

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: Monday, February 23, 1998 **8:00 p.m.**

Date: 98/02/23

head: **Committee of Supply**

[Mr. Tannas in the chair]

THE CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply would come to order. Hon. members of the Committee of Supply are reminded that tonight we divide ourselves into subcommittees. Subcommittee C will remain here, and subcommittee D will go up to room 512. Those that are going there will discuss the estimates for the Department of Energy, while we who remain will discuss the Labour estimates.

We would invite all those in subcommittee D to go upstairs, and we'll see you sometime shortly before 10.

[The committee met as subcommittees C and D from 8:01 p.m. to 10:07 p.m.]

THE CHAIRMAN: I'd like to call the committee to order. That would mean that we're all sitting down.

MRS. GORDON: Mr. Chairman, subcommittee D of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of the Department of Energy, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to table copies of documents tabled during the subcommittee of supply meeting this day for the official records of the Assembly.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the committee concur in this report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed? So ordered.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Mr. Chairman, subcommittee C of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of the Department of Labour. It reports progress thereon and requests leave to sit again.

Mr. Chairman, I also would like to table copies of documents that were tabled during the subcommittee of supply meeting this day for the official records of our Assembly.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the committee concur in this report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed? So ordered.

The hon. Government House Leader, indeed.

MR. HAVELOCK: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report progress and request leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

MRS. GORDON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of the Department of Labour and the Department of Energy, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

I also would like, Mr. Speaker, to table copies of documents tabled during Committee of Supply this day for the official records of the Assembly.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur in this report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

head: Government Bills and Orders
head: Committee of the Whole

10:10

[Mr. Tannas in the chair]

Bill 16

Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 1998

THE CHAIRMAN: Any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

MR. SAPERS: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Well, I couldn't debate the other motion, so I'm going to try to get in some of my concerns about the subcommittee process through supplementary supply.

Actually, Mr. Chairman, I'd just simply like to put on the record one other question for the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development that I overlooked when I had an earlier opportunity to debate these estimates – but I can't say that, that I overlooked when we earlier discussed these estimates – and that has to do with the transfer of \$8 million support for adult learners. I would like the minister to undertake to get back to me in writing, if he will, to let me know exactly the path that that money is taking and whether or not any of it flows from the skills training agreement with the government of Canada and the HRDC part 2 funding that the government of Canada and the government of Alberta agreed to spend in a whole new exciting way about a year ago. I'll have some other questions for the minister once just a little bit more research is done on this topic, but I understand that there have been some significant changes in policy on how that money is spent and allocated, and I'd like to know whether or not this \$8 million savings, which the minister has been able to find so that he could transfer funds out of the actual training program, is a result of these significant policy changes.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Calder.

MR. WHITE: Thank you kindly, Mr. Chairman. To finish off some statements I made earlier today regarding the supplementary estimates and where the moneys were that were not expended in the normal course and budgeted for, but there were extra funds available – I believe this document does not show so much where money was spent but the fact that money was not spent in certain areas.

In the infrastructure for transportation, I point out that the north/south corridor that is supposed to have been – I think it was '93 that it was agreed upon, from Mexico to Alaska or some point up north. It was planned to be completed. I note that getting through this city is nigh impossible without gearing down 14 times and making some tough corners for any transport. In this member's constituency there is an expenditure that is at least five years late for the extension of Anthony Henday from highway 16

to 16X. Now they've changed the numbers, so it's from 16A to 16 proper. That's being worked on now, but it's very, very late, and in fact there was no extra money put in this year's budget to move that forward.

Likewise there were no major moneys put forward to twinning highway 43, even to get the planning in order such that some construction work could occur, particularly from the end of the four-lane divided, from about Gunn all the way up to Whitecourt.

See, those are the expenditures that could have and should have been undertaken in this budget in the regular course and, if not that, it certainly should have been cited earlier on that there would be more revenues than there were expenditures and in the areas where expenditures were less than expected, those funds should have been shifted into these areas at least to get the planning going in the capital work.

In the area of forestry management and the environment in general, it's this member's feeling that there's a great deal of expertise in those areas that is being rapidly lost by reason of the private sector pulling people out with that expertise and hiring them away, aside from the fact that there's been a shrinking of these departments such that they're painfully thin on the number of people they have to do the job allotted. And when you're dealing with the environment, it's my view that if you're about to err on one side or the other, which you're bound to do, try not to err on the side of overlooking some area that can be potentially very damaging.

I cite any manner of environmental minidisasters that do occur every day. I cite the upstream water quality of this city versus the downstream water quality. It's not simply a matter of choosing a number to say how much you are going to ship out as raw sewage versus how much you're going to treat into primary and secondary. That can be gauged in simple dollars, sir. Now, I would think that if you're going to err, you'd err on the side of preservation, particularly in a land such as this. That's not just my personal view, but that is the view of a great number of the younger people that we have in society today, those that are knowledgeable in those areas and expect to live well into the next century and have to deal with the consequences of a potentially failed environment.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I've exhausted those comments that I want to make today and hope that those who do listen to these debates and understand what this member has said take those statements into consideration in some future expenditures from the general fund as well as the supplementary estimates.

Thank you kindly for your time.

[The clauses of Bill 16 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

THE CHAIRMAN: Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. HAVELOCK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move the committee now rise and report.

[Motion carried]

10:20

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

MRS. GORDON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration certain bills. The committee reports the following: Bill 16.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur in this report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

head: **Government Bills and Orders**
head: **Third Reading**

Bill 16
Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 1998

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. HAVELOCK: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Provincial Treasurer, I move third reading of Bill 16.

[Motion carried; Bill 16 read a third time]

[At 10:22 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.]