

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, March 28, 1973

[The House met at 3:00 o'clock.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. JAMISON:

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that we have with us today in the members gallery 20 members of the St. Albert branch of the Women's Institute, a worthy organization with a proud history in Canada of study and achievement in many areas, particularly those related to helping women reach their potential as good citizens.

With them, Mr. Speaker, are three charter members who have given fine leadership in the Institute: Mrs. Lorne Aiken, the first president of the St. Albert branch, now in its 27th year; Mrs. John Ball, the charter member of the Boyle branch now in St. Albert with 40 years of service; and Mrs. Telfer, a charter member in Nova Scotia with 55 years. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce them to you and through you to the members of this Assembly and I would now ask them to rise and be recognized.

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, seated in the members gallery this afternoon are some 43 students from the Colonel Walker School in Calgary. They are accompanied by their teachers and three members of the school association.

Mr. Speaker, the Colonel Walker School, which is located in my constituency, was one of the first public schools to be built in the City of Calgary. It is named after the first school board chairman. It is a proud school with an outstanding record of achievement dating back to the pioneer days of the early 1900's. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, because of poor planning we find the school gradually being surrounded by encroaching industrial development on all sides, on the west the Blackfoot Trail, on the east the oil refineries, and on the south the stockyards. But in spite of this, Mr. Speaker, this school is still proud to carry on in the traditions set by turning out outstanding students and citizens.

Today they are here to observe what some of us term to be the democratic process. And I hope that through this experience they will return safely to their homes, refreshed, inspired and confident in the performance of this Legislature.

In introducing them, I would ask them to please stand and be recognized by this Assembly.

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, for many years in Alberta we've heard Calgary and Edmonton fighting about who should be called the oil capital of Alberta or Canada, but I think before very long a town or future city in my constituency will be known as the oil capital of the world. I refer to Fort McMurray.

Today, we have with us some 65 students, Grade 9 students, from the Peter Pond School in Fort McMurray. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Bob Crow, Mr. Ken King, Mr. Bill Lacy, Miss Darlene Squires and Miss Barbara Hoffman. These students left this morning at 5:00 o'clock and arrived in

Edmonton at about 11:15 when they had lunch at NAIT and toured NAIT. They are here to observe the democratic process in action. I'd ask them to rise and be recognized by the House.

DR. MCCRIMMON:

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to introduce ten ladies from the Wolfville Ladies Club, which is just west of Ponoka in my constituency. I would like to introduce them to you and through you to the members of this Assembly. They are accompanied by two of the husbands, Mr. Coulter and Mr. Watson. We are very happy to have them come. I think it is the first time anyone from this area has come to visit with us in the House. We hope they come again. I would ask them now to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table today the water quality reports on four of the main rivers in Alberta, the Bow River, the Oldman River, the Red Deer River and the North Saskatchewan River.

CRA QUESTION PERIOD

Municipal Taxation Guidelines

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Municipal Affairs could advise the House as to the nature of the information he provided to the municipal councillors this morning?

MR. RUSSELL:

Yes, I could, Mr. Chairman. Very briefly, what I did was outline to them the guidelines they could expect to receive in the mail tomorrow with respect to questions we have received regarding various administrative details of the program.

Their main point of interest was the 7.5 per cent increase factor in municipal budgets and how it affected the eligibility for receiving the intensive grant. We went into that in some detail and there are printed guidelines, as I said, being mailed tomorrow, and I have also arranged for all MLAs to get a copy of them.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, am I right in assuming that the guideline is a very simple one -- simply that the government has decided to abandon that course of action and eliminate the 7.5 per cent guideline?

MR. SPEAKER:

I wonder if the hon. Opposition House Leader could assess the guidelines after they have been read?

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I think surely when the minister has spoken to the municipal councillors about it, it is incumbent upon him also to outline in the House this afternoon what it was he spoke to them about.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think in any way it could be construed that the 7.5 per cent guideline has been abandoned. We allowed them the flexibility of computing it on different methods, of coming to the minister with an appeal if they felt there was some exceptional circumstance, and allowing them to accumulate it over a three year rolling period. But the result of the 7.5 per cent per annum growth factor is a very integral and important part of the

program. I don't understand how the hon. leader could arrive at that conclusion.

MR. HENDERSON:

I didn't arrive at that conclusion, because I didn't know what it was he told the committee this morning, but I'd like to ask a further supplementary question. Do I gather that the government has not produced a mathematical formula on which to base allocation of grants, but it is going to be done by the seat of the minister's pants?

MR. RUSSELL:

No, Mr. Speaker. That item has been dealt with, I think, in some detail in previous question periods. Insofar as the incentive grant is concerned, that hasn't changed at all. It was laid out in the government announcement in three lines. It is a direct proportion of the previous year's supplementary education requisition by each municipality, and is very carefully calculated insofar as dollars and cents are concerned.

The other grant, the Municipal Assistance Grant, which is unconditional and does not relate to any growth factor involved in the municipal budget, is the result of a rather lengthy working exercise. I have told the members on many previous occasions, as well as the two municipal associations, that they will be given that information, and that information is coming.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. What steps are planned by the minister or the government to have further consultation on the guidelines with the municipal councils?

MR. RUSSELL:

That's a good point perhaps to say a couple of words on, Mr. Speaker, because in the initial part of the task force report that was published, in the government statement that was published, and on several occasions when I have spoken myself, I have always indicated that immediately both the municipal and provincial governments get through this budgeting time of the year, we would go on with ongoing consultations to deal with the effects of the plan and other matters recommended in the rest of the task force reports. We have always assumed there will be very heavy ongoing consultation.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, during that consultation during the next few weeks, will the minister be prepared to change some of the guidelines he has sent out to them, that are in the mail at the present time?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I think the point was made very effectively at this morning's meeting by some of the delegates that we are nearly into April insofar as the calendar and taxation year of the municipalities are concerned. It was important that these consultations end at some point, at least for this year so they could get on with their budgeting. The guidelines that are in the mail today represent answers to all the queries and the contentious points that we received since the announcement of the program on January 16. They are the guidelines for 1973.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister in a position to be a little more definitive as to when he will be tabling the information with respect to the mathematical formula used to calculate the unconditional municipal grants?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I think the members are perhaps exhibiting unwarranted curiosity about that working paper, because it really has no effect on the plan itself. All it does is allocate a fair portion of the municipal assistance grants pool to each municipality. The method by which it is allocated is fairly complex, but insofar as the details of the program is concerned, it has no bearing on the guidelines or on any other parts of the program.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Then it is my understanding at this time that consultation on the 1973 guidelines has ceased at this point in time, and consultation which will take place will be on the guidelines for the next fiscal year or financial year. Is that correct?

MR. RUSSELL:

That is correct, Mr. Speaker. I think we could say the active part of the consultations for 1973 concluded on March 6 and 7 at our meetings with the executives of the two associations. Since then we have been considering their written submissions and other correspondence received, but again bearing the point at which we are in the calendar year I think it was important the guidelines for 1973 be established.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Olds-Lidsbury, followed by the hon. Member for Macleod.

AVC Allowances

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Advanced Education. I would like to ask the Minister of Advanced Education if he has had an opportunity to check into the problems the students at the AVC centre in Calgary are having with regard to the income tax that was being levied on their federal and provincial training allowances.

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, as I understand the circumstances, the income tax is only a problem, if it be such, with respect to the allowances paid to students by the federal government and that manpower training allowances provided by the Department of Advanced Education are not income tax assessable. In commenting on that in the House earlier, I suggested if there were students who found themselves in a situation where they could not continue because of the tax and the cost to them I would encourage them to discuss their problems with the centre supervisors. Or if they wish to bring it to the attention of the chairman of the Students Finance Board, we would be happy to attempt to help them if we can.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Have some students left the AVC in Calgary because of this problem of getting funds for income tax?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, I have no personal knowledge of that. I noted through the media however, that there were three or four who felt they may be in that circumstance, but these have not been brought to my attention and I am not specifically aware of that.

Student Assistance

MR. CLARK:

One more supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Advanced Education. Have you had an opportunity to meet with the students of the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary regarding their submission to you on student assistance?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, I have a meeting already arranged and I expect to be discussing it with them in the course of the next week approximately -- or perhaps it is two, I have forgotten the precise date -- I'm not sure whether the student group coming to me will represent both universities or all precisely, but it is being coordinated through one of the officers of the student's association from the University of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Macleod, followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Ontario Premier's Edmonton Visit

MR. BUCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Premier. On the visit of the Premier of Ontario to Edmonton next week, and owing to the interest and importance of this occasion to the people of Alberta, has the hon. Premier considered inviting the hon. Mr. Davis to speak before the Legislature at this time?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I haven't. It would be a very interesting thought to consider. I would suggest that if we moved in that direction in our Canadian confederation, we here would have to be assured of the necessary quid pro quo so that we would be entitled to an opportunity to express our views before the Ontario Legislature. But subject to that point, I will give it some further thought. I will plan to meet with Mr. Davis when he does come into the province briefly on April 4, but I would think that at this late date scheduling on that basis probably would be difficult for him.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier is aware of the fact that should he decide to move in that direction, I would be pleased to make my seat available to the Ontario Premier so that it will put the exercise in the proper context.

[Laughter]

MR. LOUGHEED:

We wouldn't put him on that side.

MR. HENDERSON:

Well, we don't want him over there.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Premier would care to advise why he would think it appropriate to invite the Premier of Ontario to address this Legislature when last year he didn't think it was appropriate to invite the Prime Minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Possibly it was because the hon. Member for Calgary Bow didn't offer his chair.

[Laughter]

AN HON. MEMBER:

Saved by the bell.

Southern Alberta Teachers' Strike

MR. HINMAN:

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Manpower and Labour, I want to ask the Minister of Education if the government is considering acceding to the growing demand in the south for some direct action to get the children back to school?

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think it would be proper for anyone to make any assumptions about which of the options open to the government might be followed. I haven't been in touch with the Minister of Manpower and Labour in the past few hours by reason of his attendance at the court house, but I understand that a mediation offer was conveyed last night or this morning to the two parties and,

of course, the reaction which they would have to the offer would be an important one for us to see.

It is important to remember, in reviewing the collective bargaining process and the question of local autonomy that those who wish to express concern, be they parents or teachers, should express it very strongly and in an appropriate way, the parents and ratepayers to the trustees, and any teachers who might have views to their representatives as well.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

Hotel Liquor Licences

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Attorney General. Has the Attorney General or his department received any representations or delegations from hotel owners alleging mishandling of liquor licences in this province over the past year?

MR. LEITCH:

Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I missed one or two of the words in the last part of the hon. member's question.

MR. NOTLEY:

The question just to repeat it, Mr. Speaker, is: has the Attorney General or his department received any representations or delegations from hotel owners alleging any mishandling of liquor licences in this province?

MR. LEITCH:

I am not aware of any, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

Environmental Meeting

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. What is the purpose of your public meeting tonight at Brookside Elementary School?

MR. SPEAKER:

There is some grave doubt in the mind of the Chair whether questions directed to the appointments which the hon. ministers may be making or keeping may not be matters that are of top priority during the question period. Perhaps if the hon. member has a subject matter in mind that he would like to ask the minister about specifically, he might advert to that.

MR. HENDERSON:

On a point of order, I wonder if the Chair would mind quoting the basis for his ruling on this particular point.

MR. SPEAKER:

The basis simply is that the question period is intended for matters of public concern, not matters which might involve, for example, the ministers' constituencies where they might be going to meetings, and in general, the question period is intended for matters concerning which there is some urgency. The citation for that is 171, or beyond 171, in Beauchesne.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, on the point of order it is my understanding that the minister had called a public hearing in his capacity as Minister of the Environment.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to correct the impression that the Minister of the Environment has called a public hearing. The Minister of the Environment has called a public meeting. The intent of the meeting is to put before all people concerned the facts in regard to a discharge of storm-sewer water into the Mill Creek Ravine.

There have been a lot of letters written to the department in this regard; there has been a petition submitted to the department in this regard, and the best method which I considered to disseminate the information to the people was through a public meeting. So the public meeting is being held to let the people know just exactly what facts and figures we have on hand and what studies have been made and perhaps what action was being contemplated.

MR. NOTLEY:

Supplementary --

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the City of Edmonton been invited to participate in this hearing?

MR. YURKO:

Oh yes, Mr. Speaker, the City of Edmonton has definitely been invited to participate. Not only have they been invited but they are going to participate very actively. As a matter of fact I think about 50 per cent of the agenda involves the City of Edmonton directly, whereby they will lay their case and their understanding of the facts before the people in the area also.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker --

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview has also attempted to ask a supplementary, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a supplementary to either the hon. minister or to the hon. Premier. Has the government determined any overall policy with respect to advertising public meetings held by cabinet ministers?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, this depends to a large degree on the nature and type of meeting that is, in fact, being held, so there is a considerable amount of flexibility in this regard.

In this particular instance there was so much public concern in regard to what was being done in the area and so many letters were received, not only by my office but other offices of government, that it was felt necessary to inform as many people as possible of the meeting.

I might say that besides advertising the meetings so that all those concerned were made aware of it, individual letters went out to just as many people as identified themselves with the problem. So we attempted to let just everybody concerned with the problems know that they might be able to attend the meeting.

I might just add one aspect about this meeting and that is this: we felt very unfortunate that we couldn't get a bigger place as we feel that the school we now have for the meeting may be filled to capacity. I think it will hold about 300 people and we anticipate considerably more than 300 people.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. Is the minister able to give the House any approximate estimate of the cost of advertising this particular public meeting?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would put that on the Order Paper I would be very pleased to get the actual costs.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker --

MR. SPEAKER:

Might this be the last supplementary on this topic.

MR. WILSON:

--to the hon. Minister of the Environment. Does the city not actually have all the approvals necessary for the temporary outfall into Whitemud Creek now?

MR. YURKO:

No, Mr. Speaker. The city did receive an approval from the Health Department some time ago in regard to a certain proposal. New legislation has, in fact, been passed and new requirements have appeared. Now, under the new Clean Water Act a permit to construct is necessary, and then a licence to operate is also necessary. So that, in fact, even though the city has a permit to construct it will need a licence to operate under some very established conditions in regard to the rate of discharge into the Mill Creek Ravine.

At the same time I might also suggest that matters also change and there was no permit obtained under The Water Resources Act initially so that in reviewing the legislation it had been my opinion, and the department's opinion, that a permit was also required under The Water Resources Act. The city was notified in this regard.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary --

MR. SPEAKER:

Could we revert to this topic if there is time left? The hon. Member for Lethbridge West, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge East.

Southern Alberta Teachers' Strike (Cont.)

MR. GRUENWALD:

Mr. Speaker, thank you. To the Minister of Education, regarding the strike in southern Alberta: have you received representation from trustees, as an organization or as individuals, showing concern regarding the strike in southern Alberta -- or from parents, individually or as organized groups? Possibly also the Minister of Labour would like to comment after that if there is anything new down there.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, on the first part of the question, I have received telegrams and letters from parents but, to my recollection, not individual submissions from trustees.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I am receiving telegrams and other modes of communication from trustees and teachers.

MR. GRUENWALD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. May I assume then, Mr. Minister of Labour, that there are no new developments in the disputes in southern Alberta?

DR. HOHOL:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the answer as reported to me by the Acting Minister of Manpower and Labour is entirely accurate.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lethbridge East, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

University of Lethbridge

MR. ANDERSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Advanced Education. Have you received a request from the University of Lethbridge to establish a Native American studies program at that university?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, the request, I believe, has been received by the Universities Commission. It has been considered by them and if that program is not adequately dealt with by the commission before its dissolution, it will be considered by the Department of Advanced Education.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

Bow River

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, my question today is directed to the Minister of the Environment. I was wondering if the hon. minister could inform the House when the committee -- the review committee, the six-man committee that has been set up -- when can we expect a report on the channelling of the Bow River from that committee?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated before in the House, there are at least four conditions that have to be satisfied before the project can proceed.

First of all, approval by the provincial government in regard to cost-sharing is necessary under the new policy announced in November. Secondly an environment impact analysis of the project has to be done. Thirdly the final report of Montreal Engineering has to be made public. Fourthly a public meeting will be held to put the facts on the table so that the people in that area of Calgary would know what in fact is being done.

The City of Calgary has now appointed its three representatives to this committee, and the department has certainly appointed its three representatives. This committee is going to meet very shortly to plan a timetable. I have asked the committee to use every means to expedite the project so that it can be under way at the earliest opportunity.

MR. DIXON:

A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Have you indicated to the City of Calgary that you will assist them in the money they are losing because of the delay? Has there been any decision made on that yet?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, any decisions that the City of Calgary made prior to receiving approval to continue or go ahead with the project under The Water Resources Act and under The Clean Water Act are expenses that they have incurred entirely on their own and through the administration of their own business. So this in fact is their business. The provincial government's policy is related to sharing the actual engineering and construction costs on a 50-50 basis. But the costs that they may have, in fact, incurred because of the manner in which they did business up until now are strictly their own costs.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to supplement that answer. I was asked by the hon. Member for Calgary McCall on March 21 whether or not the office of the Premier had received correspondence from the City of Calgary with regard to the issue and it has been answered now by the Minister of the Environment. The

answer to the question, after checking, is: yes, a letter was received on March 8, dated March 7, from the commissioner's office. It was acknowledged on March 12 with reference to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Minister of the Environment.

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, is it clearly indicated in that communication that verbal agreement had been given -- verbal permission had been given to the city to proceed in this specific communication which you have just referred to, Mr. Premier?

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Speaker, that question has been asked before and I thought I answered it fully and indicated that, in fact, in conversations between engineers in talking about these types of projects verbal agreement is often given or often alluded to. But I made it very plain before, and I make it very plain again that projects of this type that go ahead have to meet certain statutory requirements. They are very specific requirements passed by this Legislature and until those requirements are met then, the project doesn't proceed. On the basis of policy and statutory requirements this program has to meet these requirements and, in fact, it will proceed when it has met these requirements. I anticipate this will be within the next few months.

MR. DIXON:

A final supplementary question to the minister. Cwing to the fact of the cost to Calgary after the cease-work order was issued by your department, are you going to make an attempt, Mr. Minister, where money is involved, in particular cost to the taxpayer where they must go through you first to get the approval -- and then it would save all this problem we're getting into because you put a stop-work order and it's costing them a lot of money?

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Speaker, we attempt to recognize local autonomy in a lot of these areas or most areas that we deal with so that initiation has to come from the local authority. And, in fact, when initiation does originate with the local authority to do these projects, then it's incumbent upon them to recognize what permits they need.

In terms of costs I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that this government passed a pretty major policy last November in terms of cost-sharing with the municipalities, a number of these major programs. But it had some pretty substantial basis and has offered to assist the municipalities in a major way in problems of this sort.

But nevertheless in passing this policy, it has had to establish some very basic guidelines or basic rules and one was that the cabinet had to approve the project in terms of cost-sharing prior to the program starting. This is what is required in this case and I do state that this policy -- major policy -- was, in fact, passed in November. So perhaps the policy wasn't advertised as well as it should have been. But I'm quite surprised on a number of instances, the opposition hammering the idea of advertising some of these things and I indicated this in my estimates. I felt that in my estimates far more money was needed to advertise some of these things and this is a case in point.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View, followed by the hon. Member for Clds-Didsbury.

Road Allowances

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Highways. I wonder if the minister can advise whether he or his department is in possession of a river access study report? And in particular with that report dealing with lands and river access between Calgary and the Stony Indian Reserve to the west.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View asked me a few days ago if there was a study of the Bow River west. He informed the House at

that time that he was in possession of such a study, and I informed him that there was such a study. At the time when he asked the question I wasn't sure whether there was such a study. This study was made in 1969, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. Is he acquainted with the fact that the report deals with numerous road allowances, leased road allowances and illegally closed road allowances?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the play of words that the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View prefers to use, probably because of his professional training in the legal business, but, Mr. Speaker, I suppose wherever a river flows, or wherever a stream flows, it has to cross a road allowance from time to time because we have something like several thousand bridges built in this province.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. One thing legal training does, it teaches you to give a direct answer, not beat around the bush.

[Interjections]

Yes, a supplementary question to the minister. Is he aware that this report indicates that there are a great number of illegally closed road allowances in the area between Calgary and the Stony Plain Reserve?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, again the hon. member has chosen to play with words. He is talking of a Stony Plain Reserve. I am under the impression, I have lived in the area a long time, and I have always referred to it as the Stony Indian Reserve. It's hard to know, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Perhaps that word missed the minister, but I am talking about closed road allowances, illegally closed road allowances and I am sure he knows what that means. I want to know whether he is going to make any moves to have these illegally closed road allowances open to the public use.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Well, Mr. Speaker, we always have these under consideration. Also we have numerous applications made by various municipalities and counties all over the province.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give a further supplementary to the hon. minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

Might this be the last supplementary on this topic.

MR. LUDWIG:

If any of these illegally closed road allowances in this area that I am speaking about between Calgary and the Stony Indian Reservation to the west which borders on the country on the hon. minister's constituency, have any of these been opened to public use since he became a minister?

MR. COPITHORNE:

Mr. Speaker, I would have to look at that. The municipality from time to time opened various ones, yes.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, are these illegally closed road allowances not under the jurisdiction of the municipality?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

Economic Opportunities Conference

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. I would like to ask the Premier if he is continuing his lobby with the federal government to host the federal government's western conference on economic priorities here in an Alberta city?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I hesitate only slightly because I am not sure if I caught the final portion of the question by the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury. We have said publicly that we will seek support for the Western Economic Opportunities Conference meeting suggested in the federal Throne Speech to be held in the Alberta City of Calgary, for the reason that we felt it would be useful to have the site at a city that was in the central part of the western region and was not a capital city. Whether or not this view will be accepted by the other four parties to the conference is something we'll have a much better idea of after our meetings in Winnipeg scheduled for Friday and Saturday of this week. They commence at the Prairie Economic Council meeting on Friday and may develop into a western premiers' meeting on Friday afternoon and on Saturday.

It is my intention to present to the other three premiers in western Canada the idea that Calgary would be an Alberta city would be an ideal location to hold such an important conference. Whether or not they accept that, it probably will be late Saturday afternoon before I am sure of it.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Mr. Premier, have you made formal representation to the federal government, who it is my understanding, is really calling the conference, have you made formal presentation or representation to them about holding the conference in Calgary?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, we haven't made formal representation through Mr. Getty, Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs or through other persons. Informal representations have been made to the federal government and my understanding is that they have raised no significant objections to the site of Calgary for this important conference.

However, I sense the matter is more likely to be resolved, at least in the first instance, at the meeting in Winnipeg and that if the premiers of the four western provinces concur on the location, or at least the majority of them do, that I am sure will have some significant bearing on the response of the federal government.

MR. CLARK:

Another supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Mr. Premier, have you given consideration to including in the Alberta delegation, going to that conference, that is the conference called by the federal government and outlined in the Speech from the Throne, have you given consideration to including in the delegation an all-party group from the Legislature and also including in that delegation a broad representative cross-section of Albertans, and certainly I mean people outside the Legislature because of the importance of the conference that you yourself have alluded to?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, we haven't. We felt that we would consider that matter after the Winnipeg meeting this weekend and it would be a matter of discussion as to the make-up of the various delegations. Certainly, it is essentially a government-to-government conference, although if it were an open meeting and if there were an appropriate row for observers, then that is something we would consider.

My memory takes me back to a request that I made, when I was in a different position, to inform a premier of the province to participate as an observer in

the Confederation for Tomorrow Conference in Toronto, which was rejected by the 'then' premier, although there were observer representatives from other provinces. I would think that what we would do is raise that, among other matters, at the Winnipeg meeting, and probably the position would be one that would be uniform relative to the four provinces to the west.

MR. SPEAKER:

Might this be the last supplementary on this topic.

MR. CLARK:

In light of the Premier's comments with regard to an all-party representation, would you give serious consideration then, to having a representative group of Alberta's business people -- municipal leaders -- included in Alberta's delegation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is repeating a question, or part of a question, already asked.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I think, from the nature of the question, I should perhaps clarify my prior answer, in case it creates a misconception.

I would not think that within an official delegation it would be other than the government. However, whether or not there is an appropriate place for observers representing other facets of Alberta society, and whether or not this approach would be amenable to the other governments represented there at that conference, is something we will take under advisement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow, followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Environmental Management Rules

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a further question to the Minister of the Environment. Now that the City of Edmonton has invested millions of dollars in a drainage system for Mill Woods, does your department's involvement not constitute a change in rules of development?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's question is in the nature of a statement, and also in the nature of debate. If he wishes to ask directly whether there has been a change in the rules, that might be in order.

MR. WILSON:

All right, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of the Environment, is it possible --? -- that won't work either--

[Laughter]

MR. YURKC:

Mr. Speaker, may I answer the question? Mr. Speaker, the rules with respect to environmental management are changing constantly.

Environmental Meeting (Cont.)

Mr. Speaker, in some of my former answers, I think I used the word Mill Creek instead of Whitemud Creek, and I'd like the record to indicate that, in fact, I was referring to Whitemud Creek rather than Mill Creek in all the answers that I gave previously.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Have you advised the federal government that their

investment is in jeopardy as a result of the Department of the Environment regulations affecting the Whitemud Creek outflow?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is making a further debating statement based on the assumption that the investment is in jeopardy which, of course, is a debatable point.

MR. DIXON:

Supplementary question to the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker. Is it going to be your department's policy, Mr. Minister, that each time one of these hearings is to be held you will advertise that the local MLA is going to be in attendance?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to correct the impression again that the hon. member gave to the House. This is not a public hearing. This is, in fact, a public meeting to put before the citizens of that area the facts of the matter.

The hon. MLA, who happens to be a minister, for that area is directly involved in putting the facts before the people in that area. When a representative of an area is directly involved in a particular project which may, in fact, be major, then that representative is generally involved, whether he is on the government side or on the opposition side. And I would like to suggest that this has happened before with members from the opposite side, rather than only from this side.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister advise when his department might be making a decision on the plans for the temporary outfall at Whitemud Creek?

MR. YURKO:

Shortly after the public meeting is held.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, and that will conclude the question period.

Dental Care Services

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Does your department have any plans to begin a pilot project for denticare for children 12 years of age and under, as proposed by the Government of Saskatchewan?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Not at the present time, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the government giving any consideration to getting cost figures on such a project, what it would cost to introduce it on a pilot basis?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, not on that particular type of project. That type of subject is one that has come up for discussion and review as between the department and the dental association from time to time. In that sense, cost projections may be available in respect to that type of program but it wouldn't be the exact one the hon. member is asking about.

MR. NOTLEY:

A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister advise whether the government has any specific studies that would relate to the adequacy of dental facilities for rural people, first of all versus urban people, and secondly, for low-income people in the province generally?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, there are several factors in respect to that. First of all, low-income people as a separate group are not of concern if they are receiving assistance, because then they are looked after by a government program. Of far greater concern is the area of people who are above that, the group commonly referred to as the working poor, and it is in that area where the greatest difficulty in providing dental services for the whole family is usually encountered. We are very much aware of this and, of course, it is a concern.

In some cases we know that fairly large groups of people are covered by private plans. Some people have described to me the advantages of plans operated by some large firms where working men who may not necessarily have a very high income can nevertheless get most of their costs for their family paid through the plan. Of course there is a premium involved in that, but it seems to be the sort of thing they react favourably to for those who have it. That sort of approach is probably the sort of thing which should be looked at first to see if it is something that can be handled in the private sector.

The difficulty in adding it to publicly-supported programs at the present time is that the program then becomes one which is supported on a basis of tax money rather than from the resources of the individual, and where possible we are trying not to add services to increase the cost of health care. If that is done it would perhaps be necessary to look at the whole question of the premium structure.

The other question as to comparisons between urban and rural areas involves the recent thrust of the government beginning in regard to native and remote communities where some dental services are going to be provided. In a lot of remote communities where Indians are a factor there is an input by the federal government. Throughout the province there is, perhaps to a large extent preventive but nevertheless useful dental service provided by local health units. I would think that the answer to the statistical part of the question as to comparison between urban and rural would be information that could be ascertained if it were taken together with information that is in fact available to the health units and to the two local boards of health in the two major cities. It is a subject that I hope to give more attention to, along with Miss Hunley, in the future and we do regard it as being a matter of current concern.

MR. NOTLEY:

Just one final, quick supplementary question for clarification, Mr. Speaker. Do I take it then that in relation to programs to provide dental care for the working poor, at the present stage the discussions with the dental association are of an informal nature, or is there a formal study under way which is reviewing the options available?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I would have to say there is no formal study under way at the present time. The sort of information that comes to us is the examination by the dental association and the department officials of such plans where they exist and they do exist.

Quebec has recently brought one in relating to small children, I don't know if it is fully operational yet. They exist in other parts of the world. This sort of information is the sort of thing that is reviewed from time to time to see if all of the factors as to cost to the public treasury and so on are concerned, when all those factors are looked at, whether or not a plan of this type is something that will be feasible for Alberta in the foreseeable future. We know the desire on the part of many people to have such a plan.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair]

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COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Committee of the Whole Assembly will now come to order.

We will resume discussion of the resolution in regard to the Department of the Environment presented by Subcommittee B.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Government House Leader could give some indication of the order of departments we are going to proceed with this afternoon.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I would think that we would begin with the completion hopefully, of the Department of the Environment and then the Department of Public Works, and following that the Department of Treasury or Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Are there any questions on the resolution?

MR. NOTLEY:

I would like to ask some questions of the minister with respect to the proposed flood control dam on the Smoky River. I raised this on February 22 and the minister mentioned there was a study which I gather he had ready to table but according to his answer, it was going to be tabled when the Minister of Industry spoke to the Legislature. It is my understanding that it has not been tabled as yet. I am wondering, now that we are discussing your estimates, Mr. Minister, perhaps we could raise some questions about that study if you could perhaps give us a general outline of the nature of the study. I may have some supplementary questions to follow.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, through inadvertence the study hasn't been tabled as yet, not because there any reason not to make it public. I think it was just a matter of timing and the way the hon. minister, Mr. Peacock's speech ended.

The nature of the study was to examine first of all whether or not it was possible to impound water to protect the railway by the construction of a major dam impounding sufficient water to reduce the incidence of flooding to, I think, one in a 100 years.

The second aspect of the study was to examine what happened in a major way to determine whether in fact riprapping was possible to protect the railway and whether in fact the railway was inadequately protected in regard to culverts and so forth.

This was done and I subsequently sent the study -- as a number of possible dam sites were identified and very rough cost estimates were prepared -- to both Calgary Power and Alberta Power to get their comments on it. I have since received their comments which indicate that the economic benefits tied into the economic costs associated with protecting the railway with damming is not a possibility, not a practical possibility at this time in that the costs even of power production ranged over \$100 million. There were other more practical methods which included riprapping and, if necessary, diking at certain areas to protect the railway; and the cost associated with this type of structure was in the order of several millions of dollars instead of \$100 million. That's basically the gist of it, Mr. Chairman.

I do have the report here and I can certainly make it available and table sufficient copies later on, but I do know that the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce has the report and necessary copies, and is prepared to table them.

The report has also taken successive photographs all the way down the line and identified the weak points, weak spots and so forth from Grande Cache onwards.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, just to follow that a bit. I take it that there is just no possibility from your answer of utilizing it for power purposes. One of the concerns that was expressed to me was that there might be substantial flooding in Willmore Wilderness Park. I am wondering what the environmental study says with respect to that particular question.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, may I ask for some clarification on that question? Are you suggesting that there may be substantial flooding if we built a dam?

MR. NOTLEY:

Yes.

MR. YURKO:

I think that's a possibility but if we are not going to build a dam, it's economically unattractive and it's not a possibility any more. I don't remember exactly what the report says in this regard but I can dig it out.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, to the minister. At the close of the last day's sitting on this committee I referred to him the Ribstone Creek development in my area --

MR. YURKO:

I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

MR. RUSTE:

At the close of the sitting on the last day dealing with your environmental estimates I referred you to the matter of the Ribstone Creek development in my area -- a multi-use one -- and asked you for some further information on that as it relates to this year's.

I would also like to have a statement from you as to the concerns expressed by Unifarm in the whole environmental field as it relates to pollution control.

Another problem would be, where is the waste oil from the garages in the city going at this present time? Because there is a considerable volume that is being expelled somewhere.

Another one is the -- or should I just let you take that?

MR. YURKO:

In regard to oil, most of the oil is recycled. There is a company called Turbo Resources which collects and re-treats the oil. I would also say that I am sure some of it does find its way into the river.

We made a major survey in regard to liquid wastes in the Edmonton and Calgary area in the last year in regard to the possibility of establishing in the Edmonton and Calgary areas a multi-purpose type of liquid waste disposal facility. We are now in the process, after making this survey, of examining various possibilities in relation to using private enterprise to set up this type of facility in the Edmonton area and eventually in the Calgary area to treat the large wastes that are generated in the two cities.

I just might indicate, for example, the sort of figures after the survey was conducted -- the sort of figures we are associated with. Nearly 1,000,000 pounds of pathological wastes are dead animals, 82,000 pounds are paper products, some of which are toxics, are contaminated, 5,000,000 gallons of oily liquids, 1,000,000 gallons of miscellaneous chemical and biological liquids, and something like 15,000 pounds of miscellaneous solids, some including radioactive

substances. We are looking at all of these to see if we can, in conjunction with private enterprise, set up a multi-purpose facility both in the Calgary area and the Edmonton area to treat such types of waste.

I might say that the only real outlet for these wastes in the long run is the river by some devious ways or means, and until a facility of this sort is provided it's going to be very difficult to, in fact, remove most of the contamination out of our rivers.

In regard to the Unifarm concern, this has been mainly expressed toward the environmental implications of feedlots, particularly in regard to cattle feedlots and hog feedlots -- odours for example. Their basic concern, if I remember correctly, is associated with the fact that odours are subjective and difficult to pinpoint and define. But I would point out that odour legislation was introduced in the United States which actually identifies the compounds in four classes.

It is our intent to move into the area, but to move slowly and recognize the implications that are involved. I would suggest that even though Unifarm and farm groups have some concern, it isn't our intent to move into the area in an unregulated manner or in a hclus-bolus way. We would move very carefully and slowly, taking into consideration the problem of farmers and also recognizing the fact that 10 percent of the feedlots are located where they shouldn't be and in fact are causing fairly serious water pollution. We are dealing with some of the feedlots right now. I think the hon. Member for Calgary Millican indicated the Burns feedlot, which we are looking at. I haven't got the report that we have made with regard to examining that one.

Again, I must say that we must move into the area and we must work with the industry to prevent more serious consequences in the future. This is what we are, in fact, doing.

In regard to the creek, I thought we were doing some work in regard to our Winter Works Program. Is that Burnt River?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Ribstone.

MR. YURKO:

Ribstone. I am trying to remember what river Ribstone Creek drains into.

AN HON. MEMBER:

The Battle.

MR. YURKO:

The Battle. I don't have it on my list. I will have to dig it out and see --

MR. RUSTE:

I can get that for the minister. Another couple of questions then, Mr. Minister. Dealing with the litter check campaign, what is the timing that you have in mind for the removal of bodies where they are collected on municipal grounds -- say car bodies that are collected? Would it be six months from the time they are collected or a year?

MR. YURKO:

We haven't established that timetable yet because I guess we really haven't got around to considering the timetable for removal of the hulks from the various landfill sites. The timetable will be established before very long and I suggest it is going to be a reasonable period. It is certainly not going to be a period of several years. We have had a program with Navaho Metals in the last year which involves government subsidy, I think, to the extent of something like \$12 per car. Again, as I said before, this is strictly a temporary solution and we are looking very actively at two different alternatives for a permanent solution to the problem.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, to the Minister of the Environment. During today's question period you indicated that the City of Edmonton had received permission from the

Department of Health and Social Development -- permits and so on that were required -- to build the Mill Woods storm sewer line. Subsequent to that the Department of the Environment was formed, and now you are questioning the use of this facility. I would like you to elaborate a little bit, sir, on the reasonableness of not allowing the temporary use of the Mill Woods storm sewer outfall into Whitemud Creek.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I didn't make any such statement that in fact the government wouldn't allow the temporary use of the creek at all. I indicated that a decision hadn't been made yet. A decision will be made shortly after the public meeting. It doesn't exclude at all -- from what I said I didn't indicate at all, in fact, that the city wouldn't be allowed to use the creek on a temporary basis. After all, Mr. Chairman, it is using the creek now at six different outfalls, I believe, and this is just the addition of a seventh.

MR. WILSON:

OK, I understand that, but if they are being held up for using the outfall, the seventh one as you call it, which services the Mill Woods area and they plan to use it for the spring of 1974 drainage for the Mill Woods area, and if this doesn't proceed on a temporary basis until they complete the tunnel under the Whitemud Creek all the way to the river, it's going to hold up the housing projects in the Mill Woods area which have Alberta Housing Corporation financing, federal government financing and so on involved in them. And if it isn't your intention to upset that temporary use of Whitemud Creek, what is the purpose of tonight's meeting?

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Chairman, the purpose of tonight's meeting is to put all the facts on the table and all the information on the table so all the people would know what the situation, in fact, is. Because Whitemud Creek is associated with a number of problems, for example, slumping of the banks and the danger to some of the houses; a proposal was made by the city in terms of channelization of the creek, very substantial channelization of the creek. There is apprehension in a number of quarters as to whether this channelization will be permitted to occur as it is one alternative for solving the slumping that is now occurring.

In terms of the temporary discharge of water, we want to indicate that the city has put before the department a number of proposals whereby they can regulate the flow from this 16 foot sewer through a 6 inch pipe on the end with a valve and a catch basin and regulate it to a very nominal value. And the city has put this type of proposal before us to regulate the total flow at the maximum rate of a figure, 180 standard cubic feet per second.

It is necessary to point out to the people the extent of the drainage basin, the Whitemud Creek drainage basin and the Blackmud Creek drainage basin, to indicate what percentage of the total flow at certain times of the year the outfall sewer might, in fact, represent.

All this data is going to be released and put on the table so the people have an opportunity to see the whole picture. Because thus far through the news media and through certain letters and so forth, only a small smattering of the total aspects of the problem have been, in fact, revealed. So there is considerable confusion in regard to the total complexity and nature of the problem.

And the city, of course, will lay its facts on the table in regard to whether they weren't given permission or if they were delayed, this would, in fact, delay Mill Woods to some degree. So all these facts are going to be put on the table.

I have all these facts available to me at this time, but it's necessary that the entire people who are directly concerned, and directly influenced by the decision know all these facts before we, in fact, make a decision as to which way we are going to go.

There is going to be some part of the meeting devoted to some of the public making statements or indicating to the department and to the officials there present, what their concerns may, in fact, be. And we are certainly going to be prepared to listen.

But again I just want to indicate that it is not a public hearing, it's just a public meeting to exchange information and to get all the facts on the table.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Then do I understand from your comments that this is an information type meeting for the benefit of the public and it is not a prelude to your department making a decision to restrict the use of the outfall?

MR. YURKO:

As I said earlier, Mr. Chairman, it's a meeting in which we are taking the opportunity to lay before the people directly concerned, all the facts of the case or as many facts as possible. Whether or not it influences the ultimate decision will depend perhaps on some things the people may say, or the fact that they may bring some facts before us that we've missed. But I don't believe that we have, in fact -- well we may have missed some facts, or we may not have enough information in certain areas. In fact, we may be proposing additional studies ourselves in certain matters. But nevertheless we'll attempt to put as much information as possible on the table and indicate to the public that it is on the basis of this amount of information that we shall be making decisions in the future in regard to the direction in which we'll go.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, to the minister then. In your studies and deliberations as to whether or not you are going to allow this facility to be used, will you be using facts, like the economics of housing in Edmonton and the need for housing in Edmonton and the need for progress in the Mill Woods subdivision? Will those kinds of facts be considered?

MR. YURKO:

Oh, absolutely, Mr. Chairman. I wonder why the hon. member would even ask me that. Those are very vital facts that influence any decision. And they certainly will be considered and are being at this present time.

MR. WILSON:

OK. Could you give a closer estimate as to when you will be making a decision on the use of the Whitemud Creek outfall?

MR. YURKO:

I think I must stick myself to the answer I gave in the House and it will be soon after the public meeting. And the word "soon" has a pretty wide latitude in meaning.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister a couple of questions with regard to the Red Deer River. My interest in it relates primarily to studies which were done some time ago when the water resources people were looking at the possibility of some rather sizable water-storage areas quite some distance west of Sundre.

And going from there, I would like to ask the minister if he'd outline what he sees happening in the course of this year as far as the Red Deer River is concerned, one portion of that being this question of studies of the dams and water reservoirs.

Secondly, if they have any money included in the estimates, Mr. Minister, as far as work on the Red Deer River upstream from Sundre -- being before the water reaches Sundre.

And then, thirdly, Mr. Minister, what plans do you have, from a long-term standpoint, on the water flow on the Red Deer to help alleviate some of Red Deer's problems with which, I am sure, the minister is very familiar.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, we met recently with the council in the City of Red Deer and I was quite free in outlining the case in regard to the Red Deer River for the council and I wouldn't hesitate to outline the program here.

I would like to indicate that a year ago I indicated to the House that from a standpoint of flow regulation of a major river we had given the top priority to the Red Deer River. We did this for a number of reasons in that the City of Red Deer is now being basically controlled, or regulated, in regard to industrial expansion because of lack of water capacity in the river at certain times of the year.

We approached the federal government in regard to designating the Red Deer River as a major area for a joint agreement under The Canada Water Act. The federal government had classified the Red Deer River as a secondary river rather than a primary river. As a result, it wasn't really interested in associating itself at this time with The Canada Water Act in terms of a joint agreement.

We then, of course, looked at all the possibilities, in regard to full regulation of the Red Deer River that had been studied so far, in regard to costs -- the costs had ranged from \$100 million and some odd to several million, I believe.

The important ones were the Raven Dam, which would increase, I think, the low flow in the Red Deer by a factor of four, and the modified Raven Dam, which again would increase the flow in the Red Deer by a factor of three to four. These were in the order of \$10 million.

These are the two areas that we're concentrating in, though we are looking at another scheme, one other alternative I should say for flow regulation -- in fact, we're looking at it on a preliminary basis, which may involve one of the major lakes along the river. We have budgeted, in our budget this year, some money for an engineering study in regard to a dam for flow regulation of the Red Deer River.

At the end of this year we will have, we hope, an excellent idea of the engineering and the environmental implications of such a dam as well as an excellent idea of the cost requirements. It is our intention, as a department, to submit to cabinet for consideration in subsequent years the construction of a major works on the Red Deer River for flow regulation. I can only say that it is our intention as a department to submit this to cabinet, to investigate every possibility for cost sharing with the federal government, and whether or not the project actually becomes a reality in the next year or two will depend, of course, on the priority of the government. I think that's just about all I can say at this time, Mr. Chairman, unless the hon. member wishes more elucidation on the point.

MR. CLARK:

Thanks, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, you indicated that you would be involved in this engineering study this year. Let me put it this way: would a major portion of your study be looking at this Raven scheme?

MR. YURKO:

Well, we are still doing some preliminary analysis and preliminary examination through the planning division of the department in terms of determining in our own minds the best alternative, and we hope that we will have established the best alternative in the next several months, after which we will engage in an in-depth engineering analysis of the alternative we have chosen.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Minister, do you have any money included in your capital works estimate this year for some work on the river in the vicinity of the town of Sundre?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, we are doing quite a bit of work in Sundre in regard to the Winter Works Program.

MR. CLARK:

That's on the Bearberry, isn't it, Mr. Minister?

MR. YURKO:

Just one second. We are doing two projects, if I remember correctly. Burnstick Lake Reservoir, clearing of the water storage and recreational reservoir in which we are investing, through the Winter Works Program, \$30,000, and the Bearberry Creek, west of Sundre, construction of gabions and weirs for

creek channel stabilization to the extent of \$55,000, and to a total extent of \$85,000.

I might say, for the hon. member's information I think this is the last year that work similar to that in Bearberry Creek will be done on a total provincial funding basis. That would more appropriately have been done as a cost sharing project with the municipality. But because of past input by the department in this regard, I accepted this as a totally provincially funded program rather than a 50 50 cost-sharing program.

We haven't, as yet, laid our plans down for what we expect to do next year in terms of winter works, or whether, in fact, this million dollar program will be continued and extended next year. I can't advise at this time but I think the chances are very good that it, in fact, will be and again a number of different projects throughout the province will be considered and done through the Winter Works Program. I would just suggest that the Sundre area received fairly high priority this last year and I'm not entirely certain they will receive the same priority next year.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, let me assure the minister that those people who make use of the Burnstick Lake area very much appreciate what is being done there. I shall attempt to break the news to the town of Sundre rather gently as far as Bearberry Creek is concerned.

My concern also, Mr. Minister, is with the Red Deer as it runs through, or just before it reaches, the town of Sundre. Over a period of years water resources has done a great deal of work there and I assume from what you say that you don't anticipate spending any money this year on further work with the river itself. The problem is, because the fall of the river is so rapid the channel is constantly changing. I am sure the minister is well aware of the problem and it is a matter of making some changes in the stream bed itself as a result of what took place last June or July when the high water hit.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, the department has certainly advised me of some of the problems in the Sundre area in regard to the Red Deer River, but then they also have advised me of hundreds of other problems throughout the province. It is a case of trying to do as much as we can for people across the province and I am not indicating that we won't be doing any additional work next year in the Sundre area. However, I am saying that there are no capital funds budgeted. Whether or not the Sundre area gets in on the Winter Works Program next year, I don't know right now, but all I can say is it received top priority last year and it's a pretty good bet that it won't receive the same top priority next year.

MR. CLARK:

I'll pass that along.

MR. BARTON:

I recently received a problem, what they call the...[Inaudible]...spring at the...[Inaudible]...gravel pit which has been used for the last 30 years. I understand, hon. minister, your department, the Department of Highways, has instructions to push this particular spring in and seal it off. In understanding the area, especially in Driftpile and Joussard and even as far as High Prairie, this spring has created a supply of excellent water. I was wondering through what procedure the Department of the Environment closes these particular springs off, because this one is actually a necessity. Truckers haul water as far up as the town of High Prairie and sell it from door to door, and the total reserve of Driftpile comes from this spring and also ...[Inaudible]. The facility is run-down and should be upgraded, and an excellent tourist attraction in that particular area would be good, clean water. But there is an order, I understand, by the Department of Highways to push it in.

MR. YURKO:

I think the only thing I can say is that I vaguely have some idea of the problem, but I don't have the details at my fingertips. I would just ask the hon. member to write to me and give me more of the details and we will look at it from a water resource point of view and see if something can be done about the problem.

MR. BARTON:

My understanding is that the order to push it in right now, is sitting in the Department of Highways, so I was wondering if you could possibly hold it off for a week. I haven't done any research on it because I just received the call. I did look at the well yesterday.

MR. YURKO:

Again, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to suggest that we can direct from our department exactly what the Department of Highways does. If they have problems associated with this spring for a number of reasons, erosion and so forth, they have obviously checked with the department in an internal manner. But I am prepared to look at the matter if you give me a note on it.

MR. BARTON:

The order came from your department to have the Department of Highways do it.

MR. YURKO:

I'll look into the matter, Mr. Chairman.

MR. COCKSON:

-- discussed with the minister several problems that are related to his department. It has to do, I suppose, with Appropriation 2981 which makes provision for considerable outlay of funds for lake stabilization, particularly Gull Lake which has been quite a common topic, I imagine, for a number of years in the province.

I have discussed with some of the municipalities concerned and involved with the financial operation of the potential development, and there have been created a number of problems which are not really spelled out in the agreement which was tabled last fall on cost sharing on water management projects.

Might I say at the onset that the plan of shared-cost by municipalities is really the only way that this province can get involved in projects in different municipalities throughout the province. I am not disputing the importance of establishing some sort of a shared-cost program.

The problem that has been broached to me is how to assess the various municipalities as to their portion of the cost. Some of the projects the province will take on have only an initial capital cost and there may be very little if any operational cost afterwards.

One of the other problems is that the areas -- I am thinking particularly of Gull Lake -- a vast proportion of the people who use the lake are not members of the municipalities on or around the lake. In fact, I suppose it would be safe to say that 80 per cent of the people who make use of the Gull Lake facility come from areas other than the Gull Lake area. Under the Lands and Forests Report which was tabled in here, Gull Lake is probably one of the most popular resorts in the Province of Alberta.

So when you are arriving at some kind of a formula to establish the shared-cost at the municipal level, you run into the problem of trying to identify who should, in fact, share the costs of operation.

I could take a typical example of the municipality with a project in one corner of the municipality and the municipality is 100 miles long, and you bounce the ball back to the municipality and say that it is responsible for the shared-cost of the operation. Now that may be all right to say, but you know when you go back to the municipality and pose this argument, they simply discredit the whole plan. Now that is an extreme circumstance.

The other situation is where you have, as I have mentioned, vast portions of people who don't reside in the park area but make use of it. And then you have three or four or five or six municipalities on or around the facility that the province has suggested should pick up the cost of the operation. Now in the world one can define what portion of that shared-cost these municipalities should be assessed, becomes an academic impossibility.

For example, in the case of the Gull Lake thing we have casually suggested that the county be involved, Lacombe Town should be involved, Bentley should be involved, the Village of Gull Lake should be involved, and yet we have two or

three fair-sized municipalities just outside that perimeter, the City of Red Deer, the Village of Eckville, the Town of Rimbey and the Town of Ponoka might even be included in the area, that possibly should be involved.

So that is the sort of practical stumbling block we run into. There is no provision in this plan to sort this confusion out in the minds of the local authorities. And so these are the difficulties we are running into in this particular project.

The other thing is -- checking into The Municipal Act, and the Minister of Municipal Affairs was not here at the time -- that we have no provision, as I understand it, to assess the different municipalities as to cost. I think, if I might suggest to the minister, this should be thoroughly researched because the interpretation I have at the present time is that there is no way a municipality can legally assess the people of the municipality for a particular project such as this. So that's the other area, Mr. Chairman, I would like the minister to perhaps clarify.

In talking to the people in my area, they have a number of suggestions that you might consider and that is the power to establish a local authority which would have some power to assess municipalities, but which also might share in the revenue derived from the operation of the parks area, such as the lands and forests.

I think sooner or later the province is going to have face some type of complete access control to parks and water recreation areas so that some type of a legitimate levy can be assessed against the people who actually participate and use that resource.

I would like to get comments from the minister on these two or three areas.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest that before the policy of lake stabilization was established we did have very extensive and wide ranging discussions recognizing some of the matters to which the hon. member alluded. The policy was, of course, established with this in mind and secondly, to a very large degree, sharing the responsibility or allowing local autonomy to predominate in the area of operation and maintenance of these structures.

There were a number of reasons for this. First of all we recognized that when we stabilize a lake and make it much more viable recreationally, the community around the lake tends to gain very substantially by a very substantial increase of business in the area, which can be, in fact, attributed directly to input of money by the province in total.

In terms of Gull Lake we estimate that by the time we are finished with the project, the province, or the people at large in Alberta, will have invested in the order of \$.75 million to \$1 million in terms of expanding park facilities, buying land, establishing not only an additional park in the area but, in fact, perhaps a wildlife reserve at one end, and so forth. So we are looking, as a province, to expending a very substantial amount of money in this particular area which will increase the business potential very substantially. We also recognize that land values also will be increased in the area to a substantial degree because now there is a much more viable asset.

In addition to this, of course, the government does tend to increase its allocation in terms of money for highways and other amenities in the area. We consider that all these projects had, essentially, to be locally initiated, and until this money was appropriated, with the various meetings that I had with the local authorities, there never seemed to be any difficulty whatsoever in finding some way of rationalizing this problem. I was assured in most instances that this was something that could, in fact, be solved.

I am assured that in other projects, and we do have a substantial number of lakes that we can create or in fact stabilize for recreational purposes all over the province, local authorities are prepared to undertake the responsibility for maintenance and operation of the works associated with stabilization of the lakes.

Now we can suggest to the local authorities ways in which they can share the operating and maintenance costs, but we would rather they figure it out by themselves. We feel that when they do figure it out by themselves and establish their own formula, they will have shown leadership. They will have shown a degree of management which would, in fact, guarantee the provincial investment in that project.

We have done a number of projects over the past in terms of water resources where we were, in fact, assured that the local authorities would look after the project, and we found ourselves 30 years later and 40 years later having to go in to rebuild the entire project. I can name a number of these types of projects.

In the new policies which we have established, one of the conditions of any agreement that we are going to sign -- and we are going to sign an agreement with the local authorities before this money is spent -- is going to be that in fact there will be some guarantee that the local authorities are going to have to look after this structure.

I am going to say, as I said to the Red Deer people, without equivocation, that if the local authorities are not prepared to set up the structure and are not prepared, in this case, to fund the \$29,000 a year for operation and maintenance the project will simply not go ahead. Because this is a very integral part of the policy and this money will be directed towards Driedmeat Lake or some other project which might be classified as the second order of priority. We did establish Gull Lake as the top priority in terms of lake stabilization.

However, if the local authorities are in fact having some difficulty we would be very prepared to sit with them and discuss ways and means by which they could solve their difficulty. But in terms of the realities and the economics of the project, as I indicated, by the time we get finished with the Gull Lake project we anticipate that somewhere in the order of \$1 million of provincial money will be spent. This money at 8 per cent imposes a total burden on the people of Alberta of something like \$80,000 a year.

Because of the gain to the local people in terms of land values, in terms of business interests accelerating and in terms of the fact that they will use the facility to a much greater degree than the rest of the province, we consider it is equitable that the local authorities undertake the maintenance and operating costs to the extent of something like \$29,000 or \$30,000 per year.

MR. COOKSON:

Mr. Minister, I appreciate your pitch.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It's part of the policy.

MR. COOKSON:

I accept the responsibility of attempting to sell the concept on the local authorities in my area. There was one area that you didn't discuss and that is the problem of legally assessing the people of municipalities for the operation of this project. I am just wondering whether you might like to make some comment on this.

MR. YURKC:

Again, Mr. Chairman, I wouldn't want to start making suggestions in that regard because they would be taken as gospel and I would much prefer to leave this up to the local authorities to work out. I suspect that the same formula will not be used by the various local authorities and we wouldn't want to impose, as a government, the same formula on the local authorities.

I think the local authorities must determine the extent of benefit by the various communities, and the various communities immediately around the lake, the various businesses and determine their own formula.

I think, though, that one of the parts of the policy suggests that 25 per cent of the land around the lakes be retained in the public interest and that this land be provided to the people of Alberta in general, without charge to the people of Alberta by virtue of the fact that the people of Alberta in total are undertaking the total capital of such a project which, in fact, in some instances can be very large.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a few comments concerning this department. Firstly, it appears that the minister is well aware of the major problems and is acting on them. There is never a shortage of people to bring to his attention

any major problems in his department or a responsibility of his department. But it is often the small problems that don't get the attention they deserve.

I want to comment on the fact that I reported to the minister several weeks ago, a pollution problem in Calgary, Alberta. That deals with the demolition of the Robin Hood Flour Mill. It isn't a big problem, but it is a problem, and it is in the constituency of the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo but I guess he doesn't go to that constituency very often so he wouldn't know about the thing.

MR. GHITTER:

Point of order, Mr. Chairman, the rest straggles over into an adjacent constituency, the member being present here today.

MR. LUDWIG:

Well, I stand to be corrected. But the smell emanates from his constituency, Mr. Chairman, if he ever goes there to find out, like I think the minister ought to.

But I did bring this to the attention of the minister and the minister told me that it is under control. That if and when the temperature should get up above freezing that thing would be sprinkled. It isn't a big problem, but it is an irritating problem, and it should be attended to.

I was in Calgary Monday; the firm demolishing the building did not sprinkle the site up to that time and I believe this should be looked at and the minister's request of the firm ought to be enforced. It might not appear to be very major, but it's these little things that determine whether there is real concern about pollution or not.

Several hundred cars get covered with very fine cement dust and grain dust, smut, every day. You can wash your car in the morning and at nighttime it is covered with dust. This is a nuisance, this is the minister's responsibility, and I'm asking him to have a look at the thing again and see that the firm, which is a Vancouver firm, the demolition firm, does what it is supposed to do, sprinkle the site and keep the dust down. Other firms that have to demolish large buildings were obliged to do it -- I'm not saying they were able to do this in the wintertime, the temperature has been by and large above freezing and notwithstanding that, if it is fairly warm during the day they should sprinkle the operation. It is creating a lot of dirt, a terrible mess and it is a nuisance.

Secondly, I would like to ask the minister if he can advise us whether there is any checking done, or testing done down river from Calgary to determine whether the fish that are caught in the Carlsland area, the Rainbow Trout and other fish, are suitable for human consumption. I know a lot of people fish there, they are probably 35 or 40 miles downstream from Calgary, but it is a problem I would like to bring to the minister's attention and I would appreciate a report of what checking or studies have been done and whether the public ought to be warned that the fish are not suitable or whether the public can be advised that the fish are suitable for human consumption.

As I stated, many people who fish there, drive through and they may not be aware that there may be a danger in eating the fish. On the other hand there may not be. This is a problem that I would like to see handled through the minister if it is in his department, and the public advised.

The third point I wish to raise deals with environmental planning and research services. I understand that under this department there is also a capital appropriation for the purchasing of land among other things, for parks. I think this is a very commendable move by the government and I am sure that much will be done under this vote, but I'd like to point out that I tried to inquire from the Minister of Lands and Forests as to how the government goes about purchasing land. There are a lot of tricks of the trade in buying land, large quantities of land for parks, that require to be resorted to in order to prevent people cashing in, as it were, on what the government wants to buy.

It appears to me that land, which is being purchased for the Fish Creek Park area, is very high priced. And I feel that the public, when the minister is advertising, ought to be made to know that the whole province is paying for this land and that it is roughly \$5,000 an acre.

I would like to know whether any expropriation proceedings were taken by the government in order to determine what the land in that area is worth rather than pay whatever is convenient.

When you buy 2,000 acres of land at \$5,000 an acre, it's an awfully big price for a park, even though it is worth it in the final analysis. I am saying that if you went a few miles further out, that for \$10 million you could create an awfully large park, well serviced, perhaps that factor should have been considered.

Notwithstanding that the park is partly within city limits, or at least is bordering city limits, many people still have to drive at least ten miles within the city to get to the park. So perhaps instead of having a 2,000 acre park, for the same price we might have had a 40,000 acre park. That is a factor that ought to be considered. I think that if they had spent less money in an area which is very affluent, where the land is very valuable, they might have been able to create three parks, larger than this one, within convenience from other parts of the city.

And I am talking about the Nose Hill area and the western part of the city, where within five or ten miles you can build a beautiful park for much less money. So the convenience of Fish Creek is not the convenience of every Calgarian, because some of the Calgarians, those who live in northeast, north, and northwest, may have to travel ten miles to get to this park. It would be nice if north of the city, northeast of the city they had 8,000, 10,000 acres at perhaps ten per cent of the price for a park for those people.

These are comments I would like the minister to take into consideration when he talks to us about this particular vote, which is, I believe, 2940 and another vote under the capital budget.

I am concerned whether the minister uses government services to purchase land. I know the Department of Public Works has a very skilled property management section. Or whether he resorts to agents, real estate agents or other forms of agencies to purchase land for him.

I am wondering whether in this area of Fish Creek the cat was not let out of the bag far in advance so everybody knew the government is paying \$5,000 an acre or thereabouts and that's what everybody held out for. When we get to that position where the top price is being asked for land, I believe that if at all possible, under parks legislation we should test the expropriation proceedings to determine whether that land could have been purchased for less.

These are all matters of good management and notwithstanding that this government is really bulging with revenue, every time the Minister of Mines and Minerals turns around there is another \$50 million coming from somewhere. And they may rejoice until their early doomsday, but I think the fact that there is so much money coming in does not alter the fact that we're paying 36 per cent income tax in this province and that they imposed a sales tax on liquor and that they are skimping in areas where perhaps they can be a little more --

MR. SCHMID:

On a point of order. Can he clarify who imposed the sales tax on liquor?

MR. LUDWIG:

It wasn't me. I think if you ask your colleagues, the Minister of the Treasury, the Provincial Treasurer or the Attorney General they might be able to fill you in, but I thought you knew better.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is misleading the House in saying that we imposed a sales tax on liquor.

MR. LUDWIG:

I'm not misleading the House, I'm not even misleading the minister. I'm not even leading him.

Mr. Chairman, that is a sales tax because you pay an increase on the price of liquor as it was previous to January 1, 1973. If that isn't a sales tax, I'd like to know what it is. Nevertheless, revenues have been coming in like never before -- many revenues. And it's a pity there isn't a comparable effort on the side of good management to perhaps see if they could save a little bit for the times when the revenues might not be that good. Because if they have to borrow a lot of money this year, what will happen if there should be a dip in revenues? The bottom may well fall out.

With all due respect to the criticism of the government members and ministers of the previous administration, it could be shown that within a cycle of 15 or 20 years they did break even on budgeting at a time when the capital expenses had to be very high, roads had to be built, universities, schools, hospitals, everything had to be built. We had nothing here.

MR. COPITHORNE:

We'll get it done, Albert.

MR. LUDWIG:

You will? You'll have to move a lot faster than you are, Mr. Minister, before you get it done.

MR. COPITHORNE:

We'll get it done in spite of you.

MR. LUDWIG:

Why don't you wait till we get to your department and see what you are doing, or has the department told you what is happening yet? Mr. Chairman, I should proceed without interruption?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Please do, and could you keep your debate to the Department of the Environment, please?

MR. LUDWIG:

It is, but sometimes I am bound to overlap when I make analogies, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Well, try to watch the overlapping.

MR. LUDWIG:

Dealing with good management and spending of money, I believe we should look at the fact that revenues have never been higher in this province --

AN HON. MEMBER:

Why?

MR. LUDWIG:

Why? Why don't you ask the Provincial Treasurer or the hon. Minister of Mines and Minerals? They would be glad to fill you in on this one.

It is certainly obvious that we are getting much more revenue, higher revenue and easier revenue today than ever before, but we can't possibly balance the budget. I believe that other, less fortunate provinces than Alberta are doing a much better job of management of the responsibility that they have in this regard. But there seems to be an indication with this government that what they can't spend, they can give away. I'm not sure this is in keeping with good management.

In any event, with record revenues we are going to have a deficit budget, and we can only speculate as to what will happen if and when the revenues should go down a bit. There has been no evidence whatsoever that this department or any other department is concerned too much about where the taxpayer is going to be hit hardest in the near future.

So, Mr. Chairman, with those few remarks, I would appreciate the minister advising us as to his policy in the purchasing of lands under Vote 2940 and the counterpart of the capital spending to this vote.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, in regard to the first minor problem, we find ourselves in the middle of all controversies these days. It doesn't matter what goes wrong; it's an environmental problem and we have to try to go out and solve it. We

know that we are pretty short of people in the department, but we also know that we can't just build indiscriminately, so we have to be quite rational in the approach we take to any problem. We thought we were very rational in the approach we took to the hon. member's dust problem, in that we did go down and inspect the premises and laid before the company some requirements as to keeping the dust down as low as possible.

We know that in the Department of the Environment if you want to get real tough then you can stop all commerce. It's a case of managing matters, and it is also a case of give and take. All people don't win and all people don't lose in terms of environmental management. There is always a trade-off. This, of course, is the case in that regard, and I'm sure the department will be out there again, consistent with the manpower it has, inspecting what the contractor is doing in attempting to enforce the regulations and the requirements that were established. We just don't have enough men to go around the province watching every little problem and spending day after day trying to see that everybody does exactly what you in fact tell them. Therefore we rely to a large degree on the news media to report back to us, and we certainly appreciate the efforts by the news media in this regard. If we don't perform they let us know soon enough and give us the opportunity to go back and see that people do perform as they are required.

If we in fact wanted to build up sufficient staff to really look after every problem, I'm afraid it would be a pretty big department.

In regard to testing downriver from the city of Calgary, I think I tabled today the quality reports on the four rivers and the quality of the water is measured and analyzed on a periodic basis at a number of points in every river, and certainly the Bow is analyzed. I think if the hon. member examines the report I tabled today he will get some idea of the quality of the Bow River, both upstream and downstream from Calgary.

In terms of the quality of the fish, I would suspect that this is not entirely the responsibility of the Department of the Environment. It is more the responsibility of the Department of Lands and Forests which has the fish and wildlife division. If the minister is in, perhaps he might undertake to see if there are any reports in regard to the quality of the fish downstream from Calgary. I think my officials are in the seats upstairs and they will undertake to see if, in fact, a report exists in respect to the quality of the fish.

In regard to Appropriation 1987, purchasing of land, the department has considerable expertise in terms of purchasing land. We have a number of land buyers, not only for purchasing land for parks, but we have land buyers who purchase land for water diversion and water control projects. In the recent Cold Lake Dam project we had to purchase substantial land. We are purchasing land for recreational purposes and redirection of use. In the Buffalo Bay area we are retiring agricultural land which is subject to frequent flooding. We use some guidelines. One is that where we buy agricultural land, generally we pay four times the tax assessment. It is hardly ever more than that, unless there is reason to do so.

In terms of the Fish Creek area, one of my top directors in terms of land negotiated the land deals with my direct involvement. I met with department officials, with the Burns people and we investigated in a very substantial way and examined all parcels that were in fact sold during a certain number of years previous to today. We examined all options that in fact existed in the land in the valley, in the Fish Creek area, so we had all these figures at our fingertips. Then when we discussed the matter with the Burns people, we recognized that the land was part of an estate of the late hon. Patrick Burns and they were accountable to the court and to many of the beneficiaries of the estate. There was a fair market value established for that land in a very substantial way.

The government, I think, used the best of management practices, as a matter of fact, to relate the actual purchase price to a fair market value. I am very pleased to say that it did not exceed the fair market value in any way in purchasing the land that it did purchase from the Burns estate.

The nature of the park was also extended, not only from the requirements of the Department of Lands and Forests but also in recognition of the total average value of land in the area. And the park was extended substantially along the river whereby we were able to pick up, on the basis of fair market values, some very reasonable pieces of land bordering the river and river frontage was of prime concern.

I think I should point out also that the government took a major step in establishing or using the concept called a 'restricted development area' and

imposed very strict development conditions on that part of the land that wasn't necessarily immediately negotiable to fix surface disturbance in that part of the land, so to some degree land prices were fixed in the area as far as the park is concerned.

I think I am certainly satisfied and the government is certainly satisfied that the best of management was used in terms of negotiating for land in that vital area which was identified as a park by so many groups in the Calgary area as well as the City of Calgary.

It is very nice to say that we could have gone out 10 miles or 20 miles and bought more reasonable land. We, in fact, did that. We did that very thing. We bought the Austin Ranch recognizing, of course, that an area like that ranch, which happened to have a very beautiful view and had enormous potential for recreation in the future, was up for sale at pretty reasonable prices in terms of parkland. So we are and we will be buying parkland in anticipation and in collaboration with Lands and Forests well in advance of its actual use.

This is one of the reasons for this appropriation, so to suggest that perhaps something else should have been done, or we could have gone off a little farther and bought cheaper land 10 miles out is certainly correct. But nevertheless, we were under constraints because the people of Calgary overwhelmingly said that this is where they wanted their park. They wanted the Fish Creek area as a major park and I think that the government had the vision that it didn't restrict itself to a 500 acre or a 900 acre park or a 1,000 acre park. It established a park of decent and reasonable size recognizing the rate at which Calgary was growing and recognizing the needs of the people of Calgary in the future.

We have indicated that this is not really a park for Calgary only. It is a park for a vast area around Calgary, and it had to be bigger than just a little park. This is why it was extended to something like 2,800 acres of one of the most vital and most beautiful areas, most amenable to park property in the area.

Again, if the hon. member wants to know the name of the individual who did most of the negotiation with me and was directly involved in everything that was said, done, written and so forth, I have no hesitation in pointing out who it was.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, a couple of questions. Would this price paid for the Fish Creek park area be about the highest price that you have paid for parkland in Alberta to date?

MR. YURKO:

I might say that some of the land in the area had a market value of over \$10,000 per acre. Some was even higher than that. The highest price we have paid thus far is about \$5,750 per acre, recognizing that some land is more attractive than others with an average price of approximately \$5,000 per acre. And I might say that the negotiations are still going on with Keith Construction with regard to two additional parcels.

I just couldn't answer your question as to whether or not it is the highest price. I just don't know. But I do know that parkland or land within city boundaries, and this is within the City of Calgary, this is within the boundaries of Calgary, that buying land that borders a river, borders a creek, that has virgin timber, that is totally within the boundaries of a city, for an average price of \$5,000 an acre is a pretty reasonable buy.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I am not at all opposed to the park and I believe that it is going to be very much appreciated by all. But I am wondering whether you have bought land any place else in Alberta for parkland at a higher price than this particular land was purchased.

MR. YURKO:

I would automatically answer no, Mr. Chairman, because this, I think, is the first time we have purchased major parcels of land for park purposes within a metropolitan area. I suspect that as we go ahead into the future we will probably be paying higher prices yet, but I think this is the highest price because I don't think we have bought any other land, just for that purpose.

Actually what we have taken is a major option in this regard for payment over five years, and the price is fixed for payment over five years.

We have also recognized that the escalating price of land is just tremendous. So even though the outlay is not entirely in this year, it's over a period of five years -- the land that we bought at this time is for a fixed price this year, for payment over a period of five years -- I suggest that this very land we bought is going to be worth far more five years from now than the price we, in fact, paid for it.

So, Mr. Chairman, I think it was an excellent deal and I would defy anybody to have done any better, including expropriation.

As a matter of fact we certainly discussed and thought about the expropriation procedure but we felt there were other tools available, such as the restricted development concept. We also felt that this being a foundation, being responsible to some very important charities in the City of Calgary -- and some very needed charities -- that there may have been something to be saved although I doubt it very much. I think we would have come out much worse in terms of expropriation.

But we recognize that we did have a responsibility to pay fair market value, and this is what we feel we have done. We have paid fair market value today for payment over five years and, in my estimation, this has been a top-notch deal.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, as I stated, I am not taking issue with the minister on the location of the park but certain facts should be brought to the attention of the hon. members.

This park is located in the more affluent part of the City of Calgary and that is why the land is so expensive. But I do believe there are other parts of Calgary very anxious to have some park areas, some developing areas. The good life and wide open spaces are just as dear to other parts of the city even though they may not be as affluent, and perhaps some alternatives could have been looked at. Maybe they were. But I'm saying that the northeastern part and the northern part of the city will require park areas -- it's building very rapidly -- and I believe that the land may be considerably cheaper unless you buy in areas which are already dedicated or committed to construction.

Now I would like to ask the minister if negotiations are presently underway for any parkland within the City of Lethbridge, within the City of Red Deer, or within the City of Edmonton?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, before I answer the last question I would just like to indicate that we have said over and over again that this park is not at all only for the people of that part of Calgary, tied into the affluent part of Calgary.

Sufficient parking space, sufficient access will be provided so that all the people of Calgary will be using the park in a major way -- not only from Calgary but surrounding Calgary. The park is for the people of southern Alberta and I would defy anybody to say that the affluent people in that part of Calgary are going to use the park more than the poor people in the North Hill area of Calgary or in the northwestern part of Calgary. Access will be provided so that all the people can use the park as frequently as they wish. It is not going to be directed towards any particular faction in Calgary or anywhere else.

The reason the park is there is because this happened to be a very natural part of the topography of the City of Calgary and it has some very beautiful areas in it and it's tied into water systems. This is why the park is there. It's not because there happen to be affluent people in the area. It just happens to be environmentally and from the surface topography one of the finest places around Calgary, an excellent place for a park. That is why the park is there.

In regard to whether or not we are negotiating actively for land in the cities of Lethbridge, Red Deer or Edmonton, I would advise that we are not negotiating actively at this time. But we are, in fact, examining a number of different properties to establish and generate data in regard to land values and so forth in a number of areas.

MR. LUDWIG:

Are there any particular areas of Edmonton that you are looking at now?

MR. YURKO:

We are looking at a fairly substantial number of areas in and around Edmonton at this time.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, just one more question. How about the Austin Ranch? How large an acreage did you buy? Where is it and at what price?

MR. YURKO:

I believe we bought 1,280 acres, but I will verify this figure. I believe it is approximately 28 miles from Calgary in a westerly direction. It is the old Austin Ranch which has a very beautiful setting and has a very beautiful view of the mountains. It is a higher land and it has some very unique features in it. I think the purchase price is in the order of \$205,000 for about 1,280 acres.

As a matter of fact, I might suggest that the asking price was initially over \$300,000. It was listed with real estate people for that type of figure. We bid on a take it or leave it basis at a very low value. We think we got some very, very prime land for a very reasonable price, much to the chagrin of a number of ranchers around the area.

MR. HENDERSON:

There are three or four things I would like to delve into briefly with the minister, Mr. Chairman. Before doing that I would just like to briefly support the concerns of the hon. Member for Lacombe relative to the government's policy in dealing with areas such as Gull Lake. I have to say that it is going to be extremely difficult in the rural areas to get a number of municipalities together to agree on a longterm, ongoing, open-ended basis to put up the operating revenue for those projects. It poses a real difficulty in determining where you draw the line, where the municipality benefiting from the investment starts and finishes.

Sooner or later it is going to have to come around I am sure, Mr. Chairman, to approaching some of those projects just like the government has the park that the minister just finished talking about. Because there, the government is going to spend \$10 million to \$13 million on that park when 100 per cent of it is provincial money. The citizens of Calgary aren't being asked to put up one nickel on an ongoing basis to support the maintenance of it. Yet, when we move out to a rural area further afield, where in this case one is talking about preserving what has been a long established recreational area, the ground rules change.

I am really afraid, Mr. Minister, that we are going to sit and watch many of these recreational lakes in other areas simply go down, down, down the drain because of the many ways the practical impossibility of trying to get a number of municipalities surrounding that area to determine what their proportionate share of the ongoing operating costs will be.

I come back to where do you determine where the municipalities that benefit from the investment, like in Gull Lake, where do they start and where do they stop. Which municipalities should be put into it? When you are dealing with the property owners on the lake, I think you have a very clear case. But when you go further afield you get into some extreme difficulties.

I can only say at this point in time I think the points raised by the hon. Member for Lacombe are sound in principle because the policy is not going to prove tenable. In fact, it won't prove applicable in a number of areas where you try to get a considerable number of municipalities to agree to pay the ongoing operational costs, which in fact is going to be a benefit to people from Calgary and Edmonton and all over the province.

I know the problem the minister has in trying to arrive at the policy. I had looked briefly at that particular project before the election and I know the difficulties of it. But the one conclusion I had arrived at was that if the project was going to continue on an ongoing basis, if it was going to get off the ground and function, the policy of trying to levy selected municipalities

beyond the shoreline of the lake which don't have a direct interest in the property itself, was not going to be a practical approach.

It's extremely difficult to come up with any logical ground rules on which to base the allocation of the money. And I mention this simply as a matter of getting it on record and supporting the hon. Member for Lacombe. Because I think if the government maintains the policy, a lot of recreational areas are going to simply suffer further decline in spite of the government's intention to put up one million or several million dollars to carry it out, because of the impracticability of trying to get a number of municipalities to pay the ongoing operating costs. I think it would be far more tenable and you might have better luck by getting the municipalities and the district to put up a capital contribution at the outset as an indication or as a demonstration of their conviction that the project should go ahead, and also act to filter out the frivolous ones from the ones where the citizens in the area are serious about the project. And when it gets down to an ongoing operating cost spread over a number of municipalities, I don't think it is going to prove tenable.

I'd like to ask the minister, then, two or three brief questions. Firstly, what is the minister contemplating regarding the mercury problem in the North Saskatchewan River, which I believe studies have indicated emanates from the universities? This question was asked in the Oral Question Period, and I wonder if the minister or his department examined it and if they are going to do something relative to the universities to stop the problem.

I'm assuming that is the source. If it isn't, what other sources are there, and what is being done about it?

MR. YURKC:

I would just like to say a couple of things in regard to the policy on lake stabilization, and for that matter all policies in regard to cost sharing or water management projects. We wrestled with this too. There hasn't been a policy of this kind in this government, and we spent many hours wrestling with it and I don't doubt that local municipalities and local authorities will wrestle with their problem too. They can establish a fund. If you insist that they should, for example, pay the capital costs of a project where they can associate themselves with something more definite, they can just as easily establish a fund, an operating fund and use the interest for operating costs if they wish. It's the same thing really.

This is a new policy. We wish to see the intent of the local authorities and the degree to which they wish to identify themselves with some major projects in their area. I will say that we have no end of projects in this regard, from George Lake to Driedmeat Lake to Buck Lake to all sorts of different projects. There is no end of projects which will come forth requesting provincial funds to, in fact, stabilize their lake and enhance the recreational capacity of their area.

Until we go down the way a while to see whether or not it really works or not, we've passed this policy and we'll stick with it. At this time I recognize that there may be difficulties -- we recognized this from the very beginning. But to, in fact, arrive at a totally equitable solution is an impossibility. I know it is, as it is an impossibility for the province in total to arrive at an equitable solution. Because we don't know if supplying the capital cost by the province is, in fact, an equitable solution. We don't know if we should only supply 75 per cent or 50 per cent. It's not a case of establishing total equity in all of these projects, it's a case of establishing reasonable equity in terms of contribution. And I think that any local municipality can establish reasonable equity without any difficulty at all.

In regard to mercury in the river, I made some reference earlier, Mr. Chairman, to a major study we did in both the Edmonton area and the Calgary area in terms of liquid wastes. And we, of course, did examine the wastes from institutions. Government institutions are some of the main culprits in terms of pouring derogatory wastes into our rivers.

But we also recognize that they don't have any other alternative at this time, unless they are asked to use substitutes for what, in fact, they are using. And this is why we think and we are pursuing very actively, a project of establishing a multi-purpose liquid disposal and exotic solid disposal facility both in the Edmonton area and in the Calgary area.

Just to give you an indication of the type of wastes that the University of Calgary puts out, it has about 508,000 pounds of pathological wastes right now. In liquid incineration it would supply about 13,500 gallons. In long-term

storage it would supply about 12,000 gallons. Chemical wastes generate something like 75,600 gallons; biological wastes, about 540,000 gallons in a year. It has nowhere to get rid of these wastes except to put them in the river in some form or other. And it does use a lot of mercury and I don't doubt that the university is one of the main culprits in terms of mercury wastes.

We have two choices -- to persuade the university to use substitutes which don't contain mercury or, in fact, in some way or other to provide a facility whereby these wastes can be handled properly. And we are working on it and we have gone a long way.

We are negotiating with a private concern to attempt to do something jointly with a fixed input by the government in terms of capital and perhaps in terms of operating costs. When the facility is built, if and when it's built, it will be charging directly for the wastes it treats, to university, industry and so forth. And I am sure that industry would be very, very pleased to, in fact, have this type of facility and has indicated to us in no uncertain terms that they need a facility whereby they could get rid of some of their wastes.

So until we provide this type of facility, it's going to be pretty difficult to clean some of the wastes out of our river streams.

MR. HENDERSON:

I understand then that the university is one of the prime sources of mercury pollution in Edmonton, or the prime source for example?

MR. YURKO:

Yes.

MR. HENDERSON:

OK. The next question just briefly is the question of air monitoring in Edmonton. Is the department carrying out any street level monitoring for hydrocarbon and nitrogen oxide or lead?

MR. YURKO:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, we are carrying out pretty extensive monitoring. Perhaps --

MR. HENDERSON:

On a continuous basis, at street level?

MR. YURKO:

Yes. It is on a continuous basis. Some of it is done at street level, yes. The index is measured from one central point, but there is a lot of monitoring for individual contaminants both at street level on a continuous and part-time basis.

MR. HENDERSON:

Where are the monitoring units in Edmonton for hydrocarbon and nitrous oxide at street level located on a continuous monitoring basis?

MR. YURKO:

Well, I didn't say we were monitoring oxides and nitrogen specifically. I would have to find out and see if we are. I said there was monitoring at street level. I didn't specify the particular component. I'm not sure if we are monitoring at street level for nitrous oxides and nitrogen. I have data in this regard. I don't know if I have it here. Perhaps if you can wait for a few minutes we'll get the data and tell you exactly where we are monitoring and for what.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I gather that the nitrous oxide and hydrocarbon measurements are taken on the third floor of the Administration Building.

MR. YURKO:

That's only for the index. There are four components monitored on the third floor of the Administration Building. And this monitoring is done on one

sample, taken from the outside of the building at third floor height. We monitor at that point for carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen, total oxidants and for coefficient of haze.

These four values are then factored in a formula which is similar to the San Francisco formula and this is then published as the pollution index for the City of Edmonton. We use this for informational purposes. But at the same time, there are a series of monitors. And we monitor individual pollutants in a number of different places. I think as many as ten different parts of the city, right now. And if the index is high then we will intensify monitoring for that component which makes the index high. The 98 that we measure is a direct result of oxides and nitrogen from the power plant. As a result, action wasn't taken on the index value, but that just indicated to us that we had to do more monitoring. The department went out and did substantially more monitoring and then identified oxides of nitrogen as the main component and asked the city to cut back on the power plant. But their action wasn't based on the index value. Their action was based on the measurement of an individual component.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I'm not concerned about the index value because it is really an academic exercise that has no pathological base whatsoever. That's not the basis of my concern. Nobody knows an index value, whether it is healthy or deadly to live in. I presume it is not deadly because we're still here.

I want to know, and I don't want to hold up the exercise, but maybe the minister could let me know -- I don't necessarily want it in the House -- as to where street level monitoring on a continuous basis is carried out for lead, hydrocarbon, nitrous oxide in Edmonton.

The last question I want to bring up, Mr. Minister, concerns the matter of whether the department is looking at other possibilities for dealing with the problem of sulphur dioxide atmospheric discharge that relates to gas plant activities where they are not recovering sulphur, they are not going through sulphur conversion. It is strictly a matter of a small quantity of hydrogen sulphide that is being incinerated and discharged into the atmosphere. Is the department looking into any alternatives in those specific cases to discharge into the atmosphere, such as re-injection for example?

MR. YURKO:

We have a study that we are funding through the research council with regard to tracing the life of sulphur dioxide and what happens to it in a fairly major way. I am not sure, Mr. Chairman, whether or not we are, as a department, are examining alternate disposal of high concentration sulphur dioxide streams by either re-injection into reservoirs or chemically tying them up through scrubbing systems and so forth, but I will check and let the hon. member know.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Henderson, I believe we have several more yet, and being 5:30 it appears there are several more members who would like to ask questions. Maybe we could continue this at the next study of the Committee of Supply.

MR. HENDERSON:

Mr. Chairman, since the minister is going to look into this matter, I don't want him to do a lot of unnecessary work. I relate the question strictly to discharges that are not associated with sulphur recovery operations.

MR. YURKO:

I realize that. The reason I said what I said is because high sulphur concentrations where we have sulphur recovery don't necessarily exist. But where we flare without sulphur recovery, then we can have very high sulphur dioxide concentration streams. And this is what we might inject or scrub or do something else.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Is it agreed?

HCN. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

[Mr. Chairman left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration certain estimates, reports progress and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the report and the request for leave to sit again, do you all agree?

HCN. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock.

[The House rose at 5:30 o'clock.]