

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Thursday, April 14, 1994**

1:30 p.m.

Date: 94/04/14

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: Prayers

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our divine Father, as we conclude for this week our work in this Assembly, we renew our thanks and ask that we may continue our work under Your guidance.

Amen.

head: Introduction of Visitors

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, it's a great honour for me to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly today Dr. Olexander Stoyan. Dr. Stoyan from Ukraine is chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine, representing some 40 different unions, some 20 million people in Ukraine. He has also as recently as Sunday been elected to the parliament in Ukraine for the first time. Traveling with him is his wife, Dr. Stoyan, who teaches at the university in Kiev, and accompanying them from Ukraine but a seminary student here at Concordia in Edmonton is translator Vadim Fedotov and also accompanying them a friend Alec Niemi from Vancouver. We are delighted to have Dr. Stoyan and Dr. Stoyan with us. We wish them all the best in the challenges that face them in Ukraine, and I'd ask that we extend to them the warm welcome of this Assembly.

head: Presenting Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want today to present a petition to the Legislature which is signed by some 550-plus people from the central Alberta region, including Rocky Mountain House, Innisfail, Red Deer, and surrounding area. These people are gravely concerned about the Special Places 2000 initiative, and they're very, very concerned that large tracts of land are going to be cut off from access.

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present two petitions. The first urges

the Government to maintain the Grey Nuns Hospital in Mill Woods as a Full-Service, Active Hospital and continue to serve the south-east end of Edmonton and surrounding area.

The second petition, Mr. Speaker, urges

the Government not to alter funding arrangements for Alberta's Seniors Lodges and Seniors Subsidized Apartments until Seniors have been consulted and have agreed to any revisions to funding arrangements.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce a petition urging the Legislative Assembly to ensure that kindergarten is funded for every child on an equal basis in this province and to make sure that they have the opportunity to receive a full 400 hours of ECS instruction.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce a petition urging

the government to maintain the Misericordia Hospital as a Full-Service, Active Hospital [which will] continue to serve the West-end of Edmonton and surrounding area.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Beverly.

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to introduce a petition from 356 Edmontonians "opposing the erosion of government support for health, education, and social services" and saying that they "will not accept the proposed budget cutbacks."

Thank you.

head: Reading and Receiving Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that the petition I presented here on March 30 from about 420 residents of Edmonton-Avonmore and surrounding areas be now read. It's the one concerning the maintenance of the Grey Nuns hospital as a full active treatment hospital, picking up on the rally of the 15,000 people who walked on it. I'd appreciate that being read now.

Thank you.

CLERK:

We the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to urge the Government to maintain the Grey Nuns hospital in Mill Woods as a Full-Service, Active Hospital and continue to serve the south-east end of Edmonton and surrounding area.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. deputy Leader of the Opposition.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I request that the petition on education that I presented on March 28 be now read and received.

CLERK:

We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to urge the government to resist calls to remove specific books, or types of literature, from Alberta Education curriculum.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

MR. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would request that the petition I tabled on March 29 regarding the government's proposed cuts to seniors' programs now be read and received.

CLERK:

We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to urge the Government not to alter the level of support for all benefits for Alberta's seniors until seniors have been consulted and have agreed to any revisions.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd request that the petition I tabled on March 30 regarding the status of the Misericordia hospital be read and received.

CLERK:

We the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the government to maintain the Misericordia Hospital as a Full-Service, Active Hospital and continues to serve Edmonton and surrounding area.

**head: Presenting Reports by
head: Standing and Special Committees**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Medicine Hat.

MR. RENNER: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Private Bills has had certain Bills under consideration and wishes to report as follows. The committee recommends that the following Bills be proceeded with: Bill Pr. 2, Lethbridge Foundation Amendment Act, 1994; Pr. 3, Companions of Angela and Francis (Koinonia Association) Act; Pr. 8, Shaw Communications Inc. Act; Pr. 9, Tammy Lee Barnes Adoption Act; Pr. 10, Janna Adella Marie Kinnee Adoption Act; and Pr. 15, Silvia Kathleen Miles Adoption Act. I request the concurrence of the Assembly in these recommendations.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur with this report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

head: Introduction of Bills

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-East.

**Bill 22
Maintenance Enforcement Amendment Act, 1994**

MR. AMERY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Maintenance Enforcement Amendment Act, 1994.

The Maintenance Enforcement Amendment Act, 1994, will allow for the withholding of licences in the event that the debtor fails to pay court-ordered maintenance or make suitable payment arrangements with the maintenance enforcement program. This Bill will give the hardworking people at maintenance enforcement another tool in obtaining funds for the children affected. This Bill also reduces the burden on the taxpayers and puts the responsibility where it should lie: with the parents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Leave granted; Bill 22 read a first time]

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I would move that Bill 22, being the Maintenance Enforcement Amendment Act, 1994, be moved onto the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Bow.

**Bill 21
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Amendment Act, 1994**

MRS. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Amendment Act, 1994.

The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Act gives AADAC the mandate to operate or fund programs for prevention and treatment of

alcohol and drug abuse problems. The mandate also extends to providing financial and other assistance for investigating and conducting research concerning alcohol and drug abuse matters. Earlier this year the government announced that a program to treat individuals who were experiencing problems pertaining to gambling addiction would be conducted under the auspices of AADAC and its funded agencies. An amendment to the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Act will give AADAC the mandate to become involved in the treatment, prevention, and research pertaining to other addictive behaviours.

Thank you.

[Leave granted; Bill 21 read a first time]

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 21, being the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Amendment Act, 1994, be moved onto the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: Tabling Returns and Reports

1:40

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Family and Social Services.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to file with the Assembly the '91-92 annual report of my department.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

MR. HENRY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to file four copies of MLA Fast Facts produced by the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association. This is one in a series of Fast Facts that the association has produced, and this one is specific to Bill 19. It's entitled: Bill 19 - A Broken Trust. The last line is: "We trusted the Minister. And a trust should not be broken."

Thank you.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table 505 coupons sent in by Albertans in response to our poster campaign entitled: "Tell Ralph Klein to take your kid's future off his hit list." Of the 505 coupons I'm tabling today, 500 register opposition to the cuts and five are actually in favour of the cuts.

head: Introduction of Guests

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's indeed a pleasure for me to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly 50 very bright young grade 6 students from Aurora elementary school in the beautiful town of Drayton Valley. They're accompanied here today by teachers Miss Tasha Aleth and Mrs. Bev Dekker, the school bus driver Robert Knyta, and parents Miss Vicki LaRose and Mrs. Debbie Fink. They are in the public gallery and in the members' gallery, and I would ask that they rise at this time and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Stettler.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you 25 young, energetic visitors

from Byemoor school. They are accompanied today by teachers Miss Karen Lane and Ms Trish Clark, as well as parent helpers Mrs. Kathy Mappin and Mrs. Roxy Gallagher. They are seated in the members' gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Little Bow.

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm again honoured to welcome and introduce to you . . . [A child in the gallery cried] My kids did the same thing.

I'm honoured to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly another group of 43 from the town of Vauxhall, the potato capital of Alberta. They're from Vauxhall elementary school. They're in the public gallery today, and accompanying them are their principal, Mr. Gerhart Reimer, and a couple of dynamic teachers Mr. Terry Olfert and one of the finalists for the excellence in teaching award Mrs. Carol Jones. As well with them are parents Mr. Bill Parkinson, Mrs. Donna Van Hal, Mrs. Deb Wall, Mr. Noel Pierson, Mr. Murray Brown, and Mrs. Alice Van Der Ploeg. Would the Assembly please give these folks, as they stand up, the warm traditional welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Leduc.

MR. KIRKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll save the best for last. I have three very special guests to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly on this wind-down Thursday afternoon. Most in the House have met the guest that I will introduce, but this individual is so unique, I think he's worth meeting a second time. This individual is visiting us from Carlsbad, California, has traveled the world stopping in such exotic spots as France, Singapore, Germany, Australia, and Africa. Our guest has confided that of all the stops he has made, the esteemed Alberta Legislature is by far his most exciting stop. He is waiting in eager anticipation for the political phenomenon known as question period. Our first guest is known as Spike, and he is accompanied this afternoon by my inspiration and friend of 30 years, Nona Kirkland, and my favourite sister-in-law, Cathy Kirkland, soon to be from White Horse, California. I would ask the Assembly to give them a very warm round of applause and welcome.

head: Oral Question Period

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Children's Hospital

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. People throughout southern Alberta are rising against the unthinkable idea of shutting down the Children's hospital in Calgary. Of course their reaction is emotional, and it's frenzied. The province is threatening an institution that we treasure, an institution that measures what we are. I submit that we have good reason to be afraid. The Klein regime has demonstrated that children aren't immune from the scramble to cut spending: first social services, then education, and now health care. My question is to the Premier. Where is the sense in even considering, Mr. Premier, closing a respected, efficient, child-focused hospital and then spending \$118 million duplicating it at the Foothills site? Where's the sense?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I simply have to reiterate what I said yesterday, that this report comes about as the result of a planning process that involved those directly responsible for the administra-

tion of health care in the city of Calgary. It was brought together by Mr. Hyndman. The report has now gone back to the chairmen for their comments. I understand that the minister will be meeting with all the hospital board authorities sometime next week to discuss with them their particular concerns. I can say that nothing is carved in stone at this particular time, but they certainly do know in the city of Calgary that there has to be a rationalization of health care services in that city, and that applies to the city of Edmonton and the rest of the province as well.

MRS. HEWES: I don't know how the Premier can even countenance such an absurd statement.

Mr. Speaker, in the Premier's somewhat supportive comments about the process, is the Premier reinforcing the notion that he thinks the Children's hospital is inefficient, wasteful, unnecessary?

MR. HENRY: Just say no way, Ralph. Just tell them no way.

MR. KLEIN: Do you want the floor?

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that at all. What we are trying to achieve through this whole exercise is to find better and more effective and more efficient ways of delivering these services. We are not talking about closing down the Children's hospital. What is proposed is the relocation of the Children's hospital. I think that point has to be made abundantly clear. As I said before, the minister will be meeting with the various authorities responsible for the administration of health care in Calgary next week, and I'm sure that cool heads will prevail and we'll arrive at a reasonable solution to this problem.

MRS. HEWES: Not good enough, Mr. Premier. This doesn't make sense to taxpayers or families.

Mr. Speaker, just stop this right now. Will you tell the people of Alberta, Mr. Premier, that children are off your hit list and this hospital will stay open?

1:50

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, again I simply have to say that this has been an ongoing exercise. As a matter of fact, this exercise in the city of Calgary has been going on for 10 years now. There have been numerous reports prepared on the rationalization of health services in the city of Calgary. The latest report was prepared by the health caregivers in that city. It wasn't prepared by the government. It was brought together by a facilitator. The facilitator has sent the report out to get the comments from the various hospital board authorities. The minister has committed to meet with these people and determine where we go from here. It's as simple as that.

Education Funding

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Mr. Speaker, most teachers in the province have accepted a 5 percent rollback . . . [some applause] We'll see whether they will keep applauding in a while. Most teachers have accepted a rollback in an attempt to protect the education of our students from further damage by the Klein regime. Now, the Premier has said repeatedly that these cuts to education will not affect the classroom, but the reality is that every board has to reduce its teaching staff by as much as 10 percent because of these cuts. To the Premier: how can the Premier say that the classroom will not be affected when there will be far fewer teachers teaching more students in September?

MR. KLEIN: I've said time and time again that we plan to get as much as we possibly can out of the administration of the

system. Mr. Speaker, that is why we are reducing the number of school jurisdictions in this province from 140 to 60. That is why we got rid of almost overnight 40 nonoperating school districts. This is why we are appealing to the administration of the various school boards to look at how they can cut administrative costs before they go into the rank and file and into the classroom. We're trying to achieve all this so in fact we can get more dollars into the classroom.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier is going to make sure that there will be no fewer teachers in September then, because all the cuts will come out of the head offices.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, there will be as many teachers as we need to run an effective and an efficient school system.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering what studies the Premier is using this time to prove that class sizes have nothing to do with the quality of education.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, there are highly qualified and tremendously competent people both within the school boards and within the Department of Education who are hired and paid very, very good money to make these decisions. That's what it's all about. Better those people making those decisions than these people.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Catholic School System

MR. HENRY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, 15,000 people rallied against the proposed closure of the Grey Nuns hospital in Edmonton, and the Premier said that they got his attention and there may be room for some compromise. Tonight in centres right across this province Albertans are going to be rallying to protect the integrity of the Catholic school system in our province. I have a simple question for the Premier. How many people is it going to take to rally before the Premier is willing to reconsider his position on Bill 19? Give us a number.

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, we don't make decisions by the size of rallies. [interjections] We don't make decisions by the size of rallies. Yes, when 15,000 people express a concern, we want to listen to those concerns. Indeed, the minister will be doing very much the same in the city of Edmonton as she will be doing in the city of Calgary, and that is meeting with the people directly responsible for the delivery of health care services to address those concerns and in a reasonable, a coolheaded manner arrive at solutions.

MR. HENRY: Mr. Premier, there's a major constitutional question here. I've asked the question twice. I'm going to ask the question again. Why doesn't the Premier have the guts to refer this whole thing to the Court of Appeal so we can determine exactly what the constitutional position is? Are you going to do it or not? One or the other.

MR. EVANS: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I haven't had a chance to discuss it in detail with the Justice minister, but certainly I have with the Education minister. Maybe the Justice minister would wish to

supplement. We think, as a matter of fact we're convinced that we are on sound constitutional ground and that there would be no need for such a reference.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental?

The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Substance Abuse

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In a study called . . . [some applause] Token support but meaningful nevertheless. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps members on all sides would allow the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat to ask the question.

The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In a study called substance abuse among . . . [interjection] I'll try again. In a study called Substance Use among Alberta Adolescents done jointly by the Premier's council on the family and the Canadian institute for law and the family a number of interesting points were raised. This was a study of approximately 3,000 adolescents and their families. My questions relate to the study and are addressed to the chairman of the Premier's council on the family. The first question is: do the results of the study indicate any relationship between family structure and substance abuse in youth?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Bow Valley.

DR. OBERG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat was entirely correct. There was a recent study called Substance Use among Alberta Adolescents released jointly by the Canadian institute for law and the family and the Premier's council on the family. Its goal was to examine the prevalence and frequency of substance abuse in Alberta youth. It surveyed approximately 3,000 people in the school system in Alberta, and some very interesting facts were obtained. One of these, which is quite startling, is that 50 percent of the people reported use of tobacco, almost 80 percent with alcohol; 20 percent had experienced marijuana and hashish.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we can supplement this with a supplemental. Time is passing quickly.

DR. OBERG: In direct answer to the hon. member's question, it does appear that adolescents who live with both parents were less likely to report substance abuse.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you. What are the results relating to other family structures?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member.

DR. OBERG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another very interesting conclusion from this study was that adolescents who lived in a single parent family or reconstituted family are more likely to abuse substances than kids who lived with their natural parents. [interjections]

2:00

DR. L. TAYLOR: It appears that members opposite aren't interested in the family.

Are there any other factors indicative of substance abuse in Alberta youth?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member.

DR. OBERG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this very extensive study there were numerous factors that were looked at in relating to Alberta's youth and substance abuse. Regardless of what the people on the other side said, it is a very serious problem. Positive family environment, a high degree of parental monitoring, religious affiliation, and parental involvement in activities all were shown in this study to reduce substance abuse among our youth.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

Family Violence

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to file four copies of the Edmonton Women's Shelter spring report.

Cuts to social assistance benefits hurt women and children trying to leave abusive relationships. The Edmonton Women's Shelter reports that women who have experienced psychological abuse can't get a damage deposit from social assistance because this government prioritizes abuse. My question is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. Why do women and children have to be black and blue in order for this minister to believe that they're being abused?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to advise the hon. member – and she knows darn well; I've said it over and over and over again in this Assembly – that damage deposits are available, as they were available before, in abusive situations.

MRS. SOETAERT: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the minister of social services. Would you please consult the Edmonton shelter report, which says that psychologically abused women are not getting a damage deposit? That's the reality.

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, there isn't anyone in Edmonton that I know of that is in that particular situation that would not get assistance. Now, if there is, I ask the member to provide the names to my department, and I am willing to meet with the individuals.

MRS. SOETAERT: I'll gladly do that, Mr. Speaker.

My final supplemental: will the minister consider reinstating benefits for a telephone so that women hiding from abusive partners can at least call 911?

MR. CARDINAL: As I have indicated before, Mr. Speaker, this department will continue assisting people that require assistance in the high-needs area. There are two ways you can put phones in a home, and I've implemented this in the department. One is if a phone is cut off, and then the second step we have is to provide a restricted phone in that particular home. I've advised my department to implement that option wherever it is required.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

DR. WEST: Yes. I think that to add to it, to appreciate the concerns that are voiced over here, I'd like to indicate that there is a capital project going on in the city of Edmonton in a women's shelter. It will also renovate the Gibson Block. It's one of the

capital projects, one of the few in the province, one of the 10 that we did announce that is proceeding right now. I'm very pleased that this is going ahead. That may alleviate some of the problems for which concern is being shown here today.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Wainwright.

Farm Income Program

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. Crop insurance and gross revenue insurance programs are an important management tool for many farmers. I've recently had some calls from constituents regarding GRIP and commodity payouts for the 1992-93 crop years. They are concerned in that their expectations were not met by the payments that they did receive. Can the minister inform this Legislature how his department has been responding to these concerns?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. Member for Wainwright for asking the question. Grade factors on all commodities are set on the basis of interim prices supplied by the National Grains Bureau at the start of the year. The difficulty that some producers are experiencing now is that in the 1992 and 1993 crop years the interim price estimates turned out to be underestimated relative to the grade 2 prices. The spread was more than was originally anticipated by the National Grains Bureau.

One of the components of the GRIP program is that there is an early payment system, and this is critical and important to the agricultural community so that they do have a maintenance of the cash flow. Later on, there are two interim payments that are made through the GRIP program. To accomplish this, the grade factors have to be made on estimates of prices before the final prices are established. This practice has been there since the original crop insurance program was established in the early '70s, and it's been maintained on a similar basis throughout. When the GRIP program came forward, it was eventually moved from the crop insurance program to be incorporated into the GRIP program.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Has any consideration been given to recalculation of the grade factors to address this situation?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you. I recently met with the producers of all the varieties of wheat in the province of Alberta and discussed the issue at some length with them. The difficulty of recalculating the whole process is that we would have to do this retroactively. We'd have to go back to 1992; we'd have to go back to 1993. In the process we'd have to recalculate the premiums. We'd have to recalculate all the commodities that are grown. Now, each commodity would be treated differently in this process. In some cases there would be money sent back. In some cases there would have to be additional funding brought forward. In some cases there would have to be changes in the premiums that were charged originally. So it becomes a very complex process. The most difficult part of all of this is that our partner,

the federal government, has said: no, this is not going to be part of the process.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental?

Bancorp Mortgage Limited

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, the provincial government is the owner of North West Trust. Yesterday the government approved the sale of a North West Trust subsidiary, Bancorp Mortgage, to Bancorp's ex-president for \$1 just one year after North West Trust had paid \$200,000 to acquire it. The first question is to the Provincial Treasurer. Can the Provincial Treasurer explain why it would cost \$1.3 million to wind up Bancorp when they spent just \$200,000 a year ago to acquire it?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, Bancorp was purchased by North West Trust back in 1992. North West Trust was a viable, operating company and continues to be so, but when Premier Klein's government came into office, we made it perfectly clear that the trust company business was not a business that the government and the taxpayers should be investing in. We made it clear that our intentions were to get out of that business. In doing so, the board of directors of North West Trust Company decided that this was not going to be a commercially viable business if North West Trust was not going to continue to exist. So what was done was that the Bancorp assets were sold off, and Bancorp was put aside such that the severance costs associated with winding down the company were some \$1.3 million.

Mr. Speaker, I think it only fair to advise members of the Assembly that the only reason why this member across the way knows that this happened is because this government, under the leadership of this Premier, accepted the recommendations of the Auditor General and ensured that all disposition and purchase, the creation or the sale of subsidiary companies of provincially owned corporations would be approved by Executive Council, by the cabinet, so that it would be public and that we would be accountable for it. The only reason why this is public today is because we have followed those recommendations. We have provided for that kind of authorization and proper disclosure so that all Albertans know the facts.

2:10

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the question, as obviously the Treasurer did not hear it. Will the Provincial Treasurer tell us why it would cost \$1.3 million to wind down a corporation that had cost \$200,000 just a year ago?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, there were some 20 employees associated with Bancorp, and in order to ensure that those employees were adequately and appropriately given severance packages to reflect their service over a period of years, that was the cost of paying those severance costs. I believe that that is a fair settlement. It is a fact that North West Trust was and is part of the government's assets. We believe that there is a future for North West Trust, and that is why we are trying to sell North West Trust to somebody in the private sector who will take it on, use its assets, and deliver its operations in a manner that best meets the standards of the private sector so that those private-sector standards don't have to match up with public-sector standards. The member and I would mutually agree that this government and the taxpayers should not be in the trust company business; it should belong in the hands of investors and private citizens.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How could the Provincial Treasurer have approved this deal when nearly a million dollars of the \$1.3 million was severance packages for the 22 employees, including the ex-president, who now owns the company?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I think it's very fair that when employees work for a company for a number of years, if those 20 or more employees take a severance package adding up to a million dollars, of less than \$50,000 per employee on average, I don't think that is a severance package that is unfair, that is unnecessarily rich but is something that the private-sector board of directors of the corporation felt was a fair and reasonable settlement for those employees who were severed from the company.

Vaccination of Health Care Workers

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, some health care providers have expressed concern to me about not receiving hepatitis B vaccinations when they were working in emergency and surgical areas of hospitals. This is a very contagious, a very hardy virus, and as hepatitis B is contagious, I'd ask the minister: what is the Department of Health policy regarding vaccination of health care workers?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, hepatitis B is a very contagious virus spread through exposure to blood and blood products. National advisory committees both in the U.S. and in Canada have recommended hepatitis B vaccinations for health care workers that could be exposed in that way, and we certainly concur with that recommendation.

MR. TANNAS: That being so, then, Madam Minister, does your department provide funding to specifically support vaccination programs in Alberta?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, prior to 1987 indeed we did provide dedicated funding in that area. Since that time we have not. We consider that to be a responsibility of the employers in the particular institutions and leave that responsibility in their hands.

MR. TANNAS: Again to the minister: what are the legal ramifications, then, faced by hospitals if they do not provide immunization for their employees?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly employers are responsible for their employees, and they would accept that responsibility. I should say that certainly some students in the health field received those vaccinations when they were in their educational years. However, the liability issue, I think, certainly encourages employers to ensure that those employees that could be at risk are vaccinated. One positive thing on this side is that at one time the vaccination, which requires three doses I understand, was at a cost of about \$150, and today it is in the range of \$61. So I think that has been of great assistance to the employers and the employees.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Bonnyville.

Community Facility Enhancement Program

MR. VASSEUR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the government's attempt to balance the budget, this government has chosen to cut

education; they've chosen to cut ECS funding; they're now closing hospitals. While Albertans have all been asked to make sacrifices, this government gives \$60,000 for a golf course in Ardmore, Alberta.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: What?

MR. VASSEUR: Sixty thousand dollars. My question to the minister responsible for lotteries: please explain in a time of restraint such as this, why \$60,000 for a golf course?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. The hon. gentleman from Bonnyville is requesting information with respect to a community facility enhancement program project located in his constituency, the community of Ardmore, which is midway between Bonnyville and Grande Centre. The community facility enhancement program has been in effect now for some five years, and thousands of applications each year are dealt with. Many, many months ago an application was made, and a decision was adjudicated on that. This particular project is a community project in the community of Ardmore. It's no different than thousands of others.

The hon. gentleman may think that it's, I suppose, politically correct on April 14 of 1994 to say that it's a golf course, and somehow you've got to use that and blow it out of proportion. It's a community enhancement project, Mr. Speaker, well promoted and well supported by the people in the community, asked for many, many months ago, approved before. It may have a great political ring today, but it has nothing to do with the cutbacks of anybody else.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. VASSEUR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Why would you spend \$60,000 on a golf course in Ardmore when you've just refused the application for a library in Cold Lake?

MR. KOWALSKI: Again, Mr. Speaker, the phraseology of the question has a great political ring.

One of the things that is extremely important is to be sure that there is balanced growth. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, one of the things we said we would not do is double dip. Now, the library in Cold Lake is part of the new northeastern regional library association, which this government, this minister through the lottery fund approved nearly a half a million dollars worth of support for, for a library organization made up of all the communities of northeastern Alberta with an office designated in the community of Elk Point, which is in the constituency represented by the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul.

Mr. Speaker, all of the communities agreed on where the spot was going to be. The community of Cold Lake may not necessarily have agreed that the location of the library office should be Elk Point, and in fact it was my brother who was the mayor of Cold Lake who basically disagreed with it at one point in time. But the communities all agreed on where it should go. Half a million dollars has been provided, and we're dealing with balanced growth throughout the whole province.

MR. VASSEUR: The minister well knows that that was then and this is now. [interjections] His brother wasn't even happy about that. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order. [interjections] Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, come to order, please. [interjection] Hon. Opposition House Leader, come to order, please.

The hon. Member for Bonnyville to ask the final supplemental.

MR. VASSEUR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's forget about my constituency. Why \$60,000 in any golf course anywhere in Alberta when we're taking away from our kids' education?

2:20

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, there are several hundred million dollars under the Alberta lottery fund now going into education, several hundred million dollars. It's there. It's part of the estimates that are before the Legislative Assembly. In addition to that, we've had an equity distribution out of the lottery fund of some \$30 million. If the hon. member doesn't want to endorse any projects within his constituency, all he has to say is that he doesn't want to do it. But if he wants to know why some people want to do that with respect to community wellness projects, he might just as easily turn to his colleague who is seated to his right and ask her why the community of Fort Saskatchewan has an application before us for support for a golf course there.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Municipal Infrastructure Program

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the benefit of the Member for Edmonton-McClung, my first sentence includes the reference to my constituents who are outraged – outraged – with any suggestion that their hard-earned tax dollars will in any way, directly or indirectly, help line the pockets of a certain businessman who has taken the citizens of this province to the cleaners and then held them out there to dry while ignoring his own dirty laundry. [interjections] Again for the benefit of the Member for Edmonton-McClung, my second sentence includes reference to the federal/provincial/municipal infrastructure program, which was established to create short-term jobs by providing funds for basic infrastructure such as roads and sewers and not to help the rich get richer on the backs of the provincial taxpayers through grants to be used for Northlands Coliseum. [interjections] Again for the benefit of the Member for Edmonton-McClung, my third and last sentence includes a requested response from the Deputy Premier and the minister of economic development to explain to all Albertans the approval process that would permit provincial infrastructure funding to be used for Northlands Coliseum. [interjections]

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether or not your office has a supply of Valium that might be made available in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the process for the national infrastructure program is a very simple process. We have said repeatedly – and the hon. member was in the House when we debated the parameters for the national infrastructure program. This Assembly already approved the expenditure of some \$40 million in the previous fiscal year and \$10 million in this particular fiscal year. We have said that if a municipal government in the province of Alberta has a duly held meeting of their council, passes a resolution, submits a list that they all agree to within their council, a majority agreement of the council, the province of Alberta would in fact endorse their applications.

These are not applications for private individuals, Mr. Speaker. These are applications for community infrastructure enhancement.

In the city of Edmonton, the Coliseum is owned by the city of Edmonton. It is a municipal building the same way that any municipal building in the constituency represented by the hon. member would be eligible if the local municipality endorsed it.

MR. JACQUES: Mr. Speaker, my first supplemental question again to the Deputy Premier and Minister of Economic Development and Tourism: what steps is the minister prepared to take to stop the provincial funding of Northlands Coliseum from the infrastructure program?

MR. KOWALSKI: I'll repeat the process again, Mr. Speaker. If the duly elected, democratically elected council in the city of Edmonton chooses to put up the first one-third of the dollars and if it shows that there's job creation associated with it and it falls into the category of municipal infrastructure improvements, then in essence the province of Alberta will endorse it, and we believe the federal government will endorse it as well. This is not a matter of dollars going circuitously to some private individual for his pocket. We're talking about municipal infrastructure, and as has been pointed out very, very clearly by the Premier on numerous occasions, one aspect of any request, skyboxes, would be deleted, eliminated, not approved immediately.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final supplemental is again to the Deputy Premier and Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. What steps, then, Mr. Minister, are you prepared to take to prevent the owner of the Oilers Hockey Club from becoming richer as a result of provincial infrastructure money being spent on Northlands Coliseum?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Edmonton Oilers are not a partner in any of this. That is all mythology. If an application comes to the government of Alberta, it will come from the city of Edmonton, the municipal council of the city of Edmonton. They will determine what it is they want to do about the upgrading of their building, and it will only be in the context of an arrangement between the owner of the property, the city of Edmonton and the taxpayers of the city of Edmonton, and the province and the federal government if agreement finally comes about to move forward with that. As far as I know, the Edmonton Oilers Hockey Club and any individual associated with it are uninvolved in any of this discussion.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Leduc.

Leduc Treasury Branch Building

MR. KIRKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last nine months I've witnessed this government ravage our health care system, our education system, and our social services system, all on the questionable justification of sound fiscal management. In Leduc the government has a new Alberta Liquor Control Board store with 18 years remaining on \$120,000-a-year lease. My question to the minister of public works: Mr. Minister, why would your department spend approximately a half a million dollars to construct a new Treasury Branch in Leduc when we have an existing building under lease that clearly can accommodate a Treasury Branch?

MR. THURBER: Mr. Speaker, as we go through the downsizing in all departments of government and we look at all of the

buildings including liquor stores, which come under our jurisdiction if they're not sold through the multiple listing service, including other buildings that may belong to the government, we look at other alternate uses. In some cases we do have a long-term lease on buildings, and we have to deal with that when the lease becomes available to be closed out or moved from there. We have started on a very extensive process of auditing all the space that we have to try and make it better fit the downsizing of government.

MR. KIRKLAND: Mr. Speaker, my supplemental was to the Premier. I guess we'll do it another day.

My supplemental, Mr. Speaker, is to the minister of public works. Why is it that your department does not have a process in place to evaluate exactly what projects are to be undertaken and what projects have to be leased? Obviously it was overlooked here.

MR. THURBER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would have to think that the hon. member is unclear of even what's happening, because I was hard pressed to understand what the question meant.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental?

The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

Children's Hospital

(continued)

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Health. My constituents are calling and faxing concerned about the proposed closure to the Children's hospital and its being moved to the Foothills hospital. The Children's hospital was developed specifically for the care of children. The atmosphere at the Children's is caring and nonthreatening to children. Can this be accomplished at an adult facility if it is moved to the Foothills?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would want to clarify that the discussion over the relocation of the Children's hospital is contained in a report, a facilitator's report, that was commissioned by the acute care facilities in Calgary. It is certainly not this government's report or the minister's report, although I am very appreciative of the fact that they have shared it with me. Each group has responded to that report to me, and I have in fact requested that we meet next week to discuss some of the recommendations.

In direct reference to the member's question as to whether services can be delivered, I would point out the very fine pediatric services that are provided in the city of Edmonton, which are not at a single site, which are delivered on a multisite basis and serve all of northern Alberta including the city of Edmonton. I certainly believe that they're doing a fine job of that delivery in this instance.

2:30

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since it is the only children's hospital between Vancouver and Winnipeg serving a wide population base, will we still be able to accomplish this if we move it to another site?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I would prefer not to comment directly on speculation of a relocation because I do want

to discuss that with the acute care givers in Calgary. Again, I would have to remind the hon. member that although that may be the only site-specific children's hospital, the children's pediatric services are delivered for Edmonton and northern Alberta in the city of Edmonton on a multisite basis and, I believe, delivered in a very valuable way. I would think that the people who are responsible for making a recommendation to this minister will weigh all of those factors very carefully before they make a recommendation on that site.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. FORSYTH: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the provincial goal of less beds per population can the minister assure this Assembly that beds will always be available for the children?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Very definitely, Mr. Speaker. The facilities will be available and the beds, but I would remind all hon. members that one of the very positive things in children's health care is the ability for us today to provide treatment to children in their homes, in many cases with their families. We will continue to try to facilitate that as much as possible and ensure that children do not have to be institutionalized unless absolutely necessary.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Beverly.

Social Assistance

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No one disagrees that physically and mentally healthy people need to support themselves. For the past 20 years there's been little encouragement or opportunity for people on assistance to become independent, self-sufficient. Things definitely needed to change in that regard, but what doesn't make any sense is the way the present changes and cuts have been made: with more priority placed on the number of files closed than the number of real jobs gained. My question is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. Mr. Minister, how do you intend to take someone who may have been on assistance for the past 10 years and suddenly make them self-sufficient given today's economy and high unemployment?

MR. CARDINAL: It sure wouldn't be the Liberal way because I would never get done if I followed their policies. As I've indicated to this Assembly before, our priority is to target the 60 percent of the employables and trainables in our caseload. This year alone we've managed to transfer close to a hundred million dollars into the high-needs area, Mr. Speaker. Just one example of that is that at this time we have over 11,000 individuals attending various forms of institutions. The Liberals, of course, would not agree with something like that, because they indicated here on February 17 that we "dumped" these students that are attending these institutions. Therefore, I would hope that we don't ever follow their policies. [interjections]

MS HANSON: I'm not sure the minister understood my question. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. If the sound level could be reduced, perhaps people could hear questions.

MS HANSON: Mr. Minister, since you have told us that you have no way of tracking ex-clients, how are you going to know if taking singles off assistance has helped to expand the income tax base or has simply increased the number of people on the street?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, as you look at the employment and population statistics in Alberta, you can see that our population growth went up in the past year and our unemployment rate dropped. So there is something that is positive. While that happened, we reduced the welfare caseload by over 31,000 cases, which is over 100,000 individuals. I can just give some examples, and I did earlier. We have over 11,000 attending various forms of training programs. We have over 1,500 individuals going to the Alberta community employment program through municipalities and nonprofit organizations. The northern job corps has over 200 individuals working. The employment skills program has over 1,500 individuals working. I can go on and on and on of where we have success stories of individuals working in the private industry also.

MS HANSON: Mr. Minister, could you tell us what attempts you have made to cut back on the department bureaucracy and administration costs as well as trimming the caseloads?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest complaints I've heard from the Liberals in the past, of course: that there was always a work overload for the staff. That is exactly the reason why we haven't. We've reduced the caseload by over 31,000 cases and did not lay off any employees. I still have over 5,000 employees. The reason we have that is so they can concentrate on the caseloads we have over there. The other thing I want to point out: only 5 percent of the 5,000 staff are in the management category, which means the balance are frontline workers dealing with clients.

head: Members' Statements Highway 2 Improvements

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Red Deer-South.

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those of you who travel regularly on Highway 2 between Edmonton and Calgary will be familiar with a small section of highway just south of Red Deer commonly known as Gasoline Alley. Gasoline Alley is the subject of my member's statement today.

The department of transportation tabled this week a plan that was developed in consultation with the business owners, the city of Red Deer, the county of Red Deer, the public, the department of transportation, the minister of transportation, and the local MLAs. This plan represents an extensive and exhaustive consultation process to come to an agreement with all stakeholder groups.

The business owners depend on highway traffic. It is their market, and proper access is paramount to reaching that market. Through the consultation process the department agreed not to relocate the highway and has provided off and on ramps and an interchange at MacKenzie Road to ensure proper access. In each direction there are two opportunities for the traveling public to exit the highway, as requested by the business owners on the commercial strip. The department of transportation mandate is to deliver safe and efficient transportation. The existing highway at Gasoline Alley permits direct access and a median crossover, which are significant traffic safety concerns. These concerns have been addressed and are removed in the new plan.

It should also be noted that every effort has been made to design roadways in the vicinity of Slack Slough, at the south end, to avoid environmental conflicts.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate all of the stakeholders for their efforts and co-operation in arriving at this highway development plan. I would also like to thank the minister for

allowing me to convey to him the concerns of the constituents of Red Deer-South and for responding to their concerns without compromising safety, traffic flow, or business and employment opportunities.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray.

2:40 Law Society of Alberta

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The annual meeting of the Law Society of Alberta is to be held in Edmonton this evening. All members of this Legislative Assembly have been invited to that annual meeting. It is of particular interest to the legal Members of the Legislative Assembly, but today, because it is the annual meeting of the society, I wanted to use my opportunity in this private member's statement to talk about the society and the legal profession that it represents.

Mr. Speaker, in societies where you have strong freedoms and a strong upswell of democratic ideas and an independence of the courts and an opportunity for people to be able to speak freely and for people to be able to live in an equitable and equal way with their fellow man, it is no coincidence that in those societies and in those civilizations is also found a strong and courageous and independent legal profession.

It has become occasionally appropriate to make jokes about lawyers and to kibitz about the legal profession, but as one member of this legal profession I want to go on record in this Legislative Assembly for saying to all of the members that I have never once bowed my head in shame about being a member of this particular profession. The legal profession in its self-governance is a model that many other governing organizations could adopt with great success. The legal profession assists the public of the province of Alberta, and every time an individual freedom is won in the province of Alberta, every time right prevails over wrong, you do not have to look very far, Mr. Speaker, to find behind that a proud and courageous lawyer who is prepared to stand up and act for and represent the oppressed minority and the underdog. To the extent that from time to time I have occasion to represent the underdog, I am proud and honoured to be able to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Medicine Hat.

Family Physician of the Year

MR. RENNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to offer my congratulations to a Medicine Hat doctor, Philip Winkelaar, who today is receiving national recognition for his work. The College of Family Physicians of Canada has chosen Dr. Winkelaar to receive the 1994 family physician of the year award. They will present the award today at the college's annual scientific assembly at the Banff Springs Hotel.

Dr. Winkelaar has practised medicine in Medicine Hat for the past 25 years. For 22 of those years he has been with the Medical Arts Centre in Medicine Hat. As well, he is the chief of geriatrics at the Medicine Hat regional hospital. He was picked from 12,000 members of the College of Family Physicians for this distinction. His extensive involvement in his profession and in his community are no doubt why he was selected for this award. Professionally he has been involved in many organizations such as the Alberta Medical Association, the medical alumni association at the University of Alberta, and the Victorian Order of Nurses, where he is a past president.

His community involvement includes work with the Medicine Hat Symphonic Society and St. John's Presbyterian church.

Furthermore, his commitment to his family is evident in the success that the family members enjoy in the community.

Dr. Winkelaar's patients and colleagues speak of him in glowing terms. Dr. Sandy MacKay, chief of medical staff at the Medicine Hat regional hospital, is quoted in the *Medicine Hat News* on February 8, 1994, as saying that he is a genuine individual who was constantly trying to look after patients in the best possible way. Larry Samcoe, administrator at the Medical Arts Centre, commends Dr. Winkelaar as being always willing to assume duties above and beyond the requirement of his job in his profession and in the community. Diane Fregin, a longstanding patient of his, said that nothing is too small for him to listen to; he really listens and he cares.

So on behalf of the people of Medicine Hat and the rest of Alberta I would like to congratulate Dr. Winkelaar for his achievements. The award recognizes his outstanding contribution to his community through his caring approach to medicine. It is an honour to be able to acknowledge his achievements in the House today.

Thank you.

head: Projected Government Business

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-North West.

MR. BRUSEKER: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Under Standing Order 7(5) I'd like to ask the Deputy Government House Leader what the projected order of business is for next week.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to advise of the projected government business for next week beginning Monday, April 18. In the afternoon we would be moving to second reading of Bills in the Order Paper - 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 - moving then in the evening to Committee of Supply, the Department of Transportation and Utilities; moving from there on to Government Bills and Orders for second reading as per the Order Paper; and if we were successful on Monday, moving to Committee of the Whole. On Tuesday, April 19, in the afternoon, Committee of the Whole as per the Order Paper; in the evening, Committee of Supply, the Alberta heritage savings trust fund capital projects division; and then presuming some progress there, moving on to Government Bills and Orders for second reading and/or Committee of the Whole. On Wednesday, in the evening, we would be moving to Committee of Supply again, Alberta heritage savings trust fund capital projects division; and on Thursday, in the afternoon, once again Committee of Supply, Alberta heritage savings trust fund capital projects division.

Point of Order Parliamentary Language

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader has a point of order he wishes to raise.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed I do. This relates to some comments that were made during question period by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre. I would refer to Standing Order 23(j), using abusive or insulting language; *Beauchesne* 485, specifically 489 on page 145. There was a reference made in relation to the Premier. If the hon. member will look at the bottom of page 145 and refer to phrases that have been ruled unparliamentary, unquestionably the hon. member will do the honourable thing and retract the comments that he made in relation to the Premier. Just to remind him, it was a question on education, and the hon. member opposite made a reference to the

Premier not having the guts to do something or other: totally inappropriate language for this House. The hon. member I appreciate is a new member of this House, but he has had a relationship with the parliamentary process for quite some time, and I'm sure that given the opportunity to review his comments and review both Standing Orders and *Beauchesne*, he will rise in his place and do the honourable thing and withdraw his comments.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

MR. HENRY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Looking at *Beauchesne* 486 and 489, firstly I'd like to refer you to 486(1), about the second sentence. First, it speaks about:

It is impossible to lay down any specific rules in regard to injurious reflections uttered in debate against particular Members.

Further down it says, "Sometimes upon the degree of provocation, which the Member speaking had received from the person alluded to."

If you'll remember the context, the question was specifically asking the Premier to refer Bill 19 to the Court of Appeal for the constitutional questions that have been raised in this House and outside of this House. Given that that question was raised two weeks ago and the Premier said that he would think about it and he would talk to the hon. Attorney General and the Minister of Education – and it certainly is my understanding that in the past two weeks and specifically last weekend they had some opportunities to spend some time together, that it would have been discussed. I asked a similar question on Monday of this week, asking the Premier if he would consider the matter. He acted as if it was a totally new question, had never been asked, and said that he would think about it and he hadn't talked to the Attorney General. So you can appreciate my frustration two weeks later when we still don't have the Premier having an opportunity to talk to the Minister of Education or the Attorney General.

Speaking specifically to 489 and the reference on page 145, I did, and I acknowledge that, ask the Premier if he had the guts to refer the matter to the Court of Appeal. I recognize that under 489 "has not got the guts" is listed as one phrase that has in the past been ruled unparliamentary. I also refer you to page 145, the words "dictatorial attitude"; on page 146, the words "hypocritical" "irresponsible Members," "mislead," "misleading the public," "obstruct the operation of government," "obstructionist;" page 147, "reneged promises," "silly reason," "trained seal": all words that have been ruled unparliamentary in the past and have been used in this current sitting of the Legislature. So I don't think this list is definitive as such. Frankly, I don't see it here, but I remember on Monday evening of this week I was referred to by two members on the front bench as "communist" and "socialist," and those words were allowed.

However, Mr. Speaker, I do acknowledge that I did ask the Premier if he had the guts. If asking the Premier if he had the guts to refer the matter to the Court of Appeal is offensive or if the word "guts" is offensive to the Premier or to any member of this Assembly, then I would need to find another word, because I certainly wouldn't want to offend members by using the word "guts" and by suggesting whether somebody had the guts.

MS CALAHASEN: Well, intestinal fortitude.

MR. HENRY: As the Member for Lesser Slave Lake has suggested, I would certainly withdraw the word "guts" and substitute the words "intestinal fortitude."

Thank you.

2:50

MR. SPEAKER: Well, just for all members' information, that word has been ruled unparliamentary in this Chamber, irrespective of what *Beauchesne* says, on November 1, 1983; May 31, 1990; June 1, 1990; and June 28, 1990. Apparently, people had gotten the message in 1990 because we hadn't heard this again until today. It is clearly unparliamentary in this Assembly and should not be used. The Chair did not intervene during the question period but was going to raise this matter if the hon. Deputy Government House Leader had not raised it, because it is inappropriate.

Speaker's Ruling Decorum

MR. SPEAKER: While the Chair is on its feet, the Chair would like to observe that most hon. members did not bring a great deal of glory upon themselves in this Assembly today. Hon. members, as members of the Assembly we should bear in mind the public perception of elected persons in our country and in our province. As elected representatives all members ought to conduct themselves in a manner befitting a Member of Parliament. Failure to conduct ourselves accordingly is a great disservice to this Assembly and to the people who elected us to come here.

Thank you.

head: **Orders of the Day**

head: **Committee of Supply**

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll call the Committee of Supply to order. I'll call upon the hon. Minister of Environmental Protection to make any comments at this additional time before the House.

head: **Main Estimates 1994-95**

Environmental Protection

MR. EVANS: Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman. It's indeed a tremendous pleasure to be here for the third time this spring with the estimates of the Department of Environmental Protection. I certainly appreciate colleagues across the floor recognizing the importance of this portfolio and giving me an opportunity to rise once again to answer questions from the previous two appearances before the Committee of Supply and certainly any other questions that may come up as well today.

Now, there were some questions I didn't have a chance to answer last time, and I'll take this first 20 minutes, if I may, to handle as many of those as I can. I'll move first to the Member for Sherwood Park. One question: is the Minister of Environmental Protection prepared to discuss with the Minister of Energy the subject of surface reclamation funding? Indeed, Mr. Chairman, that is an important issue that we are working on with the Department of Energy and in fact with my colleague to my right from the far north, the hon. Member from Grande Prairie-Smoky, who is our Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. These are important issues, and we are trying as a government to take a one-window approach to dealing with all of the issues that confront us as members of government. We have a memorandum of understanding in the development stages between Environmental Protection and the Energy Resources Conservation Board on abandonment and reclamation operations of orphaned well sites, and of course members are aware as well of Bill 5, which has been debated in this House and in fact was up last evening for

committee study, to deal with abandonment of well sites left by defunct operators.

Moving on then to the next question by Sherwood Park. That is with respect to our environmental protection and enhancement fund, trying to give a breakdown of the revenue to be sourced from royalties or economic rent and the user-pay sources on page 9 of the business plan. In terms of royalties or economic rent, I'm just going to give some categories here. Mineral surface lease revenues and stumpage fees: we're hoping that stumpage fees will be around the \$20 million mark and about \$900,000 to a million on mineral surface lease revenues. In terms of user pay, we certainly have ongoing discussions with stakeholders, as I promised we would have, regarding fee levels. At this point I can only give an initial breakdown, but in terms of the Alberta Environmental Centre and some of the costs that we may recover through our diagnostic and analytical services, that may be as high as \$750,000. I have spoken before about seedlings and seed and reforestation. I'll be getting to that in more detail in a further answer, but we hope to recover about \$5 million from that source. Water licence application and annual fees, in the neighbourhood of \$100,000. NRCB charges, which represent partial recovery for the hearing costs themselves, about \$220,000.

Water consumption use annual fees and interim licence fees. Of course, as has been asked here in the past and as I've mentioned, this is something not in this coming budget year but in '95, if it does come in. I just thought I'd indicate to hon. members that we're looking at a grand total there of about \$2.8 million, and then regulatory licence and approval fees of about one and a half million dollars.

Moving on then to another question from Sherwood Park: why has the vote for Action on Waste moved from Economic Development and Tourism to Environmental Protection? I was actually surprised at that question because I thought the hon. member opposite was aware that the Action on Waste program is a joint program of the departments of Economic Development and Tourism and Environmental Protection. We went into a joint venture between the two departments in 1991, and accordingly the vote's not moved anywhere. The funds that were being provided up to this year by Economic Development and Tourism, 50 percent under the industry and market development program, will not be provided. That's been discontinued as of the end of the last fiscal period, but we are going to continue in Environmental Protection with covering the costs associated with waste minimization and the recycling projects that are carried out under this program. Our portion was consolidated under a number of other programs to make one division, and that's called the Action on Waste division. It's in keeping with our desire in the department to streamline our operations.

Another question from Sherwood Park was: why is Action on Waste managing contaminated sites and decommissioning initiatives when this function is already being done under vote 2.4, wastes and chemicals? Well, I assure you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, that there is no duplication in either the functions or activities or the services between the HELP program, help end landfill pollution, and the wastes and chemicals program or other programs within our environmental regulatory services. But there is certainly co-ordination between the separate programs.

3:00

Action on Waste actually administers the HELP program, and that's responsible for the remediation and decommissioning of orphan contaminated sites such as the Canada Creosoting site in the city of Calgary. The conservation and reclamation program

itself is a regulatory program. It delivers conservation and reclamation provisions of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, which does include both a development and a reclamation review. Activities that are included under the processes of approvals – dealing with holding inquiries, issuing reclamation certificates, et cetera – when operators don't live up to the requirements of their approvals, are reviewed by our department to ensure that reclamation takes place.

I'll move on to another question from Sherwood Park, and that was: isn't the same function being performed in vote 3.4, which is data collection and inventory, as in vote 2.4, which is wastes and chemicals, concerning the investigation of the effects of development on groundwater resources? Actually, in vote 3.4 the principal responsibility is to identify, protect, enhance, and conserve groundwater as a resource, and that's from a quantity perspective, whereas in vote 2.4 the principal responsibility is to ensure that mankind's activities have a minimum impact on groundwater quality – not quantity but quality – and to ensure that where necessary there are appropriate remedial actions taken.

Another question from Sherwood Park: isn't the same function being performed in vote 3.3, which is water resources planning and co-ordination, as in vote 11, which is Water Resources Commission, with respect to the development of new policies and programs for water management? Well, the water resources planning and co-ordination activities within the department are clearly a technical and a water management perspective that we take regarding policy development and evaluation, whereas the Water Resources Commission itself is a partner with the department. It provides quite an effective forum for an ongoing review and, I daresay, Mr. Chairman, a balanced and competent review of a number of complex policy issues related to water in this province. That forum brings together the political, public, and interdepartmental reviews in what I believe has been shown to be a timely, effective, efficient, and really constructive manner.

On to the next questions. How are the members of Action on Waste appointed? Whom do they report to? How are they accountable for the dollars that they spend and the programs that are initiated under Action on Waste? Well, Action on Waste staff are not appointed, Mr. Chairman. They are employees of the government of Alberta. The division reports directly to my assistant deputy minister of water resources. The budget and the program initiatives of the Action on Waste program are subject to our department's executive committee and certainly to my review and direction, ultimately, because I am ultimately responsible for that in this House and otherwise.

Another question from Sherwood Park, and indeed he was very busy with questions the last time we had an opportunity to be here before the Committee of Supply. Will there be business plans coming forward for stand-alone organizations within the department such as the Environment Council and the Water Resources Commission? If the hon. member will take a look at page 3 in our business plan, it's quite clear that these organizations have been included in our overall business plan. We don't intend to be creating individual business plans. The funding all comes from the department. Again it comes through our executive committee process. We monitor quite closely each and every one of those stand-alone organizations. We will not be doing stand-alone business plans.

One other question that was asked: how can we justify \$61,000 from the budget for running the standing policy committee on natural resources and sustainable development when that committee – and clearly this is true – covers a broad spectrum and it's not an all-party committee? Well, for one thing, just as I find

every time I go around the province, regardless of what organization I meet with and regardless of how many other ministers of the Crown are there, because this is such a pervasive department and all-encompassing, dealing with air, land, and water, the number of questions that come my way is just incredible, that certainly applies as well to the agendas that we have on the natural resources and sustainable development standing policy committee. So what we have done in terms of trying to be practical about this and be efficient with the use of money is to have my department as the department that funds the activities under natural resources and sustainable development. I would go on to say that even the other departments that are before that committee – departments like Labour, Economic Development and Tourism, and Energy – all have causal connections with the Department of Environmental Protection. So I think it is an efficient and effective use of departmental funds to have that kind of a public policy opportunity and input, and I believe that it's working very effectively and efficiently.

To move on then to another question from Sherwood Park: how in fact is the shared stewardship of Crown lands funded between the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and the Department of Environmental Protection? Who is handling this and who is paying for it? Well, again – and I know the hon. member opposite is aware of this – day-to-day responsibility for the management of public lands that are under any kind of agricultural disposition in the white, or the settled, area of the province, under our shared stewardship agreement are the ongoing responsibility of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. In fact, they've had a large and significant part to play in these kinds of day-to-day reviews and decision-making in the past, and I think it's consistent with the one-window approach. However, there's no question that the ultimate responsibility and authority for public lands remains with the Department of Environmental Protection. Any policy changes, any sale, et cetera, all remain the responsibility of the Department of Environmental Protection. Now, just to get back, so I don't miss this point: the day-to-day operations are funded specifically through the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. Our department's role and responsibility is an overseeing responsibility.

Two other questions from Sherwood Park: one – and I think he was referring to lands and forests division – the description of program supports is two lines in the estimates, so it doesn't really give us any clear indication of where we're spending almost \$17 million on program support. I would ask the member to take a look at page 33 of the supplementary estimates because on that page there is a detailed breakdown of program support budget and the activities under that program support budget. Almost a quarter of the funds in this program are used to provide staff in our 10 forest regions, whether that goes to infrastructure, tools, materials, training necessary for them to carry out their activities, et cetera.

Moving on then to the last question from Sherwood Park. We talked a lot about the privatization of various government assets and services, and it seems that Pine Ridge nursery is one that deserves to be looked at. I notice again that we're spending quite a bit of money on upgrading. Well, Pine Ridge is being operated as a public facility, and it will be operating on a full-cost recovery basis by '96-97. The upgrading of Pine Ridge, which was to give it adequate capacity to grow seedlings, was completed in 1993-94, and there's no additional capital expenditure anticipated for '94-95.

Moving on then to some specific questions that were asked by Edmonton-Whitemud dealing with automated information systems, forest resource data acquisition. I see my time is starting to wane here, and I undertake to provide that information in writing to the hon. member because it is detailed, and I think that would be an

effective use of time. He also asked about the sum of \$5,344,000, which is slightly down from the 1993-94 estimates dealing with reforestation. The question: forestry, particularly in reforestation, you can't have your forest investments in any way tied to your budget cycle. Reforestation levies, Mr. Chairman, have kept pace with the increased level of forest investments in this province. Changes in our legislation have seen the increase in dues up to \$6 per cubic metre as a base rate and then a percentage of profit for the industry that goes anywhere from 15 percent up to 50 percent depending on the market price for sawlogs in this province and elsewhere on the national and international markets. What we want to do with those funds is put them into a revolving fund, and that's one of the ways that we're going to take care of some of the emergencies that we have in this province that could affect our natural resources.

3:10

I would remind the hon. member opposite that in years past we've never had a forestry budget that was anywhere close to adequate to deal with forest fires in this province. The average in the last five years has been approximately \$44 million, and if you look back to the late '80s and the early part of the '90s, the budget amount was something in the neighbourhood of \$10 million. It was a well-understood practice that any difference would be made up through special warrants. Well, of course, the Provincial Treasurer, and quite rightly so, has now asked us to eliminate special warrants altogether. We are into net budgeting, and we have to take into account all of the costs that are attributed to the department. So this is one way that we are going to be able to deal with the reality of the costs that are attributed to forest fire protection in this province. Clearly, with the forest industry in Alberta being the fourth largest economic generator in this province, it's extremely important that we have first-attack capability. I think our first-attack capability is second to none in Canada, and I want to make sure that we retain that capacity not only for forest companies and not only for those involved in the forest industry but for those who recreate in the forest and those who enjoy the natural, out-of-door experiences that we have all over this province.

Another question from the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud was that the Natural Resources Conservation Board would be an ideal mechanism, in his opinion, to review and to ensure that the best project is chosen to access the timber inventory in the Grande Prairie area. Well, as the members are aware, we have the Grande Prairie timber development area review and opportunity that's just been announced by the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. I've said in this House in answer to a question from West Yellowhead, I believe, that since the projects up in the north will probably be oriented strandboard projects – and the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake is particularly keen on these announcements in High Prairie because that will clearly be an oriented strandboard plant – we don't know that that's going to happen in Grande Prairie, but it may well happen.

We have a process once a proponent is decided: it's legislated through our environmental impact assessment process to review the application to decide whether an environmental impact assessment process is required, and if we are going through a full environmental impact assessment, then there would be a review by the Natural Resources Conservation Board. However, again, if this turns out to be an oriented strandboard plant, I don't think that's going to be necessary, but I'm not making any judgment on that. That will be a decision that will be made by our standards and approvals branch, and it will be made on the evidence before us.

I see my time is up, the first 20 minutes. I hope I'll have another opportunity sometime later on this afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Calgary-North West.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have just a couple of questions with respect to environment for the hon. minister. In the constituency of Calgary-North West an environmental issue is growing a little bit, and that environmental issue is gravel. Now, gravel may not seem like a terribly important environmental issue. I saw the hon. minister of transportation perk up because gravel is something he tends to deal with a lot. It does in fact relate to the minister of transportation as well in part.

In the constituency of Calgary-North West there are currently four operating gravel pits. They're operated by the city of Calgary, which has probably the largest gravel pit in the area, Standard General, Lafarge, and Cahoon Sand & Gravel Pit. Now, the issue with respect to these is that the department of the environment issues excavation permits and mining permits and so on for this kind of extraction to occur. The question that I have is: what kind of liaison occurs between the department of the environment, for example, and the department of transportation or the department of highways with respect to the traffic that goes back and forth?

One of the concerns that I have heard in my constituency is from a number of the communities that are concerned about the gravel trucks that are going back and forth. Obviously the different contractors all have the permits from the department of the environment, so they're not operating illegally. That's not my concern here. My concern is the number of trucks that are going. Is there any kind of liaison that occurs to address the issues of concern? These trucks are heavily laden in terms of, first of all, the weight of the load, and then we've got these tandem trucks that are going back and forth, and there's a lot of this traffic that is going through the constituency.

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

In addition to that, just right across the road, actually in the constituency of Olds-Didsbury – it's quite literally a stone's throw away; no pun intended there – is an application for potentially two more sites to be given consideration. I'm wondering: are those going to be approved for operation in the near future or in the distant future? Of course, in that particular corner of Calgary-North West there are a lot of glacial, moraine, deposits that were left at the last ice age, which is in the city of Calgary one of the best deposits for gravel. Now, I spoke with one individual from Lafarge. They have bought a section of land, and they anticipate a 40-year supply of gravel in that area. Now, of course I'd like to also hear the minister talk a little bit about what rules there are in place with respect to reclamation of the site, because the activity that will be going on here will result in, I think it was, if I recall correctly, 40 million tonnes of gravel to be extracted from this area, which of course is going to have a massive impact on the topography of the site. It's not just the one, but in fact there are four, as I said, right in the constituency of Calgary-North West, two more proposed gravel pits just across the road from the constituency of Calgary-North West.

One of the advantages, of course, that the city of Calgary has is that they're extracting the gravel and they're replacing it with in fact garbage from the Spy Hill dump. I'm wondering also in that respect what monitoring, I guess, the department of the environment has with respect to the impact on surface and also subsurface water. The concern, I guess, that I've heard from a number of people is that when you start changing in massive form – as one can envision when you drive around these sites – the lay of the land, the way the water currently runs off and will run off

in the future once all of this surface is disturbed and moved around, potentially you could impact significantly on the flow of water, as I said, both surface and subsurface. I know there have been a number of cases in the past, certainly again in the constituency of Calgary-North West where we've had lately it seems like annual one-in-a-hundred-year rainstorms, and we've had serious flooding in certain parts of the constituency. So I'm concerned about what's going to be happening there with respect to these particular areas.

I wonder also if the minister just might address the terms of these permits. My understanding is that the permits are issued not for the entire pit, for the life of how long one could perhaps successfully and economically extract the gravel, but rather in short time chunks, being three- and five-year time chunks. I'm wondering: in order to get a renewal on a permit to extract gravel from the department of the environment, what criteria does the department look at to ensure that the processes that have been followed or are being followed are in fact appropriate?

The issue, as I said, of transportation is probably the greatest issue of concern. I'll leave that with the minister to consider how it is that those issues will be addressed, because traffic and truck traffic and loads on those trucks is probably the biggest issue in the constituency.

3:20

The final point, again with respect to the actual physical operations themselves of the gravel pits. I've talked about topography, but the issue that I've heard – and it's particularly timely now because three of the four that are operating are in fact also operating asphalt plants. Of course we're coming into the summer season when those asphalt plants are going to kick into high gear, and the concern that I've heard from a number of individuals is a concern expressing two very common concerns or complaints. That is the dust that is associated when these gravel pits are operated, and of course we tend to get some breezes occurring there. So I'd like to know what kind of monitoring goes on there, and also with respect to the noise associated with the operation of these pits.

It's kind of like the never-ending airport question. Pick an airport wherever you are, and of course there's noise associated with airports, then people start building their houses closer and closer to the airport. The same thing is going to happen in the constituency of Calgary-North West. You've got housing that is growing, getting closer and closer and closer, and I'm wondering how we're going to monitor and prevent the kind of concerns that have happened with airports, that have happened in the former Calgary-North West when it used to include Varsity Acres. There was another gravel pit and cement operation just below the hill in Varsity Acres, and of course the city came around that. Now the residents are saying, "Gee, now we've got to put up with this noise and dust and so on." I'm wondering how it is we're going to deal with that, not next year but five years, 10 years down the road, because I think those are the concerns certainly of the residents.

So with those few comments, Mr. Chairman, I'll take my seat and leave those questions with the minister. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to the Minister of Environmental Protection for taking some time this afternoon to answer questions that had been raised in our second session of estimates for Environmental Protection. I appreciate

the answers. Certainly the purpose and reason for us being in Committee of Supply is to have an opportunity to go through the various departments, go through the budgets of the various departments, select some questions, and obtain some information on why dollars are being spent the way they are. I know that of course philosophically we may not necessarily agree with the way dollars are being spent, but certainly the questions have to be asked initially so that we can understand how the government is developing policy and budget policy to see where in fact the money is being spent.

One of the comments that the minister did make about separate business plans is that in fact this department, with respect to stand-alones, won't be developing business plans. I think that's a bit unfortunate, because I think I also have heard the minister previously say that this was the first time for the business plan process, and it's a process that's going to have to be improved as we go along. Certainly I think all members on both sides of the House appreciate that there will be long hours taken to look at improving and streamlining the process of developing the business plans.

I think that perhaps one way to improve the business plan process is to look at how various parts of departments, to look at how stand-alone organizations, councils, commissions will operate within a department. I think it would be a positive step, it would be a step forward if there were long-term business plans, long-term goals and objectives looked at by those departments and condensed and put into written form as business plans for those. We could look at that in terms of sunset clauses. We could look at that in terms of whether or not those commissions or councils or stand-alone entities are in fact being effective, require change, require modification. That would certainly be the way to do that, where it would be both quantified and qualified as to whether or not Albertans are getting good value for their tax dollars being spent in whatever area.

Mr. Chairman, what I'd like to do in my time this afternoon is just very quickly go through some votes and just some very quick questions to the minister on some various issues and then move to some other votes where I'd like to spend a little bit more time, particularly vote 8 and vote 10. We'll start, Mr. Chairman, again, as I say, with some very quick questions for the minister on some various votes.

Some answers did come forward today from the minister on the Action on Waste program. Mr. Chairman, within that vote at 3.5 we have the \$1.7 million dedicated revenue. Just quickly to the minister: can he advise the House how that dedicated revenue does come . . .

MR. EVANS: I can get you that on Monday.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Okay.

. . . and in fact some indication as to whether or not in the budgeting process of the government there will be more funds coming into that particular program, that particular vote, through the dedicated revenue process? I hear the minister saying that he does have the answer for that, and I appreciate that.

We go to vote 5.4. We have heard some indication that in the deregulation, in the downsizing, streamlining, some off-loading of costs, the department is, I believe, considering the possibility of an access fee on Crown lands. I'm wondering – again, I'm looking at the dedicated revenue column – whether or not in the future we can expect to see access fees on Crown lands as one of the user fees or rental fees that the minister has been talking about in some other areas of environmental protection, whether or not that would form again some basis or some revenue for the

environmental protection and enhancement fund that the minister has introduced into his budget and into his business plan for a significant amount this particular year.

There were again some answers provided by the minister today with respect to vote 5.5, which is the wildfire operations, and having sufficient funds in the budget for that purpose in an attempt to avoid having to resort to the special warrant process. We have in this vote, Mr. Chairman, \$36.8 million, and of course we also have the funds available in the environmental protection and enhancement fund, which the minister has stated on a number of occasions will be dollars available for, presumably, wildfire operations for fighting forest fires in the province. So we're now looking at potentially two sources of revenue for the purposes of preserving the forests of Alberta and, as the minister says, for full assault on any forest fires that become known.

I guess the question then here, Mr. Chairman, is: if we've got two different sources of revenue for this purpose – we have one that comes within the general revenue fund, and we have one that comes through the environmental protection and enhancement fund – how do we do this? Where do the dollars come from first? Do we exhaust general revenue first? Do we then go into the environmental protection and enhancement fund?

One of the concerns with the environmental protection and enhancement fund is that as the legislation stands right now – and the minister has heard me say this previously – the Provincial Treasurer has the opportunity to come and retrieve those dollars from the environmental protection and enhancement fund and put them into general revenue for some other purpose or for some other reason if in fact the dollars that are in the environmental protection and enhancement fund are not required for the purposes intended. Now, I deviate slightly, but generally in respect to vote 5.5, as the legislation stands right now, it doesn't appear that specifically wildfire operation is included there. There are some specific provisions in section 120 of the Act in terms of the legislative authority of the minister as to how those funds can be allocated at this point in time. Now, I believe minister has made some general reference to amendments that may come forward with respect to that. I think it's fair to say that it's unclear right now as to how those dollars can be spent that will come into the environmental protection and enhancement fund, and I know the minister will clarify this issue cleanly, succinctly – clear wording. So I'd leave that with him.

3:30

I'd like to move to vote 6.2. I guess that would be where it is. The vote at 6.2, Mr. Chairman, has been reduced slightly, but this raises an issue perhaps in the minds of many Albertans. We've heard a great deal of talk about – and I know the minister is perhaps not as comfortable with the wording as I am – the privatization of our provincial parks. In saying that, we understand that it refers to the opportunity for private contractors to provide services to those provincial parks, whether that's in terms of confectionary, whether that's in terms of road maintenance, gravel, snow hauling, wood, whatever service is being provided to the provincial park. It at least raises the question as to whether or not that process of providing opportunities to Albertans to participate in the private contract servicing at provincial parks would have had an impact on this particular vote. I guess, generally put, does this reflect the privatization of provincial parks in Alberta, or has that not been reflected as yet and it's something we wouldn't see until some time later on?

I might just comment, as I'm moving through – the minister did make reference just moments ago about the OSB plant that has been announced for the High Prairie area. The minister and

members will recall that the question was raised in question period about that particular OSB plant and in fact, as the minister has just referred to today, about the environmental impact assessment process that would be associated with that. I believe the minister did reply in question period that the OSB plant proposed for High Prairie is now going through the screening process to determine whether environmental impact assessment will in fact occur. It sounded like today he may have been saying that we don't have to do that because it's an OSB plant, but I know for certain that that's what the minister had said, and I just wanted to clarify that for the record today.

Mr. Chairman, generally on program 5 and not necessarily relating to the OSB plant, because of course that's a project that deals with deciduous wood in northern and northwestern Alberta. The minister has figures which indicate that only 7 percent of the coniferous forests of Alberta are now unallocated. We have a buffer of about 7 percent of coniferous wood that is not allocated specifically for any forestry management agreement, although there are agreements in place that still allow for some reserve from opportunity to even impact or to access that 7 percent unallocated coniferous wood.

There is also information available that suggests that some of the reforested areas are not growing back at the rate that was initially expected and anticipated. There is a concern not only amongst members here on this side of the House, Mr. Minister, but certainly members on the government side of the House, foresters in northern Alberta, the environmental groups that care deeply about our forests and the protection of our environment that we have gone to the point of overallocating or not having had a proper handle on the forest reserves, the forest inventories that we have in northern Alberta and that we have to be much more vigilant than we are now in terms of allocating those timbers to forestry projects. The minister may be aware that a comparison had been made by a northern Alberta forester that we don't want our industry in northern Alberta to become like the cod fishermen in Newfoundland, where because of poor resource management we find that we don't have any trees left that we can use to keep our small sawmill operations going. I know the minister is certainly going to make sure that doesn't happen, but the concern has been expressed, and I think it's worth while for the minister to comment on that. We have to be very, very careful that we don't overallocate, and we do have data to suggest that we only have 7 percent of the coniferous wood unallocated.

I'm going to move, Mr. Chairman, to vote 8 and vote 10. Vote 8 specifically refers to the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, which is the facility at Swan Hills, Alberta, and tie into that vote 10, which is the Natural Resources Conservation Board. Mr. Chairman, I think the minister and certainly members will understand the reason that I deal with these is because the NRCB is now commencing a process where it will be hearing submissions from Albertans on the importation of hazardous waste from outside the boundaries of Alberta into the Swan Hills facility.

The unfortunate thing about this NRCB hearing, Mr. Chairman, is that Chem-Security (Alberta) Ltd., which is the operator of that facility, has in fact been forced to become a proponent to the NRCB requesting that it be allowed to receive at its facility hazardous waste from outside the province. I think the minister and members will recall that that was not the original intent of this process. The original intent of this process was to have been a complete and comprehensive review of the importation of hazardous waste into this province, not simply hazardous waste that is destined for and to be received at the Swan Hills facility.

We have a similar situation that occurs right now in the Bovar biomedical waste facility in Beiseker. They are asking the

government to remove the Alberta-only policy, the Alberta-only provision of its contract, and allow it to import biomedical hazardous waste from outside the province. It's not being dealt with in this NRCB hearing, and it ought to have been.

Mr. Chairman, the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation has gone through its expansion on the assumption, on the premise, and on the basis that it would not require out-of-province hazardous waste and in fact would be able to become self-sufficient with the backlog of hazardous waste in the province and with the hazardous waste from the oil patch that was to have been destined for the Swan Hills facility. Since the NRCB approved that expansion to the 40,000 tonne a year facility, which presently exists and has gone through its commissioning process, we now find and found after the decision that oil field hazardous waste has been excluded and need not be sent to the Swan Hills facility. So we now have lost that full revenue stream into Chem-Security, into the Swan Hills facility from disposal of that hazardous waste. So we lose that level, that source of revenue, that source of income. This corporation is heavily, heavily, heavily subsidized by the government. We know that the officers and the directors of that company are very optimistic that very soon they will be weaned off the government purse. But it's suspect, Mr. Minister, and we need some comment from you that this corporation, this facility will ever become self-sufficient in this province and won't be riding on the back of government and taking taxpayers' dollars for many, many, many years to come.

Now, that does not in any way derogate from the first-class facility that this is, but in terms of a business decision, in terms of how and why this facility gets to where it is, there are some uncertain business decisions that were made to embark on a process and on a project that can't make a buck. I look forward to the minister's comments on that.

3:40

With respect to the NRCB hearing, we now have Chem-Security being the party that has to now be the proponent and has now been forced into all of the obligations that a proponent of an NRCB hearing has to abide by. The original process has taken place. We have had preapplication, prehearing submissions by the proponent and by intervenor groups, and we've had a decision from the NRCB that in fact no funding for technical experts will be made available to the intervenors and that funding will only be made available through the board through its counsel to in fact hire the technical experts. Mr. Minister, I think that's wrong. I think that while the board may have the mandate and the authority to do so, the optics of this are that the board should not participate directly in that it will fund to itself the technical experts for this hearing and make no funding available to the intervenors with respect to the technical aspects of this.

The board is making funds available to intervenors for legal assistance. There are some funds that have been set aside for that purpose, but there is certainly in the interoffice memorandum with respect to this application 9301 a statement that concerns me, where it says, and I quote, that the board requests that you as board solicitor arrange for such legal assistance to be available to those parties seeking it, including attendance at the hearing of a lawyer as a common resource to those parties who might seek such services. My concern with that statement, Mr. Minister and Mr. Chairman, is that I hope that the board solicitor is not involving itself directly in arranging for counsel and that it's simply making funds available to those intervenors so that they can arrange for counsel. It may have just been a difficulty with the wording, but we want to make sure that intervenors have the autonomy to come to this NRCB hearing and make it worth while.

We need to have a full hearing on this particular aspect, and I don't want to see us going through this process and the cost and the expense of the process if it just becomes one sided and the decision becomes obviously apparent.

With those comments, Mr. Chairman, I'll take my seat and allow other members to provide comments and ask questions.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Leduc.

MR. KIRKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll spend some time this afternoon on one of my little pet peeves here, if I might, and see if I can't bring some clarification to the matter, and that is tire recycling. The minister of the environment was very kind in responding to a private member's statement I made in this House indicating that I was dissatisfied with the tire recycling and marketing board and their lack of true recycling initiatives. I also suggested that in fact they were stymieing true initiatives in the recycling area as a result of their present policies and plans. The hon. minister, as I say, kindly wrote me a letter and attempted to correct and clarify and provide me with clear information. Certainly I read that letter with great interest. I have spent many hours with the industry attempting to find out whether this system is working properly and to their satisfaction. They are the ones with the vested interest, so I think it's important to consult them. I would have to share with the minister – and I'm sure he's aware of it – that they are not very happy. We have seen some dissatisfaction, dissent in the last few months. It does tie into the estimates in the sense that we're talking about \$10 million here, and \$10 million is significant.

Now, I have to ask the hon. minister rather directly about some of the comments he made in regards to Alberta environmental recycling products when he stated that they were required to collect tires from all across the province. If that is the case, I would ask the hon. minister – and I will concede at this point that they have not been up and running a long time – to table in this House or send to me a copy of a bill of lading from that particular company showing that they have picked up tires outside the city of Edmonton. It is not happening, and the industry does not have confidence that it will happen. So that would allay some of the concerns that I have.

Along that line, I would have to ask the minister – and I know that this board is independent and he would like to see it operate on its own decision-making process – why White Line tire cannot get their truck tires picked up and have been forced into a situation of withholding their \$4 per tire recycling fee in an attempt to force the issue.

I would have to ask the minister also, when we look at the guidelines that Alberta environmental recycling products inc. has set down to the tire retailers in this community whereby they have to schedule a specific date to pick their bins up or have their bins dumped off at their site, how those recyclers are supposed to deal with bins that overflow or how they gauge their sales in discards to accommodate that date. It's near impossible. They will tell you that, and what they are running into and expect to run into more frequently is the Edmonton fire department banging on their door suggesting that they have to get rid of those tires immediately. I would ask the hon. minister if he will ensure that the tire recycling and marketing board will be responsible for the costs associated with truck tires or other tires that cannot be delivered on a timely basis, because sales cannot be controlled – whether the tire recycling marketing board will cover the cost of that extra removal.

I alleged to the minister that the present system of recycling tires stymied or deterred true tire recycling, and he and I have a

difference of opinion on that particular matter. Tire recycling today in the province of Alberta, if we look at Inland Cement, has fluctuated slightly, but the average is that there are four employees involved in that tire recycling process over there. They generally marshal tires from their holding lot across the street to the plant itself.

I want to just take a minute to outline and refresh everyone's mind in this House as to the Inland Cement contract, because it's important in the final determination of how we're going to deal with this problem. In brief, they do get \$2.15 to incinerate tires. They also get another 77 cents for handling that tire or, it could be construed, say, 77 cents to automate their tire-feeding process. Any way one views it, we're paying in the vicinity of \$3 a tire to recycle a tire. Now, Inland's contract calls for 600,000 tires. If we do a quick mathematical computation, that's \$1.8 million. Inland Cement will tell you publicly that they save 10 percent of their natural gas costs burning tires. That amounts to \$600,000 a year. We have conservatively over \$2 million a year going to Inland Cement as a result of the partnership with the tire recycling marketing board and the government. Now, that is and it does deter true recyclers. It forces the cost of used tire stock up to \$3 per tire, and if the minister responds that there are pre-1992 tires that can be accessed for other recyclers, that's oversimplification. Those individuals know they have a large problem. They know the province has a large problem, and they are hedging their bets, so to speak, and are not going to part with their tires at this time until this situation is cleared up.

Back to Inland Cement. What we cannot overlook is that rubber products do compete with cement products. There are several products that would be in competition. So Inland has the ideal solution. They ward off and stymie competition by collecting over \$2 million from the tire marketing recycling board to incinerate tires, and yes, it does stymie recyclers in this province. So I would ask the minister to review that one more time. I'm not going to get specific about the individuals involved with the company that is presently dealing and the principals in Alberta environmental recycling products incorporated. I have a tough time with that name.

MR. EVANS: Alberta Environmental Rubber Products.

MR. KIRKLAND: Okay. We both understand which company we're talking about anyway. The minister states that part of their contract also indicates that they will crumb tires and sell the crumb to recyclers. I would have to ask the minister: does this company have the rights to the technology to crumb tires? I think it's extremely important. I would have to ask the minister: have they crumbed one tire to date? Again I will give due consideration to the fact that they have not been up and running that long. I would have to ask the minister why in jurisdictions such as California and some of our Canadian provinces as well companies such as Lafarge and such as Inland will actually pay \$20 per tonne for tire stock, for tire-derived fuel, and why we have to in turn pay some \$215 a tonne to dispose of that. When I look at it and I talk to the industry, it is not working. There is more dissatisfaction growing within. I had suggested that there is large room for improvement, and I would ask the minister to look very closely at that, because it is not going to go away.

3:50

I'll move on to a different topic at this point. One of the areas that causes me a great deal of concern is identified in the business plan, and it has a financial implication. It's an attempt to reduce costs, and that is handing over the self-policing by industry. I did miss one environmental estimates. The minister may have

answered it, but I would implore the minister and I would ask him, if we're moving into this situation, if he intends to have each company post a bond, some sort of collateral so that if in fact this company is not a Canadian company we have some sort of financial comeback on the company if they should leave us in a polluted state. I can think of Procter & Gamble in Grande Prairie that wasn't charged until they left this province, and the fines awarded certainly were not those that would clean up the mess that was left behind. I would remind the hon. minister that there was quite a controversy about their results and some of the private lab results. With all due respect to industry when it comes to large costs, they're like the government. They would like to reduce, and they will become lax in these areas. I ask the hon. minister what sort of process he is intending to put in place to ensure we have some sort of financial deposit or bond to cover potential disasters left behind. It's difficult to pursue companies that are offshore or companies that are outside our federal boundaries.

Another area, Mr. Chairman, that I would like to spend a minute with involves a fair number of Albertan taxpayers' dollars. The hon. Member for Sherwood Park touched base on this issue briefly, and that was the intention of privatizing provincial parks. He asked specifically if the minister could identify specific sectors of park maintenance that would be factored out, such as the wood or the lawns or the likes of that. I await the minister's answers in those cases. It's difficult to extract from the business plan if it's the intention to hand entire parks over to individuals to manage. I would ask one more time of the minister to ensure that we have some sort of financial bonding or backing to ensure that if a manager – and it can happen – turns out to be somewhat suspect and runs, if I could use that term, a provincial park into the ground, takes the profits and leaves us a mess, we have some sort of process to recover. Provincial parks, as the hon. minister knows, are very dear to Albertans. We have invested literally billions of dollars in them. We have to certainly look at a better collateral than we came up with for the NovAtels and the MagCans and the likes of that. So I would ask the minister to share with us how he intends to protect against loss of great dollars invested in those areas.

With those concerns, Mr. Chairman, I will turn the floor over to one of our other members who is presently prepared to stand and speak.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, a number of good questions are still remaining from the last time, and I don't want to preclude any of the hon. members from making their comments, and I'll certainly take the opportunity to speak to as many as I can. But I wonder if I could just take a few more minutes now and go through some more of the past questions, and then we'll get, hopefully, on to some of the ones from today as well.

Last time the Member for Calgary-*Buffalo* was asking about the joint work that we're doing with the Department of Justice and asked a very specific question about how many sites use inmate labour, is the work year-round or is it seasonal, and does the department quantify the benefits to the department. Well, there are two divisions in Environmental Protection, park service and land and forest service, that are using inmate labour through our minimum security work crews. The work is certainly oriented and undertaken to deal with our campground use, particularly before the busy season in the summer and then once again in the fall, dealing with cleanup of sites and closure of sites that we do close in the fall. We do have, of course, some winter activity recreation areas, and we use the minimum security work crews for upkeep there as well.

I can give you a couple of examples, Mr. Chairman, of some of the work that they do, things such as trail work and firewood splitting and dead tree removal and cleanup. But more importantly, I just want to assure hon. members that the young people, by and large, who are at these minimum security prisons really do value the opportunity to get out into the wilds of Alberta, get away from that urban setting whence most of them come, and take that opportunity to spend some time in the fresh outdoors. It's a very positive thing for them. They even get a couple of bucks a day for doing it. It's certainly not much pay, but the fact of the matter is that they get to go out into rural Alberta, into the countryside, and do something productive, do something tangible. It gives them a better sense of self-worth and self-esteem than sitting in a cell or sitting in a bricks and mortar in the city. I certainly hope that hon. members will agree that this is a beneficial program and should continue.

I'll give you one example of some of the cost benefits to us as government. We'll look at the park service, southern region, from the period April through September 1993. There were a number of inmates from the Lethbridge Correctional Centre at Taber. Some of the things that were dealt with were the Little Bow provincial park and the Oldman River dam provincial recreation area. We received 3,439 man-hours of labour, and the costs of that were really quite minimal. Assuming a wage level of about \$7 an hour, Mr. Chairman, the benefits were in excess of \$24,000, and the costs associated with those projects were a little bit more than \$3,000. So from a number of angles this is a beneficial project.

Move then to the Member for Edmonton-Roper. He asked me a question about how many FMAs have conditions for the government to provide seedlings and are we in the business of not only providing the natural resource but then going one step further and providing reforestation tools. Are these contracts or agreements in place written in stone so that they can't be ended, or can we end them and are we going to? Well, there are 11 forest management agreements in place in the province. All of them contain seed service or seedling supply clauses. We made a policy change back in November of 1993 that indicated that we wanted to try to transfer the seed service and tree seedling supply costs to the industry, and that would apply both to forest management agreement holders as well as quota holders throughout the province. Now, the history has been that when you have a quota holder who has less than 200,000 cubic metres of annual allowable cut, they have the option to either do the reforestation on their own or they can do it through contract with our department of lands and forests. If they do so, they pay us to do that contract work. Sometimes we take on that responsibility, and the costs that are incurred in that, the costs that come back to the department, go into our departmental revolving fund.

In terms of passing all of that responsibility, particularly with the FMA holders, over to them, I have indicated to the FMA holders by letter and also individually that we recognize, and certainly as a member of the bar of the province of Alberta I recognize, the sanctity of contract. We're asking for them to be good corporate citizens and good partners with us in trying to deal with the issues that we have before us, recognizing the costs that are attributed to forest management in this province. We've asked them to consider taking on that kind of responsibility, and I'm very pleased that they have approached this issue with an open mind. I think we are making some progress, and that's why I identified earlier, in my first comments, that we hope that \$5 million of seed and seedling costs will be picked up by industry.

4:00

The same Member for Edmonton-Roper then noted that in reforestation we are spending \$5.344 million, slightly less than last year, and is that going to the cost of seedlings? Are we working with Pine Ridge nursery? Are we looking at a cost-recovery basis for the seedlings? Certainly, Mr. Chairman, the moneys that go into that reforestation element are used to support the start-up of the reforestation revolving fund that we have in the department and, as well, to address the additional costs that have been incurred on cut blocks that are harvested prior to the introduction of the new reforestation dues. It really is expected as we look into '96-97 that the revolving fund is going to generate sufficient revenues so that we can cover all of these costs of reforestation.

There was another question asked about Pine Ridge generally and whether it should be privatized and whether there was an opportunity there. I might as well talk about that while I'm on the topic. I think there are some possibilities there. It is operating as a public resource. What we have to look at, of course, is twofold. Number one is what government has put into the Pine Ridge nursery. We have to look as well at the fledgling seedling industry that we have in the province and the commitments that were made in the early '90s to try to give them some assistance, because of course if we go to a system where we have a private-sector owner of Pine Ridge, we may have even more seedlings being produced. We will want to be sure that we have a balance so that the new smaller operators, those with 500,000 to a million seedlings a year and sometimes up to 2 million, are not going to be left aside because Pine Ridge all of a sudden takes over everything. I think that's a matter of balance.

I think there are some possibilities. I've had some interest shown in the Pine Ridge facility itself. So I'm not at all saying that that will remain as a government-run facility for all time. There is a very important component to Pine Ridge which is not available through any other seedling operation in the province, and that's the research capability. But I think that if we were to look at a privatization model for Pine Ridge, the research could very easily move over to the Vegreville Alberta Environmental Centre, and we could probably have our cake and eat it too. So we're looking at that, and if the hon. member opposite has some members of the business community who are interested in looking at Pine Ridge, or for that matter any other members of this Assembly, I'm certainly open to hearing their proposal.

There was a question asked as well by Edmonton-Roper and again today by Sherwood Park on 3.5.4, the Action on Waste dedicated revenue of \$1.7 million, asking what the basis of that was. Well, we have an agreement between Alberta and the government of Canada to deal with orphaned site remediation and technology development costs, and those costs are eligible for government funding. During '94-95 it's projected that \$3.9 million will be needed for orphaned site remediation. So \$1.7 million of that is coming from us and the other \$1.7 million coming from the federal government and then some makeup funds as well.

Moving on, then, to another question by Edmonton-Roper asking what the land agents' licensing programs are and if that could be better served in another department and then a question about the administration of foreign ownership of lands. The \$248,000 in 5.4.4 for foreign ownership of land relates both to land agents' licensing and the foreign ownership of land programs. We generate about \$36,000 through that program. The licence program itself administers a number of programs. The primary purpose is essentially to protect agricultural producers, and that may be the reason that the hon. member was asking about

another program. It also relates to the energy sector. There was a decision to leave this in the Department of Environmental Protection based on a need to have a neutral department analyze the applications that would be coming from Energy, on the one hand, and Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, on the other, and to really be an arbiter of the applications that might come forward.

In terms of the foreign ownership of land administration, that comes up under section 35 of the federal Citizenship Act and the Agricultural and Recreational Land Ownership Act. I think the hon. member opposite is aware of this: the regulations restrict foreign citizens and corporations from acquiring more than 20 acres of nonurban land not exceeding two parcels in size. Although there are a number of exemptions, such as transfers between family members, et cetera, that's quite a strenuous restriction, and we look at it very carefully. We're not about to make exemptions unless the circumstances are appropriate.

Then the Member for Edmonton-Roper went on to ask some questions about 5.4.2, land dispositions, and the expenditure of almost \$2 million. He claimed – and I'm sure he did this facetiously, because anytime he wants to give me a call and ask a question, I'm happy to try to answer it – that this was a little ambiguous and was wondering why I would put such an ambiguous provision into my budget. Well, that's the total public land administration budget. It reflects all of our funding requirements for staff involved in the disposition of administrative processes which relate to our leases, our permits, our licences, and our land sales agreements. So I think I'll leave it at that. I may be able to give the hon. member some additional information in writing, or he could just come on over to my office, 323 here in the Legislature Building, and I'd be happy to give him a little more detail.

The final question that the member asked was about native land claim settlements. He noted a \$1.6 million land claim amount and also noted the same amount from the previous year. That \$1.6 million, Mr. Chairman, is actually a carryover from 1993-94 related to the Tallcree treaty land entitlement claim. We have not solved that yet, and that's the reason that we just carried it over. It's not an additional \$1.6 million; it's the same amount.

The question was asked last year, I think it was, why Environmental Protection is involved in this in terms of settlement when we have a very capable Minister of Family and Social Services who is responsible for native affairs. It's actually an historical anomaly. The department of forestry, lands, and wildlife, as the land manager, has always been responsible for the actual land that came into these settlements, and we continue to be involved. I have indicated on a couple of occasions that I'd be happy to transfer that responsibility over to my colleague. However, since public lands remain within the Department of Environmental Protection – and I think rightly so – it's not likely that my involvement in these land claim settlements will end in the near future.

So I think that takes into account the questions that were asked last time. Now to move on to the questions today.

4:10

Calgary-North West asked a question about gravel, and it was interesting. He was talking about his constituency in particular and the gravel extraction operations that are close by. Well, unquestionably – and the hon. member opposite is aware of this – where you have cities, where you have development, you need gravel. Whether it's for roadways or whether it's for fill when a basement is poured or what have you, you need gravel. That's not going to go away nor is the apparent conflict between residential owners and industrial uses.

In that area that the hon. member was referring to, he was saying: what is the liaison with Transportation and Utilities? Well, we have a very good liaison. We try to anticipate issues. We try to ensure that there is an adequate supply of gravel for this province for the roadways that we're so very proud of. We also want a process that allows public input into these decisions, and that's not only at the provincial level, because oftentimes what's required is a change of the municipal plan or municipal zoning to accommodate a gravel pit. So the municipalities involved do get into this and often have public meetings. Quite frankly, there have been a number of applications that have not been successful because as a result of those public meetings the gravel companies have pulled back their applications. You know, they want to be good corporate citizens as well, and they recognize that there are some problems if there are a number of people in a community that come out to protest a change of land use.

Reclamation rules. Well, of course we have rules for reclamation, a very important component, although we are trying to move away from direct involvement in reclamation issues except in those instances where human health and safety is at issue. So we will keep working on that.

Two issues were raised by Calgary-North West: dust and noise. Many of those concerns can be dealt with through land use bylaws, land use reviews. Quite frankly, I think in many instances that's the best place for decisions to be made as to whether these things would go forward: by the local government dealing with local community interests.

I want to move on, then, to Sherwood Park and a comment that was made in response to my comments about no stand-alone business plans for, for example, the Environment Council of Alberta. That doesn't mean, Mr. Chairman, that our stand-alones are not part of the three-year business plan process but rather, as I mentioned earlier, that our executive committee reviews all of our stand-alones and would in a sense dictate an amount of money that will be allocated to the Water Resources Commission for example. I know the Chairman is very familiar with that. The Water Resources Commission or the Environment Council will decide how they can best deal with the resources that are allocated to them, and then those total figures are identified in our budget. I think that process does work well. I just want to clarify that of course there is a three-year budget plan process that is required of our stand-alone businesses as well that come under the general budget.

Another question was asked about Action on Waste and whether or not we were thinking of putting – pardon me. We'll move on from Action on Waste because that was essentially Edmonton-Roper's question.

Moving along to land administration in 5.4, the access fee to Crown lands. Well, that's something that we are considering. The announcements I have made are that I have my staff looking at a cost/benefit analysis of charging a day-use fee, for example, in provincial parks and recreation areas. I won't be making a decision on that before the end of this camping year because there are a number of issues that have to be determined.

I see that my time has rapidly left me. I will take whatever other questions are available and then if there is additional time try to answer some other questions as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Roper.

MR. CHADI: Thank you very much. In due course. Just be patient and you'll be using those words.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the hon. minister for answering those questions I had asked from the previous time that we met in the estimates debate on Environmental Protection, especially with respect to the Pine Ridge nursery and the contracts with respect to forestation, the different contracts that they have with different – I'm sure not FMA holders. I missed what he said in terms of the contracts that they have out there to reforest and plant these seedlings. If it is within those FMAs or without that, I think there's something here that can be worked out.

The hon. minister mentioned that Pine Ridge nursery is indeed prime and not a bad idea to privatize. I think what I'd like to propose to the hon. minister is that maybe what we can do is package this thing up, because it wouldn't be a bad idea to look at Pine Ridge nursery along with the different contracts that are in place to do reforestation and the planting of these seedlings. If that can be packaged up as a parcel and the research area, like the minister says, could go on to Vegreville, that would be a wonderful idea. I think you've got a tremendous opportunity here to get out of the business of being in the reforestation business and as well, Mr. Chairman, the business of being in the seedling business.

I think it shouldn't be too difficult to look at finding a buyer that will have contracts in hand, so there will be actual revenues as well as the production of the product that they sell and the product that they plant. Perhaps maybe even the different FMA holders themselves may be interested. I would imagine that if I were one of those FMA holders, I would be interested, because more than likely I've already got the infrastructure in place to go out and do my own planting of those seedlings. Perhaps I've even got my own infrastructure in place for things like the development of the different types of seedlings. So the research and development could also be there. There could be a real good fit here somewhere, and I would hope that the minister would take a good hard look at that and consider trying to get out of that by the end of this fiscal year.

The question was answered with respect to 5.4.5; that is, the native land claim settlements, Mr. Chairman. It's a total of \$1.6 million. I appreciate the minister's comments. The part that got me was that last year it appeared as though the comparable estimates of 1993-94 were \$1.6 million. I appreciate the fact that he tells me now that it's the same amount of money, and it isn't anything new. I think what could have saved us a bit of a problem is if we hadn't shown it as an operating expenditure in last year's estimates. Last year we showed it in our budget. Clearly in the supplemental estimates it showed up as an expenditure, so again it will also show up as an expenditure. So that in itself is what threw me off, and I appreciate the minister clarifying that.

Mr. Chairman, I want to take the minister back to the revolving fund. That is page 147 of the estimates book. I'd like the minister to give me – and I asked this question, I believe, last time. I'm sorry; I didn't hear the minister's response, if he did indeed respond to this question. The total revenues were \$25,781,000. The total expenditures were \$26,307,000. It seemed to me that if we were on a cost-recovery basis on all this, we have actually lost money, and it doesn't add up. What really gets me to suspect that it doesn't add up is when you look at the revenues and you look at the sales within the revolving fund. I see \$23,574,000 in sales, and the cost of goods sold shows a million dollars. So there's one tremendous markup there, it would appear, unless I'm missing something. I'd like the minister to explain that perhaps in his comments before we close at the end of the day. A million dollars in cost of goods sold and the sales are \$23 million: it's an awful lot of markup.

4:20

Then you look at the general operating expenses within the expenditure department of the revolving fund and you see \$22,778,000. Mr. Chairman, I'm sure there's a good explanation for this, but when you look at it at first glance, you would have to say to yourself that the operating expenses within the revolving fund are equal to the amount of sales, or thereabouts. It's just slightly under that. I think it's somewhere in the range of about a million dollars less, \$750,000 less than the entire amount of sales. It just doesn't make sense at all, and I'd like to know what it is that makes general operating expenses \$22 million to sell \$1 million worth of goods. Please explain that one.

Quite clearly on page 146 within the revolving fund it says:

The Ministry is authorized to provide machinery, equipment, services, stock and material for the investigation, construction, operation, maintenance and rehabilitation of water management projects.

These are some of the goods and services that are provided by the revolving fund. So this is what's happening here.

Equipment for surveying and drilling investigations and for the maintenance and rehabilitation of hydraulic structures.

So the very first one here, this equipment for surveying, is what is being provided.

Now, in the revenue section I see equipment rentals, and the rentals are \$2,192,000. So I suspect it would be something to do with equipment for surveying and drilling investigations. One has to ask as well: are there people within the private sector that are doing this? Are people out there with the equipment for surveying and drilling investigations? Are there equipment rentals within the private sector that can handle that part of it? If there are, I think maybe we ought to be looking at the privatization of some of these entities.

I notice that we also do "maps, aerial photographs and related products." So in that area as well we are providing this service. Then you look at different areas within the department, and there are three or four different areas that appear to be doing the same thing; that is, mapping. At 5.6, land information services, in 4.1, program support, there's also mapping. In other areas there is mapping as well. I have to question if there aren't other areas within this government, particularly the different departments, that are doing mapping. I know that as a member of the Public Accounts . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, hon. member. Would the government Whip and the Minister of Municipal Affairs, if they'd like to talk, please have a chair.

MR. CHADI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The Minister of Municipal Affairs was so quiet I never even heard him. It's certainly a luxury not to hear him.

As I was saying, within the different mapping areas, I noted, being a member of the Public Accounts and meeting with the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism just yesterday morning I believe, that there was a section within Economic Development and Tourism where we were expending last year alone on things like mapping, Mr. Chairman, around \$600,000 or \$700,000. Now here we are. The minister when questioned said that there was nobody who actually has come forward and said, "You know, I'd be interested in pursuing this and perhaps the purchase of this to develop some kind of a business out of it in terms of mapping." I think mapping is a great business, and one ought to look at that. I know that there are mapping companies in Alberta. I recall years and years ago when people were traveling around the countryside doing the county maps and the ID

maps. I remember being on the council in those days, and we made a deal with I believe a company just outside of Edmonton, out in Stony Plain somewhere. We did a contract with them; they provided us with one heck of a nice map.

I think we may be able to look at this whole system of mapping and see if there isn't a way that we could package it up once again and sell it off, because there's no reason for the government maybe getting into the business of selling things like maps and aerial photographs and related products, within the Environmental Protection revolving fund anyway, although we've done it for a long time, it fits, and we must do it. But there have got to be ways that we can streamline this department as well as other departments, and this is just one way.

Here we are, selling things like veterinary drugs and appliances as required. So within Environmental Protection we're selling veterinary drugs and appliances; that's part and parcel of our revenues within the revolving fund. Now, I question again: why are we in this business? I think we ought not to be in this business at all. If there is a reason that we are, I'd like to hear it. I know that veterinary drugs, no matter where you go throughout the province - years and years ago when we needed whatever drugs we needed for our herd, our cattle, et cetera, we just went to the local drugstore out in the country and picked it up. We got anything we wanted because they handled it. Again, why are we in that business? I'm wondering if we're not actually taking some business away from the private entrepreneurs that are out there trying to make a living. I know that the hon. Minister of Environmental Protection would never do anything to hurt any private entrepreneur out there, and that's why I'm asking that question. I have much respect for the hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

Another area is pesticides, Mr. Chairman. Pesticides are something that, again, along with the different veterinary drugs, et cetera, are usually purchased from your local feed mill. In those days we used to have a feed mill, and whatever we required, we could go to a local place or else a co-op store, and they normally had those in the countryside. There's a fair amount here. On page 146 it actually starts at (a) and it goes all the way down to (m). It seems to me that wherever you go for these different products that are out there either for rent or else for sale, there is somebody perhaps out in the private industry doing the same thing. I think we ought to consider maybe cutting back a little bit and working with private industry to try to eliminate some of our expenditures, because it really does not make sense to expend almost \$23 million to sell a million dollars' worth of products. We're actually selling that million dollars' worth of products for 23 and a half million dollars, so there's one tremendous markup, unless I'm missing something. I'd like the minister to explain that one.

4:30

I would now ask the minister to just go back for a second on the Action on Waste. I believe it would be in this category. What I'm looking for is the different reclamation projects. Correct me if I'm wrong, if it isn't within the Action on Waste but within the reclamation itself. With the Department of Energy the other day we spoke at length with regard to Bill 5, which is the reclamation of orphaned wells. My concern is particularly with respect to Crown land. Are there any orphaned wells out there on Crown lands that have been identified? I note that within the Department of Environmental Protection with the heritage savings trust fund there were some 800 sites, if my memory serves me correctly, a fair number of sites that were identified as contaminated sites. I think those relate mostly to old dump yards

and this sort of thing. Nonetheless, I'm interested in knowing if there were any of the identified orphaned wells on the Crown lands. Within the Action on Waste, if I'm not mistaken, it clearly identifies the fact that we are expending some funds to do some cleanup and some reclamation. Please advise us, hon. minister, in that respect.

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

Now, within program 4.1 – it's a support program, Mr. Chairman. It has imbedded in it vehicle and risk management. That's what it says, amongst other things. I'll just tell you, we're expending \$9 million, almost \$9,100,000, and it

coordinates all recreational, commercial, and domestic licensing programs . . . Forecasts, monitors, and controls revenue and manages a province-wide licence vendor network. Provides computer graphics and mapping, systems analysis and support, integrated office . . . [et cetera]

It goes on to say, "vehicle, asset and risk management support." Now, I again want to ask the hon. minister: what in fact is vehicle and risk management? Are we self-insuring in this area? I believe it was the Treasury Department that we had the estimates on the other day, and when we discussed it, there was a fair amount of money being handled within the department of Treasury going towards risk management and insurance. Now, if we are – and I suspect that this risk management and insurance would be related to vehicle insurance, because I can't imagine the department having much more than just our vehicles out there. My questions are: what sort of losses, if any, did we have, and if we had some losses, are we charging back some of the people that have incurred these losses? I note that even within my own corporations it's difficult to go back to your employee and say, "Well, you caused this claim; maybe you ought to pay for it." They say, "Well, you know, that's why we have insurance," and they give me some excuse, "A deer ran across the road; I swerved to miss it." Damages are caused here, and I'd like to know if we're actually getting back and recovering some of these funds again.

What sort of systems do we have in place for doing any underwriting? I know that within my own companies when somebody comes along and is a driver on one of my vehicles, it's difficult, if he's a good person, to tell him or her that I'd like to see an abstract to see if they're worthy of actually handling this vehicle or not. Do we have some system for underwriting if we're going to be self-insuring? If we are self-insuring, I'd kind of like to ask the minister whether or not we've actually researched whether it's cheaper for us to go into the private marketplace to get some of our insurance or not. I think it's a good opportunity to at least research it and ensure that we're getting the best bang for our buck, particularly when we're spending a fair amount of money in this category, although I don't know what the exact amount of money is. I'd like to have the minister tell us, if he's broken this down, how much of that \$9,100,000 is attributed to risk management and insurance.

I recall years ago when there was a fellow by the name of Ian Reid, I think the Solicitor General in those days, who got a fair amount of speeding tickets traveling back and forth from his constituency. So I suspect if we went to the private marketplace, one would have to conclude that we would expend a tremendous amount more money to insure that person driving that vehicle. That's the kind of thing that I would like answered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you. It gives me great pleasure to address the estimates of Environmental Protection this afternoon.

I haven't had the opportunity to speak to this particular department in this session. I am always telling my constituents the importance of the Legislative Assembly with regards to not only items such as education and social services and health care but the fact that the decisions we make in the Assembly, sometimes on a daily basis, even affect the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink. Therefore, it is of importance to constituents, to Albertans to recognize what exactly is the mandate of this particular department as well as the impact of some of the decisions that it makes either through regulation, through legislation, or through the budget process.

One of the common threads that we see in all of the budgets, of course, is this government's attack on the deficit. Unfortunately, at times the attack on the deficit doesn't necessarily go hand in hand with good, sound fiscal management or protection of those areas that are under the auspices of the various departments.

Now, Environmental Protection has a broad mandate to ensure that the policies and programs pertaining to the environment – again, what we breathe, what we drink, forests, public lands, fish and wildlife, parks, et cetera – will be promoted "for the benefit of the people of Alberta and future generations." This, of course, is a very important thought that we should keep in the back of our minds when we are looking at the budget and any discussions with regards to environment. The document A Better Way talks about the goals of the particular department of the environment. I look at some of the goals and say, well, some of these are laudable; for instance, integrating department services and improving customer services, harmonizing federal and provincial environmental laws and standards, delivering the environmental protection mandate efficiently and effectively.

But then I look at others and my antennae go up, because I wonder what these words actually mean, especially ones that talk about privatizing and outsourcing, ones that look at eliminating various programs through efficiency gains, and of course number 11, which says, "Implement efficiencies through innovation, fairness and compassion to staff." To my mind, this of course means that we are going to be laying off incredible numbers within Environmental Protection. When you look at the actual effect, I see that over the next two to three years approximately 357 people, I think it is, will be laid off from the Environmental Protection department.

Now, when we address the fact that there are differences in terms of, again, deficit slashing and cutting versus sound fiscal management, I then move on to the next area, which to my mind talks about: how do the different departments and the ministers engage in addressing the situation of balancing the budget? I look at departments such as Environmental Protection, Transportation and Utilities, and Municipal Affairs and think, well, these departments are supposed to be looking after certain aspects within the province. I happen to have a constituency that is the proud owner of a dangerous goods route. This dangerous goods route travels right past West Edmonton Mall, right past a hospital, right past major developments, huge developments such as the soon-to-be Revy store. There's a Superstore. There's a Food for Less. I think I've got the picture pretty well laid out in people's minds, that if there were ever a danger with regards to a hazardous spill, this would be an area that could have incredible implications in terms of the people who live on this route.

4:40

Therefore, when I see within the minister's portfolio that one of his functions is to look at intergovernmental liaison and to ensure that there is improvement in the environment for the benefit of the people of Alberta, I wonder how the government

could overlook this incredibly hazardous situation that has the potential for a disaster to occur and not have co-ordination between Transportation and Utilities and Municipal Affairs and Environmental Protection so that in fact those departments could say: perhaps there should be some dollars allocated through to the municipality for the extension of the ring road.

There's another area where I don't see much co-operation between the departments. That's with regards to the departments of Labour and Environmental Protection. Now, I know that though I said there wasn't co-operation, this is in one particular area that there seems to be a breakdown of communication, because there has been some co-operation between Environmental Protection with regards to a joint project that is going to be set up with regards to MUST, the underground storage tanks. There are some questions with regards to that area. That, specifically, is in terms of: will the self-regulating of this particular area lead to increased user fees? Will there be more taxes at the pump or at refineries as a result of this? Who will do the regulation? How will that regulation occur? If the industry is to self-regulate and to pay for that self-regulation, then how do they get the dollars to do that? There are not very many people in this world that do something for nothing.

My second point with regards to the lack of co-ordination or co-operation or understanding between the departments of Labour and Environment Protection is an area that the minister of the environment is well aware of, I'm sure, because this particular plant is within his own riding, the Lafarge cement plant. My understanding is that there probably will be an awarding of a tire recycling contract – and one of my hon. colleagues has already addressed the issue of tire recycling – where the particular plant will be receiving \$4 a tire for the burning of said tire. On the other hand, there is a strike that I believe is 13 weeks old at this current point in time. The only reason that strike is able to go on for so long is because of the ability of Lafarge to bring in replacement workers. As a result, we have a situation where there are workers on strike. So the Department of Labour should perhaps be dealing with and talking to the Department of Environmental Protection in terms of saying, "Well, while this is going on, why are you looking at awarding the employer – maybe it's questionable as to whether the employer is an employer we want to see emulated within the province – a government contract that will be giving them an extra \$4 a tire?"

So I think there's a real issue to look at with regards to those things. Those are just two examples that came to my attention that I think need to be looked at in terms of co-ordination between departments.

There are a number of issues with regards to the budget in Environmental Protection that are of deep concern to Albertans. One of these issues, of course, is the provincial parks and the privatization of provincial parks. I am a camper. I enjoy camping. It's a good way to see the countryside. It's a good way to enjoy the fresh air and the amenities of I guess country living. I have camped both here and in the United States. I've had the pleasure and not the pleasure of camping at private parks within the United States. In the United States there is a private park system and there is a public park system, and there is a reason for that. The public parks have higher standards. They tend to be overcrowded, and therefore people spill over into the private parks. Now, that's not to say that every private park is like a slum landlord, but there are a lot of private parks that are there for the quick buck.

I think when we are looking at the potential privatization of all of our provincial parks, we need to look at what the implication is of that. We need to look at the potential fees and how do we

make sure those fees are not out of sync. We need to look at what happens if someone can't afford and that's the only way that they can go on vacation: to get some kind of a cheap tent, get into a car, and go to a park. That is one of the reasons people look at camping as a way to go on vacation. With the stress that we're seeing within Alberta right now because of the cuts this governments has made, I would hate to see the one source of recreation that people might still be able to afford be taken away. So I urge the minister to really look at whether it's necessary to privatize the parks.

There are other areas in terms of deregulation and self-regulation. I've looked at those areas within the Labour budget. There are the same concerns here in this particular budget that I have with regards to the Labour budget when it comes to deregulation and self-regulation, and it's the old fox in the henhouse concern. There are a number of questions. How effective will it be? Are there any standards that the minister is looking at in terms of putting into place spot-checks? What kinds of spot-checks are they going to be, et cetera? So I think that's an area that needs to be looked at.

I had a strange call this afternoon, and rather than having it potentially brought up in question period, I'd like to address it to the minister now. Perhaps he can have his staff look at researching it. It was a call from an individual who did not wish to identify himself. He indicated that at a tree nursery – and I'm not sure if it's the Pine Ridge nursery or if it's some other nursery that you have a contract with – there is now privatization of a source going on. In other words, what's happening is that employees at this tree nursery are taking home work and being paid for it even though they're still being given moneys, dollars, as government employees. So there seems to be almost a double payment going on, and I wonder if you'd be able to look into that. As I said, it was a call I just received about an hour and a half, two hours ago, and it was not very detailed but enough that I'm asking that perhaps you can investigate that.

There are some other concerns and questions that I think Albertans would like to see addressed. I think these are issues that have been in the press in the past and are going to haunt this government perhaps for a long time. One is with regards to the Drumheller golf course, especially with regards to the fact that there is no review required for that particular golf course, that one of the mandates of this government or this department is to preserve and protect special places that are – there's a quote in here that deals with, in terms of the budget, "Preserving and Protecting Special Places." It seems incomprehensible that an area such as this could be turned into a golf course. I think golf courses perhaps have their place for those individuals who enjoy golfing, but a golf course can never take the place of an historic site, and I would be . . . [interjection] Unless it's an historic golfer. I think this is an area that will haunt this government if this does go ahead.

4:50

That's much like the controversy that was and I'm sure will still exist with regards to Buffalo Lake. We saw that this project was approved a few years ago, that it just so happened to be near the home of the last Premier of this province, and that despite the environmental assessment study done that indicated it was not cost-effective, the project was and is still going ahead – unless we get different information from the minister – and that the cost of this project was about \$10 million. Again we're seeing in this province kindergarten being cut. We're seeing the potentiality of the Children's hospital going in Calgary. We're seeing the potentiality of a hospital in Edmonton disappearing. Yet we still

seem to have the dollars to build a lake that was not required or cost-effective to begin with. So I think this is an issue that needs to be addressed by this government and needs to be addressed quickly.

There's another question that I'd like to ask, as I am close to the end of my time, and that's with regards to – and we have asked this in question period – the assessing of an export fee to deter logs being exported to British Columbia. Again this is a government that claims that it understands the importance of value-added and it understands the importance of creating jobs within Alberta, yet we're seeing our timber leaving Alberta with no advantage to Albertans.

With those comments, I would like to thank the minister for his attention and look forward to his remarks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the questions that were asked by hon. members this afternoon, and I'll try to deal with a few more of the questions that were asked.

Moving along again to Sherwood Park, the Member for Sherwood Park asked me whether I had indicated that there would not be a screening review done of whatever the proposal is for Grande Prairie and certainly for High Prairie in particular. I think he was concerned that I may have said that we didn't need to go through a screening process. No, I didn't. I was referring to the fact that given that High Prairie is talking about an OSB plant, I didn't think it would be likely that we would need a full environmental impact assessment and therefore anything further along that way. We do have as a result of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act a legislated environmental impact assessment process that begins with a screening report, screening review, and we will certainly undertake that with respect to High Prairie.

There were some concerns about the unallocated conifer area in this province, and whether or not it's 7 percent or whether, when you take into account mixed stands, it comes up to 10 or 12 percent is really not the issue. The issue is that we don't have a great deal of unallocated conifer.

The hon. member did talk about how we are going to ensure that we live up to our Free to Grow standards that came in in 1991. Well, one of the ways that we can do that, hon. member, is through the FRIP account, which was part of the proposal that came to us from the Alberta forest industry when we talked about increasing the stumpage dues for sawlogs. The FRIP account is the opportunity to improve the existing forest, and we are identifying those areas that were harvested with less than Free to Grow standards, the before 1991 standards, and where vegetation has not been up to our current standards. We hope to use some of those moneys that will be coming into the natural resources emergency fund for that purpose.

Now, the hon. member has said that it doesn't appear that we have as much authority in the environmental protection and enhancement fund in the current legislation as I've been talking about, as the future of that fund, and he's quite correct. We are working on amendments to the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act. I think we'll resolve those issues and allow us to clearly have all of the authority that we need to get on with the business of protecting our province, the natural resources in the province and providing a resource and a source of funding for emergencies that may come about.

He then went on to talk about the Alberta special waste corporation and the NRCB. Clearly on the issue of the importation of hazardous waste we've said from the time that the siting

of Swan Hills was an issue back in the mid-80s that we would not change our Alberta-only policy with respect to hazardous waste without Albertans saying that it should be so. I really looked very carefully at how we should be approaching this issue with the application by Chem-Security to expand the type of waste that they would be able to use from outside of this province. It's very clear in dealing with my colleagues at the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment meetings throughout this country that it's very difficult to site a facility; it's very difficult to fund a facility that's capable of handling special waste. My colleagues have asked for a regional approach on the basis that we must think globally and act locally. I think this will happen if the conclusion of the review into the importation issue is that we should be accepting waste from outside of the province. The two big issues that will be reviewed are really the transportation safety issue and the treatment process itself. When the new kiln came in, we had a very, very thorough review of the treatment process itself, so I think the focus is likely to be on transportation.

The hon. member did talk about the Bovar company and the biomedical waste that is being dealt with at Beiseker. Hon. member, that's not hazardous waste that's being dealt with by the definition that we have of hazardous waste. We use three categories: general waste, biomedical waste, and hazardous waste. So we have given the opportunity to Beiseker or to any other facility that has the capability of dealing with waste and not infringing on the stringent emission standards that we have here in the province, as long as they live up to those standards, to import biomedical waste. So we are working on that premise. But again that's not a hazardous waste; it's a biomedical waste. It's a separate category.

In terms of the oil patch waste, I just want to make it clear that when we are talking about oil field waste, we are not talking about two different ways of dealing with that waste. It's very clear that the Energy Resources Conservation Board, which does have the authority over this through the Department of Energy, has to live up to the same environmental standards as we have in the province dealing with non energy issues; in other words, renewable natural resources.

In terms of the hearing at Swan Hills, I believe the only reference to counsel was to intervenor funding, to identify counsel for the intervenors, not that they would use counsel from the NRCB.

Tire recycling. Well, I could go on for a long time on tire recycling. The company in Edmonton is Alberta Environmental Rubber Products. They do have a contract not to deal with tires around the province, hon. member, but just in the Edmonton and north area. We expect that we will have that same kind of opportunity in southern Alberta.

One thing I do want to make clear: the experts in the field say that the average is only about 5 percent of the waste stream that is being used in other jurisdictions or in all of the jurisdictions that are dealing with tires in terms of high-end recycling. We're at about 25 percent just with Alberta Environmental Rubber Products. The passenger tire equivalent is about 600,000 tires, so we're up to a very substantial amount of rubber product that we are creating. I think we have to be cautious and careful not to flood the market and not to look beyond the province of Alberta for a continuing market for these rubber crumb products, because there are going to be other initiatives in other jurisdictions trying to do exactly the same thing. We are clearly focusing on high-end recycling initiatives as the way to deal with this and, in the meantime, to deal with the problem that we have on an ongoing basis of 2 million to 2 and a half million tires being put into the

waste stream each year and the 6 million, 8 million, 10 million, whatever, tires that are stockpiled.

5:00

Self-policing by industry, only if the technology is there to ensure that we can monitor, that we can do spot checks and that we put that responsibility on industry to report back to us.

Privatization of provincial parks. Again we are talking about privatization of the operation of provincial parks; that is all. We have to have controls. We do that through contracts, and we will continue to look at whether in a specific example a bond should be required or not.

I want to thank the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, who did ask a number of good questions, and with her questions and some of the questions from other members opposite I undertake to report to you in writing. Once again I thank you for the opportunity to deal with these important questions in Environmental Protection.

Mr. Chairman, I would now call for the vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the vote?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

Agreed to:

Program 1 - Departmental Support Services	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$16,994,000
Total Capital Investment	\$401,000

Program 2 - Environmental Regulatory Services	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$34,082,000
Total Capital Investment	\$1,266,000

Program 3 - Water Management and Waste Assistance	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$49,907,000
Total Capital Investment	\$3,781,000

Program 4 - Fish and Wildlife Conservation	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$26,335,000
Total Capital Investment	\$463,000

Program 5 - Land and Forest Services	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$110,391,000
Total Capital Investment	\$1,178,000

Program 6 - Provincial Parks and Kananaskis Country	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$36,069,000
Total Capital Investment	\$2,503,000

Program 7 - Administrative Appeal Services	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$366,000
Total Capital Investment	\$3,000

Program 8 - Special Waste Management Assistance	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$30,732,000

Program 9 - Overview and Co-ordination of Environmental Conservation	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$1,338,000

Program 10 - Natural Resources Conservation	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$1,505,000

Program 11 - Water Resources Advisory Services	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$480,000
Total Capital Investment	\$14,000

Summary	
Total Operating Expenditure	\$308,199,000
Total Capital Investment	\$9,609,000

Department Total	\$317,808,000
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MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I move that the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again.

Resolved that a sum not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1995, for the department and purposes indicated.

The Department of Environmental Protection: \$308,199,000 for operating expenditures, \$9,609,000 for capital investment, for a total of \$317,808,000.

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. All in favour of that report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: Opposed, if any? Carried.

[At 5:09 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]

