

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Monday Evening, April 2, 1973

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair at 8:00 o'clock.]

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS
(Second Reading)Bill No. 11 The Libraries Amendment Act, 1973

MR. DOAN:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 11, seconded by the hon. Roy Farran, The Libraries Amendment Act, 1973. Section 63 (1) is amended by striking out the words "not exceeding two mills on the dollar". This simply means that with this amendment councils may, if they so wish, levy more than two mills in support of libraries. In some areas, there is a request for larger amounts in support of library needs and this amendment will allow this request, if councils so wish.

[The motion was carried. Bill No. 11 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 15 The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1973

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Education, second reading of Bill No. 15, The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1973. This bill, Mr. Speaker, amends a number of acts and I will go through each of them and comment on the changes made by the bill.

The first one, Mr. Speaker, is The Bills of Sale Act and the proposed change really accomplishes two things. First of all, it removes an inconvenience and a restriction with respect to the late registration of bills of sale. As matters now stand, if one files a bill of sale that has some defect in its form or is filed after the time allowed by the Act, it is necessary to apply to a judge and get his leave to file a corrected bill of sale or a late bill of sale. And that leave, Mr. Speaker, is really a matter of form in the sense that one merely files an affidavit saying that the mistake was inadvertent, giving particulars of the inadvertence and the court gives its approval.

Very little is accomplished by going through that procedure and it is cumbersome. One of the proposed amendments would remove that procedure, enable the filing of a late bill of sale or a substitute one if the first one contains an error and there is a provision that any rights that have intervened as a result, between the time of the sale and the time of the late filing will not be affected by the late filing.

A further amendment provides that where an application has to be made to the court, it can be made to any judge and not just the judge of the district in which the chattels are located. And again, Mr. Speaker, this is an amendment that will remove inconvenience.

A further amendment, Mr. Speaker, removes Sections 30 and 31 of the existing Act. And those two sections impose restrictions on the way in which a farmer can pledge, as security, crops that are presently being grown or are about to be grown.

Mr. Speaker, it is now the feeling there is no need for that kind of restriction on the landowner, and that he ought to be free to pledge his crops for security if he so wishes.

The second bill dealt with, Mr. Speaker, is The Chattel Security Registries Act, and the effect of the proposed amendment will be to remove the obligation on the clerk who receives these documents to form a legal opinion as to whether the document complies with the Act. The reason for proposing the removal of that requirement, Mr. Speaker, is that the clerk is really not trained or equipped to form a legal opinion on whether the document that is tendered to him complies with the Act. Quite frequently it is an undue burden on them to no one's advantage.

The third act that is proposed to amend, Mr. Speaker, is The Commissioners for Oaths Act. The amendment there provides for students-at-law on becoming articulated to automatically become commissioners for oaths. This again will be a matter of assistance, particularly to those small offices in one- or two-man firms, where it is helpful to have another commissioner for oaths. The practice frequently now is to make an application, when the student begins his articles, to be appointed a commissioner. Rather than go through that procedure, the proposed amendment merely provides that they would automatically become commissioners for oaths. The second amendment to that Act provides that members of municipal government will, while they hold office, be commissioners for oaths and they are, in fact, placed in the same position as members of the Legislative Assembly.

The next act that is amended, Mr. Speaker, is The Conditional Sales Act, and the amendments to this Act are the companion amendments to those referred to in The Bills of Sale Act, save for the fact that there are no sections comparable to Sections 30 and 31 which are struck out in The Bills of Sale Act.

The amendment to The Alberta Evidence Act, which is the next one dealt with in the bill, is one that will be of assistance to municipal governments, hospital boards, school boards and bodies of that nature, in that it permits the submission in evidence of microfilm copies of documents. That, as the legislation now stands, is something that is only permitted for government documents or Bank of Canada documents. This enlarges that rule and will enable municipal governments, hospital boards and school boards to microfilm their documents rather than retain the originals for a number of years which is now the case.

The next bill that is amended, Mr. Speaker, is The Execution Creditors Act, and that's a very minor amendment merely to clear up an ambiguity. It now provides that when money is in court, the application with respect to directions for its payment out shall be made to the court by the sheriff.

The bill also provides for an amendment of The Limitation of Actions Act, and brings optometrists within the one-year limitation period which is now provided in Section 56 of that Act for members of the medical profession, members of the dental profession, members of the chiropractic profession, naturopaths and persons of that nature.

There is an amendment too, Mr. Speaker, to The Provincial Court Act. That is an Act that was passed in 1971 but has not yet been proclaimed.

There are two amendments proposed to that Act, Mr. Speaker. The first would strike out the provision making the Provincial Court a court of record. The reason for that amendment is that as a court of record, it is necessary to have a clerk of the court at all of the court's proceedings. Because the Provincial Court sits in a number of the smaller communities for very brief periods of time, it would be very expensive to provide a clerk in all of those courts. For that reason, for the time being, Mr. Speaker, it is proposed that the Provincial Court not be a court of record.

The second amendment to that Act alters the make-up of the Provincial Court Advisory Committee which acts as an advisory committee to the Attorney General with respect to the appointment or removal of provincial judges and also deals with complaints against provincial judges regarding neglect and things of that nature.

The original legislation had provided that there be a five member committee of which one be a supreme court judge, two members of the provincial bench, one other person and the Secretary of The Law Society.

On reviewing that legislation, Mr. Speaker, it seemed inappropriate to have, as an essential, that is an appointed member of that body, someone from another court, particularly when there is a review by the supreme court of this advisory body's decisions and recommendations. It also seemed inappropriate, Mr. Speaker, to have on that advisory body a member of the legal profession

which practises before the provincial courts, and that is the reason for those suggested amendments.

There is also an amendment, Mr. Speaker, to The Racing Commission Act and the purpose of that amendment is to enlarge the authority of the racing commission and enable it to spend money to assist in the development of horse racing by acquiring physical plant, if that be necessary, making research or making direct loans or grants.

Mr. Speaker, there are some rather lengthy amendments to The Religious Societies' Lands Act, but the purpose of those amendments is relatively simple and again it is to make the winding up of a religious society simpler and more convenient for those who wish to wind up. The proposed amendment would enable the religious society to make an application to the court which can then provide for a summary winding up of the religious society, or it can direct that it be wound up in accordance with the provisions of The Companies Act.

There is an amendment, Mr. Speaker, to The Sheriffs Act and that merely alters the place of filing certain documents from the Provincial Treasurer to the Inspector of Legal Offices.

There is a rather important amendment to The Trustee Act. As the law now stands, Mr. Speaker, if a testator were to leave property in trust for someone, or rather to pay the income to someone, if that person is of the age of majority and is entitled to get the estate in any event, despite the fact that the will provides it shall remain in trust with only the income going to the person until, say, they reach the age of 30 years, the beneficiary on reaching the age of majority is entitled to call on the trustee to pay him the entire proceeds of the trust and thereby defeat the intentions of the testator.

The amendments to The Trustee Act now merely make it possible, in most circumstances, for the beneficiary to apply to the court to be paid the gift and the matter is left in the discretion of the court.

The last amendment, Mr. Speaker, deals with The Wills Act, and the first amendment is merely to correct what was a drafting error when the last amendment was made.

The second amendment, Mr. Speaker, which is an important one, permits persons under the age of 18 years, who are unmarried and have children, to make a valid will. As the law now stands they are not in most circumstances able to make a valid will.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with one or two items in this particular bill, but first of all I rather question the advisability of including 13 acts in one bill. While this may be quite satisfactory in the Committee of the Whole, I find it very difficult to deal with it as far as principle is concerned in the second reading. Far from the same principle goes through each of these bills. Should there be some principles that were not satisfactory at all to a member in the second reading, he would either have to vote against the whole thing or vote for the whole thing and either way would be basically wrong. I realize there is some convenience in putting a lot of acts that comes under one minister in one bill, but I frankly hope this will not be the practice that is developing, because I do not think it is a wise practice from the viewpoint of passing laws.

I would like to deal for a moment or so with just one or two items, and the first one, more for information than anything else, is under The Provincial Court Act.

At the present time the Provincial Court Advisory Committee is composed of one judge of the Supreme Court's Trial Division, two provincial judges, one member of The Law Society and one other person, and that is being replaced with three provincial judges and two other persons. The hon. minister did not give us a reason why this change is being made. There may be some very good reasons for it. I am hoping that in putting it in this fashion the Provincial Court Advisory Committee will not be entirely composed of legal minds. When this other Act was passed it was felt that one other person at least would be a layman, who would not be a lawyer, not trained in the law, yet one who would bring the viewpoint of the general public into the discussions so there would be some input of that nature. I can well realize that the Executive Council can now appoint a lay person under (b) and maybe a legal man too, or it might be felt that three provincial judges is enough for the legal minds and two laymen, or one professional, one lawcurer, and so on.

I can well see that the new setup will give more leeway to their appointments and I would like the hon. minister to let us have some indication of the intention of the government in that regard. I hope that it is not going to mean that a layman will not be appointed to that committee, because I feel that a layman can bring a point of view that may not be known or not be shared, but certainly not known to the men of legal training.

In connection with The Wills Act I think the principle there is very sound. I have had one or two cases come to my attention, a person under the age of majority who was actually a mother or a father -- the two I had were mothers -- were not able to make a will and they felt very annoyed at this. I think this is a good improvement and I think it does give these people the rights that should properly be theirs.

I have no other thoughts on the various amendments to the bills. I think some are housekeeping and some are exceptionally good. I would like to commend the government on The Commissioners for Oaths Act in which municipal councillors are now able to become commissioners for oaths. I think this is a real good item and a real good advance and something that will be appreciated by the councillors throughout the province.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, just one brief comment with regard to The Provincial Court Act. I would like to ask the Attorney General if he has had any concern expressed to him by The Law Society of the province with regard to the amendment which, as I read it, would give provincial court judges the majority of the five people on the Provincial Court Advisory Committee?

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, there are one or two comments I would like to make really, on the principle involved in Section 8. It is regarding the situation that has arisen in Edmonton and there's quite a bit of controversy in the newspapers. There doesn't seem to be any real direction from the top magistrate in Edmonton. He recently, apparently more or less advised the other magistrates that some of them may have to appear in traffic court and one of them in particular took issue.

I believe another problem that may come under 8 -- actually isn't touched on by this bill but I would like to bring it up at this time. It seems to me that where you have the Attorney General's Department actually directing magistrates as the case is well then I think you have sort of a conflict of interest. Because in many cases, or in all cases they are really the men who are pushing the prosecution and I wondered, while the minister was speaking. Maybe he could clarify that point for me, in particular the one that refers to Edmonton where we have the clash between the two magistrates.

Apparently a magistrate who is a senior magistrate has taken it upon himself to set up schedules but some of the other magistrates decided they were not going to follow through with the schedule and had to call in the Attorney General's Department to help clarify the situation.

The other was on Section 7, Mr. Minister. I was wondering about the case that was brought in last year under the private bills where this lady attempted to take up an action after the year had expired. There was some merit to that case, for all that the Private Bills Committee decided to throw it out. There was some merit in the case, the fact that this lady had mentioned that it was over a year before she realized there had been poor professional conduct, according to her and her solicitor.

I am just wondering if the Attorney General's Department after reviewing that case would make consideration to the Legislature, especially as far as medical practitioners are concerned. Because I can see where a person might go beyond a year before they found out there was malpractice and therefore it would deny them seeking their rights in the courts. I wonder, while the hon. Attorney General is summing up on the principle of this bill, maybe he could touch on those two items I have brought up, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, just following on from where the last speaker left off on Section 8, I am wondering about the principle of having the three provincial judges constituting an absolute majority on the Provincial Court Advisory Committee. With all due respect to the people on the bench I question whether

it is really wise on a provincial advisory committee that representatives of the provincial judges should constitute an absolute majority.

Then dealing with (b) "two other persons", seems to me that while one of them should obviously be a layman, there is a lot of merit here in the section of the former Act, or of the present Act which says that one of them will be a barrister, someone who is practising law. Because it seems to me that if the Provincial Court Advisory Committee is to function properly, its strength will be enhanced considerably by having someone on the advisory committee who does practise law.

Now, I realize that the proposed change does not rule it out. It is perfectly possible for the Attorney General to appoint one of the two other persons. One of them would be a lawyer, but I'm really questioning whether it wouldn't be more prudent that we have that written into the Act so that we would have the balance preserved. At least there would be one practising lawyer, perhaps two laymen, and two representatives of the provincial judges on the committee.

It seems to me that that kind of committee would be more representative than one where the judges themselves constitute a majority on their own advisory committee.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment briefly with regard to the observation made by the hon. Member for Drumheller, in relation to the fact that Bill No. 15 contains, in effect, amendments to some 13 statutes under the purview of the Attorney General.

Firstly, I think it should be noted that certainly not all the bills to be introduced by the hon. Attorney General are contained in this Bill No. 15. Already today, we have seen two other bills which could be said perhaps to deal with broader principle introduced separately and brought forward by him.

The purpose, essentially of the government bringing forth Bill No. 15 incorporating 13, what we would, I think, consider to be non-contentious bills, was I think, to modernize and update and try to streamline in a gradual way the parliamentary process. Now the purpose was to put in this amending bill, the 13 statutes which appeared to be non-contentious, and one realizes that this is really a value judgment.

Certainly another factor to be considered, Mr. Speaker, was the amount of paper work, realizing that each bill requires some 500 copies to be printed irrespective of whether it is an amendment of one word or two words. This, therefore, saved; instead of printing 6,500 copies, we printed 500 copies of this. And in an era and in a time when the government and legislatures and Queen's Printers and MLAs I think are increasingly swamped with paper, this, I think, is one other factor.

I think the hon. gentleman's concern would have been better put if we did not have a Hansard, because I agree it would be unfair if a member of the Assembly agreed with one part of an omnibus bill, but disagreed in principle with another, and there was no record of how he spoke to it. But, because we have a Hansard, Mr. Speaker, I suggest the record could clearly show, for example, that the member of the Assembly was opposed in principle at second reading to 4 out of the 13 bills included in this omnibus bill, then it would clearly so state. He would not be embarrassed and his position would be clearly on record.

So, consequently, and for one other reason though, I think this is a valid procedure in the sense that we have had over the years a number of new acts which have included consequential amendments, sometimes consequential amendments to seven or eight or ten acts, which really change those previous acts by one new bill. So I suggest we are not really that far away in terms of being radical, but simply a thoughtful and gradual reform in the streamlining of the parliamentary process.

MR. SPEAKER:

I believe the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View was on his feet first followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I was rather impressed with the remarks of the hon. Minister of Education when he tells us that one of the reasons for putting all the bills into one bill was a matter of saving of paperwork and paper. I wish that the government would bear this kind of reasoning in mind when they deal with particularly their publicity bureau that is apparently sending out paper by the truckload and this saving is really negligible.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we ought not wherever we intend to economize on space dealing with legislation that affects the lives of people, ought not to be jumbled together and passed off as one bill. But that is a very minor matter.

The big criticism, Mr. Speaker, is that although we have 15 bills from the Attorney General's Department here, there is very little emanating from that department to date in the way of real reform in those areas in which the Conservatives were rather well informed and very serious about presenting reform to this province. But that stands as a serious criticism of the whole government that the AG's Department has not come up. These are little housekeeping reforms, amendments, but in the field of reform in the administration of justice it's very negligible.

I share the criticism, appointing the three provincial judges to be the main part of the Advisory Committee is in my opinion wrong in principle. There is sufficient input from the judges at the present time to the Attorney General's Department that we could have done well with perhaps only one judge on the Advisory Committee.

But when we talk about saving paper, let's get down to brass tacks, Mr. Speaker. I received two copies of every release and a lot of material from the Department of Agriculture -- one is one too many, but I get two -- they are careless about the way they handle the money of this province. Then they come up with the lame excuse, that we jumbled all this together to save money --

AN HON. MEMBER:

Careful Albert.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, and they're saving money -- they're penny wise and pound foolish in my opinion, Mr. Speaker. These are just some of the brief recommendations I have to make. But I believe the hon. Premier knows very well what I'm talking about.

They have truckloads of government-screened, government-filtered propaganda, if I may say so, emanating from the publicity bureau, but here they're magnanimous and they're going to save a few dollars on paper on this bill.

MR. HYNDMAN:

It's a privilege, Mr. Speaker, I was in error in stating that 500 copies of each bill are printed, 1,500 copies of each bill in this Assembly are printed. So, therefore, had this been a separate bill for each of the 13 included we would have had almost 20,000 separate bills printed. So there is a net saving of 18,500 bills, or at about 4 pages each, around 60,000 pieces of paper being saved.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I have no criticism of him saving paper.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. Order please. Order please. The hon. member has spoken.

MR. LUDWIG:

So has the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker -- so has the hon. minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. KOZIAK:

I am very pleased to enter this debate, Mr. Speaker, and particularly to add to the sage comments of my learned friend from Calgary Mountain View in reference to the principle of the bill.

MR. LUDWIG:

Words of wisdom.

MR. KOZIAK:

I would like to join the hon. Member for Drumheller in commending the government in extending the provisions of The Commissioners For Oaths Act to elected municipal representatives. I think that is a welcome addition. So is the further addition in the Act permitting the automatic inclusion of students-at-law as commissioners for oaths under the Act.

Two amendments are contained in this bill, first to The Bills of Sale Act, and to The Conditional Sales Act, are I think, very important to the citizens of the Province of Alberta, especially in the area of late registrations of documents under those Acts.

Quite often, individuals find themselves in the position where through some delay, whether it's an oversight or caused by some actual necessity they fail to register a document within the required time or they fail to renew a chattel mortgage within the required time and are forced to go through the expense and inconvenience of applying to a judge. The judge's order, I would say, in almost every case is exactly to the effect of the amendment which permits the late registration subject to the equities which may have arisen in the meantime. And I welcome this addition to these two acts as saving the inconvenience, saving the money of the taxpayers of the Province of Alberta, without at the same time, transgressing on the rights of others.

One thing that a bill of this nature does bring to my mind, and I am sorry that the former government when it considered the revision of the Statutes first in 1970 which is the first revision after 15 years, that they didn't consider a more modern method of keeping the Statutes up to date.

Many jurisdictions are now using a loose-leaf method so that if you have any one of these acts, let's say The Commissioners for Oaths Act, as that Act is amended with each sitting or what have you, instead of looking to the 1971 Statutes, the 1972, the 1973, 1974 and so on, by the time we get to 1980 looking through ten books, we just go to The Commissioners for Oaths Act and all of the amendments are contained therein. Each year the sheets in that Act, the pages that have been amended are replaced so you don't have a situation where to determine the true intent of an act, you have got 15 books in front of you. And I would hope that whoever's responsibility that particular matter lies under, that he would consider that and before the next revision comes along prepare to provide that type of service to the people of the Province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, there was a question asked as to whether The Law Society had expressed any concern over the advisory committee having a majority of provincial judges. And the answer to that is no. At least if they have a concern, they haven't expressed it to me and I would be very surprised if they had a concern.

The next question dealt with the administrative functions of the department in respect to the provincial court and was raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican. And the position -- as I recall his question, Mr. Speaker, he wondered whether the department, because they are often on the prosecuting side of cases before the provincial court, ought to be in any way involved with directing that court.

I don't think there is any difficulty at all about that and the answer is really very simple. The department does not and within wide limits, in my view,

should not have anything to do or any direction to give to the provincial court as to how it shall do its job. We should not be in any way involved in that. And we aren't.

We do tell them when and where they will do their work. And we do that by setting the places and times at which the courts will sit. But that in no way affects how they will do the work. And so I don't see any difficulty there at all, Mr. Speaker.

The other questions which were raised by three of the members dealt with the composition of the advisory committee. The hon. Member for Drumheller, I think, must have missed my opening remarks, because I indicated in them that I didn't feel that there ought to be a lawyer on this committee and he was concerned with there being too many legal minds on it. And the fact is that the amendment proposed reduces the number of legal minds that must be on it.

As the legislation now stands, there must be three judges, one from the supreme court, two from the provincial a member of The Law Society, and one other person. We have proposed three provincial judges and two other persons. And it is my belief that those two other persons ought not to be members of The Law Society. The question was raised or the argument put that there ought to be a member of the Law Society on this committee. And in my view, there shouldn't be.

To appreciate the significance of that view, one should examine what this committee does. It not only advises the government with respect to appointments or removal of provincial judges -- and it does that in the first case, for the appointments, on the request only of the government -- but it also is a self-disciplining body for the provincial court.

I think it inappropriate to have on the body disciplining the court or members of the court a member of the profession that practises before that body, because I don't think that member will, of necessity, bring to it the impartiality that is necessary, or a lack of personal interest in the proceedings. Although I do appreciate the view that someone who has practised before the court can, perhaps, bring some valuable advice and opinions to the committee, I think that advantage is outweighed by the disadvantage of having someone on that committee who practises before the court.

The last point, Mr. Speaker, that I want to deal with is the question of the limitation period. And the question the hon. Member for Calgary Millican raises there is really the same question that exists with all limitation periods. It's not peculiar to this amendment; it exists with respect to all of them.

You will notice that in that section of The Limitation of Actions Act the limitation period is quite short. It deals with a group of people, doctors and dentists and so on, who are providing a personal medical or medical-type service, and the difficulty with that kind of case has always been that the proceedings are dependent substantially upon people's memories and, unless they are brought very quickly, it is difficult to be sure that the case is really being dealt with on the facts because of the weakness of memories as time goes by.

[The motion was carried, Bill No. 15 was read a second time.]

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, before we go into Committee of Supply, I was just wondering how the bill introduced this afternoon just before adjournment was handled. I don't believe anyone moved the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair's understanding is that the effect of what we did was that the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury adjourned the debate.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair.]

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COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair.]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

We have under consideration the following resolution from the subcommittee:

Resolved, that a sum not exceeding \$16,439,390 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1974, for the Department of the Environment.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, when we closed the discussion the other day there were three questions I wanted to ask the minister. One deals with the publication, Public Hearings on Land Use and Resource Development of the Eastern Slopes. I believe the minister is familiar with that one. I would just like to quote from page -- I don't believe they are even numbered -- but it is the page dealing with submissions for specific recreation and tourist development projects. On that page it says: "All submissions for these kinds of developments should be sent in to the Director of Lands by February 28, 1973."

I raised this when we discussed the Department of Lands and Forests Estimate and he indicated these were turned over to you, Mr. Minister. It goes on to say: "These will be made available to the public prior to the hearings so that comments and briefs concerning them can be presented at the hearings." My question in this regard is, have these been presented to the public, or when will they be presented to the public?

Another question, while I am on my feet, deals with well log information, where wells are drilled in areas. Is this information available to any individual, and if so, where can he get it?

MR. YURKO:

Well log information resides with the Energy Resources Conservation Board--

MR. RUSTE:

Water wells?

MR. YURKO:

Oh, and water wells? That information is available from the department and I can dig it out if you wish.

In regard to the hearings, we have received 138 specific applications with respect to the hearings and approximately 20 of these are major ones which will be the subject of separate hearings. That is, the general hearings will be held first and the hearings on the separate applications will be held subsequently. All I can say at this time is that the information, that is, the submissions the authority received, will be made available to the public very shortly. I'm not sure that it is not available now. If you contacted the authority I think they would tell you.

My last meeting with the authority was about the middle of last week and at that time everything was going very well. As a matter of fact, the interest in the hearings was mounting very dramatically and actually the interest goes well beyond the province. I think that is all I can say at this time.

MR. NOTLEY:

Just before we leave this department, could the minister advise when he will have an answer to Question 202? That is the question, Mr. Minister, relating to water treatment procedures and the process that the government goes through in determining what techniques are proper, et cetera.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I just received the information from the department today. I will be putting it together in Motion for a Return form in the next couple of days and will be tabling it this week sometime.

MR. NOTLEY:

That is fair enough, Mr. Minister, so for the general questions I will await your response in reply to my written question.

But I would like to ask you about the proposals from Aquion Water Treatment Ltd. concerning water treatment facilities for the town of Thorhild -- the village of Thorhild. There seems to be some delay in approving the OK on the installation of this equipment. I am wondering what the reason is. Is there some objection to it by the department, or is there some problem, because I have a copy of a letter here from a gentleman in the company who claims that this has been approved by the United States Federal Food and Drug Authority and also by the Government of Canada, the Department of Health and Welfare.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I spent several hours myself with this gentleman who has been trying to get the department to approve a particular type of installation using amber light RR40 resins, resins that I am very familiar with as I used them back in the early 50s in Chalk River. This individual has attempted to get us to give him permission or endorsement of the use of this resin for colour removal. We judge any approvals on the basis of two matters. First of all from a health standpoint, and the use of the material must in no way be injurious to health and as a result they have received the approval from two agencies from a health standpoint.

The second part that we are very concerned with is that we do not become a party to a fraud. You can fill up the vessel with sand, you can fill it with rocks -- anything, and say that in fact it can be used for colour removal. So we have to be convinced that the material, in this particular case the resin, does what it is intended to do. In fact, not only that, but that it can be handled in the municipal water supply in such a way, reactivated and so forth, that it presents no danger during the reactivation stage to the water supply or the people involved.

Now these kinds of resins are generally used industrially, not for colour removal, but for iron exchange. They are used on the regulated instances where you have chemists, where you have laboratories, where you have all the necessary technicians to make sure they are operated and regenerated properly.

In this particular instance, this particular gentleman has run across the fact that he thought he could use this resin for colour removal, and we have asked for sufficient experimental work to indicate to us without a shadow of a doubt that we were not a party to a fraud, that in fact it did remove colour.

Such information was not supplied. As a matter of fact, we also asked the company to indicate to us where in fact in the United States this resin was used extensively, or even in one instance, for colour removal. The individual in this case indicated that he would seek out this information and he has come forward with no information thus far. He was supposed to have said that it was used in Florida extensively, but we have not got any confirmation of this at all.

At this time, until we are supplied with the information indicating the material can be handled properly and safely, and in fact it does remove colour over a reasonable length of cycle, we then cannot consider it as a replacement or as an alternate for charcoal and other types of colour removal devices.

When the individual in fact, proves this to us, we are prepared to work with him, as I indicated, to no end of degree in terms of even putting some money into the situation. When this is proven, then we can justifiably go to the communities and say, 'you can put this material, or this resin into your water systems for colour removal. It's somewhat economical, the cycle is such and such, it will cost you so much per thousand gallons, and it will definitely remove colour'.

This information is not available at all at this point and the individual has not supplied this information at all. He did get an installation in the Gibbons area, in the Gibbons water supply quite by a -- and I have investigated the situation in terms of perhaps laying charges. He got approval from the Health Department, the old Health Department, the approvals were in the Health Department at the time, and quite inadvertently he got the approvals.

But under our tightened procedures, and stricter procedures, there is just no way he will receive approval for the Thorhild installation until he can prove that in fact, it is not only safe from a public point of view, but this is an

economical type of installation that we can recommend to the municipalities to put into their water supply. This is why we insist that from a health point of view he satisfy us there. We ask that if the American Waterworks Association approves this, then basically they have approved it for economics, utilitarian purposes, and so forth. That is why we ask him if in fact it was approved from the American Waterworks point of view.

All this information, I am sure, will be contained on the Order for Return that the hon. gentleman has asked.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Purdy, do you have a question?

MR. PURDY:

I have one comment, Mr. Chairman, and one question. I would like to publicly thank the minister for the undertaking that happened on the Sturgeon River basin this last winter, clearing out the brush, and so on.

The question that I have is also in regards to the Sturgeon River basin. Will any further work be carried out, and by this I mean mechanical means of dredging out a lake for greater stabilization -- lake stabilization -- in this area? That is, Lac Ste. Anne?

MR. YURKO:

The lake or the river?

MR. PURDY:

No, the river itself.

MR. YURKO:

Under our planning division, the reorganized department, we have established our planning on the basis of river basins. One area that we are looking at in great degree in respect to planning is the entire Sturgeon basin which we have tied in with the Pembina and Paddle area. We are going to consider this as one area. So there is a great deal of planning going on in this area, and we expect that we will probably continue some of the work that we did on the winter works basis this year into that basin also next year.

MR. BENOIT:

A number of people are concerned with the ground water situation in the subdivision areas around the cities. There is a lot of water well drilling going on and people have been asking for some kind of assurance that the operators are fairly reliable or dependable. I have asked this question before and we haven't made much headway on it.

I was wondering if the department of someone is looking into some set of standards or regulations that water well drillers will have to be required to come up to in order to qualify for a certificate for water well drilling, and what we can expect in the future in this regard. If a water well driller is licensed by the government does that ensure that there is any degree of competence on the part of the driller?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, under The Ground Water Act -- regulations under 6 and 10 of The Ground Water Control Act establish the manner in which the drilling should be undertaken and done. These are pretty specific. Now any operator has to follow these regulations implicitly when he gets approval to drill wells into the ground water formation. They are available and I can give them to you.

As I said before, the well drillers pressed me rather hard to set up a drillers' association so that they could license these and close shop. I resisted this idea of closing shop because I know what generally happens. The restrictions become tighter and tighter and tighter and pretty soon there is a monopoly and you just have so many drillers and nobody else can get in.

In this area of drilling there is no end of drillers and the types of wells are numerous. It's not just one type of well. There are a number of types of wells that can be drilled. Sometimes some farmers even want to drill their own wells. So I have resisted the idea of setting up a very tight licensing

procedure for well drillers, and we have got some guidelines in that regard -- and put more of our requirements in terms of the regulations for the actual drilling itself or the type of well and conditions under which the thing is drilled.

I think this is a better approach because I feel certain that if we go in the other direction that it will be a closed shop before many years. But I will make these available if you wish. It's public knowledge anyway.

MR. BENOIT:

I am not quarreling with the method you are proposing to use in not making a closed shop. I am not quarreling with that at all. The only thing that I am concerned about is that the government licences these people like the government licences an electrician or a steam fitter -- he doesn't do the job right, the people have a comeback and they can go to the government and ask for some protection in the matter. Can this be done here too? Are there penalties for the violation of those regulations?

MR. YURKO:

There is a general penalty section under The Ground Water Act. But every operator in the Province of Alberta wishing to bore for water on lands, of which he is not the owner, is required to apply for a water boring permit under Application Form A to the Director of Water Resources. His application is to be accompanied by an annual fee, \$2 to cover the issuance of an annual permit and so forth and we make sure that they have reasonable equipment and that they are qualified to drill. But again, I don't want to get into the area of closing the shop.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister can advise whether any application for permits to drill have been turned down in the last year in the Province of Alberta?

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Chairman, that's such a detailed question I just have to find out. I really don't know.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the hon. minister would say, in dealing with that equipment, if he would let us know whether the witch or the willow rod is part of that? It is a very important item.

MR. YURKO:

We have under special services in the policy that we announced last year we've provided a very generous program in which the department drills. For the first 100 feet we charge \$50; for up to 300 feet, \$100; and from 300 feet to 500 feet an additional \$50. for this service. We'll bore a hole. We have all sorts of instrument gauges that tell them full capacity of the well and so forth. This is a really remarkable service which the department provides all farmers. Unfortunately, not too many farmers know of this, as yet, but we're going to try to publicize this irrespective of the complaints of the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Chairman, regarding this service which you are offering to the farmers, does that apply to the hobby farmers, like the small acreage holders?

MR. YURKO:

This is not directed at farmers necessarily. It is really called rural water development, in that anybody can apply.

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Chairman, is that service available to the hamlets too, in the area?

MR. DIXON:

Well, I was going to change the subject but --

MR. DRAIN:

But -- I was just thinking that this is an out and out bargain, I should buy a few hundred miles of wells at this price.

What are you going to do if you run into a casing situation -- and your casing costs \$2 a foot? You are still going to do it for that?

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Chairman, we have two rigs and we are pretty careful where we use them.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Minister, that program sounds like having a sausage about eight feet further along than a dog can reach when you've only got two drilling rigs. I think you are going to have to get a lot more if you are going to do a service.

Anyway, to the hon. minister, Mr. Chairman, during the speech of the Premier regarding the Suffield gas field he mentioned the fact that the government is concerned with the deterioration of the land being used and the ecological damage that was being done in the Suffield area. I was wondering just what jurisdiction your department would have to go into that area and prevent any damage, or is that tarred from the provincial government? Can you go in in Wainwright or in Suffield, in a military establishment where it has been claimed by this government that ecological damage is being done? What prevention are you taking?

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs may also wish to answer part of this question, but from my understanding right now, the federal government has the surface rights. And, in order to enter into the area, you have to get their permission.

We've been concerned about this to the extent that I have written the Minister of Defence asking for permission to send in some qualified soil experts and land management experts to make an on-the-spot appraisal of the type and manner of damage that in fact is being incurred, to the 65 per cent of the area that is being used for military manoeuvres.

MR. DIXON:

To the hon. Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs. Are we getting any reaction from the federal government? After all there is a vast amount of land there and I mean if the statement of this government is that damage is being done, surely we should get some action. Are they just ignoring us completely?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if the hon. member is referring to the Premier or to the report. It is the report that made the statement that there is quite a bit of damage and I think the report of the consultants. The Premier in reflecting on that said that it was the Government of Alberta's desire to, over the long term, rehabilitate and get back those surface rights. However, I'm sure all members will agree the federal government feels that they must have a certain input into national defence, either to Canada or to the British Commonwealth, that we must respect their feelings in this regard.

And we are able in the first instance, and we have been able to obtain their consent to go on the surface to do the drilling that is necessary to prove up the reserves and to prevent drainage. We have not, as we have said in the House earlier, wanted to push too strongly on the other recommendations in the report until we are certain of our initial progress.

MR. DIXON:

Well, Mr. Chairman, actually I'm not reading from a report. This is a news release that was given out from the Premier's office and it says here:

The surface area of the Block also represents a valuable renewable asset. This resource, currently owned by the federal government, is deteriorating due to the form of military training currently being carried out.

But I'm not reading from a report. This is from your own news release.

MR. GETTY:

Yes, the news release was passing on -- as you know the report is that thick and a substantial document is not able to pass that out. So the news release was highlighting the comments in the report.

MR. DIXON:

I was wondering then, Mr. Chairman, to the minister, it would seem reasonable then that you should make representation to the federal government to try and define whatever the British are doing or whatever the Canadian Forces are doing to maybe a smaller area because you are talking here about parks and wilderness areas. So I think we should maybe be giving some advice to them because we're the ones who are vitally concerned. It is within our province.

MR. YURKO:

We certainly are. Before the British Army came in I met with representatives of the federal government on this matter about a year and three months ago. We discussed the thing in considerable detail. The whole area was divided into restricted areas where no manoeuvres of any kind can in fact be held. It was zoned. Only 65 per cent of the area is being used and that 65 per cent of the area is not necessarily the critical area at all. All the critical areas have been set aside.

We also agreed with the federal government that we would have an advisory committee to the commandant on the station. There is an advisory committee and the provincial government is represented. We have a representative from the Fish and Wildlife Division, and Dr. Stevens from the Canadian Wildlife Division.

But in recent weeks, on the basis of reports that I have received, I recognize that the type of damage that is being done in terms of grass fires, and the possibility of weakening or disturbing the surface of the land, we recognize that this was now a new type of damage that was possible which may result in considerable erosion, windstorms, and so forth. And this is why I requested permission from the federal government that we send some knowledgeable land people on there to determine the actual condition of the surface of the soil, vegetation, restoration, the years in which restoration could occur and so forth, and the actual damage to the root structure due to fires, and this is what I have requested.

So it's not a case of having not done any work or not being on top of the situation. We've been on top of the situation all along. But we recognize that the problem is more complex and we want to look into it a little bit farther.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, to the hon. minister. On March 19, you mentioned that there was considerable concern, not only for the non-plant contamination with respect to the health and welfare of people working on a plant with asbestos, but the general background and content of asbestos fibres was of concern. And on the same day you said you anticipated that you would be doing some work yourself, or your department would be, on asbestos. And then you finished off by saying that you're not sure there isn't an application before the government in regard to the environmental research thrust.

Would you like to elaborate on your statements of that day? I am particularly interested to know what work you plan in your department on research into asbestos, and what you meant by your closing statement.

MR. YURKO:

Well, I'm not at all certain I'd like to see my statement to indicate whether or not the department is or whether I said the department was, in fact, doing some work in this area. I know we are concerned and we have been examining the literature and collecting the literature, compiling all sorts of information in this area.

[Interjections]

Well, you think I can remember everything I said 14 months ago? And this is such a vast and broad field, it is hard enough to remember what you said yesterday.

I also said we've got the research trust going this year. And the research trust is now functioning and we have had before the research trust a vast number of proposals put forth by universities, by different groups. I think, I am not sure, but I think the STOP group, for example, has put in a proposal for research funds. Some people have -- I think Fish and Game have requested funds for mercury.

The research trust is now operational; it has a board of directors. I do know that a series of experiments or research projects have been approved and money allocated. I rather think there were one or two submissions in this area. I am not sure if any were approved and I haven't had the opportunity to check. But in terms of the research that we are doing in the department it's all, I think at this time, literature research.

And I think I said at that time, and I'll say again, this area is very complex, the health effects are very complex. In this area, like so many other areas we are dependent to a very large degree on the research done in other jurisdictions. So that the majority of the research we do is really literature research.

We accept the standards of other jurisdictions. And in this regard I think we will be looking at, and we are examining the Environmental Protection Agency standards in the United States, which is, I think, on the verge of either regulating in a very meaningful way or just have in the last couple of months. Any regulations or standards we establish are going to be based on their vast experience.

They have worked with asbestos for years and years and years and not necessarily on their own. Because we just simply don't have the kind of funds that are required to do long-term research in an area like the effects of asbestos and the type of fibres, the size and so forth, the distribution of the fibres in the air -- it's not possible for us to get into all these areas. So we will be dependent, as I have said, on what's done in other jurisdictions.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Does the government at this time have any published guidelines on the use of asbestos or asbestos materials? And have you reviewed the Ontario legislation on occupational handling of asbestos?

MR. YURKO:

Yes. Occupational handling is not a function of my department. Occupational handling is a function of the Department of Health. And they would obviously have regulations in the Department of Health. As a matter of fact, I am quite certain they have, on-plant occupational hazards in terms of handling compounds and gases and so forth is their responsibility. If you wish me to check into it, I certainly can.

MR. WILSON:

One final question then, Mr. Minister. Have you received an invitation to see the movie on asbestos this coming Friday at 10:30 in the morning in the Workmen's Compensation Building?

MR. YURKO:

Yes, I have and I intend -- I am going to have a number of officials from the department attending. I intend to attend myself if I am not tied up at some important or highly critical meetings of some kind.

But I just want to indicate to the hon. member the role of the Department of the Environment. The Department of the Environment is fundamentally concerned with off-site conditions not on-site, on the plant conditions. This is a responsibility for the Department of Health. So that the protection of the workers in regard to the plant itself is the responsibility of the Department of Labour and the Department of Health. They established, to a large degree, the standards in the plant itself.

We have been increasingly concerned about this area because there is wide variation between the standards on the off-site area and on the on-site -- on the plant itself. This is why my colleague -- or why the Throne Speech contained a reference to, I think, a commission established to study the whole area of on-plant environments, including safety.

MR. WILSON:

One final question then, Mr. Chairman, to the minister. You mentioned that your department wasn't concerned with the occupational handling, but would not the material research that your department is doing -- would there not be any communication or coordination between the research of your department and the Department of Labour and the Department of Health and Social Development?

MR. YURKO:

Oh, obviously. We have a board of health and our department is represented directly.

MR. WILSON:

All right. Are you anticipating any legislation this year on the use of asbestos?

MR. YURKO:

Not at this time. I don't have it in our plans, and I'm not sure whether the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development has it in his considerations. Perhaps he is revising his regulations, I don't know.

MR. DIXON:

Just sort of a general question to the minister, Mr. Chairman. Have the federal government incentives helped industry here in Alberta to meet pollution standards? I was thinking of the low-cost loans that are available to industry for putting in pollution equipment to take care of waste materials from their plants. The other tax relief is that there is no federal sales tax on the equipment. The other one, of course, is the two-year, fast depreciation write-off.

I was just wondering what assistance we have beyond the federal government assistance to help industry meet some of the regulations that you as a department wish them to carry out?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I've said before that as a policy basis, the provincial government doesn't favour the establishment of incentives of the type you suggest, which distort the true price of the products being sold.

We have said very specifically that we are for internalizing the costs of pollution control, so that the price of the products bears the true costs of the manufacturing of that product. We think this is the only way to go, and as a result, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, after considerable discussion with me, has removed the tax incentive in regard to property tax on pollution control facilities, or he is giving consideration to removing it, I believe, after discussion with me.

I let the cat out of the bag, Mr. Minister.

And I also said in the House the last time the Estimates were being discussed, that the only incentive we subscribe to is a relocation grant or a relocation allowance when industries relocate when it is not their fault that the community has grown around them.

This is an area we are examining seriously as a government, in terms of establishing some meaningful policy, because we do have a number of industries that would dearly love to move, that are being boxed in through no fault of their own and they'd love to move further out if, in fact, they could be aided. This is an area we are examining very carefully at this time.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to congratulate the minister on it. That was my next question because in my particular constituency of Calgary Millikan, we have a lot of plants which have been there for many years that are obnoxious to some people, but the people moved in after the plants had been established.

I'm certainly pleased that the minister has decided that it is worthy of consideration. I hope it goes beyond that stage because under the Alberta Opportunity Fund and others, maybe we can assist these plants to move out into areas where they won't have objections from the residents in the area.

I was wondering, Mr. Minister, while I'm on my feet, if either yourself or the Minister of Municipal Affairs -- regarding stockyard locations in the different cities of, say, Calgary and Edmonton, but I'm thinking particularly of Calgary in my case because of the stockyards being located in my area.

Have you had any discussions with the stockyard people? One of the major people in the area is trying to establish Agrimart, and yet there are other people in the area and the packing plants are still there. I wonder, are you going to try and bring them all together and have Agrimart stay in the stockyard area? Have you done anything to encourage that, or is your overall plan to move everything out?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Minister, do you want to answer that question?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Chairman, the first people we are going after are those people who raise race horses inside city limits.

[Laughter]

There is a great deal of consideration given to the Agrimart complex because it is another new one going into an urban setting. As all members know, there was a great deal of discussion with those people. The second part of the problem -- and we did discuss this at cabinet committee level -- was if you could encourage new ones from not locating in urban centres, could you then do with the existing ones in urban centres? Of course, that is a problem of another whole dimension because -- the hon. member mentioned Calgary -- there are the existing stockyards, the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede and other industries that are oriented towards livestock enterprises. Quite frankly we have not gone into that in depth.

MR. DIXON:

While I am on the subject, it does actually cross into about four different areas. The people who have the packing plants there are a little concerned because they can't move their establishments as easily, and they are arguing now that if you move the stockyards further out all you are going to do is add to the cost of processing the feed. I was just wondering -- maybe it's an unfair question for the Minister of the Environment -- but I think this thing really needs to be looked into because they are expressing concern. It is a big industry and packing house people are concerned about the fact of getting the stockyards away from the actual processing plants.

MR. YURKO:

Without getting into the area in considerable length, I can't say we haven't been concerned with it. Certainly we have looked at it. We have looked at it from a number of different aspects. That is why we are considering a policy for plant relocation.

The City Packers in Lethbridge, for example -- we have looked at it from four or five different ways in terms of cost analysis and cost benefit analysis and the obvious solution is to move them out. They know this and we know this, but it is a case of establishing a policy and assistance and so forth.

We have also worked to a very large degree in terms of new processes for controlling odours. All these stockyards have to meet pretty stringent requirements in terms of sewage disposal or manure disposal. They all have to have approvals, now the longest length of an approval is five years. We have done quite a bit of work in terms of scrubbing for odours, complete evacuation and instead of incineration we are swinging over to the processes of absorption in water. I have had correspondence with the stockyard people in Calgary. Certainly I have had all sorts of sittings and discussions with the Agrimart people in this area.

There is one thing you can do with new plants coming in, but the situation in old plants that now exist is a much more difficult one and it isn't a problem that is going to be solved overnight. It is going to take a lot of years to solve the problems of moving out packing plants from the centres of cities. It's just not going to be done overnight.

I don't want to suggest that we haven't been addressing ourselves to it and that we are not concerned about it. As a matter of fact, one of the real

reasons why we, as a provincial government, didn't use the legislation we have to move Agrimart -- and we could have -- was that we had to weigh all the factors. If we moved Agrimart then there was a very good justification, or a very good justification could be made for moving one heck of a lot of other industries almost immediately, industries that are now existing rather than the Agrimart type which in fact would have met every single requirement under The Clean Air Act and The Clean Water Act.

They had no difficulty in convincing us from that point of view. The real question was one of aesthetics and one of zoning and so forth. The legislation exists to have the provincial government impose its will on the local government, to direct them in this regard, but it is a very ticklish, sensitive matter and if we would have done it the opposition would have been the first to be yelling, being the champions of local autonomy as they so frequently are. So it is a very delicate matter.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Sorenson is next.

MR. SORENSON:

I am changing the subject --

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

Go ahead Mr. Ruste.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, to the minister. In the event that -- we will say a farmer-operated feedlot that is adjacent to water or something, has to move, or will be required to move, or change his operation in the future; would you look at it then on the basis of assistance of some form to him?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, that is an entirely different situation and no growth of society surrounded him and encompassed him and created a situation. If he is polluting the water stream that he is located on, he has to meet the conditions of The Clean Water Act. He has to do that regardless.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, certainly the changes in society have made it more difficult for him than it was in the past. I think these have gone on for decades really and they haven't come to the attention of the public until the latter years.

MR. YURKO:

The trouble with the hon. member is that he is forgetting that whereas that farmer started with perhaps 10 cows and this was perfectly fine in locating where he did, but suddenly he is up to 1,000 head, equivalent to 4,000 or 5,000 people, or 5,000 head or 10,000 head and he doesn't consider that having expanded himself he has now the responsibility to maintain that creek clean. So, it is not only society in his case that has changed, he himself has changed and he has to meet new requirements.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, he still went in there on the basis of owning that property and having a right to do with it as he pleased really. And now the game is changing.

MR. DRAIN:

Mr. Chairman, I'm just wondering, is there any form of policing or inspection of water courses in order to be aware of these particular problems? I can think of a feedlot where a creek runs right through the middle of it.

MR. YURKO:

Last year, Mr. Chairman, we surveyed in a major way virtually all feedlots. I hope to table that report in the next couple of days. I have it in my office and it will be tabled in terms of the location and the difficulties that may

arise with some of the feedlots in terms of streams. We know that there are some difficult ones.

But again and I have said so many times in this House and out there, this is a sensitive area where we are moving in slowly. We cannot go in there and just move in a big way. We are structuring guidelines and regulations and moving into the area in a careful sort of way, recognizing the importance of this industry.

Nevertheless, there are some feedlots which are directly interfering with the well-being of downstream people in a major way, polluting a stream in a very bad way and as a result interfering with the freedoms and the rights of the people downstream from them also in a very major way. As the hon. gentleman should realize, when they started and bought their land, if they weren't interfering with anybody else, no one would say anything, but they are in fact, interfering with all the downstream users in a major way. As a result they must pay the penalty of being brought into the Twentieth Century.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, to the hon. minister. I was interested in his answer to the hon. Mr. Ruste, but what about a situation where the farmer was located say, a half mile from the stream and a dam was built downstream from him. He did not increase the size of his herd and the lake is now up close to his buildings, and I know of a situation where the farmer is concerned. What approach would you take in a situation like that?

MR. YURKO:

A very reasonable approach. We review every single case in a very reasonable way.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, does that mean that any requirements that the Department of Environment would impose upon the farmer would be financially assisted by the government?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, all I can say is that we have the best of relations with all sorts of people and we do our utmost to try to satisfy everybody. And in some instances we have to buy land. I indicated before that in order to solve the major problems in regard to the Buffalo Bay area we are buying back a lot of land that never should have been broken in the first place. So we try to solve every case individually.

Where we build a dam and we flood an area we recognize that it's the responsibility of the provincial government and we try to satisfy the situation in all its dimensions. But nevertheless, in a case like the Cold Lake Dam and the Cold Lake Reservoir where a farmer built a feedlot right inside a ravine which drains directly into the lake, obviously he had to be asked to move. He never should have built that feedlot down in that ravine anyway, which was a natural drainage course. Nor did he ever receive a permit to build a feedlot in the natural drainage course or water course.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, I was rather interested in the remarks of the minister. I think that when farmers started -- and many of them started 60 years ago or maybe even longer -- they built their feedlots where there was water. They didn't have the modern conveniences we have today where you can pipe water literally miles through plastic pipe and so on. They built where the water supply was.

I would suggest to the minister that if there is a case where an established farmer has an operation and he is going to have to move or modify it because of the requirements of the 70s, then I think it is the responsibility of the government to assist him.

MR. YURKO:

Well, that's the hon. gentleman's opinion, but we will treat each case separately and perhaps he might bring himself into the Twentieth Century also.

MR. SORENSON:

I would be interested in knowing if any studies have been carried out on tree bark as a mulch material for erosion control. In some of the states they are using this product extensively. They have 12-ton trucks with spreaders and they are covering their strip mines, and even along highways, where erosion is taking place. What are we doing as far as revegetation is concerned?

MR. YURKO:

We are not ignorant of this at all. As a matter of fact, we have a lot of peat moss in Alberta and peat moss can be pelletized very beautifully with the seed impregnated right in the pellet. The pellets can be sprayed from helicopters and airplanes. In the Swan Hills area, for example, we are giving very serious consideration to using this technique to get catches of grass and prevent erosion.

These pellets swell very dramatically once they are hit with rain and the seed starts to grow right out of the pellet. It can be mixed with peat moss, a little bit of dirt and seed and so forth -- a little bit of fertilizer and that sort of thing. Quite a bit of work is being in Sweden in this regard. We have west of us an individual, a real entrepreneur, who is engaged in pelletizing the peat moss. He, in fact, has approached the department with respect to some assistance, research and otherwise, in regard to developing and perfecting some of his techniques and we are very interested in what he is doing.

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to go back to the water drilling program. I wonder if the hon. minister could read into Hansard complete details of this program so that we will have it available to us. What I mean by complete detail is the prices. You gave some prices. Now are those the complete prices or --

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I would very gladly do that but it would just take time. This Position Paper No. 5 was tabled in the House as a government position paper. I have referred to it over and over again. In the end of the position paper we are putting together a booklet so that we can distribute it to as many rural people as we possibly can, irrespective of the hon. member's concern for advertising. In it, under special services, the entire rural water program is developed, and the assistance that we offer. So, I just suggest that maybe the hon. gentleman can get on the ball and get one of these.

MR. D. MILLER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the hon. Minister of the Environment, if he can remember, the position he has taken on City Packers in Lethbridge where the city has grown out into my constituency. They are ready to go right around City Packers but it's the odour that keeps them away.

The Dominion Experimental Farm uses the disposal system of City Packers and there is a real mess there. It isn't hooked into the Lethbridge sewer system, but they both use city water and City Packers will have to be moved out of there. It is right up against the Exhibition Grounds and a housing development is across the street from it. It is a serious situation.

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Chairman, I certainly know it's a serious situation. I spent the better part of a day in Lethbridge flying all over the area inspecting a series of sites with officials of City Packers and we indicated to City Packers exactly what sites would be appropriate from the departmental point of view, right on the spot. City Packers is corresponding with the Department of Industry, with the Department of Environment and with the Department of Agriculture. We are working, as I indicated, in terms of establishing a policy in terms of assistance for moving. City Packers has also applied to DREE with respect to a grant. They recognize and, actually, they came to see me, initially on the basis of our request, last September.

I asked them immediately to get an engineering consultant to do an engineering analysis and a cost analysis, actually a cost benefit analysis, as to whether they should stay there and put in the equipment for pollution control, move into the industrial side of the City of Lethbridge or move in various areas around the city. And they followed this advice and they did have an engineering appraisal done, cost benefit analysis done. So they know where

they are going. And they are taking a series of steps toward the eventual solution of their problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Is this the same topic, Mr. Dixon? Mr. Ludwig is next.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister who just stated that he is tired of repeating some of the answers that he had been giving the hon. members. I hope that he'd get tired of me complaining about a little problem that exists in Calgary. I'm bringing this to his attention for about the sixth time.

And this deals with the Robin Hood Flour demolition by Johnson Terminals, a regular little dust bowl in the City of Calgary and in that area today. I understand that the minister had a real nose for trouble for pollution problems before he became minister but now he tells me that he is short of staff. All he needs to do is phone up the demolition firm and advise them the same as he has advised me in a letter, to tell them that they should sprinkle the operation like other demolition sites to do and solve the problem.

But I suppose it is probably too small a problem for the minister to take time to deal with. It is a serious problem. I think that one problem Calgary has is that they perhaps have too many Conservative representatives who don't tell you what problems there are in Calgary. This should be looked at.

It isn't a big problem but it is a serious problem. There are several hundred cars that get covered by fine cement dust. These people ought not to be exposed to that kind of treatment. We have the Minister of the Environment who knows all the problems. This is a simple one. It doesn't take much. It takes a phone call to solve it. If the minister can't do that, I doubt whether he can solve some of the bigger ones.

I think that if this demolition firm was a small firm, somebody would have shut it down by now, if it carried on the way it does. I'm telling the minister for about the sixth time and I will tell it again, if he doesn't stop this; the people in that area are fed up with the fact that there is a little dust bowl in that area, at the north end of Third Street and Ninth Avenue. The demolition will continue for another month and a half or two. So this isn't something that will terminate tomorrow. It has been warm the last few days, on and off for the last month and that site could have been sprinkled and the dust kept down.

As I stated today, there were literally clouds of dust emanating from this site and it covers cars downwind and particularly to the east of the site. There are hundreds of cars covered in the parking lot. These cars are covered by fine dust and the dust gets inside the cars. It is something that this government ought to do. And, I am stating that the minister lost his zeal for solving these problems after he became a minister.

Because he was in Calgary, he advertised that was in Calgary and one problem exists there and he can't seem to solve it. I don't believe that it is fair for a member or a citizen to be complaining time and time again unless you can say that it can't be done. If it can't be done, tell the House that you can't do it, and maybe we'll get some local people to pressure the firm to do it. We've got a minister to do it, we've got the department, we're spending the money to do it, but the minister can't seem to get around to it.

Now I wonder if the minister could advise whether he is aware of the fact that this firm is dumping all the crushed material, all the cement blocks and all the dust and dirt into the Bow River. Has he been advised to this effect?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that most of the dust problem exists between the hon. member's ears.

MR. LUDWIG:

If the hon. minister is saying what I am saying isn't true, I'm saying he is lying.

That the minister is arrogant and he is in contempt of this committee because what I am saying is true. And I think the minister has displayed his arrogance before and I think it is a sad reflection on the minister of the Crown

when I complain about a legitimate problem, that he and some other ministers who don't deserve to be in that position, turn around and start abusing me.

I'm not going to stop complaining. It's a legitimate beef, and I think the minister indicated that he is perhaps a lot shorter than his stature when he makes a remark like that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

Will the minister proceed.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, the only complaint I received on this matter is from the hon. member. I haven't received a telephone complaint or a written complaint to my knowledge from anybody else.

Nevertheless the hon. member wrote to me and I had the department trot right out and investigate it immediately, and recognized that it was of a temporary nature. We know our standards in regard to dust very well.

And there is a pall of dust rises on the city of Calgary every morning about 11:00 o'clock, an enormous pall of dust that settles over the whole city, so our standards are based on the basis of the fact that we know the dust exists and, in fact, it will always be there. When the traffic starts in the morning, on every day in the city of Calgary, a pall of dust does in fact come up. So we are not going to get rid of the dust in the city of Calgary. It's always going to be there.

The question is one of degree. So we did, in fact, inspect, on the hon. member's letter to me, went out and inspected it immediately. We laid down some conditions to the company and that was to use sprays as long as they didn't endanger the workers' lives, in terms that sprays would only be used during non-freezing weather. If it dipped below freezing, then in fact, the ice that would form would in fact, create dangerous conditions.

The matter was inspected by the department in Calgary, I believe, three different times. I have also asked the department to go today and inspect the matter again because the hon. member still keeps complaining. And to see that, in fact, that now that the weather has warmed up some, that in fact, they are spraying.

But as I have indicated before, we do go down and we see these companies and we lay down the law, but if the company turns right around and doesn't in fact do exactly what we suggest, we don't have a massive department that we can put a person on that spot and have him stay there all day. We're quite short of personnel, and we try to use them to the best possible advantage. We simply get hundreds and hundreds of complaints every day, some a lot more serious than the hon. member's problem. We have to attend to all these complaints and not only his.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I'm surprised at the hon. minister's reply because he says I'm the only one who complains. I told him that he has nine Conservative MLAs and they won't complain about anything because they forgot what the people elected them for.

This is a public problem, it affects hundreds of people. It is a very fine dust, it is pollution and the minister says he hasn't enough staff. You don't need a staff. Just phone the contractor and tell him to sprinkle the site now, as you said you would. You don't need a staff, you don't need a man standing there to see that they obey your instructions.

I believe the minister has the authority to do this, and he says, well, other people have bigger problems. This affects hundreds of people, there are hundreds of cars parked east from there and every one is dirty in the evening, even if it is clean in the morning. I suppose this problem is too small for the minister to look at because it is probably too far away. But I believe that if he wants complaints, he could get complaints. But apparently the people do not complain to the Conservative MLAs on matters of this nature because, perhaps, it is futile.

But I think that if the minister still doesn't, I'll check tomorrow. I'll check tomorrow that if he hasn't arranged to stop it, I'll tell him again, and

if he isn't tired of repeating his answers, I'm not tired of asking him. It's his responsibility and I'm helping pay for it.

But the minister gets up here and tries to play down that this is something that I'm blowing out of all proportion. Maybe a lot of small people are involved, but they have to eat this dust. I thought that you preached the fact that you're a people's government. These are people. These are people in that area and I think that this is not the only indication of contempt of people's problems by this government. This is a fine example of contempt of complaints of the public.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member has expressed his opinion. Any questions?

MR. WILSON:

[Inaudible]... dates back when I was asking the minister during the daily question period about land filling wine and liquor bottles. The minister mentioned that he very soon hoped to have an alternate method of disposing of wine and liquor bottles by recycling them. We understand that you are advertising the system which you are using now as recycling and there is some question as to whether land filling them is recycling. Would you care to elaborate, sir, on what it is that you plan to do with the wine and liquor bottles that you are now land filling?

MR. YURKO:

We expect that this glass will be stockpiled and the beginning of stockpiling will be during this month.

MR. WILSON:

Will it -- go ahead.

MR. LUDWIG:

I didn't get a reply from the minister as to whether he is aware that this cement and dust and everything is being dumped in the Bow River.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I'll have the department check into that matter.

MR. WILSON:

My question is to the minister. You said that this month you would start stockpiling wine and liquor bottles and would you --

MR. YURKO:

Crushed glass.

MR. WILSON:

I beg your pardon?

MR. YURKO:

Crushed glass.

MR. WILSON:

Crushed glass? And for what purpose, sir?

MR. YURKO:

In anticipation that it will be used in an enterprise of some sort in the near future.

MR. WILSON:

And do you have the facilities and the space to handle this glass and to crush it and will this apply to areas other than Calgary?

MR. WILSON:

Well, Mr. Chairman, we have two main sites -- Contain-A-Way, which handle all these containers -- one is in Edmonton, one is Calgary. Crushed glass from these two sites will be stockpiled in suitable areas. If we didn't have the ability to provide the areas, I wouldn't make the statement that we, in fact, will be stockpiling it this month.

[Mr. Chairman in the Chair.]

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Chairman, I wondered if the minister had any information he could give people, especially people in small holdings regarding the surface water where they are drilling for private wells. I think the hon. Member for Highwood was alluding to this.

There are some people now who are concerned about the fact that there are so many small holdings being set up around our major cities that their own water supply, those people who are already out there feel that their water supply may be affected with all the new wells being drilled.

What research are we doing in this field so that we can give information, not only to the people who are already there, but to those who may be moving out to the small holdings where they would have to supply their own water supply by way of a drilled well?

MR. YURKO:

Well, all they need to do, Mr. Chairman, is write to the department. The Alberta Research Council has, in fact, now documented virtually a complete map of the settled part of Alberta in regard to the ground water availability. This information is available.

MR. MANDEVILLE:

My question is to the minister. At the recent cost-sharing program that you signed with the federal government for rehabilitation of capital works of irrigation, what portion will the Alberta government be paying towards capital construction? I was thinking of the \$20 million that's in the agreement for construction of capital works.

MR. YURKO:

Well, Mr. Chairman, what we announced last week was the federal contribution of \$28.2 million of which \$20 million was -- \$16.5 million was for the four main structures, \$3.5 million was for rehabilitation of secondary structures which haven't been identified as yet nor priorities established.

The Alberta government input into this whole area of rehabilitation was, of course, placed before the Assembly by the Minister of Agriculture. The Irrigation Council capital contributions have been increased to \$2 million a year this year. The direct assistance in regard to engineering and technical services from the Department of Agriculture has now been increased to, I think, approximately \$1.5 million, making the total about \$3.5 million.

And also from the Department of the Environment there is considerable assistance in regard to technical help and engineering help, so that the total input by the provincial government is of the order of \$3.7 million per year.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Chairman, three questions for the minister. Mr. Minister, the first one deals with a complaint I just received today, dealing with the closing of a municipal dump by the Department of the Environment and the shut-down or closure order becoming effective the middle of May. Is this done solely by your department, or is it done in cooperation with the local health unit? In that case it would be the health unit operating just out of Calgary. Would you just outline briefly the policy?

MR. YURKO:

Well, it would obviously be done by the Department of Health, and it was closed for health reasons. Obviously the initiation of the closure was from the local Board of Health.

MR. CLARK:

To follow that up, then, Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Is the Department of Health responsible for the land fill regulations, and to, in fact, see that this is done?

MR. YURKO:

From a health point of view, the regulations in regard to the operation of multiple land fill sites come under the Department of Health. I'm not certain, right now, whether or not we have any under the Department of the Environment. It has been some time since I looked into the regulations in that area, but I could check and find out. But primarily, if there was closure, it would be under the Department of Health for health purposes.

The Department of the Environment is involved in terms of ground water and the approval of the sites. Initially, we are involved in quite a major way, but then I'm not sure whether we have any regulations directly from the department in this area.

MR. CLARK:

Second question, Mr. Minister, dealing with the policy that your department follows as far as research that is contracted out. First of all, does the department have a general policy that, in fact, all the research that is contracted out, when the timing is appropriate, especially in keeping with major industry like the tar sands project -- does the department have a policy of making all research public?

MR. YURKO:

Oh, yes, Mr. Chairman. Any project that is contracted out to do research or a study, like a corridor study or, in fact, the environmental aspects of the tar sands, is considered to be public information and is made public at some time. I try to table these reports in the House.

MR. CLARK:

Just to follow along then, Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Mr. Minister, with regard to the tar sands studies, whether it was the last one tabled or the one previously, have you had an assessment from the department with regard to the quality of the report?

The reason I raise this is that I've had a number of people in the environmental engineering profession speak to me with regard to these studies and suggesting very strongly that to a very great degree these studies are a review of the existing literature. I refer here especially to the intake review. It is my understanding that this cost the province about \$150,000.

I appreciate that it is one of the first studies like this that the department has been involved in as far as the tar sands is concerned, but on the other hand if, in fact, that's the quality of work the department is receiving, one, how does the department assess it? Secondly, how does the minister react to this complaint I've got from more than one professional in the field?

MR. YURKO:

I'm a little bit perplexed, Mr. Chairman, because the intake study hasn't been tabled. The intake study is not public knowledge, so I'm wondering where the hon. member is getting his information.

I did table in this House a number of studies in regard to tar sands. One is by Syncrude which was tabled several weeks ago. Perhaps this is what you are referring to. The other study that I tabled in regard to Syncrude work was one I tabled today in terms of ground water drainage with respect to the Great Canadian Oil Sands lease.

As I said when we tabled the first Syncrude study, we would make a determined effort to make public as much information as we possibly could in terms of environmental consequences of tar sands development, because this work is required by all the companies, or desired by all the companies that are interested in development in the area to have access to this information.

And if, in fact, it was done by public money through the Alberta Research Council, or reforestation or revegetation done by the Department of Agriculture

or by some other government organization, then we would table this so it is available to all these other companies. Then they can extend their work.

I should also say I have talked to Syncrude and Great Canadian Oil Sands and attempted to convince them of the benefit of tabling all this information so that we could get together a very large pool of knowledge that everybody could have access to. This is what we are trying to do.

But the intake study itself, you will just have to wait until I table it. We hope to table it within the next three or four weeks. The interim report was submitted some time ago, but the final report has been rewritten and I think now it is just a case of publishing it, or printing it.

I do want to say this, that we have been so concerned in this area that we have talked to a number of companies and the companies, under our direction, have now got together 14 companies. We intend to collaborate with the department jointly on research work from here on in on a pool basis. We have discussions going on right now with a very large number of companies in terms of trying to pool a lot of this work, this research work that has to be done.

We found when we took over, I must say in all honesty, a very, very substantial deficiency of good solid research information in regard to development of the tar sands and we recognized how vital it is to attempt to generate as much possible information as the earliest opportunity.

MR. CLARK:

Just to follow along, Mr. Minister, with regard to the proposed Syncrude plant and the studies your department has done in that area, it is my understanding that involved in the proposals is a series of tailing ponds and that, in fact, some of these ponds may be as large as nine miles square. Some people involved have expressed concern to me with regard to wildlife, especially ducks, because of the very obvious problem of ducks landing in this. One, has your department had a chance to consider this and what about the implications?

MR. YURKO:

We're not exactly - I shouldn't say unknowledgeable - that's the wrong word - we are aware of this possibility and we are aware of some work that was done on some ducks and the fact that the bitumin that exists in these ponds is injurious to wildlife. We know this and it has a prolonged effect, so that this is all part of this body of research. Not only that, but the baseline studies in terms of the wildlife that exists are going on, so the amount of research is enormous that is being done and has to be done and we are trying to be on top of it. Jointly that is, with private industry.

MR. CLARK:

One last question, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the make-up of the professional people, the senior people in the department. How many of the directors and people right next to the directors are professional engineers, and about professional engineers, how many of them have done considerable professional preparation in the field of environmental areas?

MR. YURKO:

I think, Mr. Chairman, that all the people in the department above director level are professional people. We have some pretty knowledgeable people, Dr. Smith is one of the foremost experts on wildlife in Canada, as a matter of fact. He has taken over the research secretariat of the Department of the Environment just in the last few weeks. He was on the Environment Conservation Authority and he transferred over and has taken over the research secretariat and he is responsible for all this work that we are planning in this area. I think we have some pretty knowledgeable and qualified people. My only concern is that the federal government is pirating them at quite a rate.

MR. CLARK:

One last supplementary to the minister. Mr. Minister, the point has been made to me that there is not more than one or two senior people in the department who are engineers with considerable expertise and training in the field of environmental studies. That is the reason I ask the question, because it came as quite a surprise to me when the point was raised, and it's for that reason that I ask it is that --

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, the chap who would make a statement like that obviously just does not know the facts. The environment itself is as broad as it is long. It is a very broad area of discipline, it does not just encumber one discipline. It involves many many disciplines. We have some of the best experts in water resource management in Alberta -- Mr. Bailey, Mr. Solodzuk, Mr. Deeprose, Mr. Strome -- they are people who have working in this field for the last 10 to 22 years in erosion, in soil stability, bank stability, and so forth. How in the world a statement like that can be made for the life of me I cannot understand it. They are all engineers.

In the pollution control services we have assistant to them, Mr. Kupchanko who has a masters degree, who mastered in the United States in related environmental aspects. Mr. Paetkau who is the department biologist, for example, who is a very knowledgeable fellow, again the foremost in western Canada. We have Dr. Smith, the fish and wildlife expert. We have Mr. Thiessen, who again is a masters student in terms of land management and agronomy and is recognized as an authority. It's a ridiculous contention.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Late last week you tabled a report on the expected run-off, the snow conditions and so on. Does this report give you any concern, and if so are you taking any steps?

MR. YURKO:

I am just wondering what sort of concern the hon. gentleman suggests.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, I was just referring to the fact that I think it reflects a less than normal run-off in most areas of the province. I was wondering the effect of that on the water levels, on dugouts, and many other aspects of water.

MR. YURKO:

Yes, certainly the farmers are concerned. The farmers would dearly like in some parts of the province, most parts of the province, to have a good two-inch rain or a ten-inch snowfall. There is nothing to say that, in fact, we are not going to get a substantial rain or a substantial snowfall yet both in the mountains and on the prairies. The situation as we saw it when I tabled the documents indicated that in most areas, or in areas 1, 2, 3 and 4 or in areas 1, 2 and 3 there was below average run-off. In area 4 it was slightly above average than expected. And in area 5, which is the mountainous area, below average run-off from snow melt. As I said we can have a very substantial rain in the next two or three days which could change this condition completely.

MR. LUDWIG:

A few days ago the hon. minister expressed the fact that his department was doing river access studies. I wonder if he could advise what is the purpose of these studies, and when we could expect a report on this matter from him?

MR. YURKO:

I was asked by the hon. member some time ago, and I think I was asked on two different occasions. But on the most recent occasion I replied, I think, as follows. In regard to river access studies, I haven't had the opportunity yet, Mr. Chairman, to discuss this with the department to see just what information there is. But I will and will take it under advisement. The department reported as follows:

The department is not at present conducting any river access studies nor does it have access to any particular river access maps other than standard road allowance maps available to the public through the Department of Highways.

MR. LUDWIG:

Did the minister say that these river access study maps are available to the public through the Department of Highways? I didn't get the answer.

MR. YURKO:

I just read what the department supplied me with:

The department is not at present conducting any river access studies nor does it have access to any particular river access maps other than standard road allowance maps available to the public through the Department of Highways.

That statement stands as I read it.

MR. DRAIN:

This to the minister: can I assume that the minister is working towards a solution of the local dust problem, which both he and I are familiar with?

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I have the problem in mind.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Chairman, I move that the Estimates be reported.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The question has been called. Are you ready for the question? Moved by the chairman of Subcommittee E, seconded by the Minister of the Environment:

That a sum not exceeding \$16,439,390 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1974 for the Department of the Environment.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. HARLE:

Mr. Chairman, as chairman of Subcommittee C we have had under consideration Vote No. 26, the Estimates of Expenditure for the Department of Public Works, and we beg to report the same. I therefore submit the following resolution: I move, seconded by the Minister of Public Works,

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$78,815,920 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1974 for the Department of Public Works.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. KOZIAK:

I heard the question called, Mr. Chairman, and I was afraid the vote would be over before I had declared my interest.

This is in connection with Appropriation No. 2617 and, because I imagine we will be voting on the entire Estimates for the Department of Public Works at once, I would like to declare my interest in that vote and abstain from discussions of this Estimate and refrain from voting on that vote and the whole.

My interest is very small. However, I feel that I should at this point declare it and indicate that I will not be taking part in the proceedings or voting.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I had the opportunity of sitting in the subcommittee that dealt with this department. It was obvious that pretty well everything that was done before in the department is presently retained. All the staff, almost without exception, is still in office --

MR. SCHMID:

[Inaudible]

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order.

MR. LUDWIG:

I wonder if the hon. Premier permits the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation to speak in Cabinet, because he sure can't restrain himself tonight. He's had a good go - I thought he ran out of steam, but apparently he has some left.

What I was going to say, Mr. Chairman, is that they have retained pretty well the same staff, the same policies, and continued with some reform in physical plant division.

I complimented the hon. minister on having a fairly good department, but after hearing him with some of the matters he raised in this House and some of the questions that he did not deal with and his problem in getting the answers on the court house cafeteria, I thought that everything is fine with that department as it was except that it would be fine if they had let the minister know a bit of what is going on in the department.

One thing that is obvious in DPW this year is that they really cut their budget. It appears there is a total cut of 5.5 per cent but with the admission that construction costs will be roughly 8 per cent higher, perhaps more, there is, in fact, a 13.5 per cent to 14 per cent reduction in actual performance in the department so far as spending is concerned.

I wish to commend the department also for continuing with the strict policy of dealing with extra work orders or change orders. These are orders requested by contractors, by architects, by engineers, sometimes by DPW to change some of the work they are doing on construction projects. I notice from reading the reports that the minister is keeping these extra change orders down to a minimum and I believe that is commendable.

I rather regret that the hon. Premier isn't here because I want to bring to the attention of the House something that took place, in particular, with regard to the law courts. The Law Courts in Edmonton -- as you will know the whole matter was raised by the previous government, the architects were commissioned, the land was purchased, the building was designed, everything was done and the contracts let. In fact, I would say that more than 99 per cent of all the construction, both exterior and interior, was completed without any interference or any input from the present government. Roughly less than one per cent contribution to anything in that court house so far as construction is concerned, was the input from the present government.

And I believe that the hon. Premier when the court house was opened paid a tremendous tribute to the previous administration by really making it appear as if his government was certainly the major contributor to the construction of that court house. In fact, he made a statement that lasted about 15 seconds during this long ceremony, that the previous administration, as he put it, is entitled to equal recognition with the present one.

I'm trying to point out that this is the kind of stuff that places the Premier's integrity in serious question. There was not a lawyer from Edmonton, there was not a judge in that court house on that day, that did not realize that the Premier was doing nothing more than parading his idiotic vanity when he made that statement. It was an untruth. In fact, it was a lie.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order. Order.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Chairman, surely you are not going to allow a member of the House to treat the Premier of this province with that kind of language. Surely that's out of order. I ask you Mr. Chairman, to rule on whether 'the idiotic vanity of the Premier' is the kind of parliamentary language that we are going to allow.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I accept your point, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ludwig, please continue with your debate on the Department of Public Works. And it would be wise that you reconsider the phrase that you used with reference to the Premier.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I believe that when I state the facts that I can prove that we do have freedom of speech here. If the hon. ministers don't like it, they can raise all the objections they wish. It isn't so long ago that the Deputy Premier abused me personally and you didn't rule him out of order. I believe what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. As I understand it we're not talking about freedom of speech, we're talking about the dignity of this Legislature and the dignity of the people who serve the people of this province.

And surely, Mr. Chairman, you have, as I heard you rule, said to the hon. member that you felt that my point of order was right and that he was out of order. Now having said that, surely you are not going to allow him to continue along this same vein. Rather if he insists on it, we should restrict his comments and refer to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ludwig, I would again beg you to watch the unparliamentary language. I believe that phrase is rather unparliamentary. Stay within the debate on Public Works.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I will abide by your ruling providing you dig out Beauchesne and show me that the expression "idiotic vanity" is unparliamentary, whether the hon. minister thinks so or not. The words that are declared to be unparliamentary are in Beauchesne. I'll withdraw it when you show me that that expression is unparliamentary and not sooner.

MR. ZANDER:

Be a sport, Albert.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ludwig, my suggestion to you is stay within the debate on The Department of Public Works.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Chairman, for the member I refer him to page 130 Beauchesne, Section 155. Almost all the sections, but particularly Sections 1 and 4.

MR. KING:

Mr. Chairman, I think that Hansard will show that the hon. member used both the words "untruth" and a "lie" with respect to the remarks that were made by the hon. Premier. I would draw your attention to subsection 2 of 155 on page 130.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Apologize.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, speaking to the point of order. I just looked in Hansard and the Premier himself used some pretty strong words some time ago that are recorded in Hansard here. And there was no objection by members on that side at the time that was made.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order.

MR. RUSTE:

Well, I'm talking about what has gone on here.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ruste, in all fairness to your comments, at the time that occurred, that is the time to raise the point. As this was in the presence of this Assembly or in the committee, raise it at that time.

I would still caution Mr. Ludwig to watch the unparliamentary language. If he continues to pursue in the same vein -- Mr. Ludwig, I would beg that you carry on your debate and watch the unparliamentary language.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I would refer to page 130 in Beauchesne, and it's Rule 154 (5): "It is not unparliamentary to say that a statement is untrue, but it is unparliamentary to say that it was untrue to the knowledge of the member addressing the House." And I wish to point out that as recently as two weeks ago in the House of Commons, the hon. Mr. Diefenbaker referred to Trudeau's remarks twice as being false and it was not even challenged by the Speaker. I'm surprised that the hon. Minister of Agriculture should be so sensitive about my remarks when only three or four days ago he unleashed a personal tirade against me and you did not rule against him. And I believe the rules are the same for both sides of the House. I wish to continue with my debate, Mr. Chairman.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Withdraw.

MR. LUDWIG:

I have no intention of withdrawing anything -- particularly if it is true.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ludwig, I have asked you to continue to debate and to refrain from using unparliamentary language. I still rule that the phrase you used -- unfortunately I'm at the mercy of Hansard, I do not have a copy exactly, but I would suggest that your reference to the Premier was rather unparliamentary. So please continue.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, whether it is unparliamentary I cannot debate with you the Chairman, but I'm still alleging the remark I made was entirely true.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

You do accept my ruling then?

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, of course, Mr. Chairman.

When I was mentioning about the opening of the court house in Calgary, that was about the most dismal kind of performance I believe anybody ever witnessed in this province. They were standing there and the Premier did what I would call in the olden days -- he tried to put his brand on a Social Credit steer and he did that rather successfully, except that before the ceremony was over at least three judges and a number of lawyers commented on what was going on at this ceremony.

I am sure that if the hon. conservative ministers and the Premier were not adverse to taking credit for something that Social Credit did, 99 per cent of it, then I ought not to be adverse to raising it in this House and bringing it to the attention of the public.

They also talk about saving paper. They issued a tremendously beautiful brochure of this whole thing, and there is not a single mention, single word of mention of the hon., the previous Attorney General, Mr. Gerhard who was really instrumental in getting this whole thing going, or any of the previous ministers. But they were all cut there, the Premier, the Attorney General, and the Minister of Public Works and some other dignitaries lapping up credit for something that they had no business to do. It was indeed rather a low performance and somewhat -- I was rather amused at the fact it was so obvious to everybody there who did all that work, who started it, who completed it --

AN HON. MEMBER:

Did they mention the Minister of Public Works?

MR. LUDWIG:

-- and here these people were standing there, beating their chests, proud of the fact that they have the --

AN HON. MEMBER:

You're just burned off because you weren't named, that's all.

MR. LUDWIG:

Well, I'll see whether you'll get burned off by the time I'm finished. They were all there pounding their chests, proud as punch --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order in the Assembly.

MR. LUDWIG:

-- and lying to the public and the people knew it, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Lying?

MR. LUDWIG:

I didn't mention any specific names as lying, but I said the dignitaries in charge.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame. Shame.

MR. LUDWIG:

And the Minister of Agriculture wasn't there. Yes. So I didn't call you one. Mr. Chairman, I am still amused at the Minister of Agriculture trying to straighten me out on the way -- on the language I'm using -- when he gave us an example of parliamentary language a few nights ago and got away with it, believe it or not. And I don't think he'll try it again somehow.

DR. HORNER:

You're embarrassing your colleagues.

MR. LUDWIG:

So Mr. Chairman, when I bring your attention to this brochure, I want to read a couple of matters from it --

MR. FOSTER:

Albert, you're embarrassing your colleagues, for heaven's sake! Exercise some restraint.

MR. LUDWIG:

It says here:

About six weeks ago my brother Mr. Justice Johnson, Justice of The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Alberta, and I took The Right Honourable Lord Diplock, Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, and The Honourable Mr. Justice Bora Laskin of the Supreme Court of Canada, on a tour of the building when it was almost finished. That day Lord Diplock said to us that "I may just have seen the best court house in the world." In a letter to me of May 8th, 1972, written after his return to England, he said: "I was most interested to see your new Court building with which I was enormously impressed. I have seen a good many in the last year or two. This seemed to me to be far and away the best designed from the practical point of view, as well as being a distinguished piece of architecture."

And it went on and on to laude this building --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ludwig, for the benefit of Hansard, I don't know if Hansard would pick up what that reference is from.

MR. LUDWIG:

Yes, I will give it to the Hansard people, if they ask for it.

MR. FOSTER:

Albert, who was the Minister of Public Works at that time? Who'd like to take all the credit?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Who was it?

MR. LUDWIG:

I don't think that I have to take the credit for anything. I believe almost every individual in Edmonton, every honest lawyer in Edmonton, knew who did it -- and I don't have to -- including every honest minister and I won't say anything for the Premier because I've already made my remarks about him.

[Interjections]

But you see --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order. Order.

MR. LUDWIG:

You see, Mr. Chairman, they not only did what I call a little bit of political cattle rustling, but they are proud of it. That's the unusual part about it. They used to hang people for stealing cattle. And these people rejoice over what they did. I thought that was a bit of political thievery, but they thought they got away with it. They didn't hear the comments of the judges and the many lawyers after the function was over. And there wasn't, of the two ministers, some other dignitaries and the Premier, there was not one with sufficient decency to give at least part of the credit to those who are entitled to it. And I'm surprised that they did not have the decency, the Premier did not have the decency -- it was his invitation -- to invite the Leader of the Opposition to be there, whose government was instrumental for 99 per cent of that court house. Nor did they invite the previous Attorney General who fought for that court house and was responsible for building it in Edmonton and making it the finest in the world. I believe these matters should be brought to the attention --

[Interjections]

I know that Mr. Foster has continually interrupted me tonight, Mr. Chairman. I believe his department will come up and he should be saving all his brilliance and wit for that time instead of heckling all the time. And the hon. Minister for Donkeyville is back again. He hasn't learned a lesson but is still --

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ludwig, for the record of Hansard, the minister of what department?

MR. LUDWIG:

Donkeyville.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I'm sorry, that is no department in this government.

MR. LUDWIG:

Then I can't be out of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

However, it is a bit of unparliamentary language again, Mr. Ludwig.

MR. LUDWIG:

When you use unparliamentary language it has to be directed at a specific minister, and I didn't direct it at a specific minister, but one is blushing. If the hat fits, he can wear it.

Mr. Chairman, I was just going to deal briefly with that matter. I think it is sort of a low mark in provincial politics. I doubt whether any government, any other party, would have stooped as low as did the Conservative government. I think this should be in Hansard and I'm sure the people of Edmonton will agree with the truth of what I am saying here today, even though the ministers are laughing.

DR. HORNER:

There is an open space on the backroom wall, and we'll hang your picture there.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I was going to mention the fact that the Department of Public Works actually reduced its overall budget at a time when unemployment in Alberta is perhaps higher than it has ever been before, certainly in the last five or six years. It's rather unusual that when the hon. ministers were on this side of the House they introduced a bill to accelerate all construction programs in all departments, in all government Crown corporations and in all government agencies, with a view of providing more employment, but now that they are in office this procedure apparently is not of any consequence. They've changed their attitude entirely, and they are now spending money on a stop gap method of providing employment. I believe this is something which should be brought to the attention of the hon. members, that when they talk about bigger revenues and more prosperity generally, they are not in fact doing for unemployment what they said they would.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Time.

MR. LUDWIG:

The minister indicated in subcommittee that the tender to Mrs. Lappa on the cafeteria was based on the fact that she made the highest tender, but I was not aware at the time that she is provided with free janitorial services for the space she has, and also with free garbage pick-up. I would like the minister to determine, before we leave this budget, what the cost is of providing those services to her, because at \$500 a month for a space that size, I'm under the impression that it costs roughly that much to provide janitorial services per month for that space. That's a large space, and if they can clean that space for \$500 per month they are doing pretty good. It means that Mrs. Lappa is, in fact, getting that space for nothing. Certainly it is an expense to remove garbage from a cafeteria. There is quite a bit of garbage from an operation like that. That's another expense that has not been accounted for.

I understand that I may be wrong, that utilities are provided for her. If utilities are provided for Mrs. Lappa -- and I'm saying that I may be wrong on this point -- but if they are, and if janitorial services are provided for her

and garbage removal services are provided for the cafeteria that we may, in fact, be subsidizing Mrs. Lappa that she is paying us nothing at all for the use of that cafeteria space at which I suppose she is making a profit. I presume she is, if she wasn't she probably wouldn't want to be there. I wish the minister to find this out, because this is something that I was not able to get before; I believe it is relevant to this budget.

I would like the minister to advise whether the government is finding sufficient space, leased space for expanded government operation particularly in the Edmonton area and whether leased space is coming at a higher price per foot now than it did a year ago and how much we are presently leasing? How much new space are we presently leasing, how much space he anticipates we will require for the forthcoming year and roughly, at what rates per square foot? I understand that rates have gone up as high as \$1.50 per foot which is easily a 25 per cent increase in the cost of leasing space.

I would also like the minister to comment on what is the future of the tract land directly north of the Legislature Building which I had hoped would be turned into a well-treed and well-landscaped park to complement this building and the park that surrounds this Legislature Building. I believe that it is too valuable a piece of land to just have as a parking space, level parking space for automobiles. I believe this has gone on for quite some time and some action should be taken.

I would also want the minister to comment on whether he intends to make any changes in his Inspection Services Branch and whether he is satisfied that what he has now is satisfactory. I believe that an investigation, a study, conducted on the investigation of the inspection services before change of government and I would like to know whether this was proceeded with or whether they dropped it.

I would also like the minister to comment whether the department or any government department in public works is going to seek requests for proposals from industry for provision of administrative space, government space, administrative buildings, et cetera, rather than to contract through The DPW for construction through government.

Also, I would like an outline, if the minister could give us one, as to the policy in renting space and construction space and what is the projected plan for the general administration space for the government within the next two or three years.

DR. BACKUS:

Mr. Chairman, I wish to thank the hon. Member for Mountain View for his congratulations and also for the latter part of his speech which showed some interest, constructive interest, in the department.

To go back to his particular vendetta that he has with Mrs. Lappa, the cost of caretakers' service in the law courts is 45 cents per square foot per year which is the same as is provided for CaterPlan in other buildings and is also the same as is provided in the law courts in Calgary where the previous minister of the department arranged for a similar sort of contract at the rate of \$1.00 per year for the rental charge. I think the \$500 a month that is being charged certainly bears considerable comparison with the arrangement he previously made.

With regard to leased space, I do not have these figures right with me as to what the total lease space is, but I can obtain these for him. The area north of the Legislative Building, we certainly do have plans for and I think when these plans have been developed to the point where they can be made public, I am sure the hon. member will appreciate them, and I think he will find they are consistent with his hopes in this direction.

With regard to whether we are encouraging the private sector to build for us, rather than the government, building: this has certainly been our declared intention, and as long as the private sector can continue to build and lease to us space at a reasonable price, this is certainly the route we will give preference to.

As a matter of fact, we are developing a policy in this direction of trying to help communities out of Edmonton and surrounding areas to develop their own town centres and village centres by a policy whereby, rather than building provincial buildings as such, which tend to sterilize an area from a commercial point of view, we are encouraging them to develop some type of commercial enterprise with the support of assurance that the government will lease space from them. We feel this is a much more realistic way to encourage development in some of these small communities.

I believe down in the States in recent years they have discovered they can extract oil from cow manure, and I do not know whether they get a higher extract from the produce of cows or bulls. But I believe the rest of the hon. member's speech would qualify for an oil royalty.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Crude oil.

DR. BACKUS:

I should point out that construction work is a very low labour intensive form of getting employment, and although if you want to get employment by throwing a lot of money into capital construction works, the proportion of employment that you will get from this type of expenditure is very low in proportion to other ways where we have given higher priorities in order to obtain a greater amount of labour for the money expended than is achieved by high expenditure and capital works. Partly, as a result of our trend to develop the private sector in providing space for us, trying to develop these policies of encouraging the private sector to develop these centres is one reason why we do not have such a big capital expenditure.

The other reason is that we do have certain priorities in this government and this year one of them does not happen to be capital works. We are trying to keep the capital works expenditure to a reasonable level so that available funds will be available for other purposes that we feel carry a higher priority. I think this answers most of the questions.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, I'm interested in the minister's remarks, and I note that he did not take any issue with the facts that I gave to the committee with regard to the opening of the court house. I believe he is perhaps one minister who ought to know that what I said could be substantiated and is substantiated in writing.

I would like the minister to give the House some indication as to how much money was left over from construction projects in the last fiscal year that were not used up. By this I mean that some construction project may not have progressed to the extent where the budgeted money would be paid out. How much of this money, if any, was left as a surplus? What happens to that money? Where did it go to and how is it accounted for?

The second thing I would like him to talk about concerns my understanding that there is small vote in the budget for the Calgary Court House, the main court house. I wonder if there is any serious intention of proceeding to design the additional floors to the court house. As the minister probably knows, in 1970 there was tremendous pressure brought to bear on the Department of Public Works to treat the problem as urgent. They require additional space in the main court house in Calgary. This was well publicized. There was an urgency in 1970.

Now, I believe we are looking at the court house being completed, possibly, by 1975. I say that in five years with legal aid, with the increased number of judges, with the increase in the size of the city and the surrounding area and the population increase, and litigation has certainly increased -- that if there was an urgency in 1970 this must be an extremely urgent matter at the present time. It isn't enough to say that we'll be thinking about it, we'll start designing. I believe there should be an appropriate budget to really go all out and provide this space. If we could get it a year and a half earlier it would be to the advantage of the people of Calgary.

So far as Mrs. Lappa is concerned, I don't believe one can say that I am conducting a vendetta against her. I want to know these facts. I would like to see all the tenders and the form of tenders that were requested, and I would like to know whether all the people who tendered knew they would get free janitorial services, free utilities and everything found.

As far as the Calgary operation is concerned, I believe that it ought to be upgraded and that the restaurant lease -- which is a much smaller operation, a fraction of what we have in Edmonton -- ought to be looked at and if possible have it tendered to the highest bidder. I do not support what is there now, but it developed a number of years ago, I believe, when perhaps the operation -- the cafeteria and the court house -- was not an economically viable operation. The number of people in the court house has now increased and I believe that perhaps

it is paying for itself very well at the present time. But I am merely assuming that.

The Edmonton operation is a much larger one, with modern facilities and expensive equipment, and I believe that we should be making money on it rather than merely setting up a cafeteria. I believe the minister never did satisfy the hon. members why it is the only cafeteria in any government building perhaps in Alberta where the civil servants cannot bring their lunches in and eat them. This is rather unusual because the building, the equipment and the caretaking services are provided by the public. This may not appear to be a major issue, but it is important to those people who work there. It's extremely important to someone who works there and wishes to bring his lunch into a public provided area. This is the first time, I believe, that this has happened and it ought not to happen. I don't believe that this is a frivolous complaint. Many people complained about it, many people were quite bitter about it. They reserve the right to bring their lunches into a place as provided for by the public.

I also would like to urge the minister that wherever possible to continue to give cafeteria management and operation to the CaterPlan of the CNIB. If we are going to subsidize anybody, if we are going to subsidize any kind of an operation, then at least let's subsidize a group that provides help for the blind.

There is justification for subsidizing something like that, because they do a tremendous amount of good work and then we can't be too seriously criticized for subsidizing the CNIB. But when we start subsidizing commercial ventures, I don't believe the public appreciates it and we ought not to do it.

I would like the minister to give us some outline of intended future space of the space he anticipates we will require in Calgary. I understand from him the John J. Bowlen Building is filled to capacity now, and if we need more space we will either have to build or rent. I wish the minister to advise what are the plans in the immediate future in this regard.

DR. BACKUS:

With regard to the government court house, it is our intention to proceed with planning this year. The urgency and the pressures that were brought on the Department of Public Works in 1970 certainly did not appear to be so great in subsequent years and we didn't have the same pressure groups acting on the Department last year. It was certainly not considered to be as urgently needed as was perhaps expressed previously.

However, it is our intention to proceed with planning this year and we may even get to the point, if the planning goes ahead and the pressures are indicated, we may try and accelerate the process so that we do go ahead with the expansion of that court house at an earlier date.

With regard to the cafeteria service, as I explained and wasn't noted by the hon. member, when I spoke in the Budget Debate, the cafeteria of the court house is a rather different situation from other cafeteria services in Edmonton.

It has normally been the policy that we do not provide cafeteria service in competition to the private sector. It is provided in areas where normal facilities are not available. There are numerous facilities available in and around the court house and the prime purpose of the court house cafeteria service was to provide cafeteria service for the public and for the judiciary; rooms and lounges are available and, in fact, were not fully utilized for members of the staff who wished to bring their bag lunches. These were inspected on numerous occasions when the complaint was raised and were found to be only partially filled. These services were available at the time of the complaints; we have, in addition, provided coffee service for those using the lounges, and therefore I think if the hon. member would update his information he would find that a satisfactory service is now being provided in the law courts. We have certainly had no complaints since the ones about a year ago.

With regard to further rental space in Calgary, we will as rental space is required in that area advertise and put out for tenders for additional space from the private sector as required. It is certainly not our intention in this year's budget to do any further building on the J. J. Bowlen Building. But the J. J. Bowlen Building has been constructed as far as its foundation and planning is concerned to enable additional floors to be built on there, and at some future date this will probably be carried out but this is certainly not in this year's budget.

And for additional space that is required, it is our anticipation to use any available space that the government owns in Calgary and if we require more than this, to go out to the private sector and lease accommodation at this time. I hope that answers all those questions.

MR. LUDWIG:

I didn't hear the answer concerning the surplus funds.

DR. BACKUS:

We had a surplus of \$3 million this year which is turned back into general revenue at the end of the year. And I think in view of the fact that in previous years this had been considerably higher it would indicate a fairly accurate assessment of what our expenditure should be in last year's budgeting.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, it was higher in previous years, but I also wish to point out that the capital construction program was considerably in excess of the one planned at the present time.

I'd like the minister to outline to the House just what major projects, construction projects, the department has in mind for Calgary at the present time.

I want to point out that what I have in mind is that we have just practically completed the medical school which was a \$25 million project, roughly \$10 to \$12 million construction under SAIT, there is a \$16 million Mount Royal College construction program in Calgary, there was not quite a \$5 million fish hatchery program under the previous government for construction -- I believe it is finished now -- there were numerous other construction projects of a major nature in Calgary and it is my opinion that this present government has no major construction in mind with the exception of the contribution to the convention centre. But perhaps there are others. So if the minister would tell us just what particular projects they have in mind for Calgary to perhaps get off the ground this year.

DR. BACKUS:

I believe the hon. member was given our book detailing all our construction programs for the year. And I believe we have, are commencing -- we are, of course, in the process of building the provincial courts and --

MR. LUDWIG:

Remand Centre.

DR. BACKUS:

Remand Centre. We are, of course, in the process of building the new Glenbow Building there under Advanced Education. They were planning in commencing in phase two of the trade and technical engineering complex, the Arrow Building under SAIT. But these are the main areas that, in fact, we are working on in Calgary. And we are not undertaking -- in view of the fact that we are still involved in construction work in Calgary, we have not introduced a lot of additional construction in Calgary at the present time.

MR. LUDWIG:

I wonder if the minister could advise whether this SAIT construction is intended to be tendered this year or whether it is going to be designed this year?

DR. BACKUS:

I think it is going to be tendered. It will be tendered this year.

MR. LUDWIG:

Any indication as to what size the project might be? I am not aware of it.

DR. BACKUS:

I can check that out for him. We have put in this year's budget \$1,700,000 and \$1,000,000 on the Arrow Building. This would be for the planning and commencing of it. The total construction cost I will have to check out.

MR. LUDWIG:

Is the Remand Centre in its final stages of construction at the present time? So that project would by and large finish this year, would it?

DR. BACKUS:

It's roughly 33 per cent completed. The estimated completion date is January, 1974.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Any other questions?

MR. DIXON:

Just two brief questions to the minister. One is, what is the proposed construction regarding new shops, such as the one that is going to replace, I understand, one in the Manchester area in Calgary? And I would urge the government to take a second look at that before they move that installation because of the fact that so many people involved there aren't the type of people who move too easily. They are people who have been employed there for years. They aren't in the higher salary bracket. And a move to them means a great deal more hardship than someone who is in a different category of government service.

And I can understand why the hon. Minister of Highways wants to move everything into his constituency, but I think that we who are in the Calgary area, would like to see some of the old established government services that have been there, such as the Manchester shops, stay where they are, or at least stay close enough so that the workers won't have to make a long trip to a new location.

I think you've got to realize that this involves people, the type of people where a move of this kind does work a hardship. I realize that it's tied in with both Department of Highways and your own Public Works Department, Mr. Minister, but I just wondered if you could tell me: are they actually going to start building a building in Airdrie that will be used eventually to replace the Manchester shop building in the city of Calgary?

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Minister, I wonder if you've had any complaints from the staff of the Attorney General's Department who are in the Madison Building regarding the difficulties they are having there, recently, with the heating and cooling system within that new building? Are you going to put some pressure on the landlord to rectify the situation? I'm sure you have probably heard of it. I just wondered what action your department had planned as far as straightening out the problem?

DR. BACKUS:

We are planning to commence the Highway Department maintenance building in Airdrie, and although it is realized and recognized that this does involve people, it is also recognized that it's important for the sake of other people outside of the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, out of the big metropolitan areas, to provide some stimulus in development in some of the areas out of the big centres.

It is necessary to rebuild this facility, and rather than going the route of building things like the shops for Lands and Forests right in the middle of Edmonton, where they could have been constructed out in a number of smaller communities and provided a stimulus to the economy of that community, we are striving in certain of these areas, where it can be without proving a handicap to the proper functioning of the shops, to place these out of the metropolitan areas. They will be developing a site in Airdrie in conjunction with Alberta Housing which will provide a very attractive setting there for these people if they wish to move out there, or if they prefer to drive in and out. This will also be possible for them.

Although I agree and I think the Department of Highways has recognized the concern of individual workers in these areas, I think, too, it is of greater

importance to recognize the needs of the province as a whole in the development of areas out of the metropolitan area.

I think whereas the private sector tends to concentrate in the big metropolitan areas, the government can play some part in stimulating the smaller communities. I assure the hon. member that all these aren't being put into the respective minister's particular areas; they are being generally distributed around the province where we can, in order to stimulate some of these smaller communities.

With regard to the Madison Building, yes, we have been very aware of the complaints. They have been going on for a very long time. We are not satisfied with the air conditioning control in that building. We have done a great deal of work with the landlord in this respect.

There are certain problems that are, perhaps, basic to the way the building has been built, and also there have arisen a large number of problems that are the result of failure on the part of some of the sub-trades in providing proper equipment. They did skimp on it and it has resulted in creating, although a new building, a number of problems which we go in and help put right. Things run fine for awhile and then something else breaks down, another valve blows or something goes wrong, and we get recurrences of this. However, we have been working with the landlord on this and he has agreed to provide better fans and better equipment in there. We hope this will resolve the problem for the Attorney General's department.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Minister, there is just one point of clarification. I can go along with the government's idea of wanting to move out into slow growth areas, but I can't see the government claiming their program will go out to a rapidly developing area, because that is only going to compound the situation. Airdrie is really a suburb of the City of Calgary, and you are going to have transportation problems and all kinds of problems. We are not really -- you could go along with the argument that you are moving it to Three Hills, but all you are doing is going from the southeast part of the city to the far northeast part, you can almost say. I don't see how that is going to really help the rural areas. I think if you are going to have a realistic program of helping the rural areas, you have to go into slow-growth areas, not areas that are being built by private enterprise as rapidly as men and materials are available. And this is what is happening at Airdrie.

Mr. Minister, my final question is, what are the plans for the replacement of the Treasury Branch in my constituency on Eighth Avenue and Centre Street? This is the one that was torn down -- you moved it across the street. What are the plans? Are you going to move it back into the new complex? Is that still going to go ahead?

DR. BACKUS:

No, Mr. Chairman. We negotiated long and hard with the developers of that area and, although we were in a position where we could have shot down the whole development by refusing to accept their terms, it was felt that that whole urban development plan and the development of the convention centre was on pretty shakey ground, I gather. In fact, our insisting on having the accommodation back in the convention centre when it is built -- although I don't think that in itself would have in fact wrecked their whole plan -- certainly gave them the excuse for any failures they might have had if things had not gone ahead successfully there.

Therefore, it was the decision to move out of these premises completely into the temporary premises across the street. We are looking to obtaining a satisfactory site still in the area, in the general area of which hasn't as yet been settled. We are in the process of negotiating on one or two alternate sites in that area.

MR. DIXON:

[Inaudible]...too far away from the general area where it is now.

DR. BACKUS:

That's right.

MR. LUDWIG:

[Inaudible]... would explain to us the vote under Contingencies. I understand that these are merely bookkeeping entries as between departments rather than a cash outlay by the government. Could he explain that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Why didn't you ask that in committee?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Which vote number is that, Mr. Ludwig?

MR. LUDWIG:

It is in the capital budget and it is under the heading of Contingencies.

DR. BACKUS:

These are normally put into nearly all the budgets and have been for many years. It is to cover unexpected expenses, although we will find on the next page that we have covered certain of these factors in more detail.

Under the projects which provide funds to correct emergent, unforeseen operation difficulties that have developed in buildings or building services completed prior to the current fiscal year to be expended only with the approval of the Minister of Public Works and the Provincial Treasurer, and then an amount to cover unforeseen accounts against buildings which have been completed prior to the fiscal year.

This could eliminate the necessity of procuring special warrants for special items to be expended only with the approval of the Deputy Provincial Treasurer, or Deputy Minister of Public Works.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Chairman, is this then not, in fact, an entry that is actually a bookkeeping entry? It is not an actual expense for the Treasury, which should be shown in the budget as an expense to the Treasury?

DR. BACKUS:

Well this is an expense -- it's an item put into the budget to be approved by this Legislature to give us a cushion, a relatively small cushion, much smaller than on previous occasions, for emergency situations; that is, we cannot anticipate that the roof is going to collapse on some building that was built 10 years ago, but this type of thing could happen or the curtain walls on the Biological Sciences Building could start leaking such a draught that they object to it and we have to go in and expend funds to improve the situation. So that this is, just as it says, a contingency item put there in order to cover unexpected emergency situations.

MR. LUDWIG:

[Inaudible]

DR. BACKUS:

I am sure we will find some other use for them.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

No further questions? Ready for the question from Mr. Benoit?

MR. BENOIT:

You might have to collaborate with the Minister of Lands and Forests on this one, but in your black book, our orange book, you have about \$850,000 for capital improvements on about 11 parks. Now, in the Department of Lands and Forests, it shows another \$603,000 for parks development, and I am just wondering why we have two here. Are there going to be other developments -- other parks developed out of the capital estimates in Lands and Forests here, as well as out of here or is there an overlapping, or what is the score here?

DR. BACKUS:

Well normally in these operations with regard to parks -- whereas the funds put into Lands and Forests for park development is for the actual development of the park, that is the landscaping, upgrading of camp areas, and so on. Normally under public works we have certain items which tend to be more of a capital nature, that is the building of actual buildings in the park areas.

The type of thing is the sort of permanent type of washroom facility that is put up in some of these parks as opposed to the privy type that is put in the smaller ones. This is the difference. In fact, what usually happens is that in these park developments, although the money is shown in Public Works, this often happens with other departments, that the money is then paid over to Lands and Forests Department for their personnel to actually do the construction work if it is a type of log cabin or something like that for the staff, and they get the money and build the actual thing.

MR. BENOIT:

There was another question in the Department of Health and Social Development in here. No provision is made for the building of a new senior citizens' home this year anywhere in this book. May we assume from that there will be no senior citizens' homes built in Alberta this year by the government?

DR. BACKUS:

No, there is a change of policy in senior citizens' homes. There was last year as well in that this no longer will be the responsibility of the Department of Public Works. The responsibility for the construction of new senior citizens' homes will be coming under the Department of Municipal Affairs with discussion and assessment by the Department of Health and Social Development. The Department of Public Works is now out of that particular construction work.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Ready for the question? Moved by Subcommittee C, seconded by the Minister of Public Works:

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$78,815,920 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1974 for the Department of Public Works.

[The motion was carried.]

DR. BACKUS:

Mr. Chairman, I move that the resolution be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

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

[The motion was carried.]

[Mr. Diachuk left the Chair.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the following resolutions, begs to report same and leave to sit again.

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$78,815,920 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1974 for the Department of Public Works.

and:

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$16,439,390 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1974 for the Department of the Environment.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move the House do now adjourn until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

[The House rose at 11:20 o'clock.]