our resource base, related to a variety of areas applying human skills to our resource management. One problem that we have, though, is that we have very good data on the flow of goods and services, and in many cases we tailor our programs to that which we can measure. My question is to the Deputy Premier. What efforts are being undertaken by Economic Development and Tourism, either by itself or in conjunction with the federal government, to get a handle on the tradable services component of our exports?

It's very clear, for example, that the city of Calgary has been remarkably successful in exporting business services related to the energy base. Those enter our balance of payments. They enter the flow of services exported by the province of Alberta, yet it's very difficult to measure them, and as a result of our inability to measure them, Mr. Deputy Chairman, we lose sight of the importance of that sector and the types of programs we can undertake to provide a context for them to thrive and to penetrate various markets. So my question would be: where, then, within the estimates – would it be somewhere in program 2? – would be studies related to the importance of tradable or business services to the province of Alberta in efforts to co-ordinate with the federal government a better handle on the magnitude of these? Because to the extent that the federal government is increasingly focusing on export promotion and jobs, I think it is important that we have a very good handle on the exact magnitude of tradable service exports from the province of Alberta.

My next question would relate to program 4, which is the national infrastructure program. My question here just relates to the sum of \$9.575 million, which is set for the '94-95 estimates. My questions would be: where is the remainder related to the infrastructure investment for the following year? Where will it come from? How will it be financed? Because that seems to be less than a third of what would be required.

With those comments, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I will conclude my comments.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Roper.

9:10

MR. CHADI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My first comments with respect to the estimates tonight – and I feel compelled to speak about this simply because I think the process is wrong. I spoke to it earlier in another estimates debate, but I want to make sure that the message I am putting forth is one that is well heard and well understood. That is with regard to the amount of money that we have to vote upon tonight being included in the certain appropriation Bills, the interim supplies that we've voted on in Bills 8, 9, and 10. In that regard, I want it known that here we are debating the estimates of a certain department, and within that department we also voted already or apparently passed the appropriation Bill 8, in particular, to the tune of some \$51 million for Economic Development and Tourism. So here we are approving the borrowing already or the interim supply funds before we even conclude the estimates of this department. I think that procedure is wrong, and it ought not to happen that way at all. I think we have to first of all understand that these are the estimates. We accept the estimates, we vote on them, we all agree on them and then go on to appropriation and go on to the borrowing or whatever have you.

With regard to the estimates this evening, Mr. Chairman – and I notice that it got awfully quiet when I got up, and I really appreciate that, hon. members. It gives me an opportunity to think. With regard to small business and tourism development and in particular – it is on page 15 of the supplementary estimates. Because I see that that program has gone down by some 2 and a half million dollars, I look at that program and wonder what it is that that program is all about and why have we reduced that program by some 2 and a half million bucks? In small business and tourism development it's quite clear on page 72 of the estimates that it

provides specialized assistance to small business, the tourism industry, communities, and the public. Encourages business

formation, expansion, and location through the work of business counsellors. Provides counselling and information services/ publications. Plans and facilitates tourism product development and administered the Community Tourism Action Program which provided financial assistance to [certain] communities.

I see that less emphasis is placed on "specialized assistance to small business," and I think that in this day and age we ought not to be looking at that at all, Mr. Chairman. I think Alberta has come a long way in the past decade to understand what the benefits of small business are and what the benefits of tourism are, and we shouldn't give up on it now. I think we have to look at what it all does for us in terms of – we've got to quantify the benefits here when we look at small business and tourism development, and I'm sure the benefits far outweigh any reduction here. I think we ought not to have looked at reducing that portion of it unless we were putting it somewhere else.

I looked through all the different programs within the Economic Development and Tourism department, and it's just plagued, Mr. Chairman, with what I think is duplication. That duplication has to be looked at, and I know it can't all be done in one year. We can't all look at it in the 1993-94 or '94-95 budget and say, "Let's do this and this and amalgamate these programs." I think what we have to do, though, is at least identify them and start working from somewhere, and small business and tourism development is one area that we ought not give up on. I think we have to pursue this vigorously in this day and age.

With regard to 2.3, tourism, trade, and investment, again this category

assists the business community in expanding trade through foreign offices, coordinates participation of Alberta companies in national and international trade,

et cetera. I think what has to happen here is we need to identify exactly what it is the trade offices ought to do and perhaps expand the role of these trade offices, because I quite frankly think these trade offices are not doing enough. I think they could be doing a lot more. There's much skepticism throughout the province and perhaps throughout the country, Mr. Chairman, and I think with good reason.

When I look at places like Japan, I'm told from different sources that Japan's hog imports in the late '70s, early '80s were somewhere in the range of 40 million pounds a year. I think the hon. minister for agriculture and rural development would be interested in noting this: the hog imports to Japan in the late '70s were in the range of 40 million pounds. I understand now that Japan's consumption of hogs has tripled, and Canada's, particularly Alberta's, exports to Japan have not changed. Now, I question what our trade offices are doing in terms of the promotion of the hog industry in that country. Why is it that in the late '70s we're exporting 40 million pounds, and when their consumption triples in the '90s, we're still exporting the same 40 million pounds? Somebody has to say something about those trade offices and their roles.

Within tourism, trade, and research as well, I also can't help but look at program 5.6, tourism marketing. I see there another \$590,000. Of course, it's down from \$1,140,000 in the year 1993-94, but in this current fiscal year \$590,000. Yet in 5.6 we're marketing tourism – because that's what it looks like – where? Asia/Pacific, in North America, and in Europe. Mr. Chairman, if you also look at 2.3, tourism, trade, and investment, we see there as well these three categories: tourism, trade, and investment. We also see the Americas, which I would imagine is North America and South America, Europe, Asia/Pacific. They're the identical locations, identical spots. I'm wondering: is this not part of the mandate of the trade offices that we've got?

Why are we spending almost \$600,000? In the year before we spent \$1,140,000. Is there no duplication in here whatsoever, and if there isn't, then why are we including them in separate categories? Why isn't it all in one? The fact that they've been split up like this leads me to believe that indeed there could very well be duplication there, and it would make sense if the hon. minister would look at that and provide an explanation with respect to tourism in those regions.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to go on to the Alberta Opportunity Company. The Alberta Opportunity Company is program 6, page 81 of the estimates. When I look at the role of the Alberta Opportunity Company and understand the role of the Alberta Opportunity Company, the more I understand it, the more I like it. But the Alberta Opportunity Company, in my opinion, is being set up to be dismantled slowly, and I think that would be devastating for this province. I think the Alberta Opportunity Company is a wonderful tool to promote small business. We must ensure that we keep this company going, and I think we have to look at perhaps utilizing the Alberta Opportunity Company far more than it ever has been. I'm not talking about financing alone. I think the Alberta Opportunity Company serves a far greater purpose than just financing small business or businesses that cannot get financing elsewhere and acting as a lender of last resort only. I think it could serve a greater purpose. I feel that some of the duplication that is in this department could well be served within the Alberta Opportunity Company.

9:20

Mr. Chairman, we keep talking about small business being the engine of growth of our economy. In *Seizing Opportunity*, a publication that was put out by this government, there is a section called Small Business, and under that section it says that

Alberta's small business community is the backbone of our economy.

Over 90% of Alberta businesses are small businesses. More than 45% of all employment in this province, including 70% of all new jobs, is provided by small businesses.

Yet when I look at the Alberta Opportunity Company, in that program, I see that funding is down. Funding is down because of I think the negativity that the Alberta Opportunity Company has been receiving over the past number of years. I think we ought not to look at it in a negative light. I think we ought to look at the Alberta Opportunity Company and say: how can we use it better; how can we ensure that the Alberta Opportunity Company will work to the benefit of the people of this province?

Within the three-year business plans it's quite clear that within that category there are a couple of departments in AOC that are going to be discontinued. It says: "Venture and Seed Operations – No further investments in Venture in Seed Operations." Obviously that accounts for some of the reduction in expenditures, I would imagine. I think it's well done by the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, because venture capital is served quite nicely, Mr. Chairman, with the different lenders we have in the province already. This government has put up \$200 million, as we all know, in Vencap, and Vencap has done its job in reaching out and providing venture capital. I don't think we ought to have two government departments out there competing with one another. Even though Vencap is not quite a government department, nonetheless it's using government funds, and when it does so – and so does AOC – then one has to conclude that there is no reason. I think that whenever we had lots of money, it was a mistake, simply because if it was a bargain even at a dollar and you don't need that item, it's still too much. When we look at the two different lenders that were out there in venture capital and both using government money, I think it was a waste of money

and a waste of time. So the departure of venture and seed operations from the AOC is timely and a good idea.

The area within Alberta Opportunity Company that I think is wrong to eliminate is corporate marketing. I think we have to look at the Alberta Opportunity Company in a different light, in the light of a corporation that's out there that is going to promote small business, that is going to assist small business in their entrepreneurial conferences, this sort of thing, Mr. Chairman. Small business needs support not only in this country but in this province.

I remember years ago when consultants used to come out to the countryside and talk to us in our places of business. They used to tell us things that were going on in our own businesses that we couldn't see. The promotion of tourism, for example. A consultant would come to our places of business and say that since our places of business were by a lake or a river or a golf course, for that matter, why aren't we stocking things like fishing supplies or live lures; why don't we have party ice; why don't we have golf balls and golf mitts and golf clubs and golf hats and this sort of thing?

It just takes somebody sometimes to show you the trees from the forest, Mr. Chairman, and I think it's of vital importance because many, many, many times we find it hard to see those trees from the forest. So when we talk about an ever changing global economy, we need to have that expertise at our doorsteps more than ever, and I think now is the time not to cut things like corporate marketing out of the Alberta Opportunity Company. I think more than ever we've got to encourage more of it.

Also, Mr. Chairman, within 2.1, small business and tourism development, that category being a category that "provides specialized assistance to small business, the tourism industry," et cetera, we look at how much we're spending in that department and you see that that total subprogram is almost \$8 million - it's down from \$10.6 million last year - and you say to yourself: how could we be spending another \$8 million this year? Why, we could have been utilizing the Alberta Opportunity Company, I think, to a far greater degree and providing the Alberta Opportunity Company those sorts of funds to ensure that they were doing the promotion of small business and tourism.

Why have two things here? We talked about the venture and seed operations of Vencap and of Alberta Opportunity Company. Here I'm going to talk about the promotion of small business and tourism within program 2, yet we see the same duplication that was going on with the Alberta Opportunity Company. Quite clearly the role of the Alberta Opportunity Company was to promote that small business and ensure that small business survived and prospered in this province and not only small business but also the tourism industry and tourism development. So here again I see a great amount of duplication. I think the Alberta Opportunity Company could have served us well if we took program 2 and incorporated it in with it.

I would hope that the hon. minister could respond to that as well and advise me as to what he thinks or maybe of future developments that could be taking place with respect to trying to streamline operations within his department and again to assist in the streamlining of the operations of the Alberta Opportunity Company, because quite clearly the Alberta Opportunity Company is worth while to keep in this province.

Program 9, lotteries and gaming. I note, Mr. Chairman, that there is one category called international assistance, and it was in program 2. It was 2.6. International assistance in 1992-93 was in the range of 1 and half million dollars and in 1993-94 was discontinued and again in 1994-95. But you look at international assistance in the estimates and you see that

grants were provided to non-government organizations for international development projects in the fields of primary health care, small business enterprises,

et cetera. It goes on to say that

grants funding is now provided by the Lottery Fund. When I look through the lottery fund and through the estimates, I can't seem to find it, and I'm wondering: did we discontinue this totally or have we just not bothered to show it?

I also have a major concern with regard to the time that is only allotted to me. I think it's not enough time.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I agree with you.

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

9:30

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If anybody has a point of order, I can sure rule on it. I like doing that.

Hon. minister, our members took one hour, and just to be as fair as we can, we are trying to let the opposition in. They haven't taken half as much time yet as the members on this side of the House.

Edmonton-Avonmore.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, sir. I am delighted to rise to speak a little bit about the estimates as they've come forward here. I want to address those areas relevant to the budget which haven't been touched upon yet, starting with the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation, which I notice on page 15 of our government estimates has approximately the same amount of money as it did in the previous year, that being about \$413,000 for this corporation.

I am delighted to note that this program is going to again result in approximately 1,500 jobs, perhaps, being created through the moneys provided there. It will come as no surprise to you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, as it will not come as a surprise perhaps to many people here, that the motion picture industry is one of those areas in the arts which are quite frequently misunderstood by many people. If in fact we want things like movies and films to continue to be made in Alberta, then it behooves us to take a look at how we can foster the promotion of even more of the same.

AMPDC has done a reasonably good job in that regard, I would say. We have attracted all kinds of films to this great province, and I think there are some very good reasons for that. I know that the film industry as we know it in Alberta has a lot of natural things going for it which frequently need to be simply pointed out to individuals, and that is largely what it is that attracts people to make their films and projects here. I'm talking about our natural setting of beautiful mountains, the lakes and the streams, our woodlands, which are very, very sought after, not to mention areas like the badlands and the wide-open prairies of the south. We have those kinds of things going for us here, in addition to the fact that we also have extremely good accommodation and cheaper prices in Alberta, so we are able to attract a lot more foreign investment dollars here through the film industry. We also have longer daylight hours here. Things like that may seem commonplace and may even be taken for granted by many of us, but in the film business those are critical points which producers and directors and writers and so on look for when they choose a location or a setting to shoot their next picture.

I know that AMPDC has been instrumental in having helped attract such projects to this province. I note with interest that it is noted here that something like 86 percent of all Alberta

productions that were carried out in the province received some form of assistance from AMPDC, and I'd like to just congratulate the minister and the government for allowing that to continue into the next year.

As we look at the role of the film and/or video industry in Alberta, I think it's safe to assume that hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars will again be generated here. The return on this investment is really very, very good. Each of the aspects connected with film and video is unto itself a little cottage industry. Those cottage industries frequently don't show up in the statistics when we take into account overall economic impact, but I can assure you that when all the writers and producers and script people and lighting and design people are taken into account, each of them is a small business unto himself or herself.

As we move through the next couple of years, I would hope that the thrust of what AMPDC has traditionally stood for will not be lost by this government, because, Mr. Deputy Chairman, we are moving very quickly in this area where new technology, new broadcast techniques, new satellite dishes, new kinds of intelligence, as it were, affecting this industry are coming at us from all ends. We know that we will have somewhere between 500 and 600 new television channels coming into our homes over the next five to 10 years. I don't want to suggest that everything that'll be coming by way of satellite dishes will be necessarily welcomed by all viewers. The point here is, however, that we must keep pace with that technology. Alberta has always been recognized as a leader in this area of the arts, and I will do everything I can from my standpoint to see that position maintained. In that regard, I'm delighted that AMPDC is able to continue with what it first set out to do.

I do, however, in that same vein now want to connect a couple of other brief points in this regard, and that is with regard to the cultural industries on page 18 of the estimates. I note here that the cultural industries project, as I understand it at least, is a joint undertaking with the federal government, and there's a matching scenario. I'm not sure what the formula is; it could be 50-50. I notice here something in the order of \$2 million which our province is putting toward cultural industries. That is to include, Mr. Deputy Chairman, books and periodicals and publishing as one category, sound recordings as another, and film and video production as the final one. Even though they're not spelled out that way here in estimates, that is my understanding of what is included here. I see that we have here an opportunity to perhaps explore something similar to what AMPDC has going. I'm not sure if the minister is able to utilize some of these funds in that regard, but I would like to make a point for the Deputy Premier, whom I know to be a cultural enthusiast and a good supporter of the arts in general in this province. I've had the pleasure of working with him on some projects in the past, and I think I can speak very soundly and very assuredly of his commitment to the area.

My idea for him to consider in this regard in relation to the estimates would be this: the sound recording business in Alberta is also a million dollar business unto itself. It is the other 50 percent, if you will, of the film business. I have always maintained that 50 percent of what you see is what you hear and that if you were to turn off the sound on your television set or if you were to try and watch a movie without sound or if you were to try and get through a day without sound, I think you would find that that would be very difficult. We would not appreciate nearly to the full extent that we otherwise might the value sound really has. In the case of AMPDC we saw an initiative some time ago that actually allowed and even attracted investment dollars, specifically perhaps even foreign investment dollars, to help out the film

industry. That was through a tax incentive where individuals were allowed to make a contribution, to make a donation, as it were, toward a film or a video project, and in return they were able to receive some sort of a tax benefit for having done so. I wonder if the minister would be amenable to considering something similar in the sound recording business, which would help us build an even more solid base for the complete production of sound recordings in Alberta.

As he knows, we are able to take a film and completely shoot it here in Alberta and do just about all of the editing here. We've seen that with projects like *Bye Bye Blues* and *Angel Square*, to mention a couple. I think the same opportunity might exist for the sound recording industry, wherein we would have what I would call the whole NHL right here, being able to not only write the songs here but to also have them recorded here, also have them pressed here, have them distributed and marketed from here. I find it always frustrating, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that we have such great talent in this province, individuals like Tommy Banks and George Fox and George Blondheim, Jann Arden, who won a Juno last night at the awards. These incredibly talented people really are our creation. They're obviously innately gifted, but the point I'm making is that in order for them to complete their recording projects, they seem to have to frequently take their business to another province for completion, usually Vancouver, Toronto, or Winnipeg. We have extremely good and very professional sound engineers and sound recordists here with state of the art 24-track studios that could take good advantage of some incentive in that regard. I'm hoping that the minister will consider that.

9:40

The specific points of reference I want to make are with regard to cultural industries as reflected in the estimates in line 5.3.1, where it says public information and evaluation. I note a budget of \$105,000. I scoured the business plan, Mr. Deputy Chairman, to find out a little bit more about what that specific area was all about, and unfortunately I couldn't find the information. In fact, I'm not sure if I missed it or if there was not a reference to cultural industries in the business plan. If there is a reference or an elaboration on cultural industries in "A Bitter Way," I'd really appreciate seeing it. Better Way; sorry. It's crossed out here, and it says, "Bitter Way," and I read that by mistake. So I would hope that there would be some explanation of what that is. If there is an explanation forthcoming, I would welcome it, but if there isn't, and if there's an opportunity at this stage to comment on what this might be - in other words, what I might provide to the minister are just some points for his consideration, if not guidance.

I would suggest that public information and evaluation here would allow for artists involved in these cultural industries to engage in studies that would then somehow crystallize themselves into useful information that would become benchmarks for the government when it starts setting other policies. Quite frequently the misunderstanding and sometimes misappreciation of what it is that the arts are all about need to be clarified, and one way of doing that is to engage some credible firms to do studies on the impact of the cultural industries. Under evaluation, I would suspect that that's something the minister might have in mind anyway, but I thought I would point it out.

Similarly, public information I would hope also could be capitalized on here to the extent that we would make more information available about these cultural industries, primarily to our younger people, to the students in our schools, and perhaps encourage them to take a role in this. Dollar for dollar the cultural industries in our province have consistently proven, I believe, to have a very high return value for dollar invested. One

way of encouraging more involvement, I think, is through our school system. Public information to all levels should be made readily available, and I'm sure that that's probably part of the scenario here as well.

The next point, which is 5.3.2 on page 18, deals with company development. Now, a lot of people may not understand this, but virtually every artist who exists in the province – be that artist involved with books and periodicals in publishing, or with sound recordings, or with films and videos, which again are the three areas covered under cultural industries – be it whichever one of those that the individual is involved in, he or she is a little company unto him or herself. These companies can be one person; they can be two people. If they're a band, it can be three, four, or five people. If it's a film production company, Mr. Deputy Chairman, it could be a small group of three; it could be a group of a dozen. The point is that each of these individuals actually employs on a part-time or a full-time basis or on a contract basis up to perhaps 20, 30, or 40 more individuals. Or in the case of a sound recording project you might see the entire symphony being a casual employee, if you follow my drift, which would mean that you'd have for that particular day subcontracts of perhaps 60 individuals. These kinds of statistics don't always show up, so we don't get enough credit being given to the cultural industries frequently for the amount of employment they generate by remote, so to speak. Company development is one such area where, I think, all of these artists and all of these one-, two-, three-person companies really do need some help.

When I think of company development, I think of what it is these individuals need to do that they need help with, that they can't otherwise do well enough themselves. The reason that people are in the arts is because they're good at being in the arts. The problems they encounter are when they try to also become business managers. That's quite frequently where they get lost, so company development is something they really do appreciate when funds are made available for it. In this instance I think the government can take a very, very prominent role to help fill a void that is difficult for artists otherwise to express and certainly is difficult for them to admit to, that they have a problem in that regard. Having been involved in this industry for many, many years myself and having watched and helped many artists over the years, I can attest to the need for company development to be funded.

With regard to the next line, which is the marketing and distribution, \$846,000, I want to simply say that this is probably the most critical of all the three areas, and that's likely why it has the second highest amount of funds attributed to it. There is no point in spending the kinds of moneys that have to be spent on creating the people who have the skills, the talents, and the abilities to undertake cultural and artistic products if at the end of the rainbow there is no way of getting that product out on the market. There is no point in making a recording in your basement or writing a clever book at your summer cottage if you have no way of getting it onto the bookshelves.

Now, that is only the beginning of what it is that the cultural industries need some help with. The marketing is something again that is usually misunderstood in this business. Mr. Deputy Chairman, the hardest thing that an artist is ever charged with doing is selling him or herself. I think we all realize that from the door knocking we did. It's very hard to stand on a doorstep and tell somebody how great you are. Well, it's even harder to stand there and tell them how wonderful your song is or your film is or your video is. Frequently the artists themselves have to try not only to be their own producers and writers; they also have to

be their own salespeople. So any help that we can give them with regard to marketing is extremely appreciated.

I note that in other examples we have frequently set up programs on a joint sponsorship basis with the federal government wherein we actually help artists make their way over to the international film festival in Cannes, France, which would be a Mideam, as it's commonly known. One of the reasons that particular venue in France is so successful and does such a great job in marketing is because it attracts film buyers and book buyers and sound recording buyers from all around the world. I'm very, very happy that in each of the years I've been involved with the Alberta recording industry, for example, we tried sending one of our artists over there not only to market their own wares but to take a look at how others were marketing their wares. So this touches on marketing and distribution, and I would hope that there are some funds available in here for that kind of continuation. I'm sure that somewhere the minister will comment on that and provide me with whatever information he can. I would certainly like it passed on for the benefit of the thousands of artists that we have here in the province.

My final comment with regard to the estimates is the professional development area, which is \$167,000 in this particular budget. I would only like to know what exactly is meant by professional development insofar as this is concerned. Is that professional development restricted to the individual? Is that professional development something that's a little more broadly available for the larger picture – in other words, the companies that would come hereunder – and how is it that people might access this particular branch of funding?

It's my understanding, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that we actually have a separate department set up within government that deals with cultural industries and that that department has done a yeoman's job in terms of communicating the wishes of the minister and the wishes of the government for the furtherance of the artists in this province. I know there is no easy answer to how to best develop a person professionally, because here we're dealing with aesthetics, frequently we're dealing with innate talent, and we're dealing with intangibles quite often. I would hope that professional development would take that broader picture into account and would allow for our very talented Albertans to take fullest benefit of their programs and talents.

I'll have to stop there. The bell has sounded. Thank you.

9:50

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I've listened very attentively in the last hour, and I must say to my colleagues in the House that some of their finest speeches and finest questions have been raised in the last hour. I would like to congratulate the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud and the Member for Edmonton-Roper and the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore for some very penetrating questions on a very, very wide-ranging variety of areas. Hopefully, in the next few minutes I'll be able to answer their questions with respect to this matter.

Mr. Chairman, there are different programs in different votes, as explained the last time that my colleague the minister without portfolio and myself were here, because in several of the votes, particularly vote 5, we have the western economic partnership agreements. Those are agreements with the federal government that were set up a number of years ago, and in fact they're all due to terminate. So it's not a matter of duplication, having some in some line departments or the Department of Economic Develop-

ment and Tourism, but these are addenda and additional programs that basically have been worked out with the federal government. I repeat, they're not duplications. They're for special reasons and special purposes, and they're just covered separately because one has participation with the federal government as well as the provincial government.

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

The Member for Edmonton-Roper was looking through, I guess, the previous year's budget for a segment called international development, which he will not find in the estimates of 1994-95 in the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. If he wanted to look at the Budget '94 document, and if he were to look at page 52 of it and the lottery fund profiles, what he would see is that there is one of the lottery funded foundations called the Wild Rose Foundation. In the past the international aid program used to be funded out of the general revenue fund in the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. That has now been transferred out of the general revenue fund into the Alberta lottery fund. That \$1.6 million has been added to the previous allocation of \$5 million which is given to the Wild Rose Foundation, so now you have an annual allocation of \$6.6 million. So the program has been retained. It has just moved out of the general revenue fund, administered now by the Alberta Wild Rose Foundation, and I'd be happy to talk about it further when we talk about the lottery estimates.

Mr. Chairman, a fair number of the questions were raised as well on the cultural side, and I appreciated receiving them. It's been a long time that I've stood in this Assembly and waited to hear someone talk about the arts in the province of Alberta and the arts in the province of Alberta in a very positive way. I must say – and this is with no disrespect to some of the member's colleagues – but in the previous makeup prior to the election of 1993 most of the comments that were forthcoming in the area of the arts in the province of Alberta tended to be very negative-type comments. The hon. member might just want to look back at *Hansard* over the last five and six years and see the number of critical questions raised of this minister for such support that we gave to the Alberta Foundation for the Performing Arts. There were numerous occasions when I had to stand here and defend K.D. Lang and other things, and the member might just want to take an evening or two off and go through the *Hansard* of the last few years and see what some of his colleagues have been saying about some of these funding programs, particularly the former critic, the former lottery critic. He used to take great zeal with respect to chastisement of some of this commitment.

Without any doubt in both the general revenue portion of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism and in fact on page 52 again – and I hope I'll have an opportunity to talk about this – you see rather significant amounts of dollars that are allocated to the arts in the province of Alberta. One of the substantial allocations is the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, under the lottery fund, which received \$16,104,000. There's absolutely no reduction in fiscal '94-95 in this very, very important area, page 52, hon. member, in terms of the lottery profile. We have to deal with the two of them because the two of them go hand in hand with that.

The development of the artistic mode in the province of Alberta is extremely important to the development of the quality of life in this province. I appreciated, again, the comments the hon. member made with respect to those who are involved in the development of films, those who are involved in the development of books, and those who are involved in the development of

artistic things and the stage and the audio area as well. That's an area that I think a lot of people take for granted in the province of Alberta. It's very, very sophisticated in terms of if you look at a small population of 2.6 million people and you see the kinds of talent that have been developed in this province, that have gone out to become internationally known people. It's an area that I believe and all members of our government believe is extremely important to continue in further development.

The Member for Edmonton-Whitemud made a series of statements and a series of questions with respect to the exports of the so-called service industries and the service aspects. One of the things that is not quantifiable, it seems yet, in any of the data that's given to us by Statistics Canada and some of the other groupings that we receive information from is the dollar volume that can be quantified for that kind of export. Even in the most recent report to be tabled, called the Alberta International Trade Review 1992, it's clearly pointed out in that particular document that we can quantify a whole series of exports but we cannot yet quantify service exports at this point in time. It's something that we're working on with the federal government, to see whether or not that can be absolutely quantified in terms of what the value is, so that we can at least start talking about that in a more sophisticated way than we have in the past.

There's absolutely no doubt at all – I talked about this the last time these estimates were out – that Alberta is very fortunate that one of its significant industries in this province is the engineering industry. Alberta has more engineers on a per capita basis than any other province in the country of Canada. The infrastructure of this province is extremely sophisticated. Where Edmonton is located – it's still in the southern part of the province of Alberta. We have half of the irrigation in the country of Canada located in the province of Alberta. We've had the engineers and the architects who could build such things as Suncor and Syncrude. We have incredible utility manufacturing complexes in this province, and we have one of the most sophisticated oil and gas infrastructures and petrochemical infrastructures that you're going to find in any of the most progressive parts of the world. We have it here in this very large geographic mass with only 2.6 million people, Mr. Chairman, and that's a result of the very talented men and women who in fact are engineers in this province, some 30,000-plus of them. They're now working all over the world, and they are bringing mega dollars back to the province of Alberta.

The last comment that I want to make mention of, Mr. Chairman, is a recent report that we also tabled in this Assembly. It's a report called *Women in Business*, and what it is is a directory that we've put together in Economic Development and Tourism. It lists, in essence, women in the province of Alberta who have their own businesses, who are entrepreneurs unto themselves. What this is is an inventory of all of them, a directory of all the businesses in the province of Alberta that are owned, managed, and run by women. The sole purpose of the document is in fact to add a more sophisticated form of networking for women who are in business in Alberta. It's a very unique little document. We did it the first time. The first year we did it, we published 6,000 copies, all of which were distributed within a matter of days. This year, in 1994, a private-sector publisher using a yellow pages type directory for women will be printing this document, and it will now be for sale for anybody in the province who wants one. It is just another example of where once the government in fact has led the way with respect to it, now the private sector has moved in and taken over, and we're very, very happy to give the idea away. Our whole purpose, in fact, was to get it going and get it started in a pretty dramatic way.

Mr. Chairman, this is an important area of development. I just want to repeat again that you'll find funding for economic activity and tourism activity in the general revenue fund, in the Alberta heritage savings trust fund. You'll find it in the lottery fund. Hon. members have also talked about Vencap, and that's another area that another day I'd be very, very happy to have a discussion on, perhaps with the heritage savings trust fund committee. There was a commitment from the taxpayers of the province of Alberta in days gone by to allocate moneys for this particular company. It came out of the Alberta heritage savings trust fund. One of the items that I would like to see happen in the next six to eight months – and I've given the next year, the fiscal year to myself as a challenge to see whether or not we can negotiate a settlement with Vencap and get dollars returned to the province of Alberta, to in fact privatize, sell Vencap if you wish. But we have to do that in a way that we can realize the best return for the investors, the people of Alberta, the taxpayers of the province of Alberta.

In fact, when I have an opportunity to appear before the Alberta heritage savings trust fund select committee and if it's one of the subject matters that the members would like to talk about, I'd be delighted to talk about that. In the meantime, if they have any ideas how we might exercise an opportunity to negotiate a sale of Vencap, I'd be very, very pleased to hear from them as well.

10:00

Mr. Chairman, I think that gives you an overview in terms of all of the various aspects with respect to this particular department. I believe it's now time for me to suggest that the committee might now like to rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur in the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? It is so ordered.

[At 10:02 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.]

