

2:02 p.m.

Monday, October 29, 1990

[Chairman: Mr. Ady]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would like to call our committee meeting to order. I'd like to welcome before our committee the Hon. Ken Kowalski, the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, and his department officials. Prior to moving to the formal part of our meeting, are there any who have recommendations they would like to read into the record today? If not, we would like to have the minister introduce his department officials and then perhaps take a few minutes with a brief overview of the two projects that are appropriate for discussion today, those being the Capital City Recreation Park in Edmonton and the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre. Perhaps he'd give us a brief overview on that, and then we'll move to the formal question portion of our committee hearing today.

Mr. Minister.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon once again. I'm very, very pleased to have the honour of appearing before the special standing committee of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. I've two gentlemen with me. The gentleman to my left is Mr. Ed McLellan, who's the Deputy Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, and the gentleman to my right is Mr. Ray Reshke, who is the executive director of financial administration, once more for the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I guess the two pertinent items you have for review today would be on page 26 of the 1989-90 annual report of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. One is the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre, and the other one would be the Capital City Recreation Park.

I feel a bit saddened today because this will be my last appearance before this esteemed committee with respect to the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre. The fiscal year under review was the last year in which there was an expenditure level on the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre. I looked at *Hansard* for November 14, 1989, which covered the appearance of myself and my officials last year before this committee, and at that time I spent a few minutes giving you background on the Capital City Recreation Park and didn't really give too much background with respect to the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre. As this will be the last opportunity one will have to make comments with respect to this project, because it was concluded in the last fiscal year and there are no expenditure levels in this year, perhaps the final chapter with respect to this project might be read into the record or dealt with in the record of this particular committee, because this has been a project of very, very significant financial investment overall. Perhaps just to bring everybody up to date, it might be useful.

In the fiscal year under review, in terms of the 1989-90 expenditure level we're talking about a level of about \$1.6 million. Of course, the construction of that project began in the 1977-78 fiscal year, and the project was completed, for the most part, by April of 1986. The project dealt with a health sciences centre that integrated health care teaching and research as part of the University of Alberta hospital in the city of Edmonton, and the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services provided the grants for the project through the Alberta Heritage

Savings Trust Fund. That included not only construction but the equipping and furnishing of the health sciences centre.

Throughout the whole project the University hospital board was responsible for the commissioning of consultants, tendering and awarding of contracts, and the ordering of furniture and equipment, with public works and formerly Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care providing assistance and guidance in project management. I use that phraseology and those words because members will remember that it was in the fall of 1988 that responsibility for the management of some of these projects was transferred from the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care to the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services.

All in all, the health sciences centre is 1.8 million square feet or 167,000 square metres in a complex which houses 843 acute care beds, 14 operating theatres, and seven intensive care units. The centre also includes a 40-bed day ward, four operating rooms, and an eight-bed recovery room for outpatients requiring same-day surgery or treatment.

There was a major relocation of patient care programs from the University of Alberta hospital and the relocation of academic and clinical functions at the Faculty of Medicine from the Clinical Sciences Building to the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre between May and September of 1986. I indicated earlier that the basic construction was concluded in the spring of 1986, but there were additional relocations and locations that occurred after that point in time. Then in November of 1986 the government approved a change in scope to the project, addressing the construction of a clinical research facility of approximately 7,900 gross square metres in conjunction with the heritage medical research building project. Of course, the heritage medical research organization is part of one of the funding beneficiaries of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Then in November of 1987 the clinical research building project was transferred to the Department of Advanced Education as the funding department, with total provincial support of \$17,632,000. Subsequently we reduced the total provincial support for the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre to \$396,457,000 from the \$414,089,000 previously approved, and that was done in recognition of the transfer of the research building project to the Department of Advanced Education.

One last update with respect to this occurred in the current fiscal year. There was a discussion with respect to the demolition of the 1950-57 wing of the University of Alberta hospital that was talked about, and you will recall that the former Member for Edmonton-Strathcona had raised such questions with me during the estimates of the various departments I had the privilege of being minister for and wanted to know when approval would be given to deal with the demolition of the 1950-57 wing. On July 20, 1990, I provided approval to the University of Alberta hospitals board. They requested that they have the right to demolish that at their cost, and we provided them that approval. So all in all, total provincial support for this project going back to the 1977-78 fiscal year is \$395,789,000.

In the last year, 1989-90, we provided some dollars, \$1,600,000, that we're talking about here today. I'll break that figure down for you. The department of medicine clinics received \$857,000; intensive care unit general systems, \$205,000; landscaping for east of the centre, \$182,000; for the continuation of the drawings and the updating of them, \$148,000; upgrading of lighting in their pediatrics area, \$100,000. We were asked to provide blackout blinds in a number of patient rooms; that was done to the tune of \$69,000. There was a telelift station on level 6 that was completed at a cost of \$35,500. Our project office expenses

with respect to the implementation of this amounted to \$3,500. So you've got a total expenditure level of \$1,600,000. That really is the story in, I guess, a very, very quick, almost chartered accountancy point of view, with the overview of the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre.

In the same fiscal year there were modest expenditures with respect to Capital City Recreation Park. Members will recall that on November 14, 1989, I'd spent a few minutes giving the overview on Capital City Recreation Park, and I pointed out that our involvement in Public Works, Supply and Services is basically to pay for the land, the purchase of which had been approved by the department which deals with this particular park, the Department of Recreation and Parks. They deal in concert with the city of Edmonton, and the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services agreed in the past in terms of a policy to purchase property and provide \$4 million, I guess it was, over a number of years. In the 1989-90 fiscal year we had \$800,000 budgeted. We received approval for that. Actual expenditure was \$780,700, so of that \$800,000 item that's included in the report, there was a leftover of \$19,300. There are a few parcels of land that still have to be obtained to complete it, and that number is 25 parcels on approximately 42 acres of land to finish what this project has all been about.

2-12

The document deals with an expenditure level of nearly \$44 million on Capital City Recreation Park. When the announcement and the agreement was made on February 11, 1975, with respect to this very important initiative that would come, there was also an agreement at that time by all the players to set a dollar level for this park. That dollar level was clearly identified. A limit of \$34 million in 1974 dollars was set to build this project, to undertake this project. For all intents and purposes it will be concluded in all likelihood in this current fiscal year, and then that will complete that project as well. I suspect I would have the privilege of coming back next year to report on that, but two years from now - unless there would be something to change with respect to Capital City Recreation Park, this will be the second last appearance I have before this committee with respect to this project as well.

So, Mr. Chairman, that's a nutshell for the two projects. Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre, a very, very major project in the history of the funding of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, is essentially complete, and for the Capital City Recreation Park we're in the last year of land acquisition with respect to that. It will be complete by the end of this current fiscal year.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister.

I will recognize the Member for Edmonton-Centre, followed by the Member for West Yellowhead.

**REV. ROBERTS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's good to have the Progressive Conservative minister with us. It's always good to see Progressive Conservatives coming whether at the federal or at the provincial level. In the great tradition of Macdonald and Cartier, the Progressive Conservative Party, federally and provincially, is such a close-knit family when you think that the minister is here presenting his views today.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Would the member please move to his question?

**REV. ROBERTS:** Yes. To the Progressive Conservative minister here, federally and provincially, the questions, of course, have to do with the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre. I have three. The first one really is more of a detailed question, and it's just to get an update or get some sense from the minister, if he does not agree that one of the great omissions in the planning and development and final chapter that hasn't been written on the Walter C. Mackenzie is a landing pad for helicopters coming in, air ambulance services. As we know, the committee met with the board of the centre last year. They want to have the hospital be a regional trauma centre for all of Edmonton and northern Alberta, but they don't have an adequate landing pad for the air ambulance. I know this has left a number in a quandary. Do we now regret that out of expenditures such a provision wasn't made for that at this centre?

**MR. KOWALSKI:** Mr. Chairman, as always, when one works with individuals in the community with respect to projects such as this, there is a board, the University of Alberta hospital board. If the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre is saying that previous members on the board overlooked something or didn't deal with a particular matter, he might choose to convey that to them. The reality is that I guess those members on that particular board did not strongly recommend that a helicopter landing pad or that kind of infrastructure was important at the time. Where we're at right now on this day in October of 1990 is that there are ongoing discussions with respect to this matter with the board and the overall future planning, I guess, of hospital needs in the greater Edmonton area. It may very well be that decisions will be made with respect to that. If they are made with respect to this particular addition, it would not be funded under the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. It would in all likelihood be funded under the operating components of Alberta hospitals and health or in fact the capital projects side of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services. But to bring it right around, there are discussions with respect to that matter.

**REV. ROBERTS:** Thank you. The next two questions really are of a broader nature. The first one has to do with how we can really assess the investment in this deemed asset of \$391 million and what that really represents, given that a health care facility of this magnitude and this nature obviously is going to experience depreciation in a number of different ways. This is, I think, the general question of how we are calculating a depreciation allowance or depreciation calculations, whether it's for the physical plant or for the medical equipment for the whole hospital. We are going to be left, of course, with general revenue having to keep it up to date, whether it's the mechanical or the engineering or the medical equipment or all the rest.

In this final chapter being written on the health sciences centre from the trust fund, I'm wondering whether the minister and his officials have taken a more thorough look at that we don't really just have \$391 million worth we can sell off to anybody. In fact, we have an asset much less than that, and depreciation is going to continue to eat away at this asset. I ask him and his officials how they've calculated that, what allowances they've made for that, and what the real net value of this asset is.

**MR. KOWALSKI:** Well, of course the facility comes under the jurisdiction of a board, members at large within the community.

There is a governance board with respect to the University of Alberta hospital and the hospital system. Our job is essentially to respond to the needs of people and react to people. If there's to be evaluation – we're essentially a department of builders, not a department of auditors and accountants. I don't really think it's incumbent upon me to spend a great deal of time trying to assess what the value of a bed is compared to the value of a human life. The perspective I have is that if a request is made to this government to respond to the medical needs of individuals, this government will assess those needs and deal with those medical needs. I'm not going to spend a great deal of time worrying about the cost of a bed. I would rather be prepared to spend my time trying to figure out how we save a life and deliver a patient to the hospital and make sure that patient receives the greatest amount of health care provided. It may very well be a position of the New Democratic Party that they can put a value on human life – I don't know what it would be – and they may depreciate it as well, but it's not the position of any member of the Progressive Conservative Association of the province of Alberta to do that, nor the government of Alberta.

From the perspective I have, I would rather deal with hospital boards in wanting to assist them in saving life and making sure that life is valuable and not trying to assess what the cost of life is in terms of the number of patient-days and beds or anything else like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Final supplementary.

REV. ROBERTS: Well, thank you. That was a very interesting Progressive Conservative answer, Mr. Chairman, how he could possibly have swum away from such a question as that in so poor a fashion. The question had nothing to do with the cost of human life but how we measure costs of health care facilities. Someone has to pay for depreciation, and I thought this minister in his role here, standing before us and saying that it's a grant of \$91 million, might have a better response than that, because other hospitals are asking the same questions: when is it needed to be replaced; when does it depreciate and by how much?

Let me try this last approach. He'll probably find a good Progressive Conservative way to swim away from this one as well. As he says, in closing the book on this whole project, the Walter C. Mackenzie isn't just a major health care facility; it is the most ambitious health care facility in not only the province but I'm sure in western Canada. I'm just wondering in retrospect and in review and in this sort of final stage now whether in fact anyone, this minister or the trust fund committee or the board, has actually done a thorough review to know what was learned by this experience, what mistakes were made, what needs not to be repeated again in terms of hospital construction and building facilities such as this. I know there have been criticisms of putting psychiatry on the fourth floor, of putting carpets in medical and surgical units where blood and other fluids get spilled and can't be gotten out of the carpets, whether in fact such glorious surroundings do improve health care and health status. A number of very important questions have been asked about this most ambitious project, and I'm just wondering whether the minister sees it as his mandate to actually review and get a handle on its successes and its failures, or who's doing that, as being good stewards of this outlay, somebody should be doing.

MR. KOWALSKI: Yes, Mr. Chairman, this is probably the most ambitious health care centre in western Canada, and

certainly it's a credit to the people of Alberta who so strongly supported the deliverance of prime quality health care in the Edmonton area and the greater Edmonton area and to all those citizens within the province of Alberta. And yes, Mr. Chairman, we have undertaken evaluation of the lessons that could be learned, lessons of a positive nature, and lessons we may want to look forward to into the future. I'd be very happy to comment on them.

I think that during the history of the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre there tended to be questions raised during the whole construction phase of it all. The process was a very basic one. The province of Alberta agreed to work with a local hospital board, in this case the University hospital board. That University hospital board was responsible for the commissioning of consultants, the tendering and awarding of contracts, the ordering of furniture and equipment. It was responsible for the management of that.

2-22

It seems to me that if lessons were to be learned, some of those things that may have led to a few headlines along the way that the very people on the board in association, I guess, with their medical consultants, the representatives of the various medical staff that you would have in such a large facility – the question really was: is there a better way to deal with construction projects of this magnitude? Perhaps one conclusion would be that there would be a greater role to be played by the funding agency, in this case the government of Alberta, in terms of supervising these construction contracts. That's a lesson that I think all of us have to address ourselves to in 1990 as we go forward in the future, because the system we have in place in our province today is that a locally appointed hospital board would in essence be the one, after getting approval for a project, to basically undertake the whole series of things.

I've had discussions over the last number of years – not as the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services but certainly as a Member of the Legislative Assembly – to ask the question that as we go forward in the future, might it be better, in fact, to have more co-ordination by the province in the construction and delivery of these projects? I think we've got a battery of people who've learned from experience in a number of these projects throughout the province of Alberta that might lessen the costs overall. As an example, if we're building half a dozen hospitals in 1990 throughout the province of Alberta, is there a way of saving some dollars by, in fact, having one set of drawings for six hospitals – in other words, a prototypical approach rather than a unique approach – because I think the underlying objective and the bottom line in terms of the health care system should not be dealing with the ego of a hospital board in terms of having this most magnificent structure or dealing with the ego of an MLA who says, "I want this hospital designed in a certain way," or dealing with the ego of an architect who wants to create the Taj Mahal that's second to none. What we're talking about here is the delivery of services for people, and the primary objective must be in providing the most efficient, cost-effective health care services to the patient, not the ego of perhaps the MLA for Edmonton-Centre, who says we've got to do something really unique because we've got a certain kind of something in my constituency that needs to be resplendent as the sun sets on the horizon at night or the like.

The focus of attention of delivery of health care in this province must be on the patient. That must be the primary objective. If there's any one lesson we have learned, being very specific in responding to the question from the member, it is

that we have to focus our attention first, always, and only on the patient.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The Member for West Yellowhead.

MR. DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try not to be as rough on the minister as my colleague, the Member for Edmonton-Centre. My questions will be mainly on the passive and pleasurable parks that are built throughout the province. Although I don't have any really tough questions – the minister covered most of the questions I had prepared in his preliminaries – I would like to ask the minister in what year they started putting the funds into this Capital City Park.

MR. KOWALSKI: I appreciate your comment. For the love of me, I certainly never found any question forthcoming from the Member for Edmonton-Centre, by the way, to be a tough question. I found it to be a devious question for his own selfish purposes but never difficult.

With respect to the Capital City Recreation Park, on February 11, 1975, the province of Alberta entered into an agreement with the city of Edmonton for the development of the Capital City Recreation Park, and there were three purposes of that original agreement of 1975. Purpose number one was for a park, purpose number two was to have a recreation complex for the people in the area, and purpose number three was for environmental conservation of the area bordering the river. The first effective period of that agreement was from February 1975 to July 1978, and it was amended at various other times. It was amended on February 17, 1978, and amended again on January 9, 1979, and then March 16, 1984.

In the original agreement that was done, three departments of our government were involved: the departments of the Environment, Lands and Forests, and Culture, Youth and Recreation. Today it's the Department of Recreation and Parks, which represents the government of Alberta in dealing with the city of Edmonton. Funding, of course, started to follow almost immediately because in that same 1975 agreement, as I indicated a little earlier, there was a dollar figure set aside. We would set a limit of \$34 million in 1974 dollars for that particular park development and land acquisition therein.

MR. DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Minister. There's another question I have, if only for clarification, and that is in regards to the expenditures on the Capital City Recreation Park. It mentions the Rundle golf course. Was that golf course in fact funded through the Alberta heritage trust fund?

MR. KOWALSKI: Part of Capital City Park was also the tying in of a series of other parks that went with it. Capital City Park itself is 1,857 acres in size, but it's also connected to 14 regional parks. I don't know if that particular golf course was part. Riverside certainly wasn't, because it existed there before. Rundle was done on an old garbage site, and I can't recall right now if that was one of the 14 additional ones that were weaved into it, because the basic number of acreages for the Capital City Park coincided with the restricted development area boundary. I'd have to check and get back to you, sir.

MR. DOYLE: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say I was pleased this morning with the \$411,000 going to the Grande Cache hospital on the minister's announcement. But I find the Grande Cache hospital is a very easy hospital to walk

around and find your way around in, whereas at the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre people are roaming all over the place trying to find where they're going. Would the minister or the government, out of these large numbers of dollars that have gone into the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre, have some suggestions to enlarge public relations or some means to help the people with directions to find their way around the massive centre that has a very large middle piece that really accommodates only air?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, there's absolutely no doubt about the size of it. The Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre, I repeat, is 1.8 million square feet or 167,000 square metres. It also has 843 acute care beds, 14 operating theatres, and seven intensive care units. It also includes a 40-bed day ward, four operating rooms, and an eight-bed recovery room for outpatients requiring same-day surgery. If you're going to get a facility of that size, there's absolutely no doubt at all. But I'm going to repeat again: there is a board. There is a board. If the hon. member is suggesting that really the board is incapable of dealing with that kind of internal thing, I'll certainly provide the board with a copy of the minutes, a *Hansard*, of this particular meeting and ask them as a petition on behalf of the Member for West Yellowhead that the board should take some initiatives. I can give them some suggestions, the very easiest, simplest, and clearest suggestions.

I've even gone down to the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre three times in the last two weeks to see a friend of mine who unfortunately is suffering from a stroke, but I had absolutely no difficulty whatsoever finding myself around that particular facility. When I was told the individual was on the fifth floor, I punched the elevator button to the fifth floor. When I was told to go to section F, I looked at the direction there and it said F to the left, and I walked in that direction. Then it said room 4, and I looked on the wall when I came in there and it said, you know, 1 to 4 to the right and 6 to whatever it was to the left. I didn't find that complicated, but if it is complicated, then we'll certainly provide some advice to them.

There is, of course, one very easy way of dealing with this. It's that you just simply draw painted lines on the floor to allow people to follow certain colours if it's acute care, intensive care. But they're located on different levels anyway.

I don't mean to be demonstratively unkind to the hon. member, but I can only give you my conclusion that I had no great difficulty, and I, for the love of me, do not recall since being appointed Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services that I've had one letter, petition, comment, or call from anyone saying it's difficult to find your way around there. But it's huge, no doubt at all, absolutely no doubt at all about its size.

2:32

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Well, I'm sure some of the Progressive Conservative members – I don't know if they're federal or provincial – must have some questions here today. If not, I'll ask a couple just to pursue this interesting area that the minister's opened up in terms of some of the lessons learned, the mistakes not to be repeated. Certainly what has been discussed are the huge cost overruns of this project from its initial planning stages. I'll ask some sort of tame question here. It may be a puffball question, but to pursue what he already said in terms of cost overruns, if he were to have more control of development of the ongoing operations and building of this

facility, where would he specifically have had more of a hands-on approach to what was being conceived and constructed and built?

**MR. KOWALSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I at no time have ever said that there were cost overruns. The gentleman is leading in his own assessment with his own bias for whatever reason he chooses to use, but I have never said there were cost overruns or anything else.

But I will answer his question, which is the same question that was asked a little earlier in terms of what would you do that would be different. I think one of the things in terms of a major, major construction project of this nature is that, in fact, the province has to play a greater role in terms of becoming responsible for the commissioning of consultants, the tendering and awarding of contracts, the ordering of equipment and furniture. The province through a department like Public Works, Supply and Services has garnered some degree of expertise and some degree of experience over the history of this department, one of the first ones created by the government of Alberta when the province was created in 1905, and there is a legacy there of how to do these things. Sometimes it's difficult for a board when faced with such a major project to have that expertise within itself, and it would seem to me that we might be able to get a better handle overall in terms of delivery by using the good offices of a department like the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.  
Supplementary?

**REV. ROBERTS:** Since his earlier reference, I'm sure he did make some reference to direct patient care and improving the health care for individuals and their health situation. However, I think what we have here is another classic example, in fact, of the health care dollar going in many larger respects to actually pay for overhead costs and fixed costs and not direct patient care costs. Has the minister, in fact, any breakdown, whether it's the \$391 million now or the ongoing operation of the hospital, of what the ratio would be of this facility now in terms of having to pay for overhead and fixed costs in their budget, which must be enormous given the heating and the hydro and all the maintenance costs for such a building which do not go to direct patient care in terms of their health? What is that ratio? This centre has had to live under quite a difficult legacy now of enormous overhead costs.

**MR. KOWALSKI:** Well, once again, Mr. Chairman, the operating of hospitals in the province does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services. Once again, if the hon. gentleman is finding a difficult time trying to figure out what that figure is, somebody could bring me a copy of the estimates for 1990-91. It was included in the estimates for 1991 of the Minister of Health. In hospitals and health care you would see appropriation dollars for the operating of hospitals. If the gentleman has a difficult time trying to find out where it is in the book, again, we would be very, very happy to assist in that regard. I'm told I get paid a big penny for being here, and it seems to be a costly use of my time, but I'd be happy to do it, happy to find it for the gentleman.

**REV. ROBERTS:** Mr. Chairman, I don't know how to be more clear with this minister. What we're asking for is that in the

construction of hospitals there are certain formulae that are used. For instance, for every capital dollar that's expended, there's at least 50 cents for every dollar to be dedicated, therefore, to operating. I'm asking in this case for the ratio in this building and in other hospitals, what he's learned from this in terms of when you build a hospital. How much of it is going to be left as a burden to the administrators of that hospital in perpetuity to pay for their overhead and fixed costs as opposed to being able to fund direct patient care costs? Now, anybody who looks at hospital construction, particularly of this magnitude, should consider such a question, and I'm wondering - it has nothing to do with the continuing operating expenses; it's in terms of the planning, the development, the building of such a place. Does he not agree that he's left that administration with having to spend more of its budget on high overhead costs?

**MR. KOWALSKI:** Well, Mr. Chairman, as a general rule in terms of the discussions that have been held in this Assembly, I think the minister of hospitals and medical care has basically said that about one-third of the total capital cost of a facility becomes the annual operating cost of such a facility, not 50 percent as the gentleman just indicated. [interjection] The minister has already said that repeatedly, about one-third. The hon. gentleman says "exactly." Well, obviously, he knew the answer to the question before he asked it.

Secondly, in terms of the so-called burden, please remember that in terms of the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre the designing, commissioning, and tendering was done by the hospital board. Of the administrators in the facility, one of them, in fact, would probably even be a member of the board. I cannot answer that question because I'm not privy to that information. That information would be with the board. I'd be very, very happy once again, though, to send a letter to the board asking for the specifics of that question.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.  
The Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

**MR. PAYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had two questions for the minister today with respect to Fish Creek park. The first has to do with the capital projects division statement of amounts expended on page 36 of the '89-90 annual report of the fund. As you'll recall, it was a question that I directed previously to the Minister of Recreation and Parks regarding the \$1.13 million item posted under recovery of amounts expended in previous years. The minister wasn't able at the time to clarify just what that entry implied and gave an undertaking to the committee that he would provide that information. Over this past weekend while I was attending a very successful policy-related function in the city of Edmonton, I chatted informally with the Minister of Recreation and Parks, who indicated to me that the minister of public works might be better equipped to respond. So I'd like to take advantage of the minister's presence today to ask if in fact he can do so.

**MR. KOWALSKI:** I'm sorry, sir, what page? There were no expenditures under the . . .

**MR. PAYNE:** Page 36.

**MR. KOWALSKI:** Page 36. There were no expenditures in the last fiscal year with respect to Fish Creek . . .

MR. PAYNE: Well, I'm not after expenditures, Mr. Minister; I'm after income, specifically the \$1.13 million income item in the section for recovery of amounts expended in previous years.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, the hon. member knows that all income associated with the government of Alberta goes to the Provincial Treasurer, not the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. PAYNE: That's fine. I certainly didn't mean to embarrass the minister. I just . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: Yeah. No, I appreciate that. It's just that if land or something else was sold in the past, whatever figures that would be accumulated from the sale of that surplus land would go directly to the General Revenue Fund to be held by the Provincial Treasurer. We've certainly had no action in the last fiscal year. At least my department has had no activity or association with Fish Creek Provincial Park at all.

MR. PAYNE: That's fine, Mr. Chairman.

Perhaps we could just shift then to the question of Sikome Lake. The minister will recall that the lake had been closed for a period of about 18 months to enable his department to upgrade the water quality of that otherwise very fine recreational facility in south Calgary. If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Chairman, the lake was reopened in August of '89. I'm wondering if the minister or his officials could update the committee and myself with respect to the water quality standards that have been achieved and the use that has been made of that facility since that extensive renovation was undertaken.

MR. KOWALSKI: The answer to the question is yes, as dealt with last year; both questions, yes.

MR. PAYNE: This is a very rare occasion where I have to rephrase two questions in a row, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KOWALSKI: The water quality has met the standard, and people are using it. Those were the two questions the gentleman raised.

MR. PAYNE: Yes. I was rather hopeful, Mr. Chairman, of some more quantifiable data, but perhaps I could deal with it on a one-to-one basis on another occasion.

2:42

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
The Member for Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Chairman. Just one other question. The minister hasn't been rising to much bait this afternoon. I'm wondering whether he would answer this question. In these \$391 million that have gone forth in the Walter C. Mackenzie, there have been some world-class pediatric services. As the minister knows, this represents, I think, 80 pediatric beds, a pediatric intensive care unit, a unit in pediatric cardiology: a very significant part of the Walter C. Mackenzie devoted to pediatric health. I'm wondering, then, having made this expenditure now and the quality that is in there, does the minister not agree that to then go and build another children's hospital - in fact, to close down what's already been built up here and to build a hundred-million dollar, 200-bed children's hospital next door - makes no sense at all?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Chairman, obviously this is a question for debate. There's nothing in the report that I'm to review in here that deals with the Northern Alberta Children's hospital. If this esteemed committee were to pass a motion saying they were calling on the government . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. minister, perhaps the Chair should intervene here. To the hon. member, please bear in mind that the Premier will be appearing before this committee later this week, and I really believe that question would be more appropriately put to the Premier. Does the minister concur on that? It really is not appropriate to your responsibilities.

REV. ROBERTS: It just does seem to me that he's here defending \$391 million worth of an asset, and I thought he might have some comment on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe it would be more appropriately directed to other ministers or the Premier.

Hon. minister and members of the committee, that's the end of the questions that have come to the Chair today. I would like on behalf of the committee to express appreciation to the minister and his officials for being here with us today and for the information they've dispensed.

We'd now call for a motion to adjourn from the hon. Member for Lacombe.

MR. MOORE: I move we adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The meeting stands adjourned till 10 a.m. tomorrow when the hon. Minister of Advanced Education, Mr. Gogo, will appear before the committee.

[The committee adjourned at 2:45 p.m.]